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Agenda

Economic Development and UW-Extension Committee meeting
January 8, 2018; 8:30 a.m.
Assembly Room, Sawyer County Courthouse

01. Call to order
02. Certification of compliance with the open meetings law
03. Meeting agenda
04. [Minutes of December 11, 2017 meeting](#)
05. Audience recognition
06. Broadband update
07. Sawyer County Agricultural Fair Association report
08. University of Wisconsin-Extension Department report
 - A. [Draft 2018 Work plan](#)
09. Bike/Ped Citizens Advisory Committee report
 - A. Letter of Support for Town of Hayward TAP Application
10. Hayward Lakes Visitors & Convention Bureau
11. [Economic Development Corporation report](#)
12. Other matters for discussion only

Carol Williamson
Sawyer County Clerk

Emailed to: Sawyer County Record, Sawyer County Gazette, WRLS, WHSM, AND WOJB, Hayward Library, and Village of Winter for posting on Thursday, January 4, 2018, 11:40 a.m. by Carol Williamson

A majority of the members of the County Board of Supervisors or of any of its committees may be present at this meeting to listen, observe and participate. If a majority of any such body is present, their presence constitutes a "meeting" under the Open Meeting Law as interpreted in State ex rel. Badke v. Greendale

Village Board, 173 Wis. 2d 553 (1993), even though the visiting body will take no action at this meeting.

Draft

Minutes of the meeting of the Economic Development and UW-Extension Committee
Sawyer County Board of Supervisors
December 11, 2017; 8:30 a.m.; Assembly Room; Sawyer County Courthouse

Members present: Tom Duffy, Brian Bisonette, James Schlender, Bruce Paulsen

Others present: Lori Baltrusis, Don Semler, Carol Williamson, Tom Hoff, Ariga Grigoryan, John Saunders, Lisa Wydra, Ruthe Batulis, Sheldon, Johnson, Kim Clark, Frank Zufall, Linda Zilmer

Motion by Schlender, 2nd by Paulsen, to approve the agenda. Motion carried

Motion by Schlender, 2nd by Paulsen, to approve the minutes of the November 6, 2017 Committee meeting. Motion carried

Don Semler updated the Committee on broadband progress. The state has an additional 7 ½ million marked for rural broadband. Semler is working on a partnership including the County and vendors to apply for this funding. The 634 exchange for CenturyLink broadband expansion is almost complete.

Lisa Wydra informed the Committee about the work herself and Kim Clark perform through UW Extension. Through SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Food Stamps) and the Food Wise (Nutritional Education) program Wydra and Clark reach out to Schools, businesses, government, and other groups. Over 50% of the students in Hayward Schools receive free or reduced lunches. Wydra and Clark provide education in food preparation and budgeting. It is important that the food the students consume while attending school be nutritional and Wydra worked with the school to have the school store offer healthier snacks. Seventeen percent of Sawyer County adults are enrolled in SNAP and thirty-one percent of the children.

John Saunders provided the 4th quarter 2017 report from the Bike/Ped Citizens Advisory Committee. Saunders is working with the City of Hayward to include a bike path in the Hwy 27 reconstruction planned for 2019. Looking at options available to connect the County B Trail and the LCO Trail.

Northwest Regional Planning Commission Director Sheldon Johnson informed the Committee of a Broadband Workshop in Rice Lake on Wednesday, December 13, at 1:00. The workshop will cover the mechanics of broadband. Johnson provided information on the READI Program. This funding program offers loans for Economic Development, Workforce Housing, and Job Training. Housing funds can be used for purchasing land or to rehabilitate existing structures to provide housing opportunities for low to moderate-income households. All READI applications must include an economic development project as well as a housing project; the job training component is encouraged, but not required. The READI program will be discussed at the Vision's Northwest meeting Wednesday, January 10, 2018 from 10:00am-12:00pm at WITC in Hayward.

Don Semler updated the Committee on the Economic Development Corporation and provided his November Executive Director's Report. Semler is working on a Workforce Summit to bring together students, young professionals, education institutions and businesses to work jointly on solutions to the work force issue in Sawyer County.

Meeting adjourned

Minutes prepared by Carol Williamson

University of Wisconsin Extension Sawyer County 2018 Work Plan

This plan is meant to serve as an outline of work for Sawyer County University of Wisconsin Extension staff members. It is designed to highlight program priorities, projects and connections to the University of Wisconsin. Our statewide extension purpose states: “We **teach, learn, lead and serve**, connecting people with the University of Wisconsin, and engaging with them in transforming lives and communities.” Our work is guided by these **values**: Community, Discovery, Inclusiveness, Relationships and Respect. We believe the most important ways we can contribute to community development include education, research and capacity building. The UWExtension staff identified and shared the following goals for 2018: **1) Support community organizations, 2) Provide education and technical support to local businesses, entrepreneurs and agriculture producers and 3) Provide life skill development for youth and families.** Discussions among the staff have also suggested an important theme: **Creating Resiliency in organizations, local economy and families in Sawyer County.** This work plan is designed to highlight priority programming, and does not include ALL projects of our educators. UW Extension anticipates work to be “relevant, digital and flexible” and therefore understands the need to shift priorities as a means of responding to community needs. Our work is based on partnerships in the community and we look forward to continuing strong relationships to address the needs together.

