

SPIT – 1/13/09

In attendance: Lisa T., Julia P, David F., Amy O., Darrel C., Charlene B., Jim G.

We began the meeting by talking about Key Issue Statements and the budget impact on potential funding for an RFP. Given the current fiscal challenge, it will be a very tough sell to staff and UNH administration to set aside even \$50,000 to fund proposals this year, so there won't be an RFP for significant issue proposals in 2009. However, we felt it critical to continue the process of identifying and prioritizing these key issues. By identifying high priority issues, we can make informed decisions about grant proposals, potential new hires, and professional development opportunities. We can further develop high priority issues as white papers for the UNH Foundation to use with potential funders and to share with some of our stakeholders. Further, if funds or opportunities for external funding becomes available for an RFP process, then we are ready to make decisions.

Agricultural Resources, Forestry and Sea Grant/Water Resources still need to finish writing up their key issue statements and the deadline will be moved to Jan 30 (firm).

Jim provided an update on the Strafford County budget situation: The proposed county budget for Extension in 2009 is \$0 and the two county-employed support staff have been laid off with four weeks pay. Program leaders are working with their respective staff to determine what reduced programming will be for them and the County Advisory Council is working hard to bring supporters together around reinstating Extension's budget. At this time, professional staff are working their full schedules and there is no plan to alter that at this time, although some of their time is being spent on duties outside of Strafford Co.

Jim also shared information about a discussion that was held at the Leadership Team meeting. We are receiving questions from UNH, USNH administration, as well as from some of our stakeholders about whether or not we are organized in the most effective and efficient manner. Are there other models (besides full staff, with support staff in every county) that are more efficient? How are we using distance education to further our reach? How have we changed the way we operate in the last 100 years? John asked that SPIT take on this question as part of our implementation process.

After lots of discussion (and discussion about having the discussion!) we determined we needed to do several things:

- 1) Review the results/recommendations from the existing Budget Reduction Committee and determine what, in the short-term, we can do to streamline operations and cut costs – ie make better use of technology (GoToMeeting, PicTel, Moodle, Captivate, etc.), consider creative funding models for grants (i.e. if a county educator is getting salary offset from a grant, might we share some of that with the county, as an effort of showing our worth to the county), and review the status of volunteer management efforts currently underway and those still in need of implementation.

- 2) Look at other state models. First review the findings from the PAST committee (Jim and Amy were going to look up notes) to see what they found when they looked at what other states were doing. We'll try to call and find out what we can about other models, their successes, and challenges.
- 3) Begin a long-term inventory of programs, funding sources, and staff expertise. It's important to be clear about what we are doing and plan to do *programmatically*, before we can make any recommendations regarding what we need to have in terms of staffing and support.
 - a. High priority key/significant issues
 - b. Programs that are grant funded or we're contractually obligated (such as Food Stamp, Nutrition Connections, Forest Service, NRCS, etc)
 - c. Program area-specific programs that are high public value and high impact

Our next meeting is February 19th – changed to an **all day** meeting. We'll try to book in Concord at the GSC facility. Agenda will be:

- Review and prioritize significant issues (Charlie is working on an updated matrix)
- Review PAST and other data we might collect about other state models
- Review budget reduction recommendations