

## BAYFIELD COUNTY

**Agriculture and Extension Education Committee Meeting**  
**Wednesday, September 9, 2020 – 4:00 PM**  
**Bayfield County Board Room, Courthouse, Washburn, WI 54891**  
**Or Via Teams**

### Minutes

**1. Call to Order**

Jeff Silbert, Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:01pm

Members present in person: Jeff Silbert, Fred Strand, and Steve Sandstrom

Members present via Teams: Jim Crandall

Others present in Person: Mary Pardee, Kaylie Lukas, & Ian Meeker

Others present via Teams: Liz Lexau, Kellie Pederson, Jason Fischbach, & Sarah DeGraff

**2. Approval of Minutes of July 8, 2020 Meeting (action item)**

*Motion (Sandstrom, Strand) to approve the minutes of July. Minutes approved.*

**3. Public Comment**

No public comment

**4. 2020 UW-Extension Budget Update Report**

The year-to date budget was looked at. Very little travel related expenses have accrued this year due to the COVID shutdown. Training and professional development costs have now shifted to online platforms.

**5. 2021 UW-Extension Proposed Budget (action item)**

The proposed budget was discussed. Though 2021 will see changes in staff and positions, and budget items have been reallocated, contractual services remain steady. A 2% increase in educator fees was offset with a lower wage replacement for Donna Ganson's 4-H position. Mary removed the \$500/educator professional development fee for 2021 at Mark's request to lower the budget. No further questions. Crandall moves to approve forwarding the budget to the full board. Sandstrom seconds, all in favor, motion carries.

**6. Area Extension Director Update- Mary Pardee**

Staff continue to telecommute, though limited office hours can now be approved by Pardee. It is anticipated that telecommuting will continue until COVID19 cases in Wisconsin begin to go down. Online programming is encouraged, though Extension policy now allows small outdoor in-person programs of up to 50 people divided into pods of 10 individuals or less. Indoor programs must be 10 or less. In-person programs must be planned with safety precautions in place and approved by Mary and the relevant program area prior to occurring. The staff's use of online educating platforms throughout the COVID pandemic has served as a learning experience, and this new way of educating and communicating with the public will surely continue, even as COVID restrictions are lifted.

## 7. Staffing Update

- a. **Human Development & Relationships-** Liz Lexau has taken a 2-year interim position as the Justice Involved Families Specialist where she will be assisting educators statewide with their work in assisting families impacted by incarceration, and in expanding the Literacy Link program. Her office will still be based in Bayfield County, and she plans to return to her former position after the two-year interim. Tracy Henegar of Douglas County will be covering 50% of Liz's position, and an additional staff member will be hired to cover the other 50% of Liz's duties as a Financial Security Educator. The position will most likely be announced next week. The overall budget for Human Development & Relationship staffing remains the same. The board congratulates Liz on her position, all in approval.
  - I. **Additional staff-** Melissa Kummerow (Literacy Link) is moving on. A new state funded Literacy Link position will become available soon.
- b. **4-H Operations Program Associate-** This position is currently open to applicants and will close on September 21. The position is set at 40%, 16 hours per week. It will continue to be a UW-Madison Extension position. This position is replacing retiree Donna Ganson's position, although duties are changing to be primarily administrative. It will be entirely funded by the county.
- c. **Superior Adventures-** Taylor Hanson will continue working throughout September to use up hours that were budgeted but not used in the summer.
- d. **Agriculture-** Hannah Figgins has moved on. Ariadna Chediack continues to assist with Hazelnut projects. There are no plans to hire anyone additional until Summer of 2021. Any new hires would be grand funded.

## 8. Superior Adventures Program Update

- a. **VFW Building-** The building was looked over by a local contractor and an estimate was developed for the most immediate repairs needed to the building. Committee members are in support of Meeker's ideas for repurposing this building, but they share concern that the buildings location would not equally serve the whole county's population but would instead benefit mainly the Washburn area populace. The committee recommends Meeker seek additional local funding sources starting with area school districts.
- b. **Summer Programming-** Participant numbers were down this year due to COVID. Family canoe days were the most successful. Throughout the summer, 11 programs took place with a total of 76 participants, 19 adults and 49 youth.
- c. **Fall Programming-** In August programming included biking, pickleball, canoeing, hiking, and rock climbing. Fall programming will take place primarily at area schools. Closures and virtual learning due to COVID will make traditional programming difficult.

