

Vernon County Agricultural and Extension Education Committee

Monthly Meeting Minutes – April 5, 2010

Chairman Herb Cornell called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Present were Cornell, Beitlich, McClelland, Larson, Easterday, Lenzendorf, Pulvermacher, Rehbein and Traastad.

The public meeting notice was sent for posting to the Vernon County Broadcaster, County Clerk and Computer Department on March 29, 2010.

Beitlich moved, Easterday seconded, to approve the minutes as written. Motion carried.

The next meeting date is May 11, 2010.

No visitors were in attendance.

Larson moved, McClelland seconded, to approve the March office expenses of \$6321.35. Motion carried.

Beitlich moved, Easterday seconded, to approve the March Teen Court expenses of \$622.11. Motion carried.

Pulvermacher reported on March activities: There were two cases in Teen Court in March, both disorderly conducts. Eight applications were received for the 4-H summer intern position. Three candidates will be interviewed on Tuesday, April 13th. Ag and Ext Committee members were invited to participate in the interviews. Volunteer orientation was taught a few weeks ago and two issues emerged. One of the participants indicated she had been volunteering for 4-H for years and did not understand why she had to take the training. Pulvermacher explained the state guidelines, emphasizing that the training protects both the child and the volunteer in case any liability issues arise. The other issue was chaperoning. Sometimes parents want to volunteer simply to hover over their own children. Pulvermacher explained that chaperones need to bear in mind that their role is to ensure the safety and participation of all group members, not just their own children. Developmentally it can be a detriment (not to mention embarrassment!) for an adolescent to have a parent supervising their group. Pulvermacher assisted at Reality Daze and really enjoyed it, as usual. Pulvermacher attended a district meeting, catching a ride with the Richland County 4-H agent. Pulvermacher has been working with Hillsboro High School 8th graders on workforce readiness skills. The Career Education class she taught had 18 students, 14 boys! Pulvermacher utilized Putting Your Best Foot Forward curriculum and used DPI curriculum for interview skills. Evaluations indicate the youth will use the skills they learned by applying for officer positions in clubs they belong to, such as boy scouts, FFA, or 4-H. One youth indicated he would use these skills to ask a neighbor to hunt on his land. Pulvermacher met with Greg Zimmerman, the Hillsboro High School principal and is collaborating with Gretchen Kanable, Guidance Counselor, to design a program to help the 9th grade class with motivation to make the most of their high school years. Pulvermacher and Kanable are planning a program to involve a low ropes experience along with career education. Pulvermacher can get a deal at Upham Woods and Kanable has some career Ed funding, so working together they will organize this program. Pulvermacher organized a reception at the Westby House to commemorate a large donation given to the 4-H program by the granddaughter of former Vernon County residents, Helen and Casper Jacobsen. The State Fair nomination process for music and drama has changed for this year. In the past Pulvermacher could send as many youth music and drama

groups to state fair as wanted to attend. Only one group can be nominated in this nomination process. This year we have three groups that potentially want to attend State Fair. Pulvermacher explained that many counties would opt not to send acts to state fair, thus opening up opportunities for more than one act to perform from a county. Pulvermacher assured all those involved in Vernon County that she will work hard to get them to state fair if they want to go. Eight youth are attending State Youth Conference in June. Orientation was held last week and went very well. Pulvermacher received a southern district resource management team grant of \$1,000 to offset expenses to attend the National 4-H Agents conference in Phoenix if she is selected to teach at that conference. Raising Healthy Calves workshop was organized by Dairy Committee members and served 30 youth. Rocketry project meeting had only four youth in attendance, but we are optimistic that with more promotion, more youth will participate. Pulvermacher received a phone call last week inquiring about a youth program regarding Elder Abuse. This request is to comply with grant requirements. Pulvermacher discussed this issue with Karen Traastad and responded to the inquirer offering suggestions as to how to reach potential youth audiences, but indicated that she did not believe 4-H was a fit for such a program.

