

Wisconsin Agricultural Education and Workforce Development Council

Full Council Meeting
Tuesday, September 5, 2023
1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Hybrid Meeting

Farm Wisconsin Discovery Center
7001 Grass Lake Rd.
Manitowoc, WI 54220

Draft Meeting Minutes, Pending Official Approval

Members Present: Monica Gahan, Miranda Leis, John Rosenow, Sara Schoenborn, Ben Huber, Nick Stadnyk, Gary Besaw, Tom Gillis, Jeff Edgar, Shelly Mayer, Erik Huschitt, Larry Lee, Corey Kuchta, Sec. Randy Romanski, Sec. Amy Pechacek, Paul Palmby, Scott Loomans, Sharon Wendt, Gwen Boettcher, Michael Orth, Jill Runde, Bob Hagenow, Kevin Bernhardt, Karl J. Martin, Sam Ridders, Sen. John Jagler (staff representative), Sen. Joan Ballweg, Betsy Leonard, Jason Wood, Greg Cisewski, Michelle Steen, Jeffrey Wright

Others Present: Jennifer Sereno, Arielle Exner, Katie Jaeger, Patty Lehn, Sally Ladsten, Ashley Andre

I. Call to Order and Welcome

Chair Sara Schoenborn called the business meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

II. Roll Call

The roll was called, and the meeting attendance was documented.

III. Review Meeting Agenda

Council members reviewed the items on the agenda and Chair Schoenborn briefly summarized each topic to be addressed. No additions or corrections to the meeting agenda were required.

IV. Review and Approval of WAEWDC Meeting Minutes

a. May 31, 2023

Chair Schoenborn made a motion to approve the May 31, 2023 WAEWDC Full Council meeting minutes. Sec. Pechacek seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved unanimously and without correction.

II. Welcoming remarks and short presentation

The Farm Wisconsin Discovery Center Executive Director, Patty Lehn, gave a presentation about the Center. Director Lehn stated that the Farm Wisconsin Discovery Center celebrated its fifth anniversary in July of 2023. Director Lehn said that the Center's goal is to educate people about Wisconsin agriculture to help them better understand where their food comes from. Their mantra is "where curiosity grows". The Center has various interactive exhibits, farm tours, and a calf birthing barn. Each month, they host special events that include bringing in London dairy alpacas, soils pits, piglets, and more. Director Lehn said that the Center relies on many volunteers and six full-time staff members to keep operations running smoothly.

In the presentation, Director Lehn also discussed that they host school field trips for grades ranging from Pre-K through college. Schools can opt to add on STEM activities that can accommodate the needs and educational levels of all the students who visit the Center.

Director Lehn discussed that the Center's goal is to generate interest and grow careers in food and agriculture. The Center has been working with Wisconsin food and beverage companies, hosting high school career fairs, and building partnerships to work toward the goal.

III. Tour of the Farm Wisconsin Discovery Center

In-person attendees toured the facility and exhibits.

V. Secretary Updates

DWD Sec. Pechacek provided an update about the state's historically low unemployment rate, increased labor force participation rate of 65.5%, and the record number of jobs. Assistant Deputy Sec. Jennifer Sereno provided an update on the Governor's Task Force on Artificial Intelligence. Legislative Liaison Arielle Exner provided an update about provisions related to agriculture in the state budget.

DATCP Sec. Romanski provided an update about the World Dairy Expo 2023 hosted in Madison, Wisconsin on October 1-4, 2023. Sec. Romanski also provided updates about the state budget and funding related to UW River Falls Short Course program and the Meat Processing Talent Development grants. Sec. Romanski discussed an idea for a video project to educate and engage the public in agriculture.

VI. Council Review of WAEWDC SFY2023 Annual Report Draft

a. Discuss Council Activities, Agency Highlights, Educational Program Reviews, and Proposed Recommendations

Arielle Exner gave a presentation to summarize the draft report. Technical corrections were offered and incorporated.

b. Identify Additional Recommendations, Opinions, or Dissents

Sec. Pechacek made a motion to take up a discussion about and approve the draft report and Sen. Ballweg seconded the motion. Sec. Romanski thanked the council member for their commitment to the council, contributions to the report, and for sharing their expertise.

Chair Schoenborn made a motion to approve the WAEWDC SFY2023 Annual Report and Greg Cisewski seconded the motion. The motion then passed unanimously.

VII. WAEWDC Executive Officers

a. Council Chair

Chair Schoenborn announced her resignation from the council and that Vice Chair Greg Cisewski would be acting interim chair until the Executive Committee elects new officers at the first meeting of calendar year 2025.

b. Council Vice Chair

The council discussed that this position could remain vacant until the first meeting of calendar year 2025.

c. Council Secretary

Chair Schoenborn announced that Bob Hagenow can no longer serve on the council due to him no longer being on a school board. Chair Schoenborn asked for nominations for a new Council Secretary. Chair Schoenborn then nominated Larry Lee, Shelly Mayer seconded the nomination, and the motion to elect Larry Lee as Council Secretary passed unanimously.

VIII. Committee Updates

a. Subcommittee Goal #1

There were no updates from the Subcommittee.

b. Subcommittee Goal #2

Sally Ladsten stated that this subcommittee could provide support for Sec. Romanski's video outreach project.

c. Subcommittee Goal #3 – Bylaws

There were no updates from the Subcommittee.

IX. Old Business

a. Council Vacancies & Appointment Authority

i. Legislative Appointments

- 1. Chair of one Assembly Standing Education Committee – Wis. Stat. § 15.227(15)(a)9.**
- 2. Chair of one Assembly Standing Agriculture Committee – Wis. Stat. § 15.227(15)(a)10.**

Council member appointments for representatives from the State Assembly are still pending.

X. Upcoming 2023 WAEWDC Full Council Meetings

a. Mon., November 13, 2023 – TBD

Chair Schoenborn announced the date for the next full council meeting.

XI. Other Business

Sen. Ballweg provided updates about pending legislation related to the council.

Larry Lee stated that he would like to discuss expanding council membership to include youth participants. It was discussed that although youth could not serve as official members of the council per state statute, they could serve as ex officio members per council bylaws. The council discussed engaging youth from the Future Farmers of America program or 4H.

Larry Lee made a motion to have a discussion on how to incorporate young people in the council. Greg Cisewski seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Shelly Mayer shared brochures for the Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin Stride Youth Leadership conference and passed out information about other PDPW programming.

It was announced that Scott Newell is the new Alfalfa Outreach Specialist for the UW-Madison Division of Extension.

Larry Lee asked about scholarship funds for youth engagement opportunities. Paul Palmby discussed how fundraising could impact FFA participation.

XII. Adjourn

Karl Martin made a motion to adjourn, Sec. Pechacek seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.