

**Wisconsin Agricultural Education and Workforce Development Council
Meeting on November 4, 2008**

Council members in attendance: Sam Skemp, Darlene Arneson, Greg Peyer, John Shutske, Mark MacPhail, Dick Meske, Paul Larson, Dave Gliniecki, Charles Hansen, Pam Jahnke, Shelly Mayer, Kathy Muth, Bill Brendal, John Petty, Cal Dalton, Dave Williams, Duane Ford, Richard Austin, Carrie Michelson, Gerry Mich, Doug Wilson, Dick Leinenkugel, Paul Dietmann, Allan Herrman, Rod Nilsestuen.

Council members not attending: Bliss Nicholson, Brett Davis, Al Ott, Karen Knox

Non-council attendees in attendance: Annette Severson, **Bridget Neigh, Dan Feinson**, Jim Gibson, Erin Ruby (on behalf of Al Ott), Jim Massey, (Editor of The Country Today), Paul Dietmann (designee for Rod Nilsestuen), Boris Frank, Eric Ross DWD, John Dupuis took minutes.

Meeting called to order at 9:00 a.m.

Opening address:

Wisconsin Secretary of Agriculture Rod Nilsestuen welcomed the members to the new council.

Al Herrman explained the group's importance in helping education to lead workforce development in the state. He recognized David Gliniecki, Richard Austin, and Paul Larson as educators in the field of agriculture. Al Herrman introduced the Executive Director of the council Gary Olson.

Gary Olson thanked council for their participation. Olson presented a brief PowerPoint presentation providing personal background information and described the potential of the council, expressed a desire that the council be personally accountable and that they consider what they could offer as individuals to the council during the meeting.

Council introductions:

(The following outlines the attending council members' agricultural area of representation on the council).

Council members in attendance:

Connie Seefeldt—A representative of general agriculture, dairy producer and owner of Seefeldt Farms, also serves on WI Rural Economic Development Board, Marinette County Board, and is a WMMB Director.

Mike Greco designee for Roberta Gassman— Secretary of Workforce Development..

Sam Skemp—a representative of agribusiness, General Manager of Frontier FS Coop, Jefferson, and Board Member, Wisconsin Federation of Cooperatives.

Darlene Arneson—general agr. rep. on council, Wisconsin Agr. in the Classroom Director and Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation Director.

Greg Peyer— a school district administrator appt. by the superintendent of schools.

John Shutske designee for Kevin Reilly— The President of the University of Wisconsin System, Associate Dean for Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension, UW-Madison College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, and Program Leader for Agriculture and Natural Resources, UW-Extension).

Mark MacPhail—Representative of food product and food processing businesses, Agriculture Director, McCain Foods, Lisle, IL.

Dick Meske—Agr. instructor.

Paul Larson—Agr. educator high school, rep. WI assoc of agr educators.

Dave Gliniecki—Teacher of classes in Agr., Math, Science, Business, or Voc. Tech. appointed by superintendent of schools, small rural population high school teacher.

Charles Hansen—School counselor appointed by state superintendent.

Pam Jahnke— Agr. Communication rep, newscaster.

Shelly Mayer—Board member of Agr. Trade & Consumer Protection.

Kathy Muth—Animal agr. business rep, dairy producer in wash co.

Bill Brendal—Tech college dean of agr.—UW-Lacrosse.

John Petty—Exec. Dir. WI agr serv. assoc.

Cal Dalton—Renewable energy related business rep., ethanol grain producer.

Dave Williams—**designee for David Wilson**, Chancellor of UW Extension.

Dune Ford—Rep. of 5 colleges or schools that offer agr. degrees.

Richard Austin—Member of a district school board appt. by state superintendent.

Carrie Michleson—WI Dept. of Natural Resources.

Gerry Mich—Envtl. stewardship interest rep., WI Family Forests, WI envtl. ed board.

Doug Wilson—Agr. bus rep.

Dick Leinenkugel—WI Sec. of Commerce

Council members not in attendance:

Bliss Nicholson—Landscaping, greenhouse, golf course, floral related business rep.

Al Ott—State assembly agriculture representative.

Karen Knox—Tech college district president.

Brett Davis—State assembly education representative.

