



MARATHON COUNTY
EXTENSION, EDUCATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MINUTES

Date & Time of Meeting: **Thursday, February 4, 2021 at 4:00 p.m.**

Meeting Location: **Courthouse Assembly Room, (B105), Courthouse, 500 Forest Street, Wausau WI**

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

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

VIA WEB/Phone: Craig McEwen, Sandi Cihlar, Jean Maszk, Michelle VanKrey, Vicki Resch, Ralph Illick, Jason Hausler, Lee Webster, Ann Herda-Rapp, Carrie Edmondson, Liz Holbrook, John Robinson, Mike Puener, Mary Detmering, Joyce Chekouras, Marla Stepnanski, Brian Kowalski, Chris Wendt, Ann Hamlin, Lee Webster, Joshua Klebenow, Jamie Mackek and six unidentified callers.

1. **Call to Order**

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

2. **Public Comment (15 Minutes):**

Chair Guild received a request to postpone agenda item 4a., identifying a date for a public hearing related to the Marathon County Library.

Lee Webster, 155617 Pine Bluff Rd, Wausau, reported the Wausau School Board meeting agenda for Monday, February 8, 2021 will include discussion on a renewed referendum and relaunching the schools for full participates as of March 1, 2021.

Supervisor Jean Maszk, District 24, 277 Old HWY 51, Mosinee stated she is a former member of this committee and appreciates that she still receives reports from Dairy/Agriculture educator Heather Schlessler. This informs her on available programs and resources that can be accessed through Extension. She requests that all the UW Extension educators provide these reports and send them to all members of the County Board.

Maszk also is in support of the public comment process that was completed in regards to the Board Size Task Force and would like to see the same process done for the Marathon County Library discussion listed below in 4a. The process was transparent and the feedback received by utilizing our website for public comment was well done.

Joyce Chekouras, 204699 Lake Dr., Rosholt, stated she is a rural resident and retired teacher. As an educator she is concerned of the process to accommodate the rural community's library needs.

3. **Approval of the Minutes:**

MOTION BY ROSENBERG, SECOND BY LO, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 7, 2021, EXTENSION, EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING. MOTION CARRIED.

4. **Policy Issues Discussion and Potential Committee Determination**

A. **Identification of Date for a Public Hearing related to the Marathon County Public Library Board's Recommendation to Seek Membership in the South Central Library System**

Discussion:

This item was postponed for a later date.

Follow Through:

Postponed until after library board meets.

B. **UW Extension 2021 Situational Analysis Development Processes (Jason Hausler)**

Discussion:

Jason Hausler gave a brief overview on the process to develop a Situational Analysis in order to strategize the county's major needs currently and moving forward. The committee shared their ideas using strategic plan objectives 10.6 and 10.10 and developed the framework outlining the following topics:

- Skilled and flexible workforce; research impacts of salaries; evaluate/assess barriers
- Rural Health; access to health care; mental health (farmers, young generation); horticultural therapy
- Broadband Expansion and education to rural communities
- Childcare alternatives and impact on workforce
- Local government research
- Agriculture vitality; worker and food safety; diversification; marketing

Hausler commended the committee for the discussion and encourage them to reach out to him to share more ideas.

Follow Through:

Hausler will meet with Administrator Leonhard and Chair Gibbs as a next step in the process.

5. **Operational Functions required by Statute, Ordinance, or Resolution:**

None

6. **Educational Presentations and Committee Discussion**

A. **North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission to give a Presentation on Regional Recovery Work (Carrie Edmondson)**

Discussion:

Carrie Edmondson a planner with North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC), gave an overview on their current Regional Recovery Project. The NCWRPC provides both regional and local assistance in the areas of economic development and grant writing, geographic information systems (GIS), intergovernmental coordination, land use & community planning, and transportation. The full presentation can be accessed in the [packet here](#).

Follow Through:

No follow through needed.

