



Minutes - March 12, 2025

Call to Order: Chair Bostwick called the hybrid Agriculture & Extension Education Committee to order at 7:21 pm.

Committee Members Present: Supervisors Bostwick, Towns, Ringhand, Schneider and Whitledge.

Committee Members Absent: none

Staff Members Present: Chrissy Wen, Brad Meier, Sara Ennocenti, Brent Sutherland

Others Present: Kathy Lilley, Candy Chrisinger, Sheila Williams, Michael Zoril

Adopt Agenda: Supervisor Towns moved approval of the September March 12, 2025 agenda, seconded by Supervisor Schneider. ADOPTED

Approval of Minutes:

February 12, 2025 Ag & Extension Committee Minutes

: Supervisor Schneider moved approval of the February 12, 2025 Ag and Extension minutes, seconded by Supervisor Towns. ADOPTED.

Citizen Participation, Communications and Announcements: Sheila Williams spoke about her concerns that the County Board is considering the naming of the curling club building at the fairgrounds.

Division of Extension::

Review of February Payments

: February payments were reviewed.

Program Report: Sara Ennocenti, Health & Well-Being Educator

: Sara Ennocenti introduced herself and her role at Extension as the Health & Well-Being Educator for Rock County. Sara went on to introduce the StrongBodies program, highlighting the objectives of the classes, the target audience and the locations of available classes both in Rock County and available online. Sara then introduced two long-time class participants, Kathy Lilley and Candy Chrisinger, who came to the committee meeting to share their personal experiences with the committee about the StrongBodies program. Both Kathy Lilley and Candy Chrisinger talked about not only the physical and healing benefits of the exercise component of the class, but also the social and mental well-being benefits they've realized as being part of the program.

Monthly Impact Report

: Chrissy Wen introduced the monthly impact report highlighting Sara's contributions and efforts in supporting Rock County and also pointed out the large volume of events, planning and programs currently available to the Rock County community from all the Extension staff educators. Chrissy also pointed out the very successful event participation at the Mental Health and Wellness Symposium at Beloit Turner High School. This was a collaborative effort between Sara Ennocenti, Health & Well-Being Educator, Julie Hill, Horticulture Outreach Specialist and the 4-H Educator, Josh Firgens.

Discussion and possible action - Honorarium for StrongBodies Instructors: Chrissy Wen shared with the committee that the StrongBodies program, although very popular, has challenges with recruiting and retaining volunteer instructors. Extension is asking the committee for approval to start a reward program, of sorts, that provides some form of reward or honorarium for its volunteer instructors. Chrissy shared that the funds used for the honorariums would not come from tax levy funding but from the voluntary contributions that support the program. She also shared that honorariums, or other forms of instructor rewards, are common in many other counties. According to conversations with the Finance department, and the identified voluntary contribution funding source, these honorariums would be an acceptable option for rewarding StrongBodies volunteer instructors. Supportive committee discussion ensued. The committee asked Chrissy and Sara to come back to the next committee meeting, with some kind of budgetary plan for the committee to review.

Fairgrounds::

February Payments: February payments were reviewed.

Approval of February Contracts: Supervisor Schneider moved approval of the May Contracts, seconded by Supervisor Towns. APPROVED
Brent shared that there were no noise complaints reported in February.

Review of Yearly Total Contracts: Year-to-date contracts were reviewed.

Committee Support of Naming the BlackHawk Curling Club Building: Supervisor Towns motioned to support Naming the BlackHawk Curling Club Building after J. Russell Podzilni, seconded by Supervisor Schneider. Discussion ensued. Brent explained that he brought this item to the Ag and Extension committee because the building is on the fair grounds, and went on to explain that the resolution for naming the building goes to the General Services committee, then to the County Board Staff committee, then to the County Board. Brent added that this is not a requirement but is asking the Ag and Extension Committee to provide a vote for or against the support of Naming the BlackHawk Curling Club Building, so that he can bring the results of that vote to the General Services Committee.

A roll call vote was held with Supervisors Bostwick, Towns and Ringhand voting yes and two dissenting votes by Supervisors Schneider and Whitledge.

Review of Solar Array's Effects on Current Soil Conditions: Brent explained that he is providing

some information in response to a question posed by Supervisor Schneider, asking what is known about the long-term effects of the solar farm on the Rock County Farm soil. Brent explained that he approached UW Extension Crop Educator Josh Kamps, Alliant Energy and Will Fulwider of the UW Extension Madison for input on the concern. Brent also provided a handout (added to the agenda packet) that included input from the Department of Energy and the EPA. Brent provided a brief highlight explaining combined with the right cover crops this will actually help with the initial construction soil compaction, lessen the water runoff and can regenerate the nutrients back into the soil. Brent concluded by adding that through his research, he's comfortable in saying that the solar array is not damaging that farmland. Committee discussion ensued.

Fair Board Report: No report provided.

Comments from the Committee: None.

Set Next Meeting Date : The committee agreed that the next meeting will be April 9, 2025 at 7:15 pm at the UW Extension office.

Adjournment: Supervisor Schneider moved to adjourn at 8:22 pm, seconded by Supervisor Towns. ADOPTED by acclamation.

Name of person who took the Minutes: Brad Meier

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