## 9. Staff Reports

- I. **Human Development & Relationships- Liz Lexau:**
  - o Taught a stress management series titled "Taking Care of You" to staff & volunteers of the BRICK.
  - o Worked with northern Wisconsin and Minnesota colleagues to develop a more consistent and convenient co-parenting education program.

- Taught a course on building positive relationships with children who have experienced trauma to Bayfield School staff & developed a related course geared toward child caregivers.
  - Provided financial coaching to individuals.
  - Helped to edit a special issue of “Living Well in Our Best Years” in collaboration with ARDC.
  - Provided “Parent Café” training.
  - Literacy Link programming included letter writing kits to incarcerated parents and their children, purchase of laptop for creating Making Reading Memories videos, and meeting with FirstBook.org to collaborate on a COVID related grant.
- II. Youth Development- Ian Meeker:** Contact with 4-H leaders to encourage programming and meetings during COVID. The virtual County Fair Market Sale was successful and fair awards have been sent. The 4-H year has ended and Meeker is encouraging clubs to put together yearbooks.
- III. Horticulture- Sarah DeGraff:**
- The field-work season is ending and final harvest and data collection dates on farm vegetable trials are coming up in the next few weeks. She will then switch to data analysis.
  - Shared the first issue of what will be a quarterly Ashland & Bayfield counties agriculture newsletter that promotes local farms and events as well as educating the public on the many Extension projects in the area.
  - Continued visits to and communication with area farmers markets, farms, Master Gardener Association members, and statewide climate change working group.
  - Helped to develop new programming in a variety of areas including online educational sessions for startup food businesses, farm machines, and wild and cultivated mushrooms.
- IV. Community Development- Kellie Pederson:**
- 2020 Bayfield County Clean Sweep took place and was a success with 135 participants.
  - Coordinated a cross county proposal for a workforce housing development.
  - Continue work on the survey that will assess the housing needs of Bayfield and Ashland counties.
  - Helped to plan the Chequamegon Bay Regional Economic Development Summit that will be held virtually in October.
  - Working to develop and pilot a virtual class series geared toward making non-profits more resilient in times of crisis and change.
  - Assistance to the Red Cliff Rising Initiative.
  - Continued work with the Ashwabay Outdoor Education Foundation, Washburn School Districts Long Range Planning Committee, Chequamegon Bay Food Systems Social Network Analysis Project, & Making the Ask: Encouraging More Women to Run for Elected Office
- V. Agriculture- Jason Fischbach:**
- Assisted with the development of an “Applefest Box” that was released through Bayfield Food Cooperative and is available via the new Authentic Superior

Marketplace; a new web platform creating a regional brand for Lake Superior's south shore.

- Worked with local dairy producers to trial different crop varieties for hay production.
- The State Legislature recently awarded funding for a natural flood management pilot project, "Slow the Flow" in Northern Wisconsin. The project is meant to mitigate floods without taking farmland out of production. Jason is partnering with the project leader, the Wisconsin Wetlands Association.
- Jason has been in contact with local fruit and vegetable growers. There has been an increase in demand for products, and it has been an overall good growing year.
- Continued currant research
- Hazelnut harvest is underway, and a lot of time is being spent in the field.
- More on hazelnuts: A Spanish made nutcracker was purchased and is located at Northland College. A new harvester was purchased through grant funding. A new variety has been developed and is available to growers. Hauser's, of Bayfield, is growing out plant material. A hazelnut alley-cropping trial has been set up on a Marengo area dairy farm.
- Jason is the editor for a new Extension podcast, "The Cutting Edge." The podcast is set to continue through the winter months.

## **10. Next Meeting Date**

Wednesday, November 11th at 4 pm in the County Board Room and via Teams.

## **11. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:50pm

*Submitted by:*

*Kaylie Lukas*

*Extension Bayfield County, Support*