B. **County Administration to Report on Work of Historical Society in 2020 Pursuant to Budget Allocation**

Discussion:

Administrator Leonhard provided a brief background on why this committee receive this report. During the 2020 Budget discussions, it was recognized to change from a contribution basis to a payment for services for all non-profit organizations. The county board directed County Administration to have a contract in place before funding is issued. The goal is to tie the county's funding to the efforts of these nonprofits that align with specific county departments. The Historical Society (HS) aligns with the work of the library which includes educational presentations that informs our residents and community. The HS contract is separated into two elements in which they focus their efforts. Programming and digitization of records. This committee is the liaison for the HS.

Follow Through:

No follow though needed.

C. **Reports from Committee-Affiliated Departments and Organizations**

1. **UW-Stevens Point Wausau**

Discussion:

Ann Herda-Rapp reported they continue to do community COVID-19 testing in the fieldhouse every Monday and Wednesday and will continue to do so through April 11th. She indicated they would be interested in being a vaccination site.

They launched a new lecture series called *Hank Talks* which features their faculty. The series is a free live-stream community outreach event.

Herda-Rapp emphasized they are different than most universities and are a community hub for organizations and other universities. There is space available for possible non-profits organizations or others that are in need of a location.

2. UW-Madison Division of Extension

Discussion:

Hausler reported he met with Mayor Rosenberg and the City of Wausau to discuss UW-Madison Extension housing resources. His full report can be accessed in the [packet here](#).

3. Marathon County Public Library

Discussion:

Ralph Illick gave a library update including the following:

- Last November put together technical team to assist with the WIPPS Program WI Institute for Public Policy
- New furnishings soon to arrive
- A Health Dept. liaison will join the Library Board at their meeting on February 15th to discuss their limited service and balancing safety and service.

4. MCDEVCO

Discussion:

Vicki Resch gave an update on the following MCDEVCO activities

- Public Hearing presentation was given for a CDBG-CV application that is due on 2/26/2020 to help with small businesses suffering from the impacts of COVID-19
- Women's small business \$1,000 grants
- Working with municipalities on a survey surviving Covid-19 and employment
- 4 month leadership program will start on 2/16/21
- Lunch & Learn in March for advertising and marketing
- Working on the Broadband Task Force
- Transitions, entrepreneurial and working center, retirement plans
- Regional Planning Task force.

7. Announcements and Future Meetings:

A. Future Committee Calendar

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

8. Adjourn

There being no further business to discuss, **MOTION BY LO SECOND BY BUCH TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. MEETING ADJOURNED AT 5:38PM MOTION CARRIED.**

Respectfully submitted by,
Toshia Ranallo

Information regarding Governor Ever's Budget

([Budget in Brief](#), [Full Budget](#), [WCA summary](#))

Update on potential Federal COVID package – [NACo overview](#)

STRATEGIC PLAN OUTCOMES – _____ – _____
EXTENSION, EDUCATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

INFRASTRUCTURE (UTILITIES) GOAL: The utilities infrastructure in Marathon County is maintained to the highest standards to support the residents and businesses of the County.

Objective 8.7: Strive to provide affordable, reliable, high-speed internet access throughout the county.

Strategy	Actionable Item	Contributors	Status	Action
A. Develop a comprehensive approach to county-wide high-speed internet access, including: fiber, copper, powerline, cellular, Wi-Fi, new radio frequencies, and other emerging technologies.				
	a.			
	b.			
	c.			
	d.			
	e.			
	f.			
B. Promote partnerships between carriers/ providers and government through MCDEVCO.				
	a.			
	b.			
	c.			
	d.			

**STRATEGIC PLAN OUTCOMES – _____ – _____
EXTENSION, EDUCATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

C. Develop financial incentives to encourage carriers/providers to commit to helping accomplish this objective in Marathon County.				
	a.			
	b.			
	c.			
	d.			
D. Establish a dig-once policy for county roadway reconstruction and bridge projects that engages providers in a discussion about whether to include conduit for fiber.				
	a.			
	b.			
E. Marathon County Government will invite all carriers providing services in Marathon County to present their current coverage, speeds, and costs..				
	a.			
	b.			
	c.			
	d.			
	e.			
	f.			

**STRATEGIC PLAN OUTCOMES – _____ – _____
EXTENSION, EDUCATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT GOAL: The utilities infrastructure in Marathon County is maintained to the highest standards to support the residents and businesses of the County.

Objective 10.6: Ensure the future availability of a skilled and flexible workforce prepared to meet the needs of both existing and emerging industries and technologies.

