



**MARATHON COUNTY
EXTENSION, EDUCATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

MINUTES

Thursday, January 7, 2021 at 4:00 p.m.

Courthouse Assembly Room, (B105), Courthouse, 500 Forest Street, Wausau WI

Attendance:	Present	Absent
Sara Guild, Chair	W	
Ka Lo, Vice Chair	W	
Gary Beaström	W	
Becky Buch		excused
Tom Rosenberg	X	
Rick Seefeldt	W	
Chris Voll	W	

Others Present: Lance Leonhard, Jason Hake, Kurt Gibbs, Toshia Ranallo

VIA WEB/Phone: Vicki Resch, Ralph Illick, Jason Hausler, Lee Webster, Ann Herda-Rapp, John Robinson, and Mike Puener

1. Call Meeting to Order

The Extension, Education & Economic Development Committee meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Chair Guild.

2. Public Comment:

Lee Webster indicated the Wausau School District is discussing another referendum for the Spring Election due to ongoing struggles.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the November 5, 2020, Extension, Education & Economic Development Committee Meeting

MOTION BY ROSENBERG, SECOND BY VOLL, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 5, 2020, EXTENSION, EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING. MOTION CARRIED.

4. Policy Issues Discussion and Potential Committee Determination: None

5. Operational Functions required by Statute, Ordinance, or Resolution: None

6. Educational Presentations and Committee Discussion

A. Recap of UW Extension programming based on 2018 Situational Analysis

Discussion:

In 2018, Extension embarked on a statewide Developmental Situational Analysis (DSA) to gain an updated understanding on existing and emerging issues and opportunities in the state that Extension programming could address. Additionally, Jason Hausler met with previous Administrator Brad Karger and Chair Gibbs to discuss the needs of the county and identify the top priorities including Broadband, Opioid Crisis, Agriculture (water quality & sustainability Workforce Development (EC Development Emphasis and Criminal Justice Reform. The full presentation can be accessed in the [packet here](#).

Since the time the team completed its work (August 2018), numerous events both locally and nationally impacted the success in some areas as well as diverted resources (local and state) to other areas that were not pressing as that time. Ex. Broadband and Public Health.

During the Spring of 2021, conversations will be had with all Area 7 Extension oversight committees, along with County Board Chairs, County Administrators and Executives. From spring into summer, an area Work-Team will begin to compile data sets/reports/etc. to help complete the picture of the situation in Central Wisconsin. The information generated will help to inform/shape plans of work for 2021-2022. Hausler would like to conduct new interviews to initiate conversations to see if there is a

shift in priorities previously identified. What do we see as the major needs in Marathon County currently and moving forward, what does that look like, and what processes will we need to take?

Follow Through:

Discuss processes at the February meeting. Jason will provide additional information and links which will be available in the packet. Chair Guild encouraged the committee to review these documents prior to the meeting.

A Supervisor mentioned concerns about operating during COVID, and the need to revisit priorities to discuss our future after COVID.

Administrator Leonhard reminded the committee of their four strategic plan objectives (8.7, 10.6, 10.8, and 10.10) they will also need to focus on. He also mentioned that county staff is not always available for economic activities and we rely on other entities such as MCDEVCO for that kind of assistance.

B. 2021 Situational Analysis development discussion

1. What process will we use to determine the UW Extension programming focus over the next 12-24 months

Discussion:

See above.

Follow Through:

See above.

C. Recommendation from the MCPL Task Force to seek membership in the South Central Library System

1. Task Force Report Vote Results

Discussion:

Director Ralph Illick informed the committee that the Public Library Task Force met on December 21, 2020 and a vote was performed in a 3 to 1 favor to move from the WI Valley Library Service and join the South Central Library System. It will be an item for discussion at the next Library Board meeting scheduled for January 25, 2021. If approved, it will eventually make its way back to this committee for discussion and then a recommendation to the full County Board.

Illick indicated they received a list of fifteen reasons to move, which were in Marathon County's best interest. The South Central Library System is better equipped for our size and we would be better served in a larger system.

A Supervisor expressed concerns about cost. Illick indicated, currently they pay for services they do not need such as technical support, because they have been supporting their own computers. The WI Valley Library Service system doesn't have the staff capacity to support our library. The membership would increase by \$100,000 but ultimately the library would save \$200,000 in other staffing that would be supported by the South Central Library System.

Illick shared there will be exterior improvements soon.

Follow Through:

No follow through needed. This was for educational purposes only.

D. Reports from Other Committee-Affiliated Departments and Organizations

1. UW-Stevens Point Wausau

Discussion:

Ann Herda-Rapp gave a brief update: COVID testing of students and staff; the facility could be a spot for vaccinations since they are already set up; an increase of students registering and enrollment of high school students; courses offered are also increasing.

Follow Through:

No follow through needed.

2. MCDEVCO

Discussion:

Vicki Resch gave a brief overview of the following: Their move to the EEC and MCDEVCO taking over managing the services which fits into their strategic planning of entrepreneurial and business development. This will enable MCDEVCO to work with the new entrepreneur, the GEARS Center, office space and then out into the Marathon County Municipalities to either lease or own their own

buildings for the business.

The kitchen adds another dimension to their educational classes that they will be able to offer that are specific to that business sector.

MCDEVCO is applying to become a CDFI which adds another dimension to their GAP financing for low to middle income and minorities.

MCDEVCO would like to become a women's business center for SBA.

Their Entrepreneurial Leadership Program begins Feb 16 through May 2021. Classes include: lean business, business plan, finances, marketing/advertising, sales taxes, leasing verses purchasing property, how to set up your business, HR, insurance, financial panel, and ending with their dolphin tank presentations.

Follow Through:

No follow through needed.

7. Announcements and Future Meetings:

A. Committee Member Announcements and Future Agenda Recommendations

B. Future Committee Calendar

1. Next meeting Thursday, February 4, 2021 at 4:00 pm

8. Adjourn

There being no further business to discuss, **MOTION BY VOLL, SECOND BY LO TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. MEETING ADJOURNED AT 5:45PM MOTION CARRIED.**

Respectfully submitted by,
Toshia Ranallo