

## Agricultural Education and Workforce Development Council

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### MINUTES

**Wednesday, November 30, 2022**

**2:00-4:00 p.m.**

Wisconsin Technical College System Office  
4622 University Avenue, Entrance E; McCarthy Board Room  
Madison, WI

And via Zoom

**Meeting Minutes Approved – February 2, 2023**

#### Council Members present:

X	Kevin Bernhardt	X	Bob Hagenow	X	Karl J. Martin	X	Sara Schoenborn
X	Gary Besaw	X	Erik Huschitt		Shelly Mayer		Daniel Smith*
X	Gwen Boettcher		Pete Kondrup	X	Rep. Loren Oldenburg	X	Nick Stadnyk
X	Greg Cisewski	X	Corey Kuchta	X	Paul Palmby		Rep. Gary Tauchen
	Sen. Alberta Darling	X	Larry Lee	X	Sec. Amy Pechacek	X	Sharon Wendt
X	Jeff Edgar		Miranda Leis		Sam Ridders	X	Jason Wood
X	Jeff Eide	X	Betsy Leonard	X	Sec. Randy Romanski		
X	Monica Gahan	X	Scott Loomans	X	John Rosenow		
	Tom Gillis		Sen. Howard Marklein	X	Jill Runde		

\*Excused

In-person

Virtual

**Staff present:** Cara Connors, DWD; Sally Ladsten, DPI; Patrick Lonergan, DWD; Shamane Mills, DWD; Leah Peterson, Rep. Oldenburg; Kietra Olson, WEDC; Carrie Schneider, DWD; Danielle Williams, DWD.

**Public present:** Ashlynn Kirk, Humane Handling Institute; Brittany Marquard, FFTFF; Candise Miller, FFTFF; Kim Pokorny, SAGES; Jenn Scott, FFTFF; Katrina Pokorny, Kurt Vogel, UW River Falls.

#### 1. Call to Order and Welcome

Chair Schoenborn called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

#### 2. Roll Call

Attendance for hybrid (in-person/virtual) meeting noted above.

#### 3. Introduction of New Council Staffers

Chair Schoenborn introduced new DWD staff supporting the Council: Cara Connors, Patrick Lonergan, and Carrie Schneider.

#### 4. Review and Approval of WAEWDC Meeting Minutes

August 24, 2022 – E. Huschitt moved to approve, P. Palmby seconded. Minutes approved unanimously.

#### 5. Update on Council-Relevant Items of Interest

- a. Secretary Romanski shared updates on DATCP's Meat Talent Development program in partnership with UW Platteville, highlighted a Minorities in Agriculture and NASDA partnership, and informed the Council that he plans to share Olbrich Botanical Gardens' video series targeting grade-school youth when completed.
- b. Secretary-designee Pechacek highlighted DWD's apprenticeship programming, career pathways, and services for businesses and job seekers.

## **6. Farming for the Future Foundation (FFTF) Presentation**

The FFTF presented to the Council how they are carrying out their mission "to education current and future generations about agriculture innovation and sustainability" with a focus on "the other side of the plate" in the world's food supply chain story.

FFTF highlighted the importance of agriculture in Wisconsin, citing that agriculture provides over \$104 billion to Wisconsin's economy while supporting 11.8% of the state's employment.

FFTF provided that they are driven by a "profound need to reconnect people to modern production agriculture" because previous generations had a personal connection to farms that has largely been lost.

To address the issues identified, FFTF is building the Food + Farm Exploration Center as a place for people to discover agriculture and an Educational Outreach Program to develop agriculture-centered lesson plans that can be easily incorporated into classrooms.

Features of the Food + Farm Exploration Center highlighted included a Sprouts Gallery, Ag. STEM Gallery, Kitchen Lab, Demonstration Fields, Farm Tech Shed, and a Makerspace Lab. Aspects of the Educational Outreach Program highlighted included lesson plans, cultivating connections literacy kits, STEM kits, classroom visits, and making connections ag. readers.

Following FFTF's presentation, the Council asked questions about the logistics of the distribution of kits for the Educational Outreach Program and requested details about the funding of the Food + Farm Exploration Center. FFTF was also asked whether they were working with FFA and in response shared multiple ways in which they were planning to do so.

