

Minutes
Extension Management Team
December 13, 2001

Present: Nancy Berry, Deb Cheever, Dan Reidy, Karen Blass, Peter Pohl, Don Black, Nory Parr, Amy Oullette, Sue Buteau, Lauren Bressett, Holly Young, J-J Newman, Wendy Brock, Bob Edmonds, Jim Grady, Charlene Baxter, John Pike, Ed McAllister

Emergency Response Team

- Bob clarified that the team is designing a framework of resources for diverse emergency situations.
- The team has investigated our legal responsibilities as defined by USDA, some of which have changed over the years. Some include nuclear disasters responses, and livestock and animal control. Bob is in contact with Rob Thompson, head of Farm Service Agency, who is coordinating USDA emergency responsibilities. There is a agriculture sub-group of the team but they have lost their leader, Steve Sifford. They have planned staff training. They are also collecting supplies needed for farm visits to reduce likelihood of spreading disease.
- Information is being posted in a private area of the web site until there is a mass of information that can be consolidated. In addition there will be links to numerous other sources of emergency information.
- Peg Boyles doing great job creating needed items for web posting
- Criteria for web site: contributes to knowledge base, does no harm, can help people apply information, is information that can't be found elsewhere
- Handout: Red Cross: Terrorism - Preparing for the Unexpected

Strategic Plan

Final editing and budget adjustments are being completed and the plan will soon be printed in booklet form for broad distribution. A draft of a total staff listing which will appear at the end of the document was circulated for additions and corrections. John described the committee being formed to analyze our administrative needs and recommend by April 30 an administrative structure that will enable Extension to fulfill the management and programming functions outlined in the plan. Dan and Sue are COAs appointed to the committee. Nine of the 10 members appointed have county experience.

CIT and Web-Design

Powerpoint presentation with following highlights:

- Granite State Distance Learning Network (GSDLN) update: 30 sites statewide with Extension's 5 office sites now operational. Next steps are to finish initial training and conduct an inservice on 12/19 designed to prepare specialists to use the technology for inservice trainings and other meetings. Also testing various components and functions of the system.
- Extension is now maintaining the GSDLN calendar. Go to any of our on-line calendars and select the GSDLN calendar
- UNHCE is developing a database of GSDLN sites for web access so you can view room configurations throughout the entire network for planning and preparing for using the system.
- Scheduling: David will handle scheduling for Extension. The UNH bridge will be able to accommodate scheduling but the software is not yet operational. In meantime, send email requests to David. He will check on availability of the sites needed.

- Another database to be developed will track usage of system. The monthly \$900 charges will likely raise to \$1,300. Need to identify reductions in time, travel, phone and other dollars saved. David encourages work with county government to maximize investment. Suggests partnering with county departments and arrange access when in close proximity.
- Need to develop guidelines for usage by both internal and external groups. Also prepare funding proposals to further develop the system.
- David will be conducting orientation sessions for commissioners via all the Extension sites and provide examples of how the county will benefit from this system.
- UNHCE has received a new grant to put a digital satellite system out at the Isle of Shoals. This grant was submitted in conjunction with Cornell who has a partnership with COLSA. This grant involves Internet II which allows for viewing 5 simultaneous broadcasts, but currently only 1 computer on campus has the necessary hardware. High cost of needed new hardware is delaying campuses from taking full advantage of Internet II.
- Web page design: the University is undergoing its own home page redesign. Prototype has been developed and previewed but still in design stage. John is attempting to ensure Cooperative Extension has a prominent presence on the UNH home page. The Comm/Tech Team is creating content site map for the CE page, using web redesign site "WebMonkey". Once content chart created will identify key audiences who access our home page.
- David will work with COAs in counties where we have interactive video systems to analyze costs and arrive at a standard charge for outside groups using our meeting rooms for distance learning programs.

On-Line Educational Resources Design Committee

David reported on UNH efforts to design a web portal with other universities to provide various math and science resources targeted for K-12 teachers. Next Step is entering resources into the database.

Civil Rights Training

- Bob reported that we met our goal to train all status employees in 2001, and the training has been documented as required. A video of the training is available for the few staff who missed live training. Bob provided a copy of the video to each county for support staff who should view the video by Jan. 31. Once accomplished send email to Sharon Ross to document the training. Counties should also maintain their own documentation that support staff are trained.
- Civil Rights training needs to continue beyond this year and further training will be offered. Bob is pursuing a system for electronic documentation of training.
- Civil Rights web page is expanding and provides various resources.
- John's annual letter to staff reconfirming our commitment to civil rights will be provided to staff via Biweekly Update in January.

State Advisory Council Meetings

In lieu of a January meeting, the state council will be sent a mailing that includes the final printed copy of the Strategic Plan. Ed questioned about a dinner meeting in April in lieu of the usual day-long meeting and endorsement was given with agreement it would enable more members to participate without taking a work day off. Tentative date is April 18.

