

Notes
Regional Directors/Program Leaders Meeting
January 12, 2009

Present: Tim Cross, Mike Gordon, Herb Lester, Tim Fawver, Connie Heiskell, Brenda Voiles, Linda Bower, Lynn Brookins, David Perrin, Richard Powell, Steve Sutton, Roy Bullock, Richard Powell, Chuck Shoopman, Melanie Wolfenbarger, Andrea Loughry, Joseph Donaldson, Carla Bush, Jim Stewart, Shirley Hastings, George Smith, Herb Byrd.

1. **Melanie Wolfenbarger**
Cross introduced Melanie Wolfenbarger, our contact for HR federal retirement benefits.
2. **Mind2Marketplace (Andrea Loughry, Chuck Shoopman)**
Cross introduced Andrea Loughry, board of trustees member, representing Mind2Marketplace Committee, and Chuck Shoopman, Asst Vice President for the Institute for Public Service. Ms. Loughry explained the Mind2Marketplace initiative—a consortium of many different agencies interested in economic development in a 40-county area in middle TN. The initiative is in the networking stage and is focusing on how to pull together efforts from different agencies to shepherd ideas into the marketplace. The Committee is looking for ways we might partner in Middle TN counties.
3. **Streamlining Planning and Reporting (Donaldson)**
State Action Agendas, Topics and Outcomes document was handed out, and Donaldson discussed the recommendations. Program leaders will take the lead – at this point don't share with counties. If there are items that need to be tweaked, let Donaldson know and we will bring back to the RD/PL group.
4. **State Budget Reduction (Cross)**
Cross discussed the information we have received on state budget reductions. Latest estimate is 8.7%. Extension is working on budget reduction plans, dependent upon the amount of reduction we receive, and employees are encouraged to submit ideas for handling the budget reductions. TSU is also facing budget reductions.
5. **Regional Performance Review Schedule (Cross)**
Cross asked about performance review schedules. Doing middle of regions this year.
6. **Bi-weekly Time Entry and Approval (Byrd)**
Byrd said that for several pay periods there are employees who were paid by petty cash due to time sheets not submitted, entered or approved on time. Regional directors should emphasize with county directors the importance of getting time submitted and processed on time. Let us know if you have ideas where the process can be improved.
7. **Middle Management Conference (Cross)**

In October, Southern Region Extension Directors made a decision to hold the 2009 Middle Managers Conference – will be held in Athens, GA in April. If Regional Directors or Program Leaders have an interest in attending, submit a Lovelace McKinney request for funding (or you may use other restricted funds). No out of state travel on E accounts unless presenting a paper, etc.

8. **Tennessee State University (Bullock)**

TSU and UT are sponsoring the Southern Agriculture Working Group (SAWG) conference scheduled for January 21-24 at the Chattanooga Convention Center, Chattanooga, TN.

A 15% budget reduction plan has been submitted to Dean to include elimination of scholarship of engagement grants, reductions in travel and supply budget.

The Faculty/Staff Institute held on January 8-9 focused on budget cuts. During the Extension meeting on Friday afternoon, The Oz Principle – Getting Results through Individual and Organizational Accountability was briefly discussed.

Completed mid-point reviews of Extension faculty with emphasis on signature programs and increasing contract and grant activity to support program priorities.

In-service training in December for TSU agents and program assistants was very successful. Dean Chandra Reddy was able to interact with county agents and share his vision of the integrated School of Agriculture and Consumer Sciences.

Rhonda Moore had foot surgery in December and will be out until January 26.

Floyd Hooker has recently joined TSU as USDA Liaison replacing Will Nesby who retired from NRCS. Hooker is looking forward to working with all the USDA Agencies in strengthening the linkages with TSU. Nesby will help coordinate School recruitment efforts.

Wendell Smith and Julius Sammons received innovative programs awards.

9. **Extension Advisory County - Feb 23 and 24 (Cross and Bullock)**

Will be held at Embassy Suites, Franklin beginning at 10:00 on Feb. 23. Cross suggested holding regional director meeting on afternoon of Feb 24. Regional directors should hold that date.

Group took a break and Program Leaders and Sutton left to attend the 4-H program meeting. Regional Directors and others remained for the duration of the meeting.

10. **County Budget Development (Cross)**

Last week Cross, Byrd, Fawver, Missy Kitts, Debbie Welch and Sharon McClain met to become familiar with the new county budget development process in SUPER. Hope to streamline the process. Plan to have some training for regional bookkeepers. Byrd and

Fawver will work together to set up the training.

11. **Travel Improvement Program (Fawver)**

Fawver said the pilot travel improvement program is working well, and we are ready to expand to overnight travel and have more counties participate. Counties participating must have adobe acrobat 8 (or higher) and a scanner. Approvers will see attachment in inbox instead of paper copy. Each Regional office should send 5-8 additional counties that wish to participate.

12. **Centra for Some Regional Director/Program Leader Meetings (Cross)**

Cross proposed March through June Regional Director meetings be held via Centra. Hastings, Sutton and Smith should decide on Program Leader meetings according to their needs.

13. **New Employee Orientation Training (Cross/Byrd)**

Since we did not hold orientation training in August 2008, we now have 40+ individuals who have not been to training. After discussion, regional directors indicated training would be beneficial. Will be held March 2-5, starting at 2:00 on Monday through noon on Thursday. Agenda will be developed.

Byrd is proposing to do two more sessions of '7 Habits' training if we can fund with restricted funds.

14. **Inservice Training**

Hastings proposed proceeding with FCS inservice training normally held in August, but shortening length of training to minimize cost. Regional Directors agreed.

Smith said Ag programs plan to go to Centra training as much as possible this year. Regional Directors felt it was not as good as face to face, but second best. It has been challenging, but is working.

It was noted Ag and FCS programs have different needs and different funding.

15. **Next Meeting**

February 24, 2009 – Franklin, following Extension Advisory Council (Regional Directors only)