

Minutes – CEC Meeting (Cotton)
January 21, 2015

Present: Jim Takala, Frank Jewell, Roger Sabin, Gary Rantala, Richard Pierce
Others: Mardi Harder, Patty Swedberg, Shirley Lantz, Jan Derdowski

Vice Chair Jim Takala called the meeting to order at 9:15 am. Minutes from November 19, 2014 CEC meeting were presented for approval. Frank/Gary made a motion to approve minutes—motion approved—unan.

Organizational Items

Patty and Mardi asked for input from committee if they wanted to continue with scheduling meetings for 2015 for the third Wednesday; members stated it works fine for their schedule. Meetings will continue to be 9-11 am at Cotton Town Hall. There are no meetings in July, August or December.

The 2015 Meeting Schedule: February 18; March 18; April 15; May 20; June 17; September 16; October 21; November 18. There are no meetings in July, August or December.

Proposal of Feature Programs

Mardi informed that regional program staff can present 15-20 minute presentations at committee meetings and asked for input. She suggested Amy Rager, Extension Educator to speak on Minnesota Master Naturalist Program. Gary would like information on Horticulture Field Day in Grand Rapids; Jim mentioned Beef Cow/Calf Days. Eric Mousel, Extension Educator with beef program would be available for a presentation. Jim asked about having staff in the forestry area; Mardi said there are several educators in that area at the Cloquet Regional Office. Small business development is another topic of interest with John Bennett as Extension Educator. Mardi will send information to Shirley about Minnesota Master Naturalist Program as she can forward it to committee along with meeting and program schedule.

Officer Elections

Gary motioned to elect Jim Takala as chair of the committee; Roger second the motion. All voted in favor of Jim Takala as committee chair. Frank motioned to elect Gary Rantala as vice chairman; Roger second the motion. All voted in favor of Gary Rantala as vice chair.

Patty is working with County Administration for process of filling two Extension committee vacancies. She will prepare board letter for approval from Board to advertise for the vacancies. Shari's term limit was fulfilled December 31, 2014. Patty asked for input from committee if they recommend filling citizen vacancies from southern part of the county. Jim asked if Doug Hoffbauer was interested; Patty believes he is interested in applying. We will check with program volunteers regarding interest; Frank suggested an IE volunteer or mentor.

Feature Discussion – New 4-H Model

Jan Derdowski discussed background related to last year some staff and committee spent fair amount of time meeting and looking at audiences we serve and recruitment. An urban program model was suggested with lots of after-school programs led by staff rather than volunteers and not as many traditional clubs.

The Incredible Exchange Program is at its peak in the summer. In the winter it is slower so a shift in staff programming for after-school is workable. A first pilot has been completed at Stowe School; next program scheduled is at Homecroft School at the end of February. It will be a 3 week program to feature science programming. Frank suggested having pets as a part of the program.

We seem to lose junior high audience involved in IE after the summer. To keep them involved the Incredible Endeavor leadership series was created for six sessions on Saturdays. In February this group will also attend BLU (Building Leadership Through Understanding)—a state leadership conference held in Duluth. The initial evaluation is very positive. Participants are making good connections. The county ambassador program in SSL has a very gifted group of young people. There are currently 12 involved in Incredible Endeavor. Those

that participate will have first choice in choosing their site for IE this year. A couple of highlights--Jan commented engaging jr. high and high school youth and keeping them engaged, explore after-school model by shifting responsibility with current staff to target K-6th grade.

For BLU Conference North SLC has 19 attending; Incredible Endeavor program has 4-5. A Regional Leadership Retreat w/Jedi Trek-Star Wars theme will be held in International Falls. North SLC leads in number of kids registered--program will be about ethical dilemmas and choices and consequences.

Recent 4-H program changes include Carol Dinius is out on medical leave; an interim person is filling in. Valerie resigned to take a position in communications at UMD and an interim has been recommended--waiting for background check before beginning work. Frank asked about the program at Homecroft School and suggested Lakewood may be worth looking at also (more rural). Gary commented FFA program has great concepts; Jan said the Farm Bureau--Ag in the Classroom is easily adapted for youth. Gary commented on allowing youth to excel and succeed--makes them believe in themselves. Frank stated to involve inner city youth--introduce them to other things i.e. some have no idea where food comes from or how it's grown.

Farm Family Nomination Process

Information on Farm Family Recognition was distributed. Mardi spoke about the program stating the committee could suggest someone to be nominated for this award. The family nominated is invited to attend Farm Fest to be honored; nominations need to be made by May 1. Jim asked for a list of past recipients. The information will be sent to the committee. Jim suggested they discuss again next month. Mardi said nominations should be made by the April 15 meeting.

Updates

2014 CEC Holiday Project

Patty asked for committee input regarding evaluation of the December event and if they want to continue the project this year. Gary felt it was very rewarding and feels the program is worthwhile; Jim agreed and stated we should continue to participate with the program. Patty stated Fairview donated 800 aluminum roasting pans and \$50 was donated from Sons of Norway. Expenses included the brochure printing (\$575) and carrying bags cost approx. \$400. Extra bags were printed to use at additional events. Gary suggested having a presence at county fair--possibly a booth in the 4-H Building. Frank feels it would be more effective in Duluth if a pan was given rather than just the brochures. Patty agrees the Duluth site needs to be elevated--maybe a cooking bag which can be used to roast meats and vegetables. Patty suggested to discuss a fundraising plan in the spring.

Upcoming Events

Patty shared information related to the upcoming IRYA Conference, scheduled Feb. 9 at Fortune Bay in Tower. Tyler and Taryn (County Youth Program Coordinators) along with students from 11 Iron Range Schools have been organizing and designing conference workshops. Workshops include: Internet Safety; DIY Recycling; Distracted Driving; What Are GMO's; Repack Your Snack; Stereotypes; The Choice is Yours—Be Happy and Healthy. The program details and conference invite will be sent to committee members. Patty stated we are expecting 350 or more students to attend.

Next meeting date is Wednesday, February 18, 9 a.m. at Cotton Town Hall. Motion by Gary/Rick to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 10:57 am.

Respectfully submitted by,

Shirley Lantz