

**Minutes:** Piscataquis County Extension Association Executive Committee Meeting  
12/11/2017, 3-5 pm

**Present:** Members: Karen Murphy, George McKay, Carole Boothroyd, Beth McEvoy, Chair  
staff: Donna Coffin, Trisha Smith and Sheila Norman, Lisa Phelps, Kate Yerza via Tandeborg

## Call to Order

- Chair called the meeting to order at 3 pm.
- Lisa Phelps provided an overview of the SNAP Ed Grant Opportunity- a state-wide grant for approximately \$2.7 million, funded through the Farm Bill. The grant focuses on nutrition and will integrate with all the work around sustainable food already in place, such as, school gardens and many other food and nutrition education programs in Maine. The deadline for the University of Maine Cooperative Extension grant application is January 16, 2018. The results will be announced in April and if granted, the program will begin in September 2108. If implemented, the SNAP Ed grant could result in a full-time Nutrition Educator and a half-time position to work with community gardens in Piscataquis County plus a multi-county position.

## Business

- Minutes of the October and November meetings were approved by unanimous vote, with no corrections.
- The Piscataquis Cooperative Extension Budget Report was approved by unanimous vote, with no corrections. Regarding the County Commissioners' public hearing on the county budget, November 27, 2017, Donna shared that County Manager, Tom Lizotte, spoke about the importance of the County Cooperative Extension to Piscataquis County.

## Program Updates

- **Highlights of the 4-H Program Update from Sheila Norman and Barb Baker**

4-H member Rebecca, from the Greenville Super Science 4-H Club, along with three other 4-H members, represented Maine at the National 4-H Congress in Georgia, Nov. 24-28. The committee asked Sheila to invite Rebecca to the Cooperative Extension meeting on February 12 to talk about the National Congress. Rebecca has also applied to be a presenter at the Healthy Living Summit at the National 4-H Center in Washington, DC.

Experienced quilters, Sally Downing and Barbara Lockwood, will offer a Quilting SPIN Club at the Piscataquis County office on February 20, 21 and 22 from 1-3 pm each day.

In January 2018, the Steering Committee of the Rural Youth Futures grant project will be distributing a survey designed to get information about local issues from youth in Piscataquis County. Listening sessions are planned for the spring and Sheila and Barb plan to attend the Oregon partners meeting to share Piscataquis results.

Piscataquis County Leader, Gretchen Huettner, along with Sheila and Barb, are planning for a 2018 Winter Leaders' Forum on January 13 in Dexter.

The Piscataquis Public Speaking Tournament is on February 24, 2018 at 9 am at the Piscataquis County Extension Office. The Penobscot Tournament is on March 10 at 9 am at the Penobscot County Extension Office. Snow date for both is March 17, 2018. The State Tournament is on April 7 at the University of Maine.

The National Association of 4-H Agents Pre-Conference Training was co-presented by Barb's Social Capital Research Committee, in which participants learned to use the Social Capital Toolkit.

- **Home Horticulture Report from Trisha Smith**

Trisha reports that much of her work intersects with other organizations that are involved with local food systems, such as Piscataquis Healthy Food for All. She attends their planning sessions and recently joined Erin Callaway, Steve Grammont and Vista volunteer Haley for the Community Food Systems Conference in Boston. Trisha believes that as the Regional Food Center idea is developed in Dover-Foxcroft, there will be many opportunities for Extension to support their various programs and activities. Committee Chair, Beth, asks for a chart of all allies in the local food movement and how they are connected.

Trisha will participate in two panel discussions this winter: Maine Federation of Farmers' Markets Convention at the Augusta Civic Center, January 11 and the Farm to Institution Summit in Belfast on February 8, 2018. Trish will talk about the Piscataquis Passport Project.

Jack Robie, The Worm Bin Guy, will present an introduction to vermiculture on February 1, 2018 at 4 pm. He will be giving away 10 stocked worm bins. The class is offered through Piscataquis Adult Ed.

Neither Piscataquis nor Penobscot counties will have the full Master Gardener Volunteer training this year, but some of the core subjects will be offered separately through Adult Ed classes in Bangor, Newport, Lincoln, Orono. Trisha and Donna may offer some classes in Piscataquis County.

- **Piscataquis Cooperative Extension December Activities Report from Donna Coffin**

Donna reports 30 one-to one contacts in December. 59% are through email.

Donna staffed the UMaine Extension Booth at the Harvest Festival, Cross Center, Bangor and sent follow up emails to folks interested in Gardening and Farming books, with an invitation to join the newsletter list.

The results of survey responses from the Annual Meeting with Smoking Chicken and Broiler Research Results indicate that attendees rated the presentation highly as to knowledge gained, usefulness of information and quality of presentation. The responses indicate that the most important thing learned was Poultry Forage Intake and Gain.

50 people, including some farmers from Piscataquis County, attended the one-day Cattlemen's College at UMO.

The Maine Agricultural Trades Show takes place at the Augusta Civics Center, January 9-11.

Is Farming for ME? Through Adult Ed, at the Piscataquis Ext. Office in Dover-Foxcroft March 26, 2018 6:30-8:30 pm.

Coming in April, 2018-Care of Small Ruminants: Sheep, Goats, Camelids with Dr. Caterina Ruksznis  
Details TBA

- **Unfinished Business**

Administrative Specialist Search- The job description has been submitted to UMO, the Search Committee received training in the hiring process on Dec 11 and the advertisement for the opening will be placed in the Piscataquis Observer. Screening by the Search Committee has been scheduled for Jan 3 and Interviews are tentatively scheduled for Jan 18.

Discussion: How to assist staff to reach more people and be more effective? The Committee had a discussion about how to support future projects, such as the Care of Small Ruminants class in April, a new 4-H SPIN Club, focused on aspects of agriculture, such as goats, support for the Regional Food Center in Dover-Foxcroft and a possible information forum to help farmers cope with a changing climate.

- **New Business**

SNAP Ed Grant Opportunity- a statewide grant for approximately \$2.7 million, funded through the Farm Bill. The grant focuses on nutrition and will integrate with all the work around sustainable food already in place, such as, school gardens and many other food and nutrition education programs in Maine. The deadline for the University of Maine Cooperative Extension grant application is January 16, 2018. The results will be announced in April and if granted, the program will begin in September 2108. If implemented, the SNAP Ed grant could result in a full-time Nutrition Educator and a half-time position to work with community gardens in Piscataquis County plus a multi-county position.

January Meeting- The Committee voted to skip a meeting in January due to schedule conflicts and to revisit the frequency of meetings for the future at the February 12<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Next meeting: Feb 12, 2018 at Dover-Foxcroft Coop Extension Office, 3-5 pm**

Submitted by Carole Boothroyd, Secretary 1/1 2018