

Minutes of Middle Manager Meeting, Orlando, Florida
August 24-27, 2009

Barbara Board, MM Committee chair, presided over the Middle Management Meeting.

Barbara welcomed the group and introductions were made. The minutes of the past meeting were distributed by Connie Heiskell, Secretary. Claude Bess made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Steve Mullins. The motion passed. The minutes of the past meeting were approved.

Charles Vavrina, University of Florida Cooperative Extension and Steve Mullin, Louisiana State University Cooperative Extension reported on the Urban Task Force Pre-Conference Roundtable held on Monday. Future urban meetings were discussed. Charles and Steve shared a syllabus for the Urban Institute, and discussed several opportunities including a possible webinar and state visits to see programming and training. They indicated that they will try to communicate better. They also plan to seek funding, possibly looking to Kellogg and conference support money from the Farm Bill monies.

Ellen Smoak, Cooperative Extension Program, NC A&T State University and Ray Rice, Alabama Cooperative Extension System gave the PLC update. A survey was passed out by Barbara. She shared the themes for next year's conference. She urged the group to fill out evaluation on this year's meeting. Because of changes in the format of this year's program, it is extremely important for all to give feedback.

The group reviewed cross committee assignments. A discussion was held regarding what to accomplish in each individual meeting. A suggested topic for group was the use of eXtension on local level. It was suggested that IT be involved.

The committee reviewed the 2009 Plan of Work and began work on the development of 2010 Plan.

Tony Tyson, Georgia Cooperative Extension Service passed out evaluation from the 2009 Biennial Conference. The results were discussed.

It was reported that money for Middle Managers' conference is in an interest bearing foundation account in North Carolina. The group decided that Joe Zublena is probably a good contact to find out more information. Paul Waddy, Alabama, made a motion that the chair makes contact with Joe Zublena to establish the status of the money for MM conferences account, begin making an annual report and have a contact person related to the account. Shirley McNeil, North Carolina, seconded. Motion passed.

The group discussed the location of the next biennial conference for Middle Managers. Claude Bess shared the opportunity for Oklahoma to host. The proposal is for Oklahoma to host the 2011 biennial conference. If Oklahoma cannot host, Texas will consider hosting. Claude Bess and Darrell Dromgoole, Texas, will collaborate on this project.

Claude Bess, Oklahoma State University, gave the ECOP Leadership Advisory Report. He has represented us at two meetings. He reported that the group is concerned with “Why is Extension fractured?” One answer is that there is no national direction and that having direction from that level would strengthen the entire system.

Other things that were discussed were possible issues that Extension can address nationwide. The group also thinks health and energy are viable topics to address.

The committee then finalized the representatives to attend the Cross Issue Discussion Areas.

Joe Schaefer, Florida, facilitated a session for the group addressing the budget and restructuring challenges many states are facing at this time.

Bonnie McGee 4-H Youth Development and Human Services, Texas AgriLife Extension Service presented the actions that Texas has taken to address budgetary needs. She pointed out that Texas is not in a budget crisis at this time, but shared the actions they had taken when they faced the situation in the past.

Via web connection with Minnesota, Kay Stank, West Central District Director, University of Minnesota Extension Service facilitated a session on their process and strategy for addressing the budget problems.

Claude Bess, chair of the nominating committee gave the report from the nominating committee. The group suggested secretary: Ray Rice, Alabama and 1890 representative to PLC: William Hodge.

Steve Mullins, Louisiana, made the motion to accept the nominations. Charlie Vavrina seconded. The motion passed.

Claude Bess recommended that we begin these annual meetings with a history of why this committee developed, how it developed, and let people know that we all serve in leadership roles.

After returning from the Cross Committee sessions, Barbara reported that William Hodge will not serve the term as the representative to PLC. The group discussed several possibilities for this position.

The group developed the action items and completed the report. The action items are on the website: <http://srpln.msstate.edu/mm/index.html>.

Barbara requested that we complete our state reports in the WIKI if it has not been done by September 15, 2009. Several individuals in the group gave their state reports.

The meeting was adjourned at noon on August 27th.