Lenzendorf reported on March activities:

This quarter in WIC the focus is on physical activity and the use of eggs. There is also a new DVD that a person demonstrating how to prepare recipes that are given out at WIC Clinics. Sonya is trying to figure out the best way to implement this into the county. Sonya received brochures from the Madison Area Community Supported Agriculture Coalition about Partner Share Programs for CSA's. This program offers CSA's at a lower price for individuals that fall into a certain income bracket. It is not yet determined how Sonya will distribute these out but she finds it to be an interesting and valuable program. I only have 8 classes left to finish up in the middle of May. Working in the schools has been a very positive experience. Since many more schools qualify for services this year the hope is to bring on more school in Vernon County next year. It is planning time for WNEP again. Sonya is planning on trying to grow the program next year and is moving forward in the process of hiring an educator. This position may be part-time; the time depends on how much cost-share the program can come up with to support the position. The position would be posted in both counties since Sonya can be located in either county primarily. The hope is that the person could work in one county mostly but be able to work in the other if needed. If all goes as planned the new position could be filled in October of 2010.

Rehbein reported on March activities: Attended the state wide meeting on Animal Care at Kimberly, Wisconsin. Approximately 250 people from Wisconsin's dairy and livestock industries attended to hear keynote speaker, Temple Grandin from Colorado speak on animal care. Worked with the Vernon County Cattlemen in hosting their annual spring twilight meeting held at Howard White's farm. The speaker and meal were sponsored by Heartland Country Coop and Chaseburg Farmers Cooperative and Land O Lakes Feed. The speaker covered mineral supplementation for the beef cow. Approximately 55 people attended. Also conducted a grazing meeting for the Cattlemen. Prof Onan, and Prof. Cosgrove from UW –River Falls were invited and they presented on how UW-River Falls manages their beef cow herd and on the results of a research trial comparing beef feeder steers finished on high quality pasture versus a corn feed lot setting. Initial results of the feeding trial show no major difference in eating quality but it does take a few more days on feed to finish the steers. Approximately 45 producers

attended. Attended an ag agent meeting at the Cal-West Research facility located at West Salem. The company conducts alfalfa and forage breeding variety trials at the location.

A new forage called Teft grass was discussed. The second stop was at the bio-energy company at Cashton. They process corn oil from regional ethanol plants into bio-diesel.

As a mentor to the Sauk County UW-Extension Ag Agent, attended the district meeting to review the tenure process with un-tenured faculty and to discuss what documents have to be written and how. Attended an emerald ash borer program conducted by the La Crosse County UW-Extension Office that covered mainly the treatment of ash trees with insecticides. Trees to be treated are mainly ornamental/landscape trees in urban settings.

Insecticide treatment in woodlot settings is cost prohibitive. Met with Brian Nelson, sale rep at Crop Production Services at Galesville. We meet during the spring to go over new fungicide recommendations for grapes and foliar feeding products. Two vineyard and one hop farm visits were also conducted on the way. Attended the Wisconsin Grape Grower School held at Wollersheim Winery just outside of Sauk City. The keynote speaker was from California discussing the sustainable aspect of grape production in California. Conducted one last private pesticide applicator training course for the spring.

A considerable amount of time was spent in March planning and conducting the hop and barley production meeting. It was held in Black River Falls on Saturday March 27th.

Over 100 people attended with many more folks turned away the Thursday and Friday before the program. The meeting facility was physically full and we could not hold any more people. The evaluation form indicated that people did learn quite a bit with some planning to move ahead with hop and barley production. Approximately 25 of the 100 attending were already growing “some” hops. More work will be needed on this in the future. A mandatory furlough day was taken on Monday, March 22nd.

Traastad reported on March activities: Attended the 3-day State Department Head conference in Elkhart Lake and Housing Coalition monthly meeting. Coordinated and held the 8th annual Reality Daze event for high school youth. Nine schools participated from Vernon and surrounding counties. About 365 students and 80 volunteers participate. This year the local community cable system taped at the event and put together a special program that aired several times. Held the committee wrap-up meeting to complete the grant report and review evaluations.

Promoted and started three new spring Strong Women classes. They will be held in the Erlandson building, Vernon Manor in Viroqua, and in the La Farge Community Center.

Larson moved, Beitlich seconded, to adjourn. Motion carried.