



Minutes - January 14, 2026

Call to Order: Chair Bostwick called the hybrid Agriculture & Extension Education Committee to order at 7:18 pm.

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

Committee Members Absent: none

Staff Members Present: Chrissy Wen, Brad Meier, Shana Leith, Mike Parille

Others Present: none

Adopt Agenda: Supervisor Ringhand moved approval of the January 14, 2026 agenda, seconded by Supervisor Schneider. ADOPTED

Approval of Minutes:

December 10, 2025 Ag & Extension Committee Minutes: Supervisor Ringhand moved approval of the December 10, 2025 Ag and Extension minutes, seconded by Supervisor Schneider. ADOPTED.

Citizen Participation, Communications and Announcements: Chrissy Wen shared that in addition to her current responsibilities, she has taken on the temporary AED role at the Dane County Extension office until they hire the new AED.

Division of Extension::

Review of December Payments: December payments were reviewed.

Program Report: Shana Leith, FoodWise Program Administrator: Shana Leith introduced herself and provided an update on the current FoodWise program and staff since the SNAP-Ed funding reductions and the consequential staffing cuts on September 30, 2025. Shana shared that the Rock County FoodWise program went from 4 educators to 2 but continues to be financed and supported through EFNEP funding. The county program did have to say goodbye for now to a lot of the community partners that they had been working with. Through EFNEP, the program is limited to working with parents or caregivers of children 18 years and younger, and it has to be a series of lessons. FoodWise offers three 6–7 week-long series options; Eating Smart, Being Active series, Around the Table, and a new series called Walk with FoodWise. Youth-focused, 6-week series programming, for Janesville and Beloit schools, is now only available to 1st and 5th grade students. 6-week educational programming for middle and high school students will continue. Shana also shared

that she is one of two FoodWise Administrators for the six participating counties and her responsibilities now include the Dane County FoodWise program. Shana also added that she knows the community partners would welcome the return of the FoodWise programming in the future should the opportunity arise. Chrissy Wen also clarified that the FoodWise FTE is not funded by the county. Shana went on to explain that Rock County has always had 50% EFNEP funding and only the FoodWise programs in counties with EFNEP funding are still ongoing.

Monthly Impact Report: Chrissy Wen introduced the county report, highlighting the educator's activities in Rock County. Chrissy also pointed out the agenda attachments of the bilingual newsletter and the Southern Wisconsin Dairy survey, adding that the survey response rates are typically pretty high locally, as the area farmers value the helpful data they get in return for their information and participation. Chrissy added that our Dairy Educator, Alison Pfau will be reporting at next month's committee meeting and could hopefully talk more about these efforts at that time.

Semi-Annual Report of Training Costs: Chrissy Wen shared that the UW Extension department did not have any training events that exceeded \$1,000 per staff member in the last 6 months as presented in the Semi-Annual Report of Training Costs memo.

Positive Youth Educator Position Update: Chrissy Wen shared that the posting of the position is in the works, and she expects to get a good turn out of applicants so that interviews can start in February. Chrissy added that the Positive Youth Educator position has been integral to the youth and 4-H programming in many other county offices. Chrissy also went on to share that in the absence of the Positive Youth Educator, she and Brad Meier have been working closely with Supervisor Wilson, of the Youth in Governance Program committee, developing the participation applications and program support website content. Supervisor Towns expressed her appreciation for the help with the Youth in Governance program.

Fairgrounds::

Review of December Payments: December payments were reviewed.

Approval of December Contracts: Supervisor Schneider moved approval of the December Contracts, seconded by Supervisor Ringhand. APPROVED

Review of Yearly Contracts: Mike Parille introduced the year-to-date contracts, adding that the rental contract numbers are looking promising for 2026 and that he's looking forward to learning how the air-conditioning in the Craig Center will impact the fairgrounds rental income. Committee discussion included revisiting the rental fees once more data is collected from the upcoming summer rental season.

Fair Board Report: No Fair Board report was provided.

Mike added that the grandstand project wood is in place and painting will begin when the temperatures warm.

Comments from the Committee: None.

Set Next Meeting Date : The committee agreed that the next meeting will be February 11, 2026 at 7:15 pm at the UW Extension office.

Adjournment: Supervisor Ringhand moved to adjourn at 7:48 pm, seconded by Supervisor Towns. ADOPTED by acclamation.

Name of person who took the Minutes: Brad Meier

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