

Agricultural Education and Workforce Development Council

MINUTES

Wednesday, March 30, 2022

2:00-4:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting via Webex

Council Members present:

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

*Excused

Staff present: Jenifer Cole, DWD; Leah Peterson, Rep. Oldenburg's Office; Ashley Andre, DATCP, Kietra Olson, WEDC; Rachel Keith, Sen. Darling's Office; Vince Williams, Sen. Marklein's Office

Public present: None

1. Call to Order and Welcome

Chair Schoenborn called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m.

2. Roll Call & Introduction

Attendance noted above. D. Smith introduced—new member from Cooperative Network appointed by Sec. Romanski

3. Review and Approval of Minutes

October 20, 2021 – J. Edgar moved to approve, B. Leonard seconded. Minutes approved unanimously.

4. Updates and Council-Relevant Items of Interest

- a. J. Cole reminded the Council about partnership between DWD and WEDC to roll out \$100 million in American Rescue Plan Act funds through the [DWD/WEDC Workforce Innovation Grant Program](#). Program provides up to \$10 million each to regional workforce development collaborations that will design and implement innovative plans to help address workforce challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Round 2 grant applications due April 15, 2022.
- b. Sec. Romanski reminded the Council that applications for the [Wisconsin Agriculture Youth Council](#) are due March 31. Students who will be high school seniors during the 2022-23 school year are encouraged to apply.

5. Briefing the Meat Talent Development Program

<https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/AgDevelopment/MeatTalentDevelopment.aspx>

- a. Sec. Romanski and B. Leonard provided a briefing on the status of the Meat Talent Development– Program is a great fit with WTCS. Originally introduced in Gov. Evers budget. Was not included in the final budget. DATCP continued work to identify ways get such a program off the ground
- b. \$5 mill in ARPA funds used to develop program
- c. Focused on four goals: talent attraction, website; 2) & 3) WTCS - partnership of programming and financial assistance. 4) mentorships, apprenticeships, and career development (career fairs etc.) Also connected to UW River Falls, Madison, and Platteville
- d. B. Leonard – First meeting in Jan. 2019, first meeting with DATCP Jan. 2021. (Partners: WTCS, UWs, Meat Packaging and processing industry businesses, and DATCP)
- e. Tech colleges – 8 are committed to starting programming. Creating short term certificates (9credits). Madison College shared a lot of expertise with the other schools.
- f. Has seen pathways open. Great agreements with local high schools, connecting the dots and creating pathways to YA, tech college credits, and then pathways to four-year schools. Looking UW for training of WTCS staff to develop certifications. Looking at having short term certificates up and running this fall, 2022.
- g. Sec. Romanski – growth is through train the trainer with tech colleges and UWs (River Falls, Madison, Platteville).
- h. Strong outreach through many avenues. Programs can get folks into the industry at the entry-level quickly. Assistance to connect to industry and then to career/education pathways.

6. Overview of Agricultural Education Across WTCS

Betsy Leonard

- Provided overview of tech college system and how WTCS provides agriculture and natural resources education.
- Proud of 50/50 representation by female and male students.
- Reviewed the structure of WTCS relevant to programming and how the career pathways function within the programming and employer engagement.
- Courses can include class and lab time, and internship/externship and on-the-job-training hours.
- Embedded career pathways – colleges engage employers for designing educational opportunities to prepare graduates with training for entry-level positions upon graduation. Also designed for different opportunities as students enter and exit educational credentialing and work.

7. Report outs from Tech College Affiliated Council Members

a. Greg Cisewski, Northcentral Technical College

- i. Program milks 50 head, robotically. Also fed and manure cleared robotically. 117 acres owned; 150 acres rented. Programs: Dairy science, crop science, vet tech. Dual credit classes are operated through close partnerships with high schools. Continuing education programs also available.
- ii. Invitation for Council members to come tour the farm. Field Day scheduled for October 12, 2022 - focused on agriculture and natural resources educational programming.

b. Jason Wood, Southwest Technical College

- i. J. Cole shared notes submitted by J. Wood. SWTC agricultural students recently competed in the national Post-Secondary Agriculture Student (PAS) competitions. Faculty and students who were involved showed impressive results. More information about PAS can be found here: <https://www.nationalpas.org/>.
- ii. These types of co-curricular activities provide powerful learning opportunities for our students and prepare them for future careers in agriculture.

8. Small Group Breakouts

- a. Sub workgroups convened for 15 minutes.

9. Small Group Report Outs

a. Group 1:

- i. Determined co-chairs: B. Leonard & G. Cisewski.
- ii. E. Huschitt reported out that G. Boettcher shared that more attention needs to be paid to dual enrollment credits; funding to maintain and expand is a challenge—is industry there to help with this?—pathways can help identify what employers are best to tap into; and number quality of ag teachers in WI is an issue because of the countless retirements. Lack of quality candidates to replace, so a burnout rate with current instructors.
- iii. Group can explore ways to take some of the pressure off with administration of ag ed programs. Look for ways to think outside the box for training and recruitment of instructors.

b. Group 2: Chair S. Wendt reported on discussion pushing out statewide career pathways:

- i. Identifying ways to inform students and student organization about the pathways.
- ii. State-level conversation to lift up these pathways.
- iii. Look to council members to provide industry feedback on pathways and what training/education needs are to best leverage existing programs.
- iv. DPI staff will create focus groups and connect back with sub workgroup to report back to council.

c. Group 3: Chair P. Palmby excused. B. Hagenow reported that discussion was focused on getting data and additional information on existing outreach. Looking to identify events and programs that would be good avenues to promote ag ed. May need to bring in third party expertise to get some branded messaging out.

10. Wrap-up

Chair Schoenborn asked small groups to continue meeting and working on goals between now and the next quarterly meeting on May 4, 2022. She will follow-up with sub workgroup chairs next week.

L. Lee – Shared feedback that there is concern about losing the farm short course at the UW-Madison College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. B. Leonard reported that WTCS is meeting with UW about how the tech colleges could be taking this programming on and filling the gap.

11. Adjourn

L. Lee moved to adjourn, B. Hagenow seconded. Council adjourned at 4:03 p.m.