

MEETING MINUTES
Ashland County Agriculture & Extension Education Committee Meeting
March 31, 2016 9:00am
Ashland County Extension Office

Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Charlie Ortman at 8:58am

Members Present: Charlie Ortman, Norm Couture, George Mika, Ken Lindquist, and Kathy Schutte

Others Present: Doug Liphart, Amy Tromberg, Kathy Beeksma, Pete Russo, Tom Wojciechowski, Jason Fischbach, and Joy Schelble

Approval of Minutes

Ken moved to approve the minutes from the February 24, 2016 meeting. George seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Public Comments - None

Agent Reports

- **Written reports submitted and agents in attendance gave a highlight of their work:**

<u>Ag</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Held Annual Spring meeting with dairy producers. Highway and State Patrol came in to talk about road weight etc. Ashland Dairy Producers would like to stand up for themselves, present to the County Board once they pull numbers regarding economic benefits and conservation programs they currently do. Responding to City of Ashland and concerns about clean water. Important on how we proceed, need to work together, want profitable farms and want clean water. Pete can put this on the Ashland County Board Meeting Agenda when the time comes. • All the dairy farms have nutrient management plans, so conservation practices are being followed, however, some farms will be getting bigger. • Bayfield County did a Large Scale Livestock Committee, Ashland could do a Water Quality Work Group or something along those lines. What group/ area would be the best to lead this: Land Conservation, Comp Plan, Zoning, Ag & Ex? • Pete said if any ordinances come into play, grandfather the current farms in. • George said that the average age farmer is 40-45, we have 3rd generation farmers here. • Can put in an ordinance that you have to go to the land conservation department and create / review nutrient management plan (the farmers are already doing this). • Jason is working on collaborative discussion (instead of active adversarial) in the Fields, Waters, and Woods Agricultural Enterprise Area. Asking why, what, pressures the farmers are under, conservation they have been doing, areas of growth, etc. • On April 13, at the Northland Chequamegon Symposium, Jason is planning on presenting on the Bayfield County Large Scale Livestock Committee experience.
<u>FRTEP</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to working and teaching in the high tunnels, still in Head Start & Birch Hill. • Gave a presentation at Indigenous Farming Conference, will present at treaty rights education day at NGLVC April 22 for 4 area high schools and 12 college natural resources programs. • Today having a community sap boil with all age groups. Mike Wiggins Jr. taught youth how to make sumac taps, Mike & Buzzy came down for sapping. Youth programs collected maple sap and today they will cook.
<u>4-H & Youth</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter Archery Project wrapped up this week, two successful 8 week youth classes. • Set up a shooting sports, riflery and shot gun, series for this spring.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate project at Bad River with Stephanie this week. Our office is a great team. • Setting up Teen Court recruitment, reviews and interviews with current members. • 4-H Events Committee working on 3 events: Dairy Breakfast, Spring Getaway, and spring ethnic food and 4-H T-shirt design contests.
<u>Family Living / WNEP</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stephanie, WNEP Educator, and Joy, FRTEP, have been successful in collaborative programming in partnership with Bad River programs. • WNEP is working closely with Deb Leonard, Iron County WNEP Educator, as she is the only WNEP there currently, so working with Ashland & Bayfield Counties for staff meeting etc. • WNEP - Heather and Heidi are looking at local high schools and the possibility of working with teen parents or teens who will be on their own. Heidi is working with Laura Kruse at Ashland High School. • Kathy spent last 2 days at a Mental Health Summit through CESA 12, great keynote speaker. Research showed that relationships are the third important support system for kids and babies.
<u>CNRED</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State cut some funding for hazardous waste collections coordinated by Northwest Regional Planning Commission, so there is a cut back on the annual Clean Sweep Hazardous Waste Collections. The cut back is on the small collections during the week, keeping the spotlight on the Saturday collection, so Tom will do both Ashland in the morning and Glidden in the afternoon on Saturday, August 13th.

Pete & Jason left 9:34am

1. High Tunnel Updates

- Jason gave an update on the high tunnels. All up and running, schools pulling spinach out of them already. Ashland might use tunnel for summer school class. Bayfield hiring Agripreneures, South Shore using a more community model. Submitting grant proposal to focus on winter greens (spinach, kale). Bill Bailey is focusing on deep winter production.
- Surveying high tunnel producers, 55 high tunnels in Ashland and Bayfield Counties, 35 of which are cost shared. Working with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Take feedback from users and focus education to make the best use.
- Joy also gave an update about the Bad River and Ashland Middle School (AMS) high tunnels. AMS worked in the tunnel yesterday, planted in November and now ready, harvested 1 bushel of lettuce for school salad bar today. AMS kids also get to do some STEM education in the high tunnels.
- Joy is working with Upham Woods, on a nationwide project, how to use these weather data collection systems. AMS & Bad River Tunnels will be collecting data which will then be compiling nationwide.
- The AMS high tunnel is also participating in the UW-Madison Pea trial with the horticulture department. Joy is encouraging Bad River youth at AMS to then transfer skills over to the Bad River tunnel during the summer.
- The high tunnels have received new grow racks, also lots of plants for tunnels and the community plant give away from Bailey's Greenhouse.
- Bad River tunnels, 1 will serve as an educational space, and 1 will be organized so there are 11 community volunteers supervised by a community committee.

