



## **UMass Extension Board of Public Overseers**

Meeting Date: March 28, 2008

UMass Collaborative Services Center, Shrewsbury, MA

Members Present: Jack Angley, Ed Davidian, Nancy Garrabrants, Ed Bourgeois, Fred Dabney, Ted Wales, Mike Leuders, Scott Soares, Art Eve, Lynn Griesemer

Guests Present: Robert Macleod, Kathy Carroll, Bob Schrader, Mary Jane Bacon, Scott Jackson

Meeting was called to order at 9:05 by Jack Angley.

Jack Angley made motion to approve minutes of January, 4th. Seconded by Lynn Griesemer. Two changes to attendees: Lynn to be noted as member; Robert Macleod as guest.

### **1. UMass Extension Update: (9:05-9:50)**

Nancy Garrabrants invited board to attend Extension annual meeting on May 5<sup>th</sup>. She spoke of the success of agriculture day at statehouse on March 18<sup>th</sup>. She also noted her recent visit to Brockton to visit NEP program. At Nancy's suggestion, Scott Jackson described a federal earmark \$268,000 to support the Community Assessment Prioritization System. Scott also described the Nature Conservatory as both a collaborator and partial funder of the project. The project uses connectivity analysis to protect wildlife by helping to set priorities for land protection. Discussion of the project followed

MDAR Update: Scott Soares reported staffing changes as well as a reorganization of the office: Brad Mitchell has resigned. There will be a total of five divisions. Scott noted MDAR is looking to ramp up to address recycling and related issues. One goal is to encourage collaboration across the divisions. He reported MDAR is looking to establish an office in W. MA, looking to work more closely with USDA and UMass partners. He noted the agency is optimistic on the budget for FY09, both the 09 budget as well as the environmental bond bill

Ed Bourgeois asked Nancy about conversations at the national Extension Directors Annual meeting. Nancy Garrabrants replied substantial discussions related to changing demographics and the impact on clientele. She also noted budgets are a part of ongoing conversation.

### **2. FY08 POW and FY07 Reports: (9:50- 10:25)**

FY08 Plan of Work: Bob Schrader walked through the UMass web site, showing the location of the issue and project plans for FY08-12. Bob stressed the level of project detail available for review.

FY07 Reports: Kathy Carroll distributed a packet with FY08 plans. She then presented the FY07 report of the Dairy Crop and Livestock team. Ed Bourgeois questioned the extent to which NRE collaborates on the projects. Ed noted a frustration in being able to collaborate with NRE. Kathy acknowledged the frustration. She also noted a new Assoc Dean, Brenda McComb, has been appointed.

Fred Dabney asked about the extent to which programs are tracked and evaluated. Ted Wales also voiced support for evaluation.

Kathy Carroll also distributed the publication: Planting and Maintaining Sustaining Landscapes. Ed Bourgeois asked if all products such as this are in the project plans.

Kathy responded that many are but not all. She noted there is sometimes a need to react quickly to opportunities.

Scott Jackson then briefly described the intent of planning and reporting system as to set priorities based on needs.

Jack Angley spoke to value of extension programs to growers. Kathy Carroll noted she has seen increase of persons attending programs solely for knowledge versus pesticide credits.

### **3. FY09 Budget/Funding Initiatives (10:25- 11:40)**

Nancy Garrabrants described handouts related to January 18<sup>th</sup> committee meeting with Chancellor Cole. Jack reported on the meeting, noting he perceived the chancellor as pleasant, a good listener. Jack expressed concern he is interim but that the meeting was overall positive. Fred Dabney asked if Jack thought Extension would see new funds in FY09. Jack responded that he didn't know.

Lynn Griesemer provided an update on hiring process, noting a new chancellor is to be hired by August.

Lynn Griesemer turned to the state budget noting the current budget is 1 billion dollars short. The House budget will be released in two weeks, Senate in two months. She noted this will be a difficult fiscal year, explaining that the UMASS president's office is working on contingency plans to reduce staff. Scott Soares noted MDAR has not been given any orders to develop contingency plans yet.

Fred Dabney suggested the board should extend an invitation to the new chancellor once hired. Lynn Griesemer suggested invitation for January meeting.

Lynn Griesemer noted that protective language should be a priority for this year given budget situation as Extension will do well to hold its own. Fred Dabney asked if Lynn felt the current budget will be cut. Lynn replied there may be cuts and reiterated the value of getting protective language in the budget.

