

Buffalo County Minutes

Committee/Board: Agriculture and Extension Education Subcommittee

Date of Meeting: Monday, February 2, 2026

The meeting was called to order by Chair, Brian Michaels at 8:35 a.m.

Board Members Present: Mr. Brian Michaels and Mr. Robert Sendelbach
Absent: Mr. Gary Stanton

Others Present: Ms. Mary Campbell Wood, Ms. Sarah Torbert, Ms. Bianca Mullen and Dr. Kari Weiss. Mr. Lee Engfer joined later.

Public comments Regarding Posted Agenda Items: None

Review/Discussion/Action ~ Minutes of the previous meeting: Motion by Mr. Sendelbach, seconded by Mr. Michaels to approve the minutes from the previous two meetings. Motion carried.

Review/Discussion/Action ~ Area Extension Director Introduction: Ms. Sarah Torbert, Area 9 Extension Director, introduced Dr. Kari Weiss, the Area 5 Extension Director. UW-Extension has implemented a new staffing model which resulted in a realignment of Areas. Buffalo County Extension has joined Area 5, where Dr. Weiss serves as Area Extension Director. Dr. Weiss shared a little about herself and expressed enthusiasm to be working in Buffalo County.

Review/Discussion/Action ~ Regional Crop Educator Update: Ms. Torbert informed the committee that a candidate had accepted the offer to fill the Regional Crop Educator position. She was recently notified that the candidate contacted HR and stated they are no longer interested in filling the Regional Crops Educator position. Ms. Torbert noted that there was a strong candidate pool and hoping that some of the candidates are still interested in the position.

Review/Discussion/Action ~ 4-H Youth Development Educator Hiring Update: Ms. Weiss updated the committee on the hiring process for a 4-H Youth Development educator. She explained that there is an individual who gave their verbal acceptance for the 4-H Educator position. She also explained that due to no official offer letter being signed yet, she cannot name the candidate at this time.

Educator Reports:

Human Development and Family Relations: Ms. Mary Wood, HDR Educator, discussed the following:

- Reported progress on upcoming programs.
- Working in collaboration with Trempealeau County Jail for classes serving both men and women.
- Noted some delays related to coordination with Trempealeau County partners.
- Scheduled 10 classes in February with 24 participants.
- 10 participants registered for the Companions Through the Wilderness, Healing from Loss and Greif program.
- Discussed A Better Beginning classes for Separating and Divorcing families.
- Provided updates on statewide classes and learning opportunities.

4-H Youth Development: Ms. Bianca Mullen, 4-H Program Assistant reported on recent 4-H Youth Development programming:

- Provided updates from the most recent 4-H Leaders' Association meeting and reported a total of 30 participants.
- Highlighted the award recipients who were recognized at the meeting.
- Shared a summary of the graduating senior 4-H scholarship interviews and the travel experience interviews.
- Walked the committee through the Buffalo County Extension website, demonstrating where to find recent updates and showcasing the improvements that have been made.
- Discussed the 4-H STEM Discovery Toolkits, including the new projects and materials being added. Explained how the Toolkits are being promoted on social media and featured at 4-H Leaders' Association meetings to increase awareness among the public and 4-H Leaders about the resources available to them.

Soils and Crops: No Report. Vacant position.

Area Extension Director Report:

Committee Chair Report:

Next Meeting Date and Time ~ The next scheduled committee meeting is Monday, April 6, 2026, at 8:30 a.m.

Public comment not related to agenda items: None

Adjournment ~ The meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bianca Mullen, 4-H Program Assistant