Lee County Advisory Meeting  
April 28, 2011

Members present: Avron Upchurch, Marvin Joyner, Grace Lawrence, Jim Foster, Jane Barringer, Phil Griffin, Wayne Watson, Dale Hulsey, Reuhl Dabolt, Alan Cox, David Dycus, Brenda Willett, Frank Thompson, Sylvia Churchwell, Wesley Faw, Myrna Rodriguez

Staff present: Susan Condlin, Bill Stone, Seth Holt, Brenda Gwynn and Rhonda Gaster

Minutes: The January minutes were posted to the web and members were notified. Phil Griffin made a motion to approve the minutes as posted to the web. David Dycus seconded the motion. All approved. Motion passed

Treasurer’s Report: The balance in the NCCE, Lee County account is $9,045.72. There were no questions or changes. The Treasurer’s Report was approved by general consent.

Report from the State Advisory Board: Sylvia Churchwell reported at the last State Advisory Council meeting, the members “stormed the legislature” in support of Extension funding. It was highly organized and the members got to speak to all representatives. They reminded the legislators that they know the budget is tight but to remember the needs of Extension and the importance of North Carolina Cooperative Extension in the communities.

Business

Campaign for Counties/Partnering for Progress – Maurene Rickards, Regional NCCES Development Director for the Office of College Advancement, gave the council an update on the Enhancement Fund. The Campaign goal is to increase the number of accounts in each county. To date, Lee County has the most accounts, four types of accounts, Restricted, Enhancement Fund, Building to Endowment Fund and Endowment Fund. Maurene explained each account and encouraged fundraising for these accounts. She distributed information packets (attached to the original minutes).

Disaster Response Update - On Saturday, April 16, 2011 tornadoes came through Lee County leaving a line of destruction. Sunday, April 17, a press conference was held at the McSwain Center. County Commissioners, the County and City Managers, US Representative Renee Elmers, NC Representative Mike Stone and Jamie Boles, Emergency Management Personnel and the Extension staff were present. After the conference, Bill Stone and Susan Condlin chauffeured officials to the devastated areas. On Thursday, April 21, FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Assistance) set-up operations in Meeting Room B in the Lee County Farm Bureau Auditorium at the McSwain Center.
They began operating on Friday, April 22. They are currently operating seven days a week from 8:00 am until 7:00 pm. The facility is manned with security 24-hours a day, 7-days a week. They will remain in our facility until they feel all claims have been processed.

Brenda Gwynn, Horticulture Agent reported that David and Gay Watson lost their home and much of their plants. Plants were thrown around with watering tubes pulled out. Several groups have helped with the clean-up effort.

Seth reported Misty Creek Horse Farm was took a major hit, thirteen horses were killed, and no cows were hurt. Gary Thomas had structure damage; mangled tobacco barns and greenhouses but the storm did not damage any of the tobacco plants. Steve and Tim Thomas had major damage to structures and equipment. Seth showed photos of the tornado destruction. Additional photos are located on our Facebook page.

Farm Service Agency (FSA) is charged with reporting agricultural damage figures.

**Horticulture Presentation** – Brenda Gwynn, Horticulture Agent started April 1, 2011. We are happy that she joined our staff. Brenda gave her power point presentation that she gave for her interview.

**District Leadership Conference** - Was held January 28, 2011 at the Dennis A. Wicker Civic Center in Sanford. Fourteen counties participated with a total of 118. Lee County had 12 Advisory members present. The focus of the event was eating locally grown food. The group assembled 3,500 backpacks for children in need. We had lunch catered by Simply Southern in Sanford and they used all locally grown food: grilled chicken from Pilgrims; sweet potatoes and collard greens from Gary Thomas farms; deviled eggs from Shockey family; corn bread, from Gilliam Mill, with hot peppers, and homemade blueberry cobbler with blueberries from Coffer Farms. The event was very successful.

**Report to the People** – Our annual report will be held Monday, May 9, 2011 at 5:30 pm in meeting room A. County leadership and key leaders in the community will be invited. This is a great time to advocate for Extension.

