

**Advisory Council Minutes
Farm Business Management
Thief River Falls
December 29, 2000**

Meeting was called to order at 8:10 am by chairman Tom Scholin, followed by introduction of members present. Also, Joel Osowski introduced himself as the new FBM Instructor working out of East Grand Forks and covering the west polk and west marshall county areas along with Ron Dvergsten and Chad Anvinson who primarily covers the Northern valley area.

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved upon a motion by Greg and 2nd by Ron.

Budget Review: equipment, supplies, and general operating budget needs to run the program were reviewed. A motion by Curt and 2nd by Bryan was unanimously approved in support of our budget request needs.

MAAE Ag Tech Conf: Greg updated the group as to the Ag Tech Conference coming up in January for the Minnesota Association of Agricultural Educators (MAAE). The MAAE is the state organization for all high school and adult farm business mgmt instructors. Every eighth year our region is responsible for the planning of the conference. Greg and Adawn Melbye, High School Ag Instructor, are this years co-chairs in the planning effort. Danie and Ron are also serving as committee chairs for part of the planning. Many worthwhile workshops are being planned as this winter conference is intended to be continuing education for all educators present. A special thanks was also given to our local banks for their financial support for the meal functions.

Prairie Grains Conference: Ron reviewed Farm Business Mgmt's role again in this years Prairie Grains Conf held Dec. 5&6. FBM Instructors put on 4 workshops for the conference- (two on marketing, one on labor relations and one on utilizing the internet). A strong working relationship between NW Farm Bus. Mgmt. and the Wheat and Barley growers continues.

Recruiting in ND: a question arised by the council as to whether or not we could recruit students in North Dakota. We can, but ND students would not be eligible for the MN state subsidy and would have to pay \$185.00 more because of that.

Current Topic Meetings: Danie updated the group on what was being planned for our winter current topic meeting series this year and also told the group that we are always looking for suggestions on topics, etc and to please let us know. Much discussion took place on the Annual Meeting which hasn't been overly well attended the past several years, as to what could be done to improve attendance. It was generally thought to keep it as short as possible and any big guest speakers may very well be better off planned on a separate day so it doesn't get too long. Also mentioned was possibly holding a short annual meeting review in 3 - 4 locations vs. the two locations of the past since our

students are quite spread out. Many ideas were thrown out and it was basically left up to the instructors to decide what they could handle and wanted to do.

Mentoring Program: Greg informed the group about the newly installed statewide mentoring program that is run in conjunction with the UofM and the MAAE to help new instructors in their first few years on the job. Northwest area has had an informal mentoring process in the past and this just makes it a little more formal with statewide meetings involving all new instructors and mentors to collaborate and discuss some of the challenges and strategies that can be helpful in those first couple years on the job. All of the Instructors in the local area(Ron, Danie and Greg) are currently serving as mentors for new instructors.

Internet course development / process: Ron notified the group that due to a lack of student enrollment and difficulty in marketing, that the DTN courses on Ratio Analysis were discontinued. However, Northland Farm Management was the recipient of a MEALC grant to impliment a series of 4 courses for use over the internet. Over the past summer, Ron and Greg Tullis(instructor in Moorhead) developed 2 of the courses. They have now found a server that can convert the courses to a web-based format to put them over the internet hopefully this spring/summer. Also this summer they will be developing the next two courses. Ron indicated that with the changing technologies and so on that this might be a way of also providing some additional educational material to our existing student base to supplement our one on one delivery methods.

Statewide FBM Impact Study: Over the past year, the University of Minnesota did a thorough survey/ study on the effects of Farm Business Management on the students we reach on a statewide basis. Those surveyed included Instructors, Students, Students Spouses, Bankers, and other Ag Professionals. Bob only had time to key in on a couple of points, but left each council member with a complete copy of the impact study for their review.

Enrollments: Danie quickly updated the group on our current student enrollment numbers which are consistent for the most part. We could always use a few new students annually to replace those who graduate, retire, or just simply exit the business of farming for a variety of reasons. Danie did indicate that Joel is starting a new program and is in need of some student leads in the West Polk and West Marshall areas.

Discussion Item: considerable discussion took place regarding the recent presentation put on by Ron Hanson, Economist from Nebraska, and who might be a good presenter again for next year. Bob asked the group for input on this and to let us know if they see a dynamic presenter in the near future etc.

Upon a motion by Bryan, 2nd by Ron, the meeting was adjourned at 10:20am.

Greg Dvergsten
Secretary