

Regional Director meeting  
January 14, 2008

Present:

Charles Goan  
Herb Byrd  
Clyde Chesney  
Herb Lester  
Tim Fawver  
Tim Cross  
Shirley Hastings  
Connie Heiskell  
Mike Gordon  
Brenda Voiles

1. **TNCEP Update** (Hastings)

Betsy Pitcock is retiring January 3; Sandra Shivers is retiring at the end of February. Both positions are announced, with the same search committee serving for both positions. Have received several applications. In view of vacancies, the TNCEP celebration is cancelled, with plans to reschedule something in late spring or early summer. A retirement reception is planned for Pitcock at Greeneville 4-H Center (February 22). Will plan something for Shivers later. Gearing up for end of year and writing proposal for next year. Hastings will be more involved in day to day operations . Let Hastings know of any concerns.

2. **Tennessee State University** (Chesney)

- TSU Academic Master Planning Process continues- completion date is May 2008
- Reunification of School of Agriculture and Consumer Sciences starting
- Reorganized CEP Program Teams:
  - Agriculture and Natural Resources – Dr. Roy Bullock, chair  
(Small Farms & IPM, Small Ruminants; Farm Demonstrations, EDEN & Renewable Energy, Organic Agriculture & Consumer Horticulture, and Consumer Horticulture & 4H SET)
  - Family and Youth – Dr. Javiette Samuel  
(Youth Development, Family Life, Nutrition Education, Health Education and Communications & Dramatic Arts)
  - Community Resource and Economic Development –Dr. Joshua Idassi  
(Forestry, Land Ownership, Small Business Development/Entrepreneurship and Leadership & Organizational Development)

- Agent-In-Training Program Approved – 5 positions
  - Staffing and Personnel
    - TSU Agents in 20 counties
    - Extension Area Specialist, Small Farm, Specialty Crops and Sustainable Agriculture (located in Western Region) - effective February 1
    - Extension Area Specialist, Community Resource and Economic Development (located in Eastern Region)
  - Changed Third Tuesday to Third Friday, starting Feb 15
  - TSU Research and Extension Demonstration Farm – Developing a 10 county regional advisory committee - Chris Robbins will be asking for nominations
  - Tennessee Organic Growers Association (TOGA) state meeting, March 15 at TSU Farrell Westbrook Auditorium
  - Recognized Mr. and Mrs. Alvin Harris as Extension Volunteers of the Year at Annual Awards and Recognition Program in December 2007
  - New members UT/TSU Extension Advisory Council - James W. Ford, retired state conservationist (ANR), Anita Allen (FCS) and James C. Jaycox (CRED)
  - Vacant position at research and demonstration farm – others could be at any location. One year contract.
  - TSU - MOU: Cross will work with Lois Fehling to get contract paperwork done to hire Peggy Hamlett as small farm specialist for crops and sustainable agriculture.
3. **New Worker Orientation Participant List** (Byrd)  
Byrd handed out New Worker Orientation participant list and discussed. Orientation is coming up March 3-7.
  4. **Regional IT Staff Involvement in SUPER Testing /Troubleshooting** (Byrd)  
Program Leaders and IT specialists met and discussed involvement in SUPER testing. There are regional IT staff that have never logged a SUPER issue. It appears some of the folks are carrying the bulk of the load. Contract with Cadre 5 has expired. It is imperative that regional IT folks are logging the issues. Regional directors should emphasize that the IT specialists are involved in the SUPER testing/troubleshooting. Byrd will ask Joseph Donaldson to send issues that have been logged.
  5. **Succession Planning** Continued (Byrd)  
Byrd handed out and discussed list of agents in Ag and FCS that are eligible for retirement through 2017. Byrd will hold training on February 11 at 1:30 PM.
  6. **Change Agent States Climate Survey** (Byrd)

Byrd thanked regional directors for the reminder of the change agents states climate survey. Regional directors should encourage program assistants and agents to respond by close of business on Friday, January 18; ask program assistants to come into office to complete.