National Leadership Seminar

Holly reported on location change from National 4-H Center to Key Bridge Marriott. Also shifted one day moving away from Saturday stay-over. These changes increase per person cost to about \$1000. Administration pays for additional meals, ground transportation and other incidental costs. Jim explained this has amounted to about \$2000. Some savings can be achieved this year if participants are willing to share rooms. Holly needs confirmation of registrants by Dec. 20.

Family, Home & Garden Education Center Update

- Margaret Hagen provided each county with a report of calls received from their county from January 1 to Sept. 30.
- The center will be closed between Christmas and New Years to enable volunteers to spend time with families.
- Center will be moving sometime in March since we're losing our space but new location is not yet known.
- An evaluation review is underway. An email survey has been sent to all staff and support staff.
- Shifting to new Access database and future report data will be available on the web as needed.

Education Center Move

Jim reported that we need to vacate our UNHM space because it's needed for a new academic program. Potential new space owned by Dean Kamin is very desirable and fits our needs but it's in a building turned over to Kamin by the City with the stipulation that he must rent to non-profits under various conditions for its use. There are some political issues with some Aldermen who feel Kamin should pay for the space. Extension is working with Don Clark the property manager who assures us it will be worked out.

Master Gardener Association

Jim reported that he, Holly, Bruce Marriott, and Kim Roundy from the UNH Foundation, met with leaders of the new Master Gardener Association. We currently have about 500 Master Gardeners, about half of whom are still active. About 50 have paid dues to the newly created Master Gardener organization whose goal is to better support the program and conduct further education. Rather than become incorporated as 501(c)3, Jim and Kim Roundy explained how they could affiliate with the UNH Foundation which provides money management and other support. This would be a similar arrangement to that in place for the 4-H Foundation of NH.

Minimum Academic Requirements for Extension Educators

John distributed a letter addressed to the Carroll Council regarding the vacancy created by Steve Sifford's resignation. Because of difficulty attracting a viable pool of applicants for some searches and the number of retirements expected within the next 5 years, outstanding applicants who have not yet completed a master's degree can be considered, recognizing it would be rare situation, and master's degrees are preferred. John has worked with Human Resources, program leaders and George Hamilton, chair of the Extension Educator Council in weighing the pros and cons of considering applicants with only a bachelor's degree. This will be tested first with the Carroll vacancy, a shared position with Strafford, so both councils will be involved in addressing and filling the vacancy. More detailed information will be provided in tomorrow's Biweekly Update. Not yet determined is whether such individuals will be appointed as PAT or EE employees. Individuals hired would be expected to earn master's degrees. Sharon Demers, Director of Human Resources, will be meeting with the EE Council on Jan.9 to discuss the best options for employing these individuals.

Planning for June 6 Conference

Bob Edmonds and Wendy Brock are the conference co-chairs. Several names were suggested for the conference committee which will be formed and meet shortly after the holidays.

Suggestions for conference content/program:

1. NH Public Television on-line educational services (4 votes)
2. How to partner with local cable TV and program locally (3 votes)
3. Present digital technology overview for hand-on training to follow
4. Provide overview of Strategic Plan for support staff (2 votes)
5. Granite State Distance Learning Network opportunities
6. Build team spirit/motivational speaker/humor (12 votes)
7. Instill in support staff their important front line role, and the role of all staff as public employees, our accountability, and the front line role we all have (10 votes)
8. Support staff sharing of office management and dealing with the public techniques, etc., and dealing with staff who don't share schedules, and other staff attitudes (9 votes)
9. Invite advisory council members (5 votes)
10. File management and other computer training to increase efficiency (1 vote)
11. Future of Extension from Dean and Director (12 votes)
12. Planning for retirement and managing investment portfolios (7 votes)
13. Risk management/dealing with difficult people/necessary documentation (9 votes)
14. Create more respect for broad range of Cooperative Extension programs (13 votes)

It was explained that John will ask the Extension Educator Council to appoint a sub-committee that includes PAT and Operating/Support Staff representation to address the strategic plan goal to expand staff recognition and recommend an appropriate recognition system. It was suggested this committee plan categories for recognition at 2003 conference and beyond. Also suggested that some recognition might be more appropriately done in alternate years during the 2-day conference.

Recognition Suggestions for 2002 Staff Conference:

1. Certificates for years of service in 5-year increments (include support staff)
2. Recognize Joan Leitzel
3. Replicate the annual UNH staff recognition so its done before peers
4. Individuals who secure big grants and other external funding
5. New and innovative programs
6. Interdisciplinary and team efforts
7. Regional programs
8. Friend of Extension Awards
9. Recognize staff with lengthy service (Hazel Ames in 2002)

Campus and County Reports

Campus - J-J Newman substituting for Sarah Smith and Catherine Violette

- Recently held specialists meeting involving John Pike with Ed also attending. Discussed proposal for specialists located in/affiliated with departments to become Extension Faculty; proposed change in administrative structure; and avenue for dealing with specialist-only concerns not appropriate for the EMT. Having John involved was extremely helpful. Agreed specialists would meet regularly and Sarah and Catherine will meet periodically with the L-Team to raise appropriate campus issues.