**Agent Program Updates and Success Stories**

Bill Stone – 4-H
- Currently working on the Feed to Seed Program – This is a gardening program/service project, known at the state level as “Hungry to Help”. We have 10 youth organizations including churches, Boys/Girls Club and the youth at Hillcrest. Monthly workshops are held; they apply what they have learned to their garden plots. When the vegetables come in, they will pledge ½ of their produce to the local food bank.

Seth Holt – Field Crops and Livestock
- Held Area Farmers’ meetings
- Livestock Producers meetings
- Attended Career Fairs at West and East Lee Middle Schools
- Held X and V Pesticide Trainings
Conducted a Fumigation Fit Testing for farmers
Will offer a Tobacco Curing Workshop for farmers on May 19
Will offer X and V Pesticide Trainings in June
Working on Research Trials for Soybeans, Herbicide Resistant, and Livestock

County Extension Director’s Updates

Kay Morton, Extension Secretary, lives in the St. Andrews development. Her home was not severely damaged by the tornado. Had an out building destroyed and a vehicle was totaled.

Susan suggested we purchase a tape recorder to record the minutes of our meetings from the Lee Regional Fair funds. Phil Griffin so moved, David Dycus seconded. All approved. Motion passed.

Landscape funds are needed for the entryway at the McSwain Center. Three hundred dollars will get them started. The funds will come from the proceeds from the Lee Regional Fair. Phil Griffin made a motion to give $300 from the Lions Club fund to purchase plants for the entryway at the McSwain Center. Frank Thompson seconded the motion. All approved. Motion passed. Frank asked that we put $300 for landscaping in our 2012-2013 budget.

FCS Centennial - May 25, 2011 is the date of the FCS Centennial Gala Event at the McKimmon Center – There will be over 500 attending this event. Lee County will take a van if anyone is interested in attending. The tickets are $40 each. A history book is also being sold for $40 each. Lee County will receive 140 books if anyone is interested in purchasing one. For more information see Kay.

We have a 15-passenger County van for Extension use and other county organizations may rent the van.

NCCE Director’s Search – Sheri Schwab was appointed to Associate Director, NCCES, and Director of County Operations. Tom Melton was appointed Associate Director, Extension Administration. Dr. Jon Ort passed away in March.

Sandhills Farm to Table is going well. Seventy-five people have signed up for the program. The membership fee is $25 to join the Co-op. The subscription program details are as follows: Standard Box (1-2 people) = $21+tax/week; Family Box (3-4 people) = $38+tax/week. You have the option of every week or every other week. The McSwain Center is the gathering site for pickups on Thursdays from 3:00 – 6:00 pm. We need volunteers to help distribute the boxes. Would like volunteers from the Advisory Council for the month of August. This can be a fund raising event. Organizations helping will share in the proceeds paid through the program. Frank Thompson and Jane Barringer agreed to help.

The local Farmers’ Market will open April 30 at Depot Park in Sanford.

Jane Barringer suggested a flier be produced for local roadside stands.

Horn of Plenty is Friday, August 19. This is an event Commissioners across the state attend. Cooperative Extension is responsible for the evening meal. Lee County is responsible for 200 sweet potatoes and three pound cakes. Gary Thomas has donated the sweet potatoes and the ECA members will bake the sweet potatoes and the pound cakes.

Natural Gas Program was held here Tuesday, April 26. This program focused on leasing agreements. Currently it is illegal to “frack” for natural gas in North Carolina. Legislators are working to get the law changed.

Budget Updates – The state budget cuts are expected to be 10-15%. Shared supporting facts and talking points with members (attached to original minutes)
that can be used when advocating for Extension with legislators. Our county budget was submitted. An additional LCD projector and a new folding machine was requested. The county manager cut the portable projector and kept the folding machine. The final budget will be approved in June.

Concerns or Comments from Advisory Members

- Dale Hulsey stated $4 million was distributed to growers whose contracts were lost in the poultry industry.
- Reuhl Dabolt commented that Pfizer is building a stem generator that will burn bark.

Meeting adjourned at 6:20 pm.

Next meeting date: Thursday, July 28, 2011