



## RICE COUNTY EXTENSION COMMITTEE MINUTES

March 9, 2020

Members Present: Jeff Schultz, Charlie Peters, Debbie Hofmaster, Grace Martin, Art Madsen, Jeff Docken, Steve Underdahl

Staff Present: Claire LaCanne, Kelly Chadwick, Jose Fulgenio, Barbara Montanye, Kristen Hurley, Lisa Dierks

Chair Peters called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm

Introductions were done as committee has a new member & regional staff.

Chair & Vice Chair elections were held. Committee elected Charlie Peters as chair; Jeff Schultz as Vice Chair

Motion to approve agenda. Motion was unanimously approved.

Motion to approve previous minutes. Motion was unanimously approved.

**4-H Youth Development:** Kelly & Jose presented “Empowering MN Youth” which discussed first-generation initiative and how they are connecting with youth in Rice County to build skills and future leaders. Currently program has 282 youth & 167 screened adult volunteers. There are currently 4100 youth in the county who are not involved in any enrichment activity. Rice County 4-H has expanded by 3 clubs: robotics clubs at Northfield & Faribault Middle Schools and a soccer club at Lincoln Elementary School. The soccer club is non-competitive and partners with the US Soccer Foundation for curriculum on leadership skills. Art Madsen asked if the 4H Foundation could financially support the robotics clubs to get new materials. All Extension staff are working together to have a garden project this summer at Faribault Middle School.

**Master Gardeners:** Barbara presented about current happenings with the group. The group has 5 new interns for 2020. They are working on community partnerships with several organizations. The group has several projects at the fairgrounds they are involved in. Upcoming events include Northfield Home & Garden show and the Arbor Day tree giveaway. The 22 Master Gardeners volunteer hours for 2019 provides over \$25,000 in service to the community. Debbie Hofmaster completed the certification for food preservation so only 15 people have done so in MN. Jen Docken asked if straw bale gardening information could be available for members of public.

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**Agriculture:** Claire shared several events from the past months that were offered: Quick books for Farmers, Profitable Farming & Drinking water, PPAT, Farm Bill, Winter Dairy series, Crops Day, soil health workshop. Many of the offerings were a direct response to the ideas offered last fall at Joint Ag meeting with Steele County. Claire has several upcoming events before planting season begins. Claire has increased her media presence.

**Regional Update:** Lisa reviewed the County Extension Committee roles – provide program support/advocacy, budget recommendations and identify community needs – with the committee. Lisa introduced Kristen to committee who is the supervisor for Kelly & Jose. Lisa also shared about her goal to launch an e-newsletter for the region.

**Business:** Committee discussed Farm Family of the Year nominations and made selection.

Motion to adjourn meeting 6:50 pm

Next Meeting: June 10 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Dierks



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