Strategy	Actionable Item	Contributors	Status	Action
A. Work with the North Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board to ensure a well-trained workforce.				
	a.			
	b.			
	c.			
B. Seek out additional opportunities to partner with local education providers (secondary and post-secondary)				
	a.			
	b.			
	c.			

STRATEGIC PLAN OUTCOMES – _____ – _____
EXTENSION, EDUCATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Objective 10.8: Encourage development and redevelopment of key employment centers in areas that possess strong market potential, provide good transportation access for workers, and promote the efficient movement of goods.

Strategy	Actionable Item	Contributors	Status	Action
A. Support efforts to engage the public and private sectors to provide leadership for county economic development efforts.				
	a.			
	b.			
	c.			
B. Engage local municipalities on how county infrastructure development can contribute to business and industrial park growth.				
	a.			
	b.			
	c.			

**STRATEGIC PLAN OUTCOMES – _____ – _____
EXTENSION, EDUCATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

Objective 10.10: Create an innovative atmosphere to foster an entrepreneurial-supportive environment.

Strategy	Actionable Item	Contributors	Status	Action
A. Respond to changing economic conditions and opportunities through periodic review and updating of economic development strategies, policies, investments, and programs.				
	a.			
	b.			
	c.			
B. Work with MCDEVCO to support a low-interest loan fund to finance new farmer startups and adoption of new technology by existing farmers.				
	a.			
	b.			
	c.			

STRATEGIC PLAN OUTCOMES – _____ – _____
EXTENSION, EDUCATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

C. Enhance awareness of MCDEVCO as the primary point of contact for business expansion and startup information.				
	a.			
	b.			
	c.			



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
MARATHON COUNTY

March 2021 Educator Update

The following work was completed in the month of February by Marathon County Extension Educators and staff. The following objectives were pulled from the Marathon County Strategic Plan where the Extension, Education and Economic Development Committee has been designated as either the lead committee or support committee.



OBJECTIVE 5.2: Promote sound land use decisions that conserve and preserve natural resources in decisions with economic development and growth.

- Rachael Whitehair facilitated planning efforts and co-hosted the Central Wisconsin Farm Profitability Expo, a virtual learning series modeled after the Healthy Soil, Healthy Water Program held from 2016-18. The series included live presentations from farmers and specialists. Each event focused on the concept of profitability through the strategic use of land practices. Presentation topics include managed grazing, regenerative farming, planting green, diverse covers, silvopasture, and precision farming. For a press release about the virtual learning series and a full list of speakers visit:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cMlykz38ZT7ateppZKitPQU6he8cxL1w/view?usp=sharing>



OBJECTIVE 6.3: Protect and enhance the quantity and quality of potable groundwater and potable surface water supplies.

- Heather Schlessor co-chaired the Midwest Manure Summit. The Summit took place on February 24th. This year's Summit was virtual due to the COVID-19 situation. However, the virtual nature of the Summit allowed us to bring in speakers that would have normally been too expensive. We had three manure management tracks with three speakers in each track, along with a keynote speaker and panel discussion at the end. For a full list of speakers and topics that were covered at this year's Summit visit: <https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/midwestmanure/agenda-2/>



OBJECTIVE 8.7: Strive to provide affordable, reliable, high-speed internet access throughout the County.

- Melinda Osterberg and Jason Hausler supported the Broadband Task Force and attended the February 15, 2021 Task Force meeting. This included coordination of meeting agenda and preparation of meeting minutes. We also

attended a meeting to discuss Extension's role in supporting broadband expansion within the County and Melinda conducted research regarding newer broadband technologies, such as Star Link.



OBJECTIVE 10.6: Ensure the future availability of a skilled and flexible workforce prepared to meet the needs of both existing and emerging industries and technologies.

