

Minutes – CEC Meeting – Cotton Town Hall, Sept. 18, 2019

Present: Jim Takala, Gary Rantala, Doug Hoffbauer, Keith Nelson, Rick Pierce, Roger Sabin

Others: Patty Swedberg, Mardi Harder, Shirley Lantz, Chris Strand, Linda Erdahl, Troy Salzer

Chair Jim Takala called the meeting to order at 9:03 am. Minutes from the June 19 meeting were approved for printing. Introductions were made.

Doug thanked Extension for their support at the MARL (Minnesota Agricultural Rural Leaders) tour day that he hosted. There were about 50 people in attendance and Extension was well represented.

Feature Program Presentation – SnapEd

- Chris Strand and Linda Erdahl, SnapEd Educators presented information about their program. Heather Snedrud, former SnapEd Educator in the Duluth office is now a Regional Coordinator out of the Grand Rapids Regional Office.
- Linda gave a review of SnapEd including how it is funded. SNAP is the new name for food stamps. Dietary Guidelines-My Plate and Spectrum of Prevention are used in their programs. With the Spectrum of Prevention the higher up you go on the ladder the more people you can influence.
- Chris gave a breakdown on what Heather did over the last year. She worked with St. Louis County Schools and did Health & Nutrition Interventions. She also did Children's Garden Summer classes.
- Linda spoke about Super Shelf. It is a new program working with food shelves to showcase healthier foods. Food shelf clients have been shown to have a higher percentage of health risks such as diabetes and high blood pressure. Of the 55% of people needing this help, half get their food from the food shelf. There is a stocking standard requirement -- fruits and vegetables first – less processed – beans, whole grain, lean meat, and dairy – over 30 food shelves in MN are being transformed, about 10% state wide. The CHUM Food Shelf in Duluth is a control group that should be operational by Thanksgiving. It is a 5 year process – about half way through to get results. Mardi asked what do food shelves do during the holidays. Linda said there is normally a standard package given out with turkey or ham, vegetables, etc. Gary asked if they know the value of locally grown foods. Keith commented that AEOA will be building a new food shelf in Virginia and that it would be great to have it be a Super Shelf. NERC has been failing as a food shelf – no donations – but Keith said it will be fixed and his goal is to get the greenhouse open again,
- Chris talked about the Children Garden in Residence. Gardening, Science & Nutrition – K-5th grade. It is held in two locations the Olcott Greenhouse in Virginia and the Minnesota Discovery Center in Chisholm – in partnership with 4-H, SWCD, and U of M Extension. 4-H and SWCD received a \$50,000 grant. It helps kids get the entire life cycle of a plant – from preparing soil, planting seeds, to harvest and using the product. It is the most fulfilling to see the learning happen. Adults came to the last lesson and had a harvest celebration. They hope to find one more location next year.

Patty thanked Chris and Linda for the excellent presentation and the great work they do.

Change in agenda

Doug asked if the Holiday Project – Salvation Army could be discussed next. The feelings given at the last meeting were that this project has little impact on people in poverty. What can we do that is more significant. Keith talked about natural resources. Classes where kids could get one or two trees at the end of the year. It could be set up at the greenhouse at NERC. Half of the kids would succeed at planting the trees. It would have a high impact.

Another suggestion was a tomato plant in a pot. Raised bed garden – square foot gardening 4' x 8' x 14" deep. They are kid height and can be reached from both sides. Plant cucumbers and peas along the edges.

They could use NERC – restorative justice people to help. Have 3,000 plants to give to schools. Start planning now for 2021. They could use Master Gardeners to assist. Direct resources from the Holiday Project to this.

Break

Mardi and Extension staff – SnapEd, YIA, 4-H, Ag work together – thoughts to implement garden project – pool of ideas – North – South or combined input of staff

Troy – planning meeting with livestock association. Demonstration of agriculture in SLC – farmers – older – interest and willingness to mentor young adults.

Dr. Eric Mousel – huge opportunity to integrate several aspects

County Fair background – could make special contest for plants that were given out; Brand new poultry and rabbit barn – new beef barn

Recommendations from committee?

Doug made a motion to direct all Extension staff to come together to discuss possibilities and ideas.

Agriculture, horticulture, healthy eating. Integrate and collaborate all Extension – best ideas come forward.

Bring ideas to November meeting. Gary Rantala 2nd motion. All approved. Motion carried.

Troy – farm family and intern update – Mercedes Moffett was intern this summer. A report was shared. Troy will condense her presentation to 8 minutes and email to the group. Keith discussed the value of having an intern. Intern request for 2020 – the goal is to have them continue a career in Extension. Keith feels this would be a wise investment for St. Louis County. It is about the community that we serve.

Keith suggested for Patty to speak with Kevin about funding \$7,000 from Administration budget (not Extension's) for an Ag Intern for Yr. 2020. Patty will have the conversation with Kevin.

Troy talked about the Farm Family recognition done at the fair for the Brodeen family. Mardi told the group that Troy will be giving leadership to 2020 Farm Family program.

Doug talked about the conversation he had with Troy – Research for cover crops, perennial crops, research in Zone 3 – grant through SARE (Sustainable Agriculture and Research Education) Support of board – Troy will be involved – 2 sites in Floodwood plus Doug H location. We need to be ahead of the game with soil erosion. Keith commented that regional projects are ok as long as SLC taxpayers get their needs met. Gary made motion to promote study of cover crop production in our region – Roger S 2nd – All approved. Motion carried.

Keith talked about the Elk issue with Chronic Wasting Disease. There is a board meeting on October 22 at McDavitt Town Hall. If people arrive at 9:30 they will be able to speak at 9:35. Deanne will send Patty a condensed version of a report. Page 29 – 1st and 4th paragraphs are the most important to read. Keep deer and elk out of farming areas, moratorium on cervids into this county. Cloquet Valley State Forest withdrew from attempt to bring in elk. This is a huge issue costing a lot of money.

Budget Report

Patty stated the 2020 proposed budget was revised...removing \$17,000 request from committee for an Intern and videotaping/podcast. At the June mtg....there was not full support from committee members present to increase the budget for another Extension position, and given the fact that two full-time youth positions and full-time Ag position were added in the last few yrs. It was suggested a grant be written for videotaping.

Other:

- Patty spoke about the Virginia Office move – new building – all departments are moved in – high level of security – working to resolve customer service issues – Keith commented there is also a new GSC in Cook.
- Patty circulated the upcoming Italian Fall Fest Workshop to be held October 10th in Duluth. This workshop has a great agenda that includes a recipe contest. The MG's plan to prepare sample food dishes for attendees...it will be both an educational and fun evening. Committee members and university staff are invited to attend.
- What's Happening – handout of current events from U of M Extension for the Northeast Region
- Patty talked about the discussion she had with Jim Gottschald and Bob Olen about developing a garden program again at Camp Esquagama. Counselors could be trained. YIA and 4-H could bring in youth and volunteers and provide educational pieces. Troy could provide help with cover crops. Doug made a motion to develop a gardening program at Camp Esquagama with Extension staff involved. Gary 2nd motion. All approved. Motion carried.
- Fall Program Conference – Monday-Wednesday, Sept. 23-25 at the DECC in Duluth.

Meeting adjourned at 11:10 am

Next meeting Wednesday, October 16 – 9-11 am at Cotton Town Hall. 4-H will be the feature program. November 20 meeting will be performance input. There is no meeting in December.

Respectfully submitted by,
Shirley Lantz