

**Minutes of Extension Educator Council Meeting
Jan 11, 2006**

DRAFT

Present: Alice Mullen, Karen Blass, Lisa Towson, Alan Eaton.

Absent: Geoffrey Njue, Matt Tarr, Steve Turaj

1) Ground Rules For EEC

This being the first meeting of the year, and with new members, we discussed ground rules for our work on EEC. They include: Having open, respectful discussions, Thinking of the people we represent, Respect confidentiality, Make attending the meetings a priority, Think outside the box, Start and end on time, Use good judgement when discussing issues outside of the meetings.

2) We updated several sections of our EEC notebooks, adding revised ones and removing outdated ones (bylaws, member lists, etc).

3) We voted to maintain the current officers: Alice Mullen, chair. Karen Blass, vice-chair. Alan Eaton, secretary. For Presidential Award of excellence committee, we named Karen and Lisa. Alice will ask Geoffrey if he could serve also. For Staff Recognition Day (May 5th) representative, either Alan, Charlie French or Karen will serve.

4) Paul Bonaparte-Krogh joined us, and we discussed COA (county administrator) issues. Paul sees COA responsibilities as falling into 3 categories: 1) working with councils, 2) working on budgets and their defense 3) working with staff issues. Some counties rotate COA duties; others identify 1 person who holds this for several years; others keep the same person for many years; or the team approach is used.. Program leaders have often played a role — not allowing this person to be COA.

It would be hard to find an opportunity to make all switch to one system. For the most part, our systems work. There are other options we could pursue (to fill COA positions) but they all cost money or take more time. The team approach seems to work well. There are COA tasks that have increased time requirements, such as paying more attention to politics, and preparing/defending budgets. When new problems appear, COA load increases. Examples are moving the county offices to new location, or replacing staff. Multi-county COA responsibility might work except that political needs are local. The county councils' role in this varies.

We discussed the points that pressure to get grants has increased loads, and dropping tasks is difficult. Also, what is good for the organization might be bad for one person, especially if a young, new employee were pushed into COA duties. Paul tries to be sensitive to this, and support the COA's as much as possible, to help get tasks completed, and also to accept "no" if the COA changes his/her mind about serving. He stressed that having a master's degree is an important requirement when we hire. Many COA tasks take emotional expense, not just time/effort.

Paul says councils should be actively running things, not passively sitting back, disengaged. If they fall back, he tries to get them more involved. Yes, they could do more in some cases.

(Nancy Franz arrived) In response to our question about a specific policy for filling COA positions, Paul thinks it wouldn't work, in part because of the variety of ways we now handle

these duties. He is sensitive to the issues, and will continue to look at them. Solutions are fluid. Paul asked that we use him when we can, and he is open to meeting with EEC more.

Nancy Franz: Update on Plan of Work (Jim Grady unable to come today)

Four major pieces in this task: 1) annual federal accomplishment reports for last year
2) State POW brought to counties for consideration 3) On-line system for reporting & planning
4) New federal on-line system "One Solution"

#1 is close to completion.

#2: feedback from the counties was that no major issues were missing. Neither could they consistently identify things to drop. Feedback has gone to each program area for any modifications in the state plan.

#3: This is a 4-state effort (MA, NH, VT, ME), and plans are to incorporate TERS. They hope to start using the new system in October 2006.

#4: We are trying to put our system (#3 above) together so that it will be compatible. Civil rights data is an example of something not in "One Solution". Feds are ready for people to test it out.

We briefly discussed the initiative to re-design state and county government, and two recent NH bills.

Richard Cannon recently named Vice Pres for finance & administration.

Minor changes are being made in forms to request professional development leave.

Four Extension staff searches underway or imminent: 2 foresters, Family/consumer staff member for Belknap Co, 4H & youth development person for Hillsborough Co. Some of these are waiting for funding approval.

Agriculture viability group is still working; no report yet.

Heckel Award

We discussed 4 candidates as nominees for the Heckel award. More progress on that is coming up by next meeting.

We further discussed web site development, discussed at our previous meeting. Karen might explore this a bit, and ask Matt and/or Geoffrey if they are interested in helping.

Alice Mullen Reported on several items:

- Performance appraisal form is still being worked on (SPCC) They are piloting this form to see how it works. This would be for all USNH staff (OS,PAT,EE)
- They discussed recent RSA's which required some changes in policies, such as the new policy on fraud. There are some concerns about inconsistencies with our current policies. This needs work.
- There are some refinements underway on compassionate leave.

ADJOURNED