

**Extension Management Team Meeting**  
**June 12, 2003**  
**Belknap County Cooperative Extension Office**

Present: Steve Judd, Peter Pohl, Nory Parr, Paul Bonaparte-Krogh, Jim Grady, John Pike, Dan Reidy, Nancy Franz, Karen Blass, Sam Stoddard, Don Black, Charlene Baxter, Sumner Dole, Time Fleury and by Picture Tel: Lauren Bresette, Nancy Barry, Wendy Brock, David Foote, and Paula Gregory.

Paul started the meeting with introductions and historical quotes about good Extension work. He reinforced the importance of COAs sharing their leadership transition ideas with him.

David reported on the GSDLN partnership. Ten new Picture Tel locations will be added to the network through the technical colleges. He announced a three part training session for staff on using Picture Tel that he will offer with Nancy Franz.

Steve indicated that most of the county computer upgrades have been completed. Some laptops still need to be updated. Problems with Word Perfect and old computers are being worked out. He also updated the group on the web site redesign and that comments will be sought over a two week period. The content management program is on hold due to budget restrictions. The ITDE group conducted 20 inservices in the last year and they are currently assessing inservice needs for the next year. Cheshire County is now on DSL. Other counties still on frame relay should stay aware of DSL arriving in their area.

The group discussed Picture tel concerns related to scheduling, having a local facilitator available to help new users and the fee structure for use of the system. David agreed to put together a business plan for Picture tel and produce brochures to help promote the use of Picture tel and how to set up a Picture tel event. Nancy Barry suggested conducting a specialist meeting to discuss Picture tel use. The group continues to be concerned about proving the value of Picture tel to local decision makers. The value of Picture tel for forging and solidifying key partnerships was reinforced even though it may be hard to measure.

Fall schedules are getting full for a number of people and should be kept in mind when adding meetings and events. Paul intends to conduct a training for new advisory council members in the fall. He suggested adding "liaison reports" to county council meeting agendas as a standing item to allow visitors to give updates.

Tim and Paul are working on the September 17<sup>th</sup> UNH president's visit. She will also visit Grafton County on October 16<sup>th</sup>. Paul is working with the UNH events office on the visits to reduce preparation time for Extension staff. Tag lines for the visits were suggested. The President pays for the costs of the events but wants each county to set the local agenda for the two hour visit. These visits are intended to be ongoing rather than one time events. Two presidential visits will take place each semester.

The group discussed Nancy Franz's proposal for the next plan of work cycle. She announced that CSREES is asking for a two year update of the current plan rather than a five year plan of work. Some members of the group requested that program leaders take the lead for the process and that the due date for the plan didn't matter. The process as proposed seemed grueling to some while others suggested taking it even further through additional local processes. Some program areas hope issues and trends are examined. Nancy will attend program area staff meetings to gain additional feedback and work with program leaders on the next steps for the plan of work process to determine what progress has been achieved to date on the current plan of work, what to continue, and what gaps exist and need to be met.

John gave an update on the state budget. The House has recommended a 5% UNH cut which translates to \$1 million for Extension. The Senate recommended level funding which means a \$700,000 deficit for Extension. The Committee of Conference will meet to negotiate differences in the two budgets. The Governor has indicated that he will not sign a budget with the current increases. The Board of Trustees will also meet in June to set tuition rates. We don't yet know if Extension will benefit from UNH tuition increases.

Jim reported on staff retirement programs. The Feds have denied our request for offering an early retirement program until our exact budget shortfall is certain. This early retirement must take place within the Federal fiscal year so the retirement opportunity window will probably be September 1, 2003 to June 30, 2004. We have been given the green light by UNHHR to offer salary separation incentives. Flexibility exists in how these incentives can be used (i.e. tuition waiver, health insurance, cash). We can use \$350,000 of our reserves for separation incentives. Staff eligible for optional retirement should continue to work with Jim on their options. Emeritus status for retirees with UNH is likely. We may also be able to hire back retirees on grant programs on a case by case basis through Program Leaders. It will be important to deal with how these retirements effect programs.

Jim gave an overview of procedures for grants and contracts. He has created a cook book approach of steps to go through to get a grant. This document will come to staff soon and COAs will be invited to share their comments on the procedures. We are looking very carefully at any new costs and whether current costs are warranted. For every \$ that we bring in, UNH charges us an administrative fee (ranges from 3-6%). This should be built into as many grants as possible.

Jim also reported on the status of Penalty Mail. This program is no longer available as of October 1, 2003. We will switch to commercial mail. Jim will continue to make \$ available to the counties for postage (based on 2000 census data). Penalty Mail meters must be removed and replaced by a commercial meter. Penalty Mail envelopes should be disposed of after September 30<sup>th</sup>. Envelopes with the county return address can then be used. Jim is working on getting a nonprofit bulk permit for the best postage rates.