Ariga Grigoryan - Community, Natural Resources and Economic Development Educator, plans to help create resiliency in organization, local economy and families through Education and Applied Research focusing on three major areas:

Organizational and Leadership Development

- Leadership Program – **Train** local citizens who get engaged in community improvement
- Develop and Teach Organizational Development Training Series to be offered in fall 2018 – 1) grant writing, 2) marketing and online presence, 3) customer service.
- Facilitate Strategic Planning for Organizations – **quality plans** that get implemented
- Provide **customized** training programs to the LCO College – including Real Colors, Generations, Board Development and possibly a marketing plan

Development of Local Food Systems

*Ongoing facilitated discussions to **create access** to local foods in Sawyer County and the LCO tribe, while creating resiliency of the local organizations and groups involved in local food systems.* For the past four years, Ariga has worked with local organizations involved in strengthening Local Food Systems. All these organizations are focusing on promoting local production, direct marketing and creating access to local foods in Sawyer County.

- Finalize **research** to measure the impact of current programs utilizing the Toolkit to guide community discussions, assessments and choices, published by USDA in 2016.
- **Research for funding** opportunities within local food systems
- **Facilitate** discussions of local organizations and in LCO related to Food Sovereignty
- Provide a **pilot** training for “Land Access”

Strengthening LCO Tribal Community

Building relationships, gaining a greater understanding of the community, and enhancing economic development by creating tools for the community to use to **assess** “First Impressions.”

- Finalize development of the Tribal First Impressions community assessment tool (Summer 2018)

Kevin Schoessow, Agriculture Extension Educator, plans to create resiliency in organizations, local economy and families by:

Support Master Garden Volunteer Activities

- **Advise and provide education** to the North Country Master Gardener Volunteer Association. In collaboration with NCMGV at least three horticulture related educational programs will be offered for Sawyer County residents. The MGV (Master Gardener Volunteers) will continue to **support and assist** UW-Extension by

responding to emails and phone calls related to horticulture from residents and through community outreach and volunteer project in partnership with Sawyer County organizations, non-profits and schools.

- MGV Training course to be offered in the Spring to recruit new volunteers.

Agriculture and Horticulture Education

- Organize and teach several horticulture [workshops and field days](#) in 2018. (Nearly 150 people attended these events in spring of 2017).
- Coordinate Horticulture [Research and Demonstrations](#) with UW Extension specialists, local growers and MGV.
- Provide consultation to farmers and LCO Extension Department on a wide variety of agriculture topics.
- Teach [Pesticide Applicator Training](#) for farmers on March 14, 2018; offer [Tractor & Machinery Safety Training](#) for youth in June of 2018.
- Partner with Sawyer County Land & Water Conservation and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service to promote conservation practices that help protect the environment and keep farmers profitable.
- Partner with at least one farmer to host an educational field day on a Sawyer County farm.
- Offer a minimum of [five workshops/seminars](#) at the Teaching & Display Garden at the Spooner Ag Station, where Sawyer County residents are frequent participants at these educational events.

Farmers Market / Local Food Economy

- Advise Hayward Farmers Market and work with local-food businesses, as needed, to keep their businesses successful.
- Partner with UW-Madison researchers and Spooner Ag Research Station staff and one Sawyer County growers on the [Seed to Kitchen Collaborative](#) vegetable variety trial.
- Partner with Sawyer County Schools, Sawyer County Senior Centers, Food Shelves and Pantries, the LCO Tribe, Sawyer County Extension staff, and MGV to distribute the organically raised produce from the Spooner Ag Research Station. This produce will also be used to educate residents about local food production and nutrition. In 2018 an estimated 4,000 lbs. of produce will be donated to Sawyer Co organizations and groups

[New Employee - Youth and Families Extension Educator](#), plans to create resiliency in organizations, local economy and families by advising and educating the Sawyer County 4-H members and volunteers to provide the following opportunities:

*Annual Leader training
VIP (4-H volunteer orientation)
Summer Camp
Record Book judging
Achievement Celebration
Volunteer Appreciation Banquet*

*Various 4-H promotion opportunities
(National Night Out, School Open
House events, etc.)*

*New Employee will also:
Advise youth and adult volunteers
about federal guideline compliance
Development of new clubs
4-H Cloverbud Project- project
meetings for youngest 4-Hers*

This new employee could potentially offer other programming to support youth and families with a specific priority of clean and healthy living. We are aware of the opioid epidemic and importance of addressing these needs in Sawyer County. UWExtension staff are committed to education, research and capacity building to help address this need. We anticipate ongoing partnerships with Public Health, Northwest Connection Family Resource Center, Indianhead Community Action Agency, Sawyer County Health and Human Services, Sawyer County Jail, Lac Courte Oreilles and others.

