

**State Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes
October 15, 2009**

DRAFT

Members present: Judy Buswell, Peter Ellis, Sandy Brocaar, Linda Smith, Glen Yardley, Martha McLeod, Marcia Poulin, Deb Spratt, Fred Creed, Anne Krantz, Rebecca Cronin, John Huckins, Hiram Watson, Carla Skinder, Anna Boudreau, Charlene Baxter, Wendy Brock, Juli Brussell, Darrel Covell, David Foote, Jim Grady, John Pike, Lisa Townson, Paul Bonaparte-Krogh, Alan Eaton, Claudia Boozer-Blasco, Sue Buteau, Sue Cagle, Deb Cheever, Kathy Jablonski, Steve Roberge, Dan Reidy, Tina Savage, Ann Marie Gilmartin

Meeting called to order at 9:30.

Minutes - Martha McLeod made the motion to approve the April 2009 minutes, Fred Creed seconded, approved.

County updates:

Belknap - Peter Ellis is meeting tomorrow on the budget with county commissioners. They have tried to remove many things from the budget including support staff being employed by the county.

Cheshire – The staff and the county advisory council currently have a budget presentation for restoration of budget for 2008. Advisory council members and staff are trying to meet with delegation members to learn more about Extension, budget and the program justification. We are planning to meet monthly with commissioners. Carl Majewski and Steve Roberge are working to help explore the use of the county farm, which is an active dairy farm.

Carroll – It's an on-going story to find a home on the county campus. Although initially a young architect had submitted plans for a new, green building, now the budget is putting the Extension office into a renovated nursing home. They are trying to find out about Extension needs. There is concern about the location of the laundry and the jail staff. Wendy Scribner is working with the county farm manager. The budget is to be presented on the October 28th - commissioners asked for flat funding. Claes Thelemarck is working hard to recruit new 4-H clubs. Ann Hamilton is working on food safety and financial management programs.

Sullivan – The budget process starts in January. The nursing home is in surplus at this point. We added new council members, diverse program areas. Staff are considering implementing some interdisciplinary issues for financial security, also life skill programs, for the corrections department. The garden next to the jail raised vegetables and many were donated to the food pantry. There is discussion about using the farm to create an animal shelter for large animals. Carla Skinder reported there are great programs going on in Sullivan County - parent education program on prescription drug programs and on-going food safety programs.

Merrimack – The budget goes in tomorrow with a few changes. The secretaries may move to a paid lunch to match other county employees, with a changed step scale etc. Tim is working with timber sales on the county land. We have a new council member with experience working with refugees, and are interviewing two interested teens. This helps provide job skill experience. We have all new commissioners. One new commissioner is trying to get involved, has been on timber walk with Tim, visited staff and talked with Thom and Deb. He is impressed with what county does with dollars.

Coös – The council members find it hard to come to the State Advisory Council meetings on a week day. The budget was submitted yesterday, and was \$1,000 less than approved last year. This is a responsible and conservative budget that meets the needs of county residents. Coös staff members have asked for regular time at county delegation meetings. Sue Buteau attended the summer meeting and the judge spoke about the need for funding to support youth and family needs. Sue told them about the 4-H life skills, and evidence-based programs. Sue secured time at the next delegation meeting as well and Larry will speak about youth development. All educators will cycle throughout the year. We have a full council. They are willing to be very supportive and to be called into action if needed. We have a staff vacancy in Nutrition Connections, hope it can be filled soon.

Strafford – Our council is full right now. There is a legislator and commissioner on the council. One administrative assistant came back and we are in the process of hiring another -133 applicants. Our goal is to hire an 80% time assistant by November 1st. Budget – we will have a surplus and have asked to carry over, but are unsure of the outcome. We are starting a public awareness team and came up with issues where education can empower individuals. Most members of the public don't know the scope of what Extension does. We have asked towns to put links to Extension on their municipal web pages.

Hillsborough – The budget is July to June. Fair went well, good working relationship with representative but always a challenge because of the number of them. We are not known for the whole scope of what we do. Just had the county-designed charette, brought in architects and professionals to gather citizen and stakeholder input for use of county land. Reps and department heads, regional stake holders, residents of Goffstown and professionals will draw from the results to develop a plan.

Grafton – The budget is July to June. The commissioners and delegation are very supportive of Extension. They feel they get a lot of value for the dollars. We are fully funded for a volunteer management position for 20 hours per week. Public awareness efforts include an educator weekly column in newspaper. Educators are also asked to participate in county projects. Robin Peters will now be taking on more state-wide responsibilities with the nutrition grant so Grafton County will need a new Nutrition Connection person. The teen on our council is now serving as the secretary. We're also involved in the 211 system, a statewide resource guide that provides information on critical health and human services available within a community. This is available via phone and the Internet: <http://www.211nh.org>. It is important to go online and update what we offer for services (can be accomplished by filling out a form on line). Suzann Knight has been Extension's contact to 211. You can get promotion cards from 211.

Rockingham – It is good to take a day from work to attend this State Advisory County meeting and give a day back to the community. The staff is amazing and they support each others' programming. We had a canning display at the 4-H fair building. The county has 20 legislators and we have met with 13 new legislators with advisory council and educators on what Extension is and what we do. A packet was provided for each legislator with a variety of current events, a report that we provide to the county and a UNHCE brochure. We have a new 4-H educator, Mike Young, who started August 1st.

