Northeast Region Advisory Council

TeleNet—May 2, 2007—10:00 AM

Minutes

Attendance / Roll Call:
Tanesha Pittman, Cook County; Pat Kosmach, DuPage County; Ana Espinoza, Kane County; Larry Williams, Kankakee County; Wayne Mundsinger, Kendall County; Laurel Dahl, Lake County; Michael Morris, McHenry County; Sandy Humbert, Will County; and staff members: Margaret DeNard, Ruth Couwenhoven, and James D. Oliver.

Old Business:
• Fund Raising—Counties
  ▪ (Question was asked at our last RACouncil meeting—how do different counties approach fund-raising issues?) Our Web Development office is working on setting up county web sites for donations. McHenry County has set up a site for their Foundation that will accept on-line donations.
    ▪ Question was asked about guidelines on what county offices can do as fund-raisers. There was an article in the local newspaper about a fund-raiser for Grundy County…mentioned matching funds. Dr. Oliver suggested the article be given to the county director to forward to him. We will research any guidelines and get the information out to all.
  ▪ Correction: The Herald News of May 1, which is where the article mentioned is in one of the 'letters to the editor', was a thank you to those who stepped forward to help raise funding for the Grundy unit…an event which was held on April 13. It was NOT sponsored by Grundy Extension; rather it was pulled together by a group of area citizens to help raise funds for Extension. Mention is made in the letter of the ongoing need for support from various local entities.

• Council Reports
  ▪ (Question was asked at our last RACouncil meeting—do counties include a cash flow sheet in the reports to Council?) Discussion on the types of reports counties use was held at our November 27 County Director meeting and the counties are using a variety of forms. There has been some concern about councils not getting enough information. We need to think about setting a standard for this report…what types of information is necessary…we will discuss this at our Fall meeting.

• Single Parent Programs
  ▪ (Question was asked do we have programming for the “suddenly single” parents on how to deal with the different issues that arise?) We are still looking into this…we know we have 2 family life educators that are working with single parents. We will invite them to our fall meeting to provide information to the council.
• Nutrition Education / Other Cultures
  o Due to scheduling conflicts, Drusilla Banks was not available today. We will invite her to our fall meeting to update on nutrition programming.

• ESL Programming
  o Question was asked about Extension doing this…we will be holding a group meeting to discuss working in communities regarding ESL programming. We offer training for staff, and may decide to offer informal training to clientele…possibly the older generations, those not going to community colleges.

New Business:
• ESAC Washington DC Report—Tanesha Pittman
  o During the week of Public Issues Leadership Development Conference (PILD) in Washington, DC April 22-26, 2007, I had the opportunity to engage in professional development workshops that assisted me with preparation for visits to legislators on the Hill. I was honored to represent ESACs position to request additional funding for Smith/Lever, EFNEP and 1890s land grant institutions. The coalition from Illinois numbered 22 including staff and volunteers. I had the privilege of visiting the office of Congressman Davis, Congressman Roskam, Congresswoman Biggert, Congressman Emanuel, Senator Obama and Senator Durbin.

• Administrative Update—
  o Personnel update
    ▪ NEW: Durriyyah Kemp, Youth, Matteson…received her masters in Resource Development / Human Development from Michigan State; and Chelsey Byers, Adult Life & Aging, Kankakee…has a gerontology background…received her masters in recreational therapy from Eastern Illinois University.
    ▪ Network Administrator: due to budget concerns this position is on hold for now—we currently have 2 network administrators for the region.
    ▪ Open Position: Environmental Educator, Countryside…closes on May 2…internal search. Looks like we will have 1 or 2 qualified internal candidates. (Question was asked about the job description and how this differs from a horticulture educator. This position will work with not-for-profit and public groups on environment programs, building partnerships and relationships; and work with young people to get them more engaged in environmental science.

  o State Budget Status—FY08
    ▪ County Board Match (CBM)—we proposed 13.4 million; the governor’s budget proposal has 12.8 million (which is equal to FY07 funding). We are trying to get this increased to our full request. The session usually ends around Memorial Day, but may be late June.
    ▪ Youth Development Educator Line—we requested 2.8 million; FY07 was funded at 1.7 million; the governor proposed 1.65 million (down from FY07)
    ▪ Cook County special initiative—we requested 5.2 million—governor proposed no funding this year. Many people / groups are working to reinstate this.
Spanish Training

- We offered Spanish Language training to our staff last year—face-to-face classes in the fall, and online individual training (still on-going). We are planning on offering the Spanish classes again in the fall; also may be renewing the RosettaStone on-line training.

Marketing / Annual Reports—Margaret

- Met with the county directors regarding the annual reports…it was a nice format, easy to read. The metropolitan area continues to grow…what was missing from the reports was hard-core data…numbers of participants, etc. We met the goals: 1) to provide financial information, and 2) to keep it as simple as possible.
- Next time we will have more numbers of people / programs. May be adding an envelope. Overall everyone was pleased. Next year will use similar format.
- We will be looking at more direct marketing opportunities during the next county director meeting…possibly include a photography workshop in the future to improve the quality of photos used in the annual reports.

Staff Training

- We recently held Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) training for all the secretaries in the region. This was held Café LaCave in Des Plaines in conjunction with Administrative Assistant’s Day. Approximately 40 secretaries met for the all-day seminar.
- Also recently held training in program planning and teaching (including risk management) for 75 paraprofessionals in the region. This workshop was held at Brookfield Zoo.

Next Meeting—our next meeting will be held on Friday, October 5, 2007. It will be a face-to-face meeting somewhere in the Oakbrook area. Time: 11:30 AM—2:30 PM. We will invite Extension Specialist Drusilla Banks to give a report on nutrition programming. Margaret DeNard will be there as well to give an update on marketing efforts. We will discuss how we can increase partnerships with groups to maximize our resources…what types of organizations / groups should we partner with. (It was mentioned that Kane County partners with the Women’s prison for a vegetable garden.)

Meeting adjourned.

Minutes submitted by Ruth Couwenhoven