Cheshire - Lauren Bresett

- No significant issues at this time. Budget request passed by commissioners. Includes increasing Diane to full-time.
- Expect in 2-3 years to be moving back downtown to a county facility. Have just signed 2 year lease for current building.
- Advisory Council is addressing the vacancy created by Bruce Clement's appointment as Program Leader.

Belknap - Amy Oullette for Sumner Dole

- Budget request includes 9% increase and made it through the first commissioner review. Increase is to raise support staff salaries, increase mileage from 31 to 34 cents, conference room furniture, and secretary insurance. Furniture denied so using some current reserves to purchase 2 computers, LCD and laptop.
- Staff were trained yesterday in PictureTel.
- Are having one educator report in detail at advisory council meetings.
- Amy represented UNHCE at the Penn State Outreach Conference in October. The focus was on distance learning and Penn State's World Campus program. She learned how she can better provide information to the public. Attended several agriculture sessions to learn new deliveries.

Strafford - Don Black

- Budget request includes \$5900 increase but doesn't expect it to be a problem.
- The shared educator position with Carroll to be vacated by Steve Sifford to be addressed by council next week. Four council members served on the initial search committee with Carroll Council representatives.
- "Getting To Know You" is a new simple form recently developed for submission by potential council members, rather than a resume. Don agreed to share copies with other COAs

Grafton - Nory Parr

- Hazel Ames retiring Dec. 14 after 37 years. Have advertised and have applications.
- Will start preparing in January for next year's budget request. Not expecting significant changes.

Carroll - Peter Pohl

- Steve Sifford has resigned effective Dec. 21 due to a transfer his wife has accepted, making the second ag educator resignation in two years. Peter is concerned about the perception of the agricultural community, but pleased about the opportunity to consider applicants with bachelor's degrees to expedite filling the position. Council members at meeting earlier this week felt it is too soon to make a determination about the success of the shared position with Strafford County but want to continue the arrangement when filling the position.

Coos - Sue Buteau

- Budget request submitted to commissioners and accepted. Commissioners had requested no increases and preferred reduced requests. Sue explained they have reduced the operating budget by \$1900 but included a \$2000 computer request, and \$2700 support staff increase for a net increase of \$2800 but commissioners asked no questions. Expects budget to be passed as submitted. County's concern is over the 28% of county taxes that comes from Berlin and Gorham, plus costs of operating 2 county nursing homes.

- Economic situation in Berlin is very bad and quite discouraging. City's initial reaction was to pursue a federal prison or casino. Now considering hiring someone to assist with economic planning. County has been awarded a \$1 million grant for production in Whitefield of a new type of pipe creating 46 new jobs. Repayment is intended to be used to create other jobs in the county.

Rockingham - Karen Blass for Rollie Barnaby

- Currently at full staff for first time in awhile with Matt Tarr assuming the vacant Forestry Educator position on January 2. Earlier this year Phil Auger assumed the new county funded Land and Water Conservation Educator position.

- Budget process has started. Commissioners asked agencies to hold to their previous budgets. The new position Phil holds needs an additional \$15,000 to be fully funded in the coming year but travel and other operating budgets have been adjusted.

Hillsborough - Dan Reidy

- Losing 2 council members with Margaret Hagen leading the process to replace them.

- County building committee continues to discuss Bouchard renovations. Three million in renovations are projected. District Court is a potential new tenant.

- Budget request is due the end of February for a March review. This past year the Business Office miscalculated step and grade increases for Extension support staff so back pay retroactive to April 2000 has been paid with Extension asked to absorb this in their current budget.

- Extension has submitted no budget increases in past 3 years but increases are expected this year. Increase is for computers needed to maintain the replacement cycle.

- Dan extended thanks to other COAs for their responses regarding rents and use of county office space since the County Building Committee requested this information.

Sullivan - Nancy Berry

- Four towns, Sunapee, Springfield, Grantham and Plainfield have proposed seceding from the county because their county taxes have increased almost 100% in the past 2 years. These towns also don't feel they are getting their fair share of county services. A public meeting for December was postponed until January to give the public an opportunity to ask questions about county departments. The high cost is operating the county nursing home.

- Advisory Council really got into the staff performance appraisal process this fall and wanted to spend more time than was scheduled so agreed to an additional meeting for completing staff evaluations.

Merrimack - Tim Fleury

- This morning Tim attended a Delegation meeting. Commissioners have forwarded a county budget with a 14% increase on top of last year's 22% increase. A proposed \$30 million bond for a new county jail was tabled.

- Extension's \$291,000 budget request has already been approved by commissioners and forwarded to the delegation.

- Having difficulty filling the vacant Natural Resources administrative assistance position. Individuals recently hired have not remained in the position.

- Tim has informed the commissioners about the increased costs associated with the interactive video system. They see this as an unfunded mandate and said they will not fund the additional costs.

Next Meeting - March 21 meeting to be conducted via interactive video at all 6 of our Extension sites.