

Minutes – CEC Meeting – Wilbert Café' - Cotton January 16, 2019

Present: Jim Takala, Gary Rantala, Seija Packila, Roger Sabin, Frank Jewell, Keith Nelson, Nancy Nilsen, Doug Hoffbauer

Others: Jim Gottschald, Patty Swedberg, Mardi Harder, Bob Byrnes, Tim Arlt, Shirley Lantz

Chair Jim Takala called the meeting to order at 9:17 am. Minutes from November 21 meeting approved as printed. Introductions were made. Joining the meeting were Bob Byrnes, Director of Field Operations for University of Minnesota Extension and Tim Arlt, Program Leader, Ag, Food & Nat Res & Ag Bus Mgmt. Tim was sitting in for Nathan Winter who couldn't be at the meeting.

Discussion of Agriculture-Horticulture Position - Virginia

- Jim G reviewed sub-committee meeting that was held about 1 month ago. The sub-committee consists of Jim G., Doug, Jim T. and Gary. Kendall and Bob were University of Minnesota employees who retired @ 5 years ago. They were then hired as contract employees through St. Louis County. Kendall's position is ½ time. Bob is full time. Kendall's primary duties were in the agriculture area but he did share in the horticulture work by answering many consumer calls and questions and in helping with the garden workshops.
- Options were discussed for the position. A proposal for an MOA with the University was discussed. A handout was given listing Options A-G - Options for an Extension Memorandum of Agreement.
- Mardi went over the options as listed. Also in handouts was a MOA price for a full time Extension Educator position; sample position description and a map of Extension Educators in the state.
- Tim talked about options for EE position – most positions in counties with agriculture are Extension Educators – a few are program coordinators. An EE position is designed to develop programs and give technical assistance – to provide certain functions requires an educator position. They want to tailor programs to meet local needs.
- Program educational events and activities that address an issue i.e. beef products, small farms, series of events and activities – work with state specialist and regional educators – work across borders--Iowa, North and South Dakota, Wisconsin.
- Frank – what did Kendall do – Jim T said Kendall also worked with by-products, small industry with a lot of profitability – is sustainable – ash can add nutrients for little dollars spent.
- Keith challenged to make contacts similar to what Troy S is doing in Carlton County. Troy is doing things throughout the region. We want to make sure with this position that the vast majority of time spent benefits St. Louis County.
- Tim – we work very hard with local staff to do that – discussion of by-products – managing – not typical but have to talk to farmers and people to find out needs – Keith – education without application or ambition is a waste of time. We need to be able to put someone on the ground quickly. Doug – take the long view – Bob retiring in 2 years – classic over achiever – We need to keep northern county horticultural needs covered. Gary – future concept ideas – look to what is ahead
- Patty – Kendall and Bob were a great team for horticulture workshops. Horticulture is very large – lots of inquiries every year by both commercial and residential. Keith wants Bob O included in selection process. Tim will work with CEC and whomever to screen and interview – want to get first choice candidate and count on them to be successful
- Jim G – lots of work – walk through options – then make come to consensus
- Reviewed Options A-G
- Jim G – if ¾ time – what about shared position retention? Full time makes for better retention.
- Jim T asked about Itasca County position – Mardi said they are looking for someone in Forestry – not Ag. Itasca CEC has not expressed interest in Ag. Jim T said the beef association has significant numbers from Itasca County. Tim commented this is something to work towards. Tim talked about counties that have positions are sometimes taken advantage of by other counties that don't.
- Doug – could by-products be put on contract for 25% - remove that portion from MOA – provide contract for that component and make the position full time
- Bob said it should be 1 position – too difficult to segment out portions of the job. If split, supervision is troublesome – hesitate taking more thought and supervision. Tim commented that discussion is needed up front – what are the goals of the county.
- Bob – if there are revenue expectations it needs to be outlined in agreement.