T.B.D.—State Senator representing education. *Determined after November election.*

T.B.D.—State Senator representing agriculture. *Determined after November election.*

Presentations: Gary Green and Eric Ross

Gary Green, of UW-Madison Extension presented the results of a survey from August thru September of 2008 that was conducted to document the existing and anticipated demand for labor in Wisconsin's agricultural and natural resources industries in Wisconsin. He presented a PowerPoint and distributed handouts illustrating the results. This was followed by a PowerPoint presentation by Eric Ross of the Department of Workforce Development that elaborated on the breakdown of the percentages of types of employment in the state's labor force.

Key points of the presentations were: the labor force is skewed towards consisting of a higher percentage of low skilled workers. Currently there is difficulty finding enough skilled workers and managers. In next 5 years, percents of categories of low and higher skilled workers will likely be the similar although there will be an increase in the number of low skilled workers. By comparison, 5 years ago fewer managers and sales reps needed. When querying employee skill satisfaction the survey found that employees were least satisfied in the areas of creativity, computer skills, and written communication skills. The satisfaction of employers sampled was

highest with their employees who graduated from technical schools. Fox Valley and Madison are the two leading areas producing graduates in the field of agriculture. Overall shift in demand for workers is toward a demand for skilled labor. Employers are not expecting to grow much in number of employees in the future. The shortage of management level employees is more a result of a lack of experienced candidates rather than a lack of applicants in the field. Production positions in agriculture are categorically lower paid than similarly skilled position in other fields. Wisconsin has a lower percentage of college graduates relocating overall to the state than other surrounding states.

LUNCH

Discussion: Mission, Objectives, and Work Plan

Council members outlined concerns and suggested strategies the council could initiate and offered ways to promote agricultural education and agricultural employment in the state

Creation of a vision and message for the public that agriculture is a key element of industry. The council needs to have an identifiable mission and set measurable goals. Current legislation like "No Child Left Behind" does not include agriculture or natural resource studies in their testing evaluations. As a result agricultural education is jeopardized. Council needs to devise ways to get parents involved with agr. in schools and the programs importance to help maintain them. Council could evaluate educational programs in universities to determine validity and recruitment effectiveness and offer those findings to universities. Wisconsin is poised to increase industry development rapidly in the biomass technology industry and we need to address educational needs for that field now and communicate the employment opportunities to the public. The veterinary profession is dominated by small animal doctoral students. Need to expand the educational opportunities for large animal candidates.

Suggestions to help promote and market agriculture

Market to a younger audience by enhancing agr. position descriptions.

Offer agr. college credit courses in high schools.

Develop marketing materials that explain agriculture's importance.

Promote industry through agr. job fairs.

Define leading future employment opportunities, define earning potential, and outline educational requirements to meet them.

Establish a Director of Agriculture position in public schools.

Improve state support structure for agr. WI falls short of MN and IA.

Fund raising

Effective fund raising will make the council more powerful and independent.

To facilitate that need to put a face on agr business, define the target, and know the consumer.

Use young dynamic entrepreneurial examples of agribusiness and present them to the audience to sell it. Write strategic 5 year plan for group to guide actions.

Marketing

Boris Frank is on retainer to foundation to help establish a market the council and outlined these important points a marketing strategy should contain:

1. Develop strategic plan.
2. Articulate goals and outcomes.
3. Acquire resources to accomplish agenda.

4. Develop marketing plan.
5. Define our brand.
6. Write a brief summary description of council efforts to deliver quickly.
7. Design and print professional presentation materials.
8. Develop implementation strategy.
9. Maintain focus.

Dick Meske has had success already with fund raising efforts. Alliant Energy and John Deere were solicited for funds and each has pledged a \$2500 grant. Kuhn North America has offered to help provide a brochure we could use for marketing the council. WI Veterinary Assoc. has offered to participate in a committee or task force to help the council. We could also solicit by mail with committee marketing materials.

Discussion: Request for objections to vision or mission objective statements

Request was made that the statement “living wage” in item number 7 of the vision statement be changed to another description as the term could be perceived as “partisan”.

Request was made to change “Human Capital” in the first line of the vision statement to “Human Resources”.

Appointing additional council member and executive committee members

One council seat is still open, that of a Natural Resources related business representative. Council is encouraged to recommend individuals to be appointed.

Council needs to appoint 4 council members to the executive committee with at least 3 members being non-state employees.

Nominees: Al Herrman, Sam Skemp, Mark MacPhail, and Pam Yahnke.

Action: Council members will receive further communication regarding the selection of the new members via email.

Closing remarks: Council members are encouraged to email Executive Director Gary Olson with questions about the council prior to the next meeting.

3:00 p.m. Meeting adjourned.