

UMass Extension Board of Public Overseers
UMass Collaborative Service Center, 333 South Street, Shrewsbury
Tuesday, September 22, 2015

Meeting Notes

Members Present: Patricia Vittum, Michael Lueders, Ed Davidian, Bill King, John Lee, Deb Phillips

Members Absent: Ted Wales, Lynn Griesemer, Jack Angley, Patricia Bigelow, Jerry Myers, Christy Foote-Smith, Gerard Kennedy (representing MDAR),

Advisory Board Members Present: Ed Bourgeois, Mary Jane Bacon

Guests: Robert Schrader, Joe Shoenfeld, William Miller, Linda Horn, Sandra Thomas

1:00 Welcome (Davidian, standing in for Angley)

1:05 Approval of minutes from April 25, 2014

Minutes approved without dissent

1:10 Updates (Vittum)

Board was briefed on the results of the search for new director.

- Process was protracted, but we were able retain the best candidate

Lueders - Expressed sincere appreciation for Vittum's service as interim director

Budget

- Funding levels for FY 16 will be the same as the previous year.

Davidian – expressed concern for the possibility of losing positions

Vittum – Did not think that would be a problem

Faculty & Staff Changes

- Retirements
 - Bob Schrader – will retire at the end of September 2015. He will be staying on part-time to assist in transition for new “Operations Manager” position
 - Ruth Hazzard – Vegetable Specialist, retired this past summer

- Bess Dicklow – Diagnostics Lab, retired this past winter
- New Hires
 - Linda Horn – Assistant Director of Massachusetts 4H Program
 - Amanda Bayer – Extension Faculty (Stockbridge School) in Nutrient and Water Management
 - Katie Campbell-Nelson – Extension Vegetable Specialist (replaces Ruth Hazzard)
 - Erica Rojas – Cranberry Scientist (replaces Frank Caruso)
 - Dwayne Bregger – Director of new Extension Energy Initiative
- Active Searches
 - Plant pathologist (position held previously by Bob Child's)
 - Nutrient management specialist - Soil Lab (replaces position vacated by John Spargo)
 - Vegetable educators (2)
 - Center Operations manager
 - Extension Faculty member (Coastal Studies) to be based in Gloucester, MA

Lee - Enquired as to status of Ron Propoky Endowment to hire A Fruit Entomologist (Faculty Member) in the Stockbridge school.

Vittum – Understands the position is moving forward but there is some confusion over if the precise status of the various funds committed. Vittum will clarify and follow up with board.

Recent Grants

Food Stuff

Scott Jackson \$184,000

Paul Catanzaro \$500,000

Crop Insurance and Risk Management

1:40 Extension work in water resources, Christine Hatch – Extension Professor (Geosciences)

- RiverSmart Communities – Extension funded project for ecologically restorative flood prevention and remediation (<http://extension.umass.edu/riversmart>)

Davidian – Concern expressed for the impact of new regulations on property owners, farmers, etc...

Bacon – Current regulations are based on a water quality concerns. This is an opportunity for existing regulations to be integrated with activities, data and policies that consider fluvial morphology and public safety.

2:10 Update on the Center for Urban Sustainability in Waltham Schrader)

- Current Waltham facility is “worn out”
- UMass Amherst is looking at options for redevelopment
- Consulting firm retained to study different possible design concepts

- Public funding has not yet been secured - Chancellor and Dean Goodwin will be leading advocacy efforts
- More info at <https://ag.umass.edu/facilities-farms/waltham-initiative>

2:40 Update on the Mass. Food System Plan development process (Shoenfeld)

- Plan is nearly ready for publication and dissemination
 - Plan identifies significant need for Extension related functions (training, education and applied research) in many different areas
 - More information on the plan is online at <http://www.mafoodplan.org/>
 - For details on potential role for UMass Extension see supplemental documents
 - *How UMass Extension Can Help Realize a Stronger State Food System*
 - *Implementation Goal...*

Shoenfeld - Request the Board's assistance in reviewing and supporting the plan

Lee – There is too much in the plan; it needs to be pared down

Shoenfeld – Agreed it is too big and advocated (unsuccessfully) for a more simple and more tightly focused plan

Bacon – Suggested that a more streamlined approach to education and training is needed: a “front door model” or “doc in the box”

3:10 Update on the 4-H Youth Development Program (Horn)

- Summer of Science program – Food Science, Movie making, 3-D Printing
- 2,600 youth in traditional (club) programs
- 3,500 youth in camps
- 1,000 adult volunteers
- An additional 11,000 youth in specialized educational programs
- Statewide community service activities - Food and family shelter assistance
- October 4th is national 4H kick-off
- Funding continues to be through grants, user fees and 4H Foundation

Bourgeois – Identified need for new opportunities for 4-H Youth in gardening education

Lee – Enquired about the status of 4-H membership?

Horn – Membership appears to be slowly increasing, particularly in Urban Areas.

King – Enquired about the nature of the new 4-H foundation marketing effort?

Horn – New banners and signs for visibility and recognition have been created. Most have been distributed to the counties

Lee – The last 4-H Foundation meeting gave a sense that membership was declining.

Davidian – Suggested outreach and partnership to farmers to allow 4H youth to use their farmland

3:40 Questions and Discussion

King – Requested a FY 16 budget for the Board to review

Meeting adjourned approximately 3:45P.M.

Submitted by William Miller, September 24, 2015