- Keith asked if there are there rules about consulting and contracting with other entities if full time. Bob commented your job is your job. You can't consult in same area to do same thing. Tim – would rather define in job description – say 25% for by-products – what is expectation – how much \$ is to be generated.
- Keith said there is a dedicated revenue source for forestry
- Frank – doesn't support outside contracts – can be problematic – much more in favor of having by-products included in the job description rather than on the side. Keith – funded through Land Department, forestry \$ - Jim G said there would need to be a conversation with Land and Minerals
- Keith – can land apportionment position work on private forests? Doug commented that SLC – 4th in Xmas tree production
- Mardi – clarify needs - still thinking Ag production as priority – horticulture second
- Frank – there has been forestry in every discussion – Jim T – define objectives more clearly Tim – pretty diverse to them both – Ag production and forestry – make 2 positions
- Ag production – by-products – shared forestry with Itasca County
- Keith – if we can pay 25% with apportionment keep that position in SLC
- Keith – niche markets – lots happening – someone who understands NE MN – lots of other opportunities
- Frank stated that the cost of MOA is a real question The County Board is committed with MOA – if another position is added with forestry we would be pushing it. St. Louis County is huge – our investment is 2nd highest in the state with MOA positions. He is excited about it but definitely is a numbers thing.
- Jim G – make sure horticulture is factored in – Bob needs support
- Roger – if forestry is added – could be split between Bob and Kendall – Duluth/Virginia – if Bob retires in 2 years
- Jim T – educate on specific topics – Keith – work with land department – benefits both parties
- Doug – big niche – DNR forestry position eliminated – small woodlot management
- Keith – won't make motion but is ok with Option A
- Bob – option A – expect sub-committee to work with Nathan and Mardi for job description
- 3 year MOA – January to December – would be an addendum to start different date
- Bob Olen transition – start thinking about it –MOA with Bob would be awkward – Bob – SLC Extension letter of understanding – allows every access to University resources and they would learn from him - Option G on handout. Keith would want it reviewed by auditor and attorney
- Doug made motion for Option A – minimum $\frac{3}{4}$ time possibly full time – get and return a better candidate – begin process – Roger 2nd motion – Jim G – add option G – vet with county attorney – add to motion
- Keith said these are two separate items – separate motions
- Have legal team check Option G first
- Option A – preferable full time
- Sub-committee – set duties and job description
- Keith – don't delay in process for hiring
- Tim – minimum for hiring is 3 months
- Frank – U could come back with job description
- Dog – sub-committee could meet in the next week or 2
- Keith – believes board will approve – add 25% under land apportionment
- Doug – revenue of by-products
- Bob – need county board to act first – need to know if approved for 75% or 100% before they can proceed
- Frank – sub-committee meet first – then recommendations to board
- Motion repeated: Doug made motion for Option A – minimum $\frac{3}{4}$ time possibly full time MOA; Roger 2nd motion; all in favor – none opposed – motion carried
- Keep forestry separate – 25% from land department
- Mardi reviewed option G – letter of agreement
- Frank would like to continue with Option G – will check with county attorney first
- Gary Rantala made motion for Option G – letter of agreement with Bob Olen – subject to legal review; Keith 2nd the motion; All in Favor – none opposed – Motion carried
- Mardi asked about time frame of sub-committee – could they meet before the end of the month – This is a timely matter.
- Keith doesn't want to wait for next CEC meeting to discuss. We could give sub-committee authority to proceed.
- Roger made motion to authorize sub-committee to make recommendation and approval for the position. Frank 2nd motion. All in favor – none opposed. Motion carried.

- Sub-committee will meet Thursday, January 24 at 8:00 a.m. at the Wilbert Café. Mardi and Patty are invited to attend.

Other

- An Ag update was sent out of Virginia office to our Ag mailing list of @ 200 people.
- County Budget Update – This is not a year-end report – there are still expenses from 2018 that will need to be paid – usually through February.
186002 – I.E. program – new column for encumbrances – 2018 participant volunteer hours – receive certificate in early September – but have a year to use – 14 have been used so far; 42-45 still to pay for this year.
Mardi asked about Wood Ash – there is nothing listed for 2019. Patty said it could still be added if revenue was generated in 2019,
- Salvation Army Holiday project – will be discussed at February meeting.
- Next meeting – February 20, 9-11 am Cotton Town Hall
4-H program update with Jan Derdkowski
Recognition of Kendall Dykhuis
Report from sub-committee – legal piece on MOA

Jim and Nancy will not be able to attend in February.

Frank/Roger motion to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 10:46 a.m.

Mardi thanked everyone for their support of Extension!

Respectfully submitted by,

Shirley Lantz