- Kaitlyn Bernarde assisted with analyzing data from the [WI 4-H Thriving Model](#) survey of youth in grades 7-13 to determine if local 4-H programs are shaping youth who will thrive into adulthood. This model suggests that youth who are a part of high quality 4-H programs will achieve developmental outcomes (incl. social competence and personal responsibility) and long-term outcomes (incl. academic or vocational success, employability and economic stability)
- Heather Schlessler continues to work on the Dairy Worker Training modules. We are currently in the process of wrapping up the Dairy Reproductive Skills module.
- Janell Wehr continues to work with a development team on Foundations in Horticulture. With the pilot complete, we are now moving into the evaluation phase of development of FIH. The team is currently evaluating qualitative data from feedback surveys using MAXQDA software. I look forward to bringing this program to Marathon County as an entry point for individuals interested in working in the green industry.



OBJECTIVE 10.8: Encourage development and redevelopment of key employment centers in areas that possess strong market potential, provide good transportation access for workers, and promote the efficient movement of goods.

- NOTHING THIS MONTH



OBJECTIVE 10.10: Create an innovative atmosphere to foster an entrepreneurial-supportive environment.

- Applications for second draw Paycheck Protection Program loans are being accepted until March 31, 2021. Working with the Community Development Institute on February 16, 2021, we hosted a presentation with SBA representatives on how to utilize the Paycheck Protection Program to support your business during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Two hundred and forty seven individuals viewed the livestream: <https://www.facebook.com/extensionmarathoncounty/videos/124849629536522> As a follow up to the program, I assisted in compiling a question and answer factsheet: <https://economicdevelopment.extension.wisc.edu/navigating-the-paycheck-protection-program/>

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Tus Tswv Hauj Lwm Ntawm (EEO/AA), ntawm lub Tsev Kawm Ntawv Qib Siab (University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension) pab rau kev ncaj ncees txog kev hauj lwm thiab kev pab cuam, xws li nyob rau hauv Title VI, Title IX, thiab ntawm tsab cai Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) yuav tsum kom muaj.

- Heather Schlessler has worked to inform Farmers on how to apply for the second round of Paycheck Program loans, and to educate them on the educational meetings and factsheets available to them about this program.
- Kaitlyn Bernarde learned about the Extension Positive Youth Development Institute’s NEW Preparing to Access College & Employment (PACE) focus for programming. This focus emphasizes the importance of connecting youth skills and interests to future careers and colleges. She will utilize this focus in her upcoming Plan of Work document to guide Marathon County 4-H programming in 2021-2022.



OBJECTIVE 10.12: Maintain infrastructure to support economic growth.

- Heather Schlessler continues her work on Farm Succession. She has created factsheets on the importance of Core Values and Transferring management from one generation to the next. On February 19th Heather presented at the Farm Management Financial Friday’s program on the topic of “Is Equal fair?” This topic pertains to the equal division of farm assets amongst all heirs.

Additionally, the following work has been completed by our local educators, meeting the diverse needs of Marathon County residents and Wisconsinites.

Diversity and Inclusion Related Activities - Melinda Osterberg

- Partnered with the Wausau School District on a virtual family night for GD Jones Elementary School recognizing Chinese New Year. This program allowed families to learn about the Chinese New Year and Marathon County’s work in supporting diversity and inclusion, while building cultural competency. This was the first family night for the 2020-2021 school year.
- Black History Month: Courageous Community Conversations Series. I partnered with LPRC Diversity Consulting Services on a series of programs recognizing Black History Month. Each Wednesday evening in February, community members met to learn more about the African American experience in Central Wisconsin. Participation ranged from 42 to 75 individuals. Janell Wehr provided technical assistance to help manage the large number of virtual participants. Participants have contacted us to thank us for this opportunity. One participant relayed, “Thank you so much for coordinating this event. It was so powerful – and so needed in our community.” And another commented, “The speakers were excellent. I feel embarrassed and ashamed at my lack of knowledge about these issues here in Wisconsin. I am learning - reading, talking to people, joining these meetings. Thank you so much. I will do better, day by day. Again, thank you to all the speakers.”