PictureTel billing was discussed. Jim is concerned about bills exceeding the allocated budget for each county. He will meet with David on this. Jim needs to know if a county office has made special arrangements/agreements with phone companies on PicTel charges.

Paul read the charge of the EMT (to address administrative and organizational management issues for the whole organization). With this in mind, he asked for county updates that addressed recent local activities, work focusing on office team work, and the value and future of EMT meetings.

### County Updates

*Steve* – The ITDE group forms teams of convenience as necessary around specific tasks tied to the group’s focus/mission. The EMT meeting gives him an organization-wide view of issues.

*Tim* – They are starting the budget cycle, preparing for a visit by the UNH President, and have increased use of their county web site for marketing. They don’t carry out particular team building activities. The EMT meeting is valuable for discussing policy and giving feedback.

*Peter* – They have finished an ergonomic assessment of the office and made adjustments, he went on the Costa Rica exchange and hosted natural resource staff from this exchange. He is also working on getting new office space. As a team they help each other with programs, and are working on communication issues. EMT meetings allow him to hear directly from state staff and what other offices are doing.

*Nory* – They have six new council members, they are working on office communications, and they will move into a new addition on the nursing home. They work as a team around county event. EMT meetings are helpful if they don’t get bogged down in county minutia and instead of keeping focused on state level policy and issues.

*Don* – The county commissioner is consistently attending council meetings and the staff is working on getting better connected with commissioners. Upgrading the 4-H building at the fair grounds has become a major project. President Hart visited one of his woodlots as part of the new faculty tour. The office team comes together well around crisis. EMT meetings are most beneficial when they are face-to-face and when ideas are shared that improve work in the county.

*Karen* – They held their county picnic at the Robert Frost Farm and invited former council members. They have many new members on their council with a legislator and commissioner attending regularly. She orchestrated a media conference at UNH with 166 attendees. Their staff teams around events and the lunch room. They have put together a climate committee that works on communication and conflict resolution. She prefers face-to-face EMT meetings because technology can leave some people out of discussion. Reports should be sent ahead of time when discussing issues.

*Sam* – Budget expenditures are going well in the county, the delegation and commissioners have been fighting over authority, they have four council vacancies, the Dummer community profile took place, and they are having problems finding a contractor to clean their office building. All staff attend monthly staff meetings. EMT meetings are best when they are face to face. He enjoys meeting people in other program areas and COA peers as well as what is learned in the side conversations.

*Sumner* – They hosted part of the UNH new faculty tour. It would be helpful for COAs and commissioners to know whenever the UNH President is coming to the county so they can connect. They recently completed a program called “Thursdays in May with Cooperative Extension” – four twilight type sessions. For teamwork, everyone is expected to attend council meetings, staff meetings, social events and site visits. This is his last EMT meeting since he is finished with his COA work on July 1.

*Lauren* – They just finished the Troy community profile, the Cheshire County Outdoors Day, and have hired an outside consultant to review employment structure, ranking, and evaluations. They have not heard about the status of their Americorps position for the county garden and nature trails. Diana Fiorey is on leave to take care of an ill family member. She suggests for EMT meetings that in the future, counties send their update to Paul via e-mail when he asks for agenda items so they can be read in advance. Picture Tel is fine for some of the meetings.

*Nancy* – Their budget for FY '04 has gone in at \$187,906 for an increase of 7%. The Finance Committee of the Delegation asks many questions about Picture Tel expenses. They would like a brochure promoting Picture Tel to go to town governments, libraries, and social service agencies. David Foote has been asked to produce the brochure. The county is now supplying janitorial and repair services for their building.

### Other Business

The new faculty tour was discussed. In the future, commissioners and legislators should be informed of the stops so they can meet and greet the President and tour participants. We can help the President learn about how to “work the county.”

Future of EMT meetings: Charlene felt information from EMT meetings is useful for learning about county issues and activities and to see how COAs feel about policies and issues. COAs want program leaders to attend to report on program area efforts if necessary and do to business with them informally around the meeting. The COAs would like the whole Leadership Team to attend the meetings to hear county issues and feedback on administrative policies and issues. Jim indicated that the EMT meetings often result in unexpected connections among staff, programs, and issues.

### Future Agenda Items

- Building a statewide data base of stakeholders for external relations
- Create a Picture Tel mailing list

### Future Meeting Dates

September 18 (changed to 25<sup>th</sup>) – Merrimac Co.  
December 11  
March 11  
June 10