

# **Community Partner Advisory Group (CPAG) April 12 Notes University of Wisconsin – Extension, Lincoln County**

Lincoln County Health & Human Services Building  
(Downstairs Conference Room)  
607 North Sales Street, Merrill, WI

## **Meeting Notes**

### **I. 5:30 – 5:45 p.m. Introductions; CPAG Members and Extension Staff**

UWEX 4-H Program Coordinator Amanda Kostman facilitated this portion of the meeting. Twenty – seven (27) community stakeholders introduced themselves and mentioned why they chose to serve on the group (see attached contact information).

### **II. 5:45 – 6:00 p.m. What is the purpose of the CPAG?; Group Discussion**

UWEX Agriculture educator Tom Cadwallader described the purpose of CPAG's (provide advice centering on UWEX programming and what issues Extension with other organizations can meaningfully address).

### **III. 6:00 – 6:30 p.m. Dinner and Networking**

### **IV. 6:30 – 7:00 p.m. Pressing Issues Discussion**

*Based on your knowledge of Lincoln County in general and issues arising in your communities, please tell us what you believe are the most pressing needs/issues that should be addressed in the next two years.*

UWEX CNRED Educator Art Lersch facilitated this portion of the meeting. The following list of pressing issues was developed by the group. Items are placed under category headings based on general themes that emerged. The CPAG may add to and/or refine the list as it chooses. A few of the items were placed in more than one category.

## **"Community Wellness" through Positive Thinking**

- Wellness/community training – information = consistently at beginning of meetings
- "Perceptions" vs. reality/truth (think for self; notice good; positive [thinking])
- Wellness standpoint = consistent across community functions/focus
- Every human being is valuable (not expendable)
- Wellness – re: Government issues; turf issues?; educate community about government functions, etc.; community/citizen representation
- [Be] open minded about business development/future
- Resistance to change
- Cooperation between city and county government

## **Addiction**

- Drug abuse
- Drug habits – multiple OWI's; drink and driving (decision making skills); addictions (supervision)
- Alcohol and drug use

## **Youth/Family Issues**

- Young/teen pregnancy
- Troubled students – behavior issues; getting younger/expulsions
- Adult and youth partnership opportunities
- Better family foundation
- "Brain drain" versus retirement community
- Educated students/young professionals leaving the area
- Create better foundation for youth through families; parental responsibility (values); busy families (over-involved)
- Youth out of control
- Mock interviews with sophomores
- Challenges of single parenting; relationship with parents; parent incarceration?
- Lack of young families staying in the community after college graduation
- Lack of health lifestyles (activity, nutrition, etc.)
- Poor financial management skills
- Family support and development Extension could address
- Growing concern with social networking sites that youth are using on computers and the lack of knowledge, education of youth and parents about risks and how to stay safe.

## **Sustainability**

- Conservation education (global change; war/resources; make individual changes as members of a community)
- Global warming; bring local level/our impact; renewable energy
- Merrill opportunities with nature; downtown/river/environmental potential; transportation via bike trails (wellness and environment)
- Alternative fuels – governor’s council; loggers and wood pellet development in our area

## **Living Wage**

- Local people (natives) maintaining current standard of living (jobs #1)
- 24 hour childcare (linked with employment with living wage)
- Employment with living wage
- General low average wage

## **Economic Development**

- Jobs in community
- Loss of production industries; e.g. farm
- Training levels of jobs
- [Be] open minded about business development/future
- Increasing business and job opportunities
- Business retention, especially among small business
- Limited professionals remaining/establishing working relationship in community
- Participate in economic development; creation of professional career opportunities
- Economic development
- Maintaining a vibrant and marketplace competitive economic base that will attract quality workers to good paying jobs, but provide the tax base needed to sustain our municipalities, school systems and healthcare facilities

## **Aging Population**

- Aging population; care of; leaving workforce
- Transportation (age 60 and older; disabled)
- “Brain drain” versus retirement community
- Impact of aging population
- Developing an effective approach to educating the general public on the impact our aging population will have on Lincoln County over the next 30 years. The purpose of this education program would be to stimulate discussion and necessary action required to build the infrastructure that

will be needed to sustain this population base in all aspects from transportation needs to medical care to social support systems.

- My thoughts and concerns are related to the older adults in our community. Future concern for the “Baby Boomers” meeting the needs that they will insist on when they are faced with their health care. I see the need for services that can be brought to their door steps. Services that will give them the opportunity to stay in their homes and retain their independence for as long as they live. I don’t see them going into the nursing homes -just something that I see. Who will provide those cares and meet their needs? Do we have enough of the quality skilled home health care workers to provide the care needed? The funds will be there, for most they have been saving up for their retirement ... (Just a thought) Meeting the needs for those in our community who will be diagnosed with dementia. Is a CBRF and Nursing Home the only option for their care? Affordable respite programs. I feel that Lincoln County is going to see the impact in the years to come with the numbers of families needing our help with respite care. Transportation will always be an issue not just for the older adults but for those unable to have the means of transportation.

We are so blessed to have the public transportation that we have (in the city) How about the handicapped person who lives ½ mile out of town and can’t afford the fee for private transportation?

- Needs/Issues: I am hoping that by this fall volunteers walkers and staff from the Merrill Senior Center will reach each home in Merrill. Providing them with a directory of information of what services and programs are available in the Merrill Area for older adults. But also to have some sort of campaign to “care” for those in our neighborhoods or to refer them to those who can help. I feel that we are not reaching everyone ... My thought is to provide the help and information before it becomes an emergency situation.

## **Education**

- Education – needs to be looked at as an investment
- Education to meet various learning styles/needs
- K-12 education
- DPI Curriculum; burden – testing = change; workforce useful
- Immigrants; housing, healthcare, drivers license; fostering welcoming environment
- Poor financial management skills
- Financial education
- Nutrition/health education
- Support and education for families (conflict mgmt parenting, lower tolerance for drug and alcohol)

**V. 7:00 – 7:15 p.m. Brief Overview of University of Wisconsin – Extension, Lincoln County**

UWEX 4-H Youth Educator Debbie Moellendorf provided a brief overview of the Cooperative Extension statewide system (including funding), and the various Extension departments within the Lincoln County office.

**VI. 7:15 – 7:30 p.m. Ideas of Those CPAG Members who Could not Attend this Meeting**

Comments were added to section IV above.

**VII. Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 24, 5:30 to 7:30, TB Scott Library Community Room (downstairs)

**VIII. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.

## CPAG Member List

(list will continue to be subject to updates)

### Name

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