

Bayfield County
Agriculture and Extension Education Committee Meeting
January 14, 2026 – 4:00 PM
In-Person at County Annex – EOC And Remotely via Microsoft Teams
Minutes

1. Call to Order

Vice-Chair Larry Fickbohm joined via phone and designated Jeff Olsen to run the meeting.

- Jeff Olsen called the meeting to order at 4:02 PM.
 - Committee Members Present: In-Person: Jeff Olsen, Online: Larry Fickbohm, Jeff Holte
 - Committee Members Absent: Fred Strand, Steve Sandstrom
 - Others Present: Mary Pardee, Stephanie Bakker, Clair Emmons, Jason Fischbach, Tracy Henegar, Theresa LaChappelle, Kellie Pederson, Heidi Ungrodt

2. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

(Motion by Jeff Holte, second by Larry Fickbohm) Approval of November 12, 2025 meeting minutes. Motion carried.

3. Public Comment

No public comments were received.

4. 2025 UW-Extension Budget Update

- Some 2025 expenses are still pending.
- Salary savings from 2025 will carry over as revenue into the 2026 budget.

5. Area Extension Director Updates

- **Understanding AI: An Extension Forum for Local and Tribal Governments:** The four statewide forums scheduled in March are designed for local government leaders and personnel. The two closest locations are Lac Du Flambeau and Eau Claire.
- **UW-Madison Extension Budget Cuts:** To assist with the budget cuts that are required, the number of Area Extension Directors has been reduced from 22 to 19. Area 1 will remain the same.
- **Staffing:**
 - **Ashland 4-H position:** The Ashland 4-H position has been filled by David Ullman.
 - **Housing Educator:** 50% Extension position to be posted this week; search committee includes Kris Kavajecz, Kelly Westlund and Kellie Pederson.

- **Health & Well-Being Educator:** Stephanie Bakker will now serve in the Health & Well-Being Educator role. Her position will be funded by Bayfield County, a State grant, and through SNAP-Ed funding until September in Bad River. She will also continue with presenting the Turtle Island Tales in Red Cliff.

6. Comprehensive Plan Review

The links to the entire County Comprehensive Plan and to the portions pertaining to the UW-Extension Office are provided in meeting packets. More discussion is planned for a future meeting.

7. Staff Reports

a. Kellie Pederson – Community Development

- **Care Cooperative:** Maren Zinski has been hired as the Care Cooperative Administrator. This program engages retired residents for part-time caregiving. Bayfield County has agreed to handle the hiring process and payroll for this part-time temporary position. Stipends will also be provided for six founding board members. The money to cover these expenses has already been provided to Bayfield County.

b. Stephanie Bakker – Health & Well-Being / FoodWise

- **Turtle Island Tales:** Igmu, the Turtle Island Tales mascot was introduced. Igmu and Bakker will be featured in an upcoming video on wild rice harvesting.
- **New Educator Role:** Bakker has been setting priorities for this role; and managing FoodWise materials across three counties as the program shut down.
- **WI Idea Conference:** Bakker will be presenting at the WI Ideas Conference in Madison on March 2, 2026. Her topic will be on the programming/collaboration with Montana State University regarding Turtle Island Tales.
- **Red Cliff Winter Camp:** The Red Cliff Winter Camp will hold cultural activities and events indoors and outdoors at the Boys & Girls Club. Bakker will be assisting with some of these. Activities are planned for the week of February 16. All are invited to attend.

c. Jason Fischbach – Emerging Crops

- **NPR Garden Talk** – Fischbach is scheduled to appear at the NPR Garden Talk Larry Meiller Show on Friday, January 16th.
- **Seedless Table Grapes:** Three new varieties of seedless table grapes (Northern Glo™ Grapes) that are suitable for our area are ready to be sold to the public. Locally, Hauser's Superior View Farms will be selling these varieties.

- **Hazelnut Processing:** Red Cliff Farms will be completing the processing of their harvested hazelnuts in the next few weeks.
- **Carbon Cooperative:** Three meetings were held in December; further planning is still underway.

d. Heidi Ungrodt – Human Development & Relationships

- **Literacy Link:** Ungrodt showed a presentation of the Literacy Link program. Some of the features of the programs include “Making Reading Memories” and “Parenting Inside Out” for incarcerated parents. In the past 2 years, 38 parents have been served, 160 books mailed, and 89 videos created. There have been positive responses to this program by participants and the jailers.
- **SEED Program:** A program evaluation meeting has been scheduled. So far, three families have enrolled.

e. Tracy Henegar – Youth Development

- Youth Wellness Leadership Conference was held at UW-Superior. Over 100 middle school and 20 high school students from ten local school districts attended the conference; with 15 breakout sessions on wellness topics presented.
- Students pitched wellness projects that they would like to see happen at their schools; \$1,200 was awarded to five schools to support these projects.

f. Clair Emmons – 4-H Program

- Onboarding and training sessions are ongoing.
- Leaders Association meeting has been scheduled; Emmons will attend her first one.
- CANSKI: 130 participants registered.
- Planning for Washburn Wellness Days, Red Cliff Winter Camp, and summer programming.
- Superior Days: Recruiting 4–5 youth and one chaperone for first-day participation.

g. Theresa LaChappelle – Office Manager

- Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) updates provided.

8. Next Meeting

Tentatively scheduled for March 11, 2026 at 4:00 PM in the EOC and via Teams.

9. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 5:11 PM.