

**Minutes – CEC Meeting – Cotton Town Hall
March 20, 2019**

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

Others: Jim Gottschald, Patty Swedberg, Mardi Harder, John Bennett

Chair Jim Takala called the meeting to order at 9:10 am. Minutes from January 16, 2019 were approved as printed. Introductions were made.

John Bennett, Extension Educator in Community Economics spoke about a survey in circulation regarding the NERCC facility and if updated what type of services would they like to see; also meat processing for re-sale. He asked the committee for others to forward the survey to. Jim T. stated to include St. Louis Valley Livestock Assn. and NE Forage & Grassland Council. John estimates it will be at least a few weeks to receive these. Keith spoke about funds committed by the Legislature to support the facility...were pretty sure the balance of funds needed will be received. There has to be an economic incentive for producers. Keith shared the deal is to sell singles...is the demand out there and are they willing to pay a premium price. Rick stated with the change we have seen in schools...encourage farm-to-table concept; the program would connect the schools and tie together. Labor force is a vocational program offered by NERCC. It has to be run as a private business. John will send us the survey and keep us posted. Members mentioned that only producers should be surveyed...it's about their current livestock and to see how strong the demand is.

Farm Family of the Year for SLC – Jim T. spoke with Pat and Karen Brodeen...they would be willing to participate in the recognition program. Gary/Roger made a motion to nominate Pat and Karen Brodeen for the Farm Family of the Year for SLC...the vote was unan. Keith has flags for the farm family. We will get the form to them; think they would be interested in attending the event in Redwood Falls.

Extension Educator Position-Virginia – Mardi stated it's been great to work with the search committee. The committee is mtg. at Wilbert Café after this mtg. for an orientation and review applications. A description and features of St. Louis County was included in the position description. A question was asked as to how many CEC members were on the search committee...only to stay under the majority of the board. There are 3 CEC members so we are fine. Interviews will be held April 3rd in Virginia.

Election of Officers – Gary/Doug made a motion to nominate Jim Takala as Chair of the Extension Committee. The vote was unan. to elect Jim as Chair. Keith/Gary made a motion to nominate Seija Packila as Vice Chair. The vote was unan. to elect Seija as Vice Chair.

Committee members completed the 2019 contact information form...these will be provided to the university. The 2019 feature program presentation schedule will be available for the next mtg.

Patty stated Celebrate Gardening Workshop in Mt. Iron (Feb. 28) was successful with 65 participants... it's a great venue. Spring Gardening Extravaganza Workshop will be held Saturday-April 13th at the United Methodist Church (Coppertop) in Duluth. Dr. Mark Seeley is the keynote speaker—on climate change and implications for northern gardeners. Patty will work with Dana, County Communications Manager, to inquire about options to videotape horticulture workshops. Patty shared the February Youth in Action Conference was well attended...333 students plus another 45 attendees. The keynote speaker and entertainment was ranked very high in the evaluations. Eight workshops were offered. We

use all the available space at Fortune Bay Resort, and will look for another possible venue that has adequate space accommodations. Keith mentioned YIA will be tasked with an educational component of drug use and vaping...for coordinators to assist County PHHS with outreach to students in 7-12th grades.

CEC Holiday Project – Discussion was held as to the outcome of December’s project with the Salvation Army. Gary felt numbers of participants were down and there were changes at the Virginia SA. Keith agreed and said the setup was not as effective. Patty shared the Duluth SA numbers were much lower, the project was originally scheduled for 2.5 days, but was reduced to 1.5 days. It was decided to discuss at next month’s mtg...maybe it’s time for a change.

Meeting adjourned at 11:01 am.

Respectfully submitted by,

Patty R. Swedberg