

Cheshire Advisory Council Meeting

Date of meeting: January 12, 2024

Time of meeting: 6:00 PM

Location of meeting: Cheshire County Extension Office, 12 Court St., Keene NH

Agenda:

1. Guest: Paul Chiarantona, UNH Extension Public Affairs Manager
2. Office Update
3. Program Updates from Staff

Present:

Rachel Brice, Paul Chiarantona, Eloise Clark, Dick Drew, David Hoffman, Matt Kelly, Carl Majewski, Aaron Moody, Christine Parshall, Lucius Parshall, Karen Seaver

Minutes:

Chair Aaron Moody calls the meeting to order at 6:00 PM at the Cheshire County Administration Building, Keene.

Minutes: November 9, 2023 meeting: Dick moves the minutes be accepted. Lucius seconds. All approve.

4-H Position: Funding for the position was approved in December by the Provost of UNH. It's been posted. 5-8 applications have been received, both local and national. A search committee will identify finalists. February 20, the Advisory Council will have a chance to interview them. The person will begin early spring. Perhaps the letter sent by the Advisory Council helped speed the process?

The role of Advisory Council's: Paul Chiarantona is Public Affairs Manager for UNH Cooperative Extension.

About one third of his job is supporting Advisory Council's around the state. He has been to visit all 10 counties and finds each Advisory Council is different but all need support for members. We discussed how we learned about Advisory Council and what motivated us to join. What does Cheshire County Advisory Council do well and what areas could we improve? Do well: good communication, like meeting new people, not a lot of homework, mutually supportive, like program presentations. Do better: Not very goal oriented, need to be clearer about outreach and outcomes, letting people know who we are in terms of expertise.

Paul presents a slideshow outlining advocacy options such as postcards to legislators and letters to newspapers to help build support among local elected leaders and the general public. The Advisory

Council also has the opportunity to collaborate with staff and support their programming as well as provide feedback on hiring and budget. Paul introduced a mock Advisory Council calendar, with a focus on self-governance and goals. Only six meetings are formally required per year, leaving time in between for sub-committee meetings. Expectations include: attend all Advisory Council meetings; attend two Extension programs per year; participate in one advocacy activity per year; meet one on one with the County Administrator and staff; attend new member orientation (online); assist in hiring and budget preparation. Sub-committees can serve as a pipeline for new Advisory Council members. The State Advisory Council has not been active post-Covid. Paul will send this slideshow and a copy of the Advisory Council handbook to all members via email.

Program Updates

Carl has been working on farm resiliency programs, weathering climate change with other counties as well as Cheshire. Pruning demonstrations are planned at the County Farm garden.

Matt has been overseeing tree work at the County Garden. He's working on the Climate and Forest Carbon chapter of an updated version of *Good Forestry in the Granite State*. To that end he showed a two minute video *Understanding Forest, Climate and Carbon* for distribution to schools and the general public. He also attends state forester's meetings and helped lead a tour in Stoddard with SPNHF.

Christine has been cooking with older adult groups as well as workshops with Head Start parents. She has found the question of "Where do you get your food?" to be a good conversation starter. She's been enjoying working with Alstead 5th and 7th graders.

Budget: Carl reports the budget will be reviewed by the Executive Committee of the County Delegation next Monday, 3/18.

Council membership: We will need new members for next fall, as some are leaving in June.

The next meeting is Tuesday, Feb. 20th: 4-H candidate interviews.

Meeting adjourns 7:45 PM.

Submitted by,

Eloise Clark

Secretary

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Cheshire Advisory Council Meeting

Date of meeting: March 14, 2024

Time of meeting: 6:00 PM

Location of meeting: Cheshire County Extension Office, 12 Court St., Keene NH

Agenda:

1. 4-H Position
2. Program Updates from Staff
3. County Advisory Council Engagement Plan:

Present: Eloise Clark, Chris Faucher, Mark Florenz, Dave Hoffman, Matt Kelley, Carl Majewski, Aaron Moody, Christine Parshall

Minutes:

Chair Aaron Moody calls the meeting to order at 6:00 PM in the conference room of Cheshire County Courthouse.

