



Winnebago County

*The Wave of the Future*

**UW EDUCATION, EXTENSION & AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2026**

**A. Call to Order**

*Members present: Steve Binder, Amber Gilbertson, Doug Zellmer, and Tim Macho. Walt Ulbricht passed away.*

*Extension Winnebago County staff present: Liliana Ramirez, Kevin Jarek, Dana Berger, and Amy Hendrickson.*

*Others present: JW (via Zoom).*

*Meeting called to order at 9:32 a.m. by Binder.*

**B. Comments from the Public Related to Items on the Agenda/Requests to Add Items to the Next Agenda**

*None.*

**C. Approval of Minutes**

1. February 18, 2025 Meeting Minutes

*Motion by Zellmer, seconded by Gilbertson to approve the February 18, 2026 meeting minutes. Passed. Yes 4, No 0, Abstained 0.*

**D. Committee Chair's Report**

*Binder welcomed Ramirez as the new Area 10 Extension Director. Walt Ulbricht passed away.*

**E. Reports and Updates**

1. Safety Share

*Zellmer discussed causes, symptoms, and management of spring allergies.*

2. UW Division of Extension Program or Educator Reports and Updates

- February 2026 Extension Winnebago County Review

*Committee members expressed appreciation for the e-newsletter and the review document, which provide regular updates from educators during months they are not presenting.*

- 4-H Youth Development - Dana Berger

*Berger presented the 2025 4-H Thriving Survey overview. The highest rating is 7. Winnebago County 4-H achieved an overall score of 6.0. Individually measured scores included: 6.0*

*Challenging Growth, 5.8 Caring Adults, 6.0 Youth-Adult Partnerships, 6.2 Youth Belonging, and 5.8 Youth Sparks. Winnebago County 4-H scored higher than WI state 4-H averages. Scores have grown since 2023 and stayed steady. Berger highlighted some club community service projects and officer training events. Berger distributed 4-H Record Book examples. There are 2 Free Little Libraries outside building door #4: 1 for a seed exchange and 1 for books and project bags. 2026 4-H Summer Camp will be June 14–17 at Camp Lakota. The location has moved due to water levels being too high at Upham Woods in recent years for campers to enjoy water activities. Berger distributed and reviewed the Winnebago County 4-H Program Updates March 2026 handout, highlighting upcoming programming.*

- Agriculture: Crops & Soils - Kevin Jarek

*Jarek reviewed the Extension Education Committee Report Winnebago County 3-18-2026 document and shared a PowerPoint presentation. He reviewed challenges farmers face regarding herbicide-resistant weeds and various plant diseases, plus examples of research and data collected/shared. AG is a relationship-based business; education and events depend on relationships, social opportunities, and information sharing between professionals. Jarek sees participants from other counties, states, and countries at his events due to a lack of these educational opportunities in other areas. His programming has increased in Winnebago County as relationships with AG professionals develop and the trustworthiness and benefits of utilizing UW Madison resources are evidenced. Jarek is the Lead Senior Judge for the World Forage Analysis Superbowl. Jarek completed an interview and article about corn production with WPR and an interview with Channel 2 discussing the impact of the Iran conflict on manure/fertilizer prices. Farmers are feeling financial stress, as evidenced by increasing bankruptcies and decreasing equipment purchases. Jarek is a key WI contact for a national research project on alfalfa winter kill by the USDA Forage Research Center. Jarek has been nominated for two awards, one focusing on mentorship and the other on culture.*

### 3. UW Division of Extension Department Administrative Report

- James P. Coughlin Center Facilities Updates

*A/V upgrades to Meeting Rooms A, B, D, and Volunteer are underway this week.*

- Extension Winnebago County Staff, Department, & Budget Updates

*Ramirez expressed her appreciation for the educators and the work they are doing. Her goal in her new role is spreading awareness regarding Extension, advocating for educators and programming. Ramirez will deliver a presentation to Winnebago County department heads to educate them on what Extension does. The Regional Dairy Educator position will open next week. County staff will be attending the rescheduled Understanding AI forum in Oshkosh on April 22. Ramirez briefly reviewed the February Winnebago County Income Statement. Tim volunteered to take Ulbricht's spot on the Winnebago County Scholarship committee.*

- UW-Madison Division of Extension Area/Region/State Updates

*None shared.*

### 4. Announcing Upcoming Extension Events at County Board Meeting Discussion

*Due to elections, the county board won't meet again until April 20.*

## F. Business Items

Action may be taken on any business items.

### 1. UWO Fox Cities Closure Updates/Discussion

*First Nation met with Executive Hintz to discuss interest in part of the campus. Macho shared that the Veterans Community Project declined considering the campus for building tiny homes and bringing education/resources to struggling veterans, choosing to focus on the Milwaukee*

*area instead. Binder noted that the county is looking for an option that can generate tax revenue for the county.*

**G. Communications Shared by Committee Members**

*None.*

**H. Next Meeting Date**

1. April 15, 2026 at 9:30 a.m.  
*Confirmed.*

**I. Adjourn**

*Binder entertained a motion to adjourn at 11:13 a.m.; Zellmer moved and Gilbertson seconded. Passed. Yes 4, No 0, Abstained 0.*

[MIN\_FOOT]