Joy left about 10am

2. Ashland County Fair

- Kathy S. gave a fair update. The County Fair is trying to raise money, Skip Hunter is leading a new idea and they will be selling raffle tickets, printed 300 tickets and selling them for \$100 each. They will hire the Sears Lumber Jack Show from Hayward for 2 days.

- George got a bid from geo textile and grid from Mike with Land Conservation. He hasn't heard from the Highway Department about gravel, asked for 20 loads. Ken said that highway doesn't have gravel, but could get it for cost. On April 19th the County Board will change committee members after re-elections.

3. Opportunities for Engaging Youth

Youth Outreach

- Shared Excel chart of 61 local youth related groups and organizations that UWEX staff compiled.
- Charlie said that finalizing this organization list is the first step. Create a needs list too then see where the gaps are, try to funnel money and programs to support the needs our area has. Suggested gap analysis, who are the kids that are falling through any gaps?
- Kathy B. questioned: who is this for? For us to connect agencies? For parents? Would require different format and maybe different information depending on who this is for.
- Questions for groups and organizations would be: What component of youth needs is this agency serving, who and how many are they serving now, what funding sources / what are they doing currently.
- Kathy S. commented that Rose Haveri is the contact for the NGLVC, currently blank.
- Kathy B. and Doug commented that the AWARE grant coordinator/ grant program is doing something similar to pulling youth related organizations and assessments. Will contact and see if this work could be shared.
- Charlie said the end goal is to serve more children.

Camp for Youth

- George would like all youth to be able to use it, Church groups, family groups, etc.
- George get ahold of recreation committee and forestry committee to look at finding a good spot that would be accessible near roads.
- Charlie asked Doug about looking into camp location and questions.
- Ken talked to a Marengo Valley log builder about helping out once we get to the building stage.

Youth Involvement in County Government

- Discussion regarding youth model in local government in other counties.
- George thinks this is important, and wants to make a proper effort to get kids involved.
- Work with schools, Doug will check in with Social Studies teacher at the charter school.

Kathy S. left at 11:03am

5. Comprehensive Plan & Farmland Preservation Plan Committee Report

- Held meeting last week, have updated goals, objectives & action steps for 3 of 9 categories.
- Tom W. and Amy are putting up Comprehensive Plan webpage on our website, also FAQ's.
- Tom Fratt's grant budget from the DATCP Farmland Preservation Planning Grant could support a summer assistant / intern, hope to post position soon.
- Discussion on time spent on project and timeline of project.

6. Energy Independence

- Tom W. held a meeting on Tuesday, March 1.
- Xcel Energy unveiled their solar farm, a larger array, \$1.78 per watt of installed solar. Pay you back per kwh at \$.069cents. Xcel gets 30% tax credit, not individuals.

- Bayfield Electric presentation last night on solar farm – 1/10th size array of Xcel Energy, \$2.50 per watt of installed solar. However pay back at \$.12 or \$.13 cents. Think you can get the 30% tax credit for what you purchase. Only let you buy up to 90% of your need, and still have to pay the \$35 per month connection charge.
- Each companies plan looks different.
- George wondering how many units does a house need etc. Tom W. shared draft of energy independence spreadsheets – separate sheets for Bayfield Electric, Xcel Energy, or purchasing and a private installer personally.
- Bayfield Electric needs to sell set amount of panels by June meeting, minimum \$500 for 1 panel, average household would need 15 panels.
- Tom W. plans to use the spreadsheet and run the courthouse with 3 options.
- Meeting tomorrow with Nathan E. from Northland about potential project.
- Kathy B. suggested looking at renewable energies for the potential Ashland School District referendum if accepted, have Tom W. work with them on using alternative energy for project.

7. UWEX Restructuring Updates

- Discussion regarding La Crosse County's resolution.
- Discussion regarding restructuring and budget: we cannot support, fiscally, the La Crosse resolution. Not sure about the restructuring, still need more information and data.
- Charlie wants to try to shape it as much as we can, as we find out more. Get it to fit our area and give feedback.

8. County Board Retreat Planning

- County official's workshop is May 11 at Lakewoods for everyone put on by UWEX and Counties Association.
- Look at June for county retreat, department fair. Possibility of 3 new board members.
- Have a speaker/ presentation at lunch time. Ideas included have committee or topic presentation, like on Energy Independence or about the Ashland County Jail and Health and Human Services addition possibilities.

9. Approve Vouchers

The list of paid vouchers was reviewed and signed. Ken moved to approve the vouchers for payment. George seconded the motion. Motion carried.

10. Other Business – None

11. Next Meeting Dates – Wednesday, April 27th at 9am

Meeting adjourned at 11:59 am

Respectfully submitted by Amy Tromberg