Introductions are made. Chris Faucher is visiting us and is the horticulture teacher at the Cheshire Career Center at Keene High School.

4-H Position:

May 9th will be the next date for the Advisory Council to interview candidates for this position. We thank the search committee for their time dedicated to filling this important role. At present, Diane Dugray is doing some of the organizational work. 4-H leaders and volunteers are also stepping up to run shows and events in the interim. However, an experienced person is needed to organize and oversee the Cheshire Fair.

Health & Well-Being: Christine has been enjoying working with a Master Wellness Volunteer at Franklin School in Keene. K-2 are the ages served.

Forestry and Natural Resources: Matt has seen an increase in woodlot visits. There is now an online form to help schedule that is popular with younger landowners. Hayley Andreozzi, wildlife specialist announced grants for women landowners of up to \$1,500. Matt is leading a workshop in conjunction with the NH Timberland Owners Association on silviculture. They will tour Yale Forest and also visit Froling Energy Biomass operation. Matt is also working with Amanda Littleton of Cheshire County Conservation District and Michael Neary of Distant Hill Gardens to help land conservation in the Alstead/Walpole area.

Food and Agriculture: Carl has also had an increase in farm visits. Ongoing programs include pesticide safety at KSC, CCCD's equipment field day, tree fruit pruning and Twilight Meeting at Alyson's Orchard,

nitrogen management for CT River Watershed farms. He announced State Funding of \$8 million for crop losses due to extreme weather.

County Advisory Council Engagement Plan:

Discussion following Paul Chiarantona's presentation in January. What do Advisory Council members get out of being on the council? All enjoy site visits and presentations by local organizations. Carl explains the budget process. Eloise discusses past advocacy activities for members of the County Delegation (Legislators) including postcards and calls. Letters to the editors reach a wider forum. Paul should be able to provide templates. Carl, as COA explains, meets two times per year with the County Commissioners to explain what Extension has been doing. Perhaps a council member could go with Carl to lend support? There is also new legislator orientation every couple of years where different departments describe what they do. In the past, county Commissioners and Delegate members have been invited to participate in programs as judges for events. What subcommittees are needed to make Advisory Council's work more "actionable" and create more "engagement opportunities"? There is also a need to recruit younger Advisory Council members. Discussion will continue at our June meeting.

Meeting adjourn at 7:05 PM.

Submitted by,

Eloise Clark

Secretary

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Cheshire Advisory Council Meeting

Date of meeting: April 11, 2024

Time of meeting: 6:00pm

Location of meeting: Cheshire County Courthouse Complex, Keene, NH.

Agenda:

1. Memorandum of Understanding
2. Advisory Council Role
3. Program Updates

Present: Rachel Brice, Eloise Clark, Chris Faucher, Mark Florenz, Jeff Littleton, Aaron Moody, Carl Majewski, Christine Parshall, Karen Seaver

Minutes:

Chair Aaron Moody called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM.

Minutes:

Eloise moves the minutes of January 11 and March 14, 2024, be approved. Mark seconds. All approve.

Memorandum of Understanding:

Every six years a Memorandum of Understanding is signed between the County Government and the University of New Hampshire regarding the arrangements funding Cooperative Extension. 2024 is the year for it to be signed by the Chair of the Delegation (Legislators), Chair of County Commissioners and Amy Loader who is the Interim Director of Extension at UNH. Amy is touring each county to introduce herself to delegates and commissioners. She also wants to introduce herself to each Advisory Council. The group decided she can join us at our Tuesday, June 11th meeting. Carl reports the current budget passed without incident.

4-H Position:

We hope to interview qualified candidates at our May 9th meeting. All members should plan to attend.

Advisory Council Role in Helping Extension:

Discussion resumes from our March meeting about ways the Council can be helpful to Extension. We reviewed ideas from the last meeting including letter writing to newspapers and postcards to delegates (legislators). We also suggest accompanying Carl, Christine, and Matt on their work visits to help understand what they do. The Chair can also accompany the COA (County Administrator), currently Carl, when he presents the budget to the County Commissioners and the Delegation. Annual events such as the Cheshire Fair and Cheshire County 4-H Presents are opportunities to help in the food booth and

judge events. Carl suggests the Advisory Council again start participating in the statewide Advisory Council meetings. The last one was held in the Fall of 2022. Two members from each Advisory Council are needed for the spring and fall meetings. These positions can be rotated. The use of social media is discussed. Aaron suggests the use of Google Calendar to track each meeting and events. UNH Extension has numerous newsletters covering program offerings and educational information. Diane Dugray manages the monthly newsletter for Cheshire County. Jeff is willing to post Extension events on Moosewood Ecological's Facebook page.