## **7. School for Agriculture and Environmental Studies (SAGES) Presentation**

Kim Pokorny, an agriculture and environmental studies teacher at the School for Agricultural and Environmental Studies (SAGES) presented information about the history and current operations of SAGES. K. Pokorny shared that SAGES is a public charter school in the Waupun Area School District funded by the School District, SAGES Governance Board, SAGES Foundation, PTO, and small classroom grants. It first opened in 2012 with 6 teachers, one office staff, and one aide for kindergarten. Referendum improvements occurred in 2018, and today SAGES has around 25 staff.

Currently, SAGES offers four-year-old kindergarten through grade six. Class sizes are 20 students per class, and enrollment was 129 students for the 2020-2021 school year. SAGES provides agricultural and environmental studies project- and place-based learning. The school is in Fox Lake, but enrollment is open to all families from Fox Lake, Waupun, and surrounding communities.

Demographics for SAGES shared include that the student population is 12% Hispanic and 88% White, 46% female and 54% male, 5% open enrollee students, and 60% meet the poverty qualification. K. Pokorny noted that only two families live on an active farm.

K. Pokorny highlighted indoor and outdoor learning facilities SAGES offers including school gardens, outdoor classroom spaces, teaching kitchen, living play area, greenhouse, apple orchard, 3 hydroponic systems, chicken coop, grainzebo, local farms, and school animals.

K. Pokorny closed the presentation by sharing ways in which SAGES was seeking to grow and barriers faced including time, people, equipment, and money.

## **8. Meat Talent Development Program Update**

The University Wisconsin – River Falls' Humane Handling Institute (HHI) provided an update to the Council on their program development.

One program provides a series of 2.5-day-long courses offered through UW-River Falls with the objective of improving and refining the ability of meat industry personnel to comply with the Humane Slaughter Act (7 USC 1901). The concept for the program was based on the identification of common causes for Humane Slaughter Act enforcement actions by USDA-FSIS. Courses offered include animal welfare and handling from farm through transport, livestock receiving and lairage, effective and humane restraint and stunning, stunning equipment operation and maintenance, and building a robust systematic approach to animal welfare.

Another program, the High School Meat Science Curriculum, provides an important component of meat industry workforce development by offering opportunities for potential workforce members to explore the meat industry. The program includes a 10-day module for Wisconsin high school agricultural education programs. The module will include prepared course content, hands-on laboratory activities, and an opportunity for interested agricultural educators to apply for a grant of basic, small-scale meat processing equipment. Course topics will include an introduction to and history of meat science, transition from muscle to meat, introduction to meat processing, careers in the meat sector, and basic food safety and the importance of meat in your diet. The program is currently being piloted, and it is expected that the program will become available to all Wisconsin schools in March 2023.

## **9. Discuss WAEWDC Subcommittee Organization, Structure, and Goals**

- a. WAEWDC bylaws discussion.

Chair Schoenborn presented to the Council the need for bylaws and suggested the Goal 3 Subcommittee could move their focus from their current responsibility to bylaws. B. Leonard moved to approve the change and B. Hagenow seconded. It was approved unanimously.

## **10. Discuss Council Vacancies and Appointment Authority**

- a. University of Wisconsin System President – Wis. Stat. s. 15.227(15)(a)(5)

DWD shared that DWD would be working with the University of Wisconsin System President to fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Dean Dale Gallenberg.

- b. School District Administrator/Superintendent – Wis. Stat. s. 15.227(15)(a)27

DPI shared that they are working internally to fill the vacancy and would be meeting with leadership.

## **11. Proposed 2023 WAEWDC Full Council Meeting Dates**

- a. 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2023 – Thursday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>
- b. 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2023 – Wednesday, May 31<sup>st</sup>
- c. 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2023 – Wednesday, August 2<sup>nd</sup>
- d. 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2023 – Monday, November 13<sup>th</sup>

The meeting dates above were presented, Chair Schoenborn suggested lengthening meetings to avoid time constraints experienced in the past, and hybrid meetings with in-person locations across the state were recommended.

## **12. Other Business**

The Council discussed whether the Council would be able to act in support of FFTFF's budget request. Currently, the Council only provides recommendations through their annual report. Secretary Romanski suggested that the Council include a mechanism for recommendations in their bylaws.

## **13. Adjourn**

Secretary-designee Pechacek moved to adjourn; B. Leonard seconded. Council meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.