Question – Is anyone targeting county employees with information about Extension? Rockingham is doing money management education with county employees. We have started a garden club with assisted living residents. The lunch time programs are working. Hillsborough is providing a calendar of what educators are doing - makes it easy to find out what is being offered.

Carla Skinder - Cable TV might be a good outlet for Extension information. Could Extension be at more legislative meetings when issues are being discussed to provide accurate technical information?

New name for Family Home and Garden Center is UNHCE Education Center. The goal is to get trained volunteers in more areas.

John Pike - Budget Update - There's a deficit projection of \$1 million for Extension, resulting from a drop in state and county funding, and grants, an increased cost in benefits, and general operating costs. University officials all understand CE deficit problems; UNH is reviewing budgeting process with results July 1st. We are operating with the deficit until July 1 and we will determine what needs to be done at that point based on the new budgeting process. If nothing changes, there will not be much choice but a reduction in force. Thanks to county councils for support with legislators who determine county and state budgets. The State Employees Association does not affect University employees. Currently this is a salary freeze, with no news about next year. Keep watching the Extension update for the most current information.

Martha McLeod - Is there a role for advisory council members to help talk with the president's office about discretionary dollars of the university. Yes, this state advisory council could communicate with the President's office about the needs of the counties. Could we talk about the economic impact of reduced staff? John is currently educating the new Provost about our staffing pattern and will revisit UNH's mission of Land, Sea and Space grant. John will keep us informed on processes.

A suggestion for April meeting is to have the advisory committee make recommendations to John about how we might move forward to meet the potential \$1 million cut.

Jim Grady – County Administrative Liaison (CAL) discussion – there is a current hiring freeze in Extension. Jim Grady is fulfilling the roles of finance and human resources, so we rearranged the administrative team. Jim is the Associate Director and Lisa Townson is Assistant Director for programs. Paul Bonaparte-Krogh is now Extension Specialist, Volunteer Development and Management and his work involves the support of 5,000 volunteers and the staff who manage them.

Each program leader and David Foote, Director, Communications & Info Technology has been assigned to two counties as a CAL. The purpose of creating this role is to have a two-way communication between county and state so we are an "US," not we and they. CALs meet twice a month to discuss issues that come up in counties. We listen for public value statements.

In total, the administrative changes saved UNHCE over \$130,000.

Paul Bonaparte-Krogh provided an update on volunteer management and risk management issues. He's working on supporting better prepared volunteers to tell the story of Extension. He will be working on a new advisory council handbook and developing an online training. In addition, he's done some work on cable TV training for staff. He is also working with other volunteer managers in NH to coordinate a state initiative that is part of a national initiative called iParticipate.

Civil Rights – We had a successful review in August of 2008. It was a week-long review that yielded a 50 page report. The response is available at:

http://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource001278_Rep1667.pdf There were only three recommendations from a human resources perspective, one the need to do a better job of recruiting for minority candidates for job openings. The review included program reviews in Hillsborough and Strafford Counties. The review looked for programs to be representative of the population. Another recommendation was to examine the make-up of our advisory councils. When recruiting new members, we need to look for people representative of the audience we serve.

In response to our budget issues, the question of when we can charge user fees was raised. There are USDA policies we must follow that state if an individual is paid with public funds, you can't charge for that portion of their time (thus making money on the deal). However, you can charge for all program costs. Jim will make available the policy for fee for service.

Charlene Baxter asked that each county advisory council work with their respective staff to review their county office image and county website view them at:

Office Image Checklist: http://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource001295_Rep1691.pdf

Website Checklist: http://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource001296_Rep1693.pdf

These checklists were developed to help make a positive first impression to first time visitors so they will become repeat customers for Cooperative Extension. Charlene suggested that each county assess their office by asking a council member, educator, administrative assistant or someone who has never visited the county office, to give their evaluation of the office. Also, ask if they would evaluate the website using the check list. Try to complete by November 15th. An additional checklist to review county newsletters will be coming soon. We also encourage all staff to use on-line calendars, both are on-line.

Darrel Covell - Energy Answers – working with Mary Tebo Davis, coordinator and Alice Mullen. Tim Fleury from Merrimack will be working to develop significant issues. Funded at \$20,000 to create a hotline to support individuals and not duplicate services. Conducted focus groups to learn about what is being offered and there is a need for a toll-free number. Thirty-plus volunteers have been trained to answer the line and have started today. Darrel Covell did a demo of the new hotline, calling in with a question on speaker phone. This new answer line has trained volunteers to answer consumer questions about energy conservation and will be available the same hours as the Education Center info line.

Alan Eaton talked about arthropods and public health in NH. Contact Alan at Alan.eaton@unh.edu for more information. Alan wants help to get information out to others.

Alan has sent out information to county and town decision makers about spraying structures. This is an example of Extension responding to community needs.

“Under Our Skin” is a documentary DVD that everyone should see. Also go on line and download Alan's publication on insect repellants.

Next meeting will be held on April 15, 2010 at the New Hampshire Higher Education Assistance Foundation. Please share meeting ideas for the agenda with John Pike or Anna Boudreau.

Office Image Checklist: http://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource001295_Rep1691.pdf;

Website Checklist: http://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource001296_Rep1693.pdf