Program Updates:

Christine's programs are moving along with the usual participants.

Matt Kelly is involved in the Steering Committee revising "Good Forestry in the Granite State". He is the author of the chapter on climate change and carbon storage. He's doing lots of woodlot visits. He's partnering with Distant Hill Gardens stewardship series, this summer.

Carl has many farm visits. He's involved with several Equipment Field Days sponsored by CCCD. Many are excited by the 2-wheeled VCS tractor. A pruning workshop at the County Farm site went well.

Advisory Council Membership:

We welcome Chris Faucher as our newest member. Chris is the horticulture teacher at the Cheshire Career Center at Keene High School. Members are appointed for two-year terms that can be renewed for a total of six years. There is no set time of the year for appointments. Officers are elected at the September meeting, after the two-month summer recess. June 11 will be our last meeting until September.

Meeting adjourns 6:53 PM.

Submitted by,

Eloise Clark

Secretary

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Cheshire Advisory Council Meeting

Date of meeting: June 11, 2024

Time of meeting: 6:00pm

Location of meeting: Distant Hill Gardens, Walpole NH

Agenda:

- Council Member Recognitions
- Introduction – Amy Loader, UNH Cooperative Extension Interim Director
- Program Updates

Present: Tom Beaudry, Eloise Clark, Dick Drew, Diane Dugray, Mark Florenz, Dave Hoffman, Matt Kelly, Jeff Littleton, Amy Loader, Carl Majewski, Aaron Moody, Michael Neary, Christine Parshall, Lucius Parshall, Karen Seaver

Minutes:

Chair Aaron Moody called the meeting to order at 6:15 PM at Distant Hill Gardens, Walpole, NH.

Distant Hill Gardens:

Michael Neary gave a history of the property, development of the nature trails and educational programs for the public.

Recognitions:

Tom Beaudry and Eloise Clark were recognized for their time serving on the Advisory Council. Amy Loader presented certificates of appreciation from UNH Extension. Both receive very nice edible gifts and a pot of flowers from Extension staff. The group celebrates with pie and ice cream, much appreciated by all.

Interim Director of UNH Cooperative Extension:

Amy Loader attended our meeting. She is meeting each Advisory Council in the State, County Commissioners and Delegates. She explained the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed every six years by the above parties. Tom moves the MOU be signed, Eloise seconds. All are in favor. Daily operations and yearly budget requests will continue as in the past.

Amy explained the financial arrangements between the University of New Hampshire (UNH) and Cooperative Extension (CE). She emphasizes CE's funding is currently "bare bones". Two non-program positions have been eliminated. She will call on County Advisory Councils to speak up if UNH proposes further cuts to Cooperative Extension. Counties, Federal funds and grants add to the 40% funded by UNH.

Program Updates:

4-H Program Manager: Astara Zuorski has accepted the job and begins June 24.

County Administrator (COA): Matt will take on the role of County Administrator July 1, succeeding Carl who has had this leadership position for the past four years. Thanks to Carl for his service in this capacity and thanks to Matt for assuming this new role.

Food & Ag: Carl has been conducting lots of farm visits. Upcoming programs include Corn Checkup meetings and the CCCD (Cheshire County Conservation District) Field Day demonstrating the No-Till Seeder.

Forestry and Natural Resources: Matt is working with Distant Hill Gardens, CCCD and the Monadnock Conservancy offering a forest stewardship series of programs this summer. Programs include the value of dead trees, a portable sawmill demonstration, chainsaw maintenance and the proper felling of a tree, Best Management Practices to protect water quality. We discussed forest carbon markets and the need for a state registry. Land deeds should include this commitment but currently do not.

Meeting adjourns at 7:30 PM.

Submitted by,

Eloise Clark

Secretary

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