Current 2018 Staffing Projections:

1FTE Youth and Families Extension Educator (includes 4-H)
1FTE Communities, Natural Resources and Economic Development Educator
.33FTE Agriculture (Horticulture) Extension Educator

Sawyer County/Lac Courte Oreilles Economic Development Corporation
6134N Morningside Lane, Stone Lake WI 54876
(715) 865-4606 – (612) 309-0221 cell

Executive Director's Report for December, 2017

- **Workforce Development:** Lynn Fitch, Associate Dean at WITC, has agreed to coordinate a Workforce Summit. We've contacted employers, educational institutions, and other interested parties that have expressed an interest and asked them to participate. Lynn is in the process of setting up our first meeting which will hopefully be conducted in the next few weeks.
- **Housing:** The transfer of housing units being managed by Impact 7 to the Sawyer County Housing Authority is progressing on schedule and is projected to be complete by February 1. This will allow housing units to be filled in a much timelier manner than they have been since Impact 7 has been managing the units.

We're also working with two local contractors who are planning to build over a hundred rental apartments and single family houses. We've been assisting the contractors by supplying information they need to determine the number of units to build and the rent structures that can be charged. This should help to reduce some of the pressure on affordable housing for individuals or families making a living wage, but still doesn't address the needs of low income workers.

- **Broadband:** I discussed with Dennis Klaila of the PSC (Public Service Commission) in Madison whether there are other broadband providers operating in nearby counties that might possibly be interested in providing service in Sawyer County. The discussion with Dennis and other broadband knowledgeable individuals concluded that it would probably be a waste of time due to both technological and competitive reasons.

At our last EDC Executive Committee meeting on December 28th we discussed how much effort should be expended working with broadband suppliers unless there was a serious interest on their part to work with us on some type of partnership for broadband grants. Last week I spoke with the Regional Operations Manager for CenturyLink about what we could contribute to a partnership. He said they are definitely interested in working with us on the next grant cycle, probably to be announced in June of this year. The PSC is expecting another \$7M of funds to be authorized for the next cycle.

I've been communicating with Charter over the past couple years about extending their network to unserved and underserved areas in Sawyer County. I just received a call from Charter expressing their interest in working with us also. They asked for information pertaining to areas for which I've been asking for service to be installed. I'll continue to work with Charter as long as they continue to have interest in providing additional service to our county.

- **Board Member Changes:** Diane Vertin, president of the LCO Community College, has resigned her position at the college and will be returning to Minnesota. Pending confirmation of our board, we will add Jim Anderson, General Manager of Jump River Cooperative to our board.

- **Business Opportunities:** We have enlisted the services of the Superior SBDC (Small Business Development Center) to work with several businesses in our community. The focus ranges from helping one business to build a business plan to allow expansion of the business, to identifying products that should receive more emphasis because of profitability, to helping another to determine how to turn around an unprofitable business.

We've also enlisted the support of the UWEX Business Intelligence Program in Madison to work with a local company to identify opportunities for expansion of their customer base and potentially to identify operational savings. The overall focus is to increase the profitability of the company.

Due strictly to limitations of resources, we're recommending to our board that we move to a low priority the solicitation of new business formations, although we'd certainly be willing to help if we received a request from anyone seeking assistance.

- **Main Street Town Meeting:** We conducted an open meeting on November 21st to discuss the closing of businesses on Main Street. Although there were only 30 people physically in attendance there were over 2,300 people watching the meeting live, and over 6,000 people who either watched live or viewed the video of the meeting. Material gathered at the meeting was just distributed to those who signed an email contact list. Online comments are in process of being processed and will also be distributed to interested parties.

We are in the process of developing a list of recommendations/suggestions for consideration which will potentially increase the viability of downtown businesses, both on Main Street and in the downtown area in general.

- **Funding:** As we begin a new year we're also seeking sources of funding for the development corporation. The Sawyer County Board has authorized \$25,000 in matching funds, and now we need to identify sources to match that amount, and more. Economic development is similar to the R&D function of a company. It paves the way for a healthy business. Let it shrink and so too will the business over time. It should be looked at as an investment, not an expense, as it helps to support long-term viability, whether it is a business or a community.

Thanks for your continued support, and happy New Year to you all.