Lynn then tied the budget to the plan of work stating budget decisions should be tied to the plan. Scott Jackson voiced support for the Board's role to ensure adequate processes are in place

Ed Davidian asked for dollars to be provided for each project. Ed Bourgeois asked for a list of advisory groups be provided for projects.

Lynn Griesemer stated support for Scott Jackson's comments related to budget cuts. She stated the board should make recommendations for guidance to the director but not be making specific decisions. She suggested the Extension director and program directors are in the best position to make decisions.

Ed Davidian noted he wants access to the detailed budget information. Mary Jane Bacon asked why Ed needed very specific information. Ed Davidian stated the board needs to review the budget as a job of the board. Nancy Garrabrants noted programs are getting input from many groups. Ed replied that was OK but that the board wanted to see the numbers.

Ted Wales voiced support for the current advisory structure. He stated he doesn't see the need for the board to make detailed decisions. Replying, Ed Davidian noted the decision at the last meeting to assure dollars were provided for operations. He asked if that step was taken. Kathy Carroll explained how operating funds were provided last year.

Michael Leuders noted that decisions need to be made by the Extension leadership. Scott Soares noted how difficult it is to replace positions once there is a layoff. Mary Jane Bacon stated the operating funds discussion was a critical issue conveyed to the Director

Lynn Griesemer noted chancellors/directors/deans have responsibility to execute decision making. It is a delegated role. Ted Wales advocated that the board's role is to support Extension in budget process but not be micro managing. Fred Dabney stated he agreed with Ted but also notes the board needs specific information, adequate to advise Extension. Scott Jackson voiced his concern that the board as constituted should not be making decisions.

Lynn Griesemer stated she is not qualified to make decisions related to specific projects. She noted there is a great deal of additional information needed as well as great deal of time that must be invested. She stated she doesn't want to be in that role.

Ed Davidian reiterated that he needs to know the dollar value at the program and project level in order to be able to advise the board. He stated that constituents want to know this information when decisions are made.

Scott Jackson acknowledged such a request is reasonable from a cost benefit perspective. He then stated the difficulty of responding quickly, noting the administrative overhead required from his many masters. He also noted the difficulty in accessing and compiling fiscal information.

Scott Jackson summarized what he is hearing: a need for evaluation; a need to understand stakeholder input; a need to give board suggestions on how to respond to decreases in budgets.

Jack Angley closed discussion by noting the board needs a value system for evaluating programs and projects.

Nancy Garrabrants, responding to a question from Fred Dabney, noted agriculture day was the principal means of advocating for the FY09 budget. Scott Soares and Bob Macleod both spoke to the success of the day.

#### **4. Board Structure (11:40 -11:50)**

Jack Angley suggests the subcommittee structure be utilized to work on issues, specifically he suggested an ad hoc "budget" committee: Ed Davidian; Fred Dabney; Jack Angley; Nancy Garrabrants were appointed to the committee.

Jack Angley asked that reassessment of subcommittee structure be an agenda item at June meeting.

Ed Bourgeois requested that a committee on planning and evaluation be created. Jack Angley requested this also be deferred to June meeting.

Jack Angley raised the issue of strengthening the board. Lynn Griesemer stated she supported changing the legislative language, suggesting language be filed in November, 2008 for next year.

Jack Angley asked that discussion items with next steps be highlighted in the minutes for discussion at the next meeting.

Lynn Griesemer agreed to serve as chair of the Membership and By-Laws committee. There are no other members at this time.

#### **5. Extension Organizational Structure (11:50 – 12:05)**

Ed Davidian briefly described the result of a survey he conducted. He chose 18 states to survey. A copy of responses had been distributed to the board. Lynn Griesemer noted her concern with the limited scope of the survey and asked that the results not be shared. She stated she was concerned with potential bias in the survey.

Lynn Griesemer stated the charge to the committee is not clear and noted she is only concerned that the study be done correctly. Scott Soares agreed to serve on the committee.

Scott Soares made a motion to adjourn. Fred Dabney seconded.

#### Action Items:

1. Budget committee to meet.
2. Subcommittee structure to be an agenda item at June meeting.
3. Creation of committee on planning and evaluation to be discussed at June meeting.
4. Issue of strengthening the board via review of the legislative language to be discussed at June meeting.

Meeting Adjourned 12:05

Submitted by Robert Schrader, Associate Director

Notes accepted June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2008