FoodWise Education - Tammy Hansen, Gaonou Thao, Melissa Yates

- Gaonou and Tammy continue to conduct a twice weekly virtual Hmong StrongBodies series with 4-8 participants at each session. StrongBodies is a ten-week strength training program developed by Tufts University.
- Tammy participated in a virtual meeting with Julie Bollman, Out-of-School Learning Coordinator for the Wausau School District, and other Community Connections partners to begin planning for this summer’s program. Community Connections provides full-day learning opportunities for children in grades K-4 during summer learning by offering afternoon enrichment programs at each of the elementary summer learning sites. These programs are

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offered in partnership with many community agencies. Additionally, FoodWise will be conducting a five-week virtual “Fun with Food” nutrition/ food demo series beginning on April 15th for students participating in afterschool programming at Lincoln, Riverview, Franklin and G.D. Jones Elementary Schools.. We will also be conducting a single-session lesson for families participating in a Lincoln Elementary Family Night on March 23rd.

- The February virtual “Healthy Eating Series” lesson on “Soup-er Bowl Worthy Meals was cancelled due to low enrollment. The March lesson “Telling the Whole Story” will focus on the importance of eating whole grains.. These monthly nutrition/food demonstration lessons are open to residents from Marathon, Lincoln and Langlade Counties.
- *All FoodWise staff continued to participate in webinars on food security, health equity, and creative virtual teaching ideas. We have begun participating in a five-week FoodWise training that provides the background information needed to complete the totally revised three-year program planning process that will begin this Spring and will continue through most of 2021. These trainings will continue through March 17th.
- Tammy continued to work on the statewide Policy, Systems and Environmental (PSE) review team looking at the issue of food security and FoodWise work with food pantries and also works with a second PSE team looking at FoodWise work with Farmers’ Markets.

4-H - Kaitlyn Bernarde

- Participated in a virtual meeting with Julie Bollman, Out-of-School Learning Coordinator for the Wausau School District, and other Community Connections partners to begin planning for this summer’s program. Community Connections provides full-day learning opportunities for children in grades K-4 during summer learning by offering afternoon enrichment programs at each of the elementary summer learning sites.
- Met with Clark and Wood County 4-H Coordinators to start planning for 2021 summer camps. With the uncertainty of COVID restrictions and precautionary measures, we are starting to plan a “Camp in a Box” style camp, which we can adjust to hybrid (mix of in-person and online pieces) or in-person. We will be recruiting older youth to serve as camp counselors for any of the models to help develop and lead programming.
- Met with the Clark County 4-H Coordinator about co-creating and co-leading 4-H programming in the Abbotsford/Colby area. Since both Extension offices are 45 minutes away from the communities, teaming up would make programming more sustainable while reaching an underserved population for both county programs.

Horticulture - Janell Wehr

- **Starting Seeds Indoors** In partnership with the Marathon County Library, I presented this program which introduced a variety of seed starting mediums and the requirements for germination. 100% of participants reported they understood the requirements for seed germination as a result of the session, and 94% of the participants expressed increased confidence in ability to keep seedlings thriving.
- **Planning the Garden** In this two-part series, participants learned how to choose a good garden site, cultivars best suited for Wisconsin gardens, crop rotation, and making a garden map. Participants reported as a result of both sessions, 100% were more confident in choosing appropriate cultivars and ability to properly site their garden locations. This program was hosted by The Landing at the Woodson YMCA to promote socializing and learning for Marathon County residents over 55.
- **WPR Central Time** I shared key factors to consider when planning the garden for the 2021 growing season, including ordering seeds, choosing cultivars and crop rotation.

<https://www.wpr.org/steps-take-now-prepare-gardening-season>



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

UW-Madison Division of Extension Update

RE: Impact of Governors Budget Proposal

Extension has been outlined in the Governor's Budget in the following areas:

- Addition of Agriculture Educator positions around the State. More information from Extension about the potential of those positions can be found here:
<https://extension.wisc.edu/engaging-agriculture/>

Areas outlined in the Governor Budget that Extension will be able to assist counties in programming, education and research:

- Broadband – via the investment in grant dollars where Extension can assist Counties in assessment of their local dynamics, potentially leading to grant applications by Counties to the PSC
- FoodShare Healthy Eating Pilot – via our FoodWise program, staff will be able to assist local communities in getting healthy foods and fresh produce to FoodShare households.

There are definitely more areas that Extension can be of assistance to programs outlined in the Governor's Budget (Mental Health & Rural Health, Climate Change Planning, Workforce and Economic Development, etc.). More details will be coming out as discussions are had throughout the budget process.

Division of Extension

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