

UMass Extension Board of Public Overseers
UMass Collaborative Service Center, 333 South Street, Shrewsbury
Friday, April 25, 2014

Meeting Notes

Members Present: Marla Michel (via conference call), Patricia Vittum, Michael Lueders, Ed Davidian, Jerry Myers, Christy Foote-Smith, Gerard Kennedy (representing MDAR), Bill King

Members Absent: Ted Wales, Lynn Griesemer, Jack Angley, Patricia Bigelow, John Lee, Deb Phillips

Advisory Board Members Present: Ed Bourgeois, Mary Jane Bacon

Guests: Robert Schrader, Joe Shoenfeld

1. Welcome: Jack Angley

Pat Vittum called the meeting to order at 9:05 AM. Pat noted Jack Angley was sick and unable to attend

2. Approve Minutes from January 27th Meeting: Pat Vittum

Michael Lueders moved to approve the minutes. Jerry Myers seconded. Minutes were accepted.

3. Center for Agriculture Food and the Environment/Extension Update: Pat Vittum

Pat noted she has had good support within CAFÉ and feels she has been able to keep abreast of issues in her interim capacity. She reported on a number of staff related changes.

- Robert “Bob” Childs has retired due to health reasons. Bob is an entomologist who has taught within the Stockbridge School and led Extension programs for many years
- 4-H Assistant Director search is underway. The position has many applicants with mid July hiring date anticipated
- Extension Faculty position was hired within Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning with a focus on community planning. This position replaces an existing Extension funded professional position
- Extension Faculty search is being conducted for plant pathologist at Cranberry Experiment Station. This position is being searched upon the retirement of Frank Caruso

- Extension Faculty search is being conducted with focus on landscape materials within Stockbridge School of Agriculture

Joe Shoenfeld noted Scott Jackson was recently named conservationist of the year by Massachusetts chapter of the Nature Conservancy.

Massachusetts Environmental Bond

Pat reported the initial language for the bond, currently in development, includes funding for development of a new building focused on sustainable agricultural and horticultural practices at Waltham. The bill as written authorizes \$30 million for projects at Waltham (20M), Stockbridge School at UMass Amherst (5M) and Bristol Agricultural High School (5M).

Centennial Celebration of Smith Lever Act Establishing Cooperative Extension

Joe Shoenfeld reported on an event planned on Friday, September 26th, at UMass Amherst, commemorating the 100 anniversary of passage of the federal Smith Lever Act (providing federal funding for Extension) in 1914. As planned the event will focus on current work with immigrant farmers while also drawing attention to a field day developed for Polish farmers (delivered in Polish) at UMass in the early days of Cooperative Extension. The event seeks to both bring media attention to extension – 100 years – and also reinvigorate the understanding of Extension on campus. Departmental open houses are planned for the morning with music and speakers in the afternoon.

4. CAFE Name and Identity Changes: Joe Shoenfeld

Joe Shoenfeld introduced a new branding identity for Center for Agriculture, Food and the Environment and application of the identity to CAFÉ web site and sub brands (e.g. Extension program/teams; academic departments and farms. Changes included logo; page layout to focus on news and events as well as a featured project, publication and partner section. The new design also reorganized “issue areas” to better reflect Extension projects. At the request of Ed Bourgeois, Joe agreed to send web site analytics to the board.

5. Massachusetts Agriculture Day at the Statehouse: Pat Vittum

Pat Vittum reported she had a full day at the state house event. She noted the most consistent issue raised in conversation related to proposed nutrient management regulations. Six persons traveled from UMass for the day. She felt conversations were positive and well received. Ed Davidian expressed his sense the event proceeded smoothly and conversations with legislators were effective. He noted the event was a bit smaller and very well run this year.

Michael Lueders asked Gerard Kennedy the status of development of nutrient management regulations. Gerard noted comments to MDAR have been numerous and the comment period has been extended for 90 days. There will then be at least one additional hearing. He also stated there will be further discussion with UMass Extension regarding the regulations.

Pat noted she and Dean Goodwin have been in contact with MDAR, expressing concern that UMass developed “educational” best management practices should not be embedded in regulations. Gerard expressed his sense that comments have been heard and regulations will incorporate concerns raised.

6. Board Appointments Update: Bob Schrader

Bob Schrader reported no new news related to appointments and expressed his feeling that no action would occur during Governor Patrick's administration. Mary Jane Bacon suggested Extension submit a summary of members, vacancies and nominations to the Governor's Appointment Office in order to encourage action on appointments prior to the fall, 2014 election.

7. Board 2014 Meeting Dates

Marla Michel expressed concern that Friday was a difficult day for her to meet. Following discussion, Joe Shoenfeld agreed to poll members as to the best week day to meet.

8. CAFE Director – Search Update and Discussion of Desired Attributes: Pat Vittum

Pat Vittum asked Joe Shoenfeld to provide an update on the search process. Joe distributed a copy of the position description and list of search committee members (15). He stated position advertisement began April 15th. The search committee is scheduled to meet May 5th. Agenda includes a charge from Dean Goodwin and instruction from UMass Equal Opportunity and Diversity Office. Position advertisements state a review of applicants to begin June 2nd.

Reviewing the position description, Joe noted this position includes the title of Vice Chancellor for Agricultural Research and Engagement. He also noted the minimal qualification is a master's degree, which is seen as opening the position to a broader range of applicants.

Michael Lueders expressed his sense that the requirement for a strong entrepreneurial track record is very positive, focusing attention on an important skill set.

Responding to a question from Gerard Kennedy, Joe explained the search is advertised through a broad variety of academic and agricultural venues. An outside firm is not being utilized to facilitate the search.

Joe noted position can be found on CAFE website in "About Extension" section.

Meeting adjourned at 10:30 A.M.

Submitted by Bob Schrader, April 25, 2014