7. **New Extension Educator Onboarding Workgroup (Byrd)**  
Have talked about our needs for training for new employees. New term is “onboarding”. Byrd handed out new employee orientation and onboarding workgroup suggestions, and the group discussed. There is a 60% likelihood employees will stay if they have a good onboarding program. Discussion about bringing in policy people. Will try to have something in place by Fall New Worker Orientation. Regional directors should let Byrd know if they have other suggestions for workgroup.
8. **Policy for One-Month Orientation for New Agents (Byrd)**  
It has been discussed that new 4-H agents have been thrown into the mix too quickly – being sent to schools to meet 4-H clubs on first day, etc. It has been suggested that policy would be for new agents to not meet clubs for first month; that they should spend month meeting county leaders, county officials, learning their way around county. The group felt we should recognize the experience in 4-H and education. Regional directors should talk to County Directors about the importance of first month and that new agents should not be given too much responsibility too quickly. Should be a recommendation now, and at some point we may have a more formal policy.
9. **SUPER Foundations Training (Byrd)**  
Byrd passed out SUPER Foundations Inservice proposal. The group agreed to the plan.
10. **Cell Phones (Fawver)**  
Fawver said that it has come to light that some people in region may have need for a cell phone. If they have R account and have funding available, they can get cell phone through UT or get a \$50 supplement. Regional directors need to approve and determine if there is a need for phone and if there is money to fund it. Can deposit from Quicken into county development account. For those that currently have cell phones, let Debby Bowers know if there is a need for replacement. Fawver will check with Boyd Dearden about email from phones.
11. **Sales Tax Due on Sale of Goods and Services (Fawver)**  
Fawver said we are working with Internal Audit to determine if we need to charge sales tax. Rule is you can have two fund raisers per year and not charge sales tax. We looked at this several years ago, and we felt we didn’t need to pay it. Regional directors should survey counties to see if we have potential fund raisers that would cause us to pay sales tax - and let Fawver know.
12. **Johnson County Endowment (Goan)**  
Will be transferring over \$40,000 to establish an endowment. Eastern Region has 100% county endowments.

Capitol Campaign is going on. If you know of people wanting to donate money or land, it can go into county endowment – it does not have to go into Extension.

13. **UT Day on the Hill/Ham Breakfast** - February 27 (Goan)  
Breakfast will begin at 7:00 AM.
14. **Extension Advisory Council Meeting, February 26-27** (Goan)  
Goan passed out a draft agenda for Extension Advisory Council meeting, February 26-27, at Embassy Suites, Airport Nashville. Will be taking the Advisory Council over to State Legislature and take tour of capital on February 27. Will be sending the agenda out to Council members. Plan to talk about Extension Advisory Council being more involved and proactive in Extension. We need to advise Council members about increasing our starting salaries.
15. **2009 Extension Conference** (Goan)  
Contract has been signed for January 13-16, 2009, at Cool Springs Marriott. Moore and committee are working on program.
16. **Dependent Fee Waivers** (Fawver)  
These forms should come to Fawver's office.
17. **History of Extension Work** (Goan)  
Goan handed out History of Extension work; page 12 says first agent was employed in 1910. Thinking of beginning celebration at conference in 2009 and continue on until 2010. Lorna Norwood in Communications is working on organizing the Extension history, and getting these pictures and documents archived.
18. **Retirement Person in HR** (Goan)  
Melanie Wolfenbarger will be the HR person who will be handling FERS and CSRS retirement. She will be going to some training in Washington at end of month.
19. **eXtension Launch** (Goan)  
Goan asked Chesney if TSU will be doing anything about the eXtension launch. Janelle is handling. 11,000 cards have been ordered.
20. **Vacant Positions** (Goan)  
Regional directors should email Fawver their current vacant positions and whether they are announced or unannounced. Goan plans to hold filling any positions until state legislature meets and budget is set.

Western:

Lauderdale adult ag - announced

Hardin 4-H

Fayette Adult 4-H

Humphreys Ag

Dyer 4-H

Eastern:  
Hawkins  
Hamblen  
Greene - 2  
Jefferson  
Hamilton - not announced

Central:  
Franklin  
Davidson  
Marshall - not announced

21. **Next Meeting**

There will be no regular Regional Director meeting in February. Byrd will hold Succession Training on February 11 at 1:30 PM.