UCR Advisory Council  
Wednesday, March 2, 2011  
7:30 – 8:30 a.m.  ~ CF206

Present:  Aaron Benike, Armin Budimlic, Sam Ellis, Guy Finne, LuAnn Hiniker, Tom Horvei, Craig Johnson, Julie Nigon, Warren Oslin, Diane Schwinghammer, Estelle Souchet Graves, Don Supalla, David Thompson

Absent:   John Devlin, Ron Smith

Recorder: Judy Kingsbury

Guests:  Stephanie Heim (University of Minnesota Extension Farm to School Coordinator) and JoAnne Judge-Dietz (Olmsted County Public Health Nurse)

Call to Order
Budimlic called the meeting to order and expressed his sorrow on the passing of a great public servant, Olmsted County Commissioner Michael Podulke.

Approval of Minutes for February
The minutes of the February 2011 meeting were approved as written.

Farm to School Program
Heim began the presentation by acknowledging everyone knows what they should eat, but as a nation we are eating more packaged foods. Heim added often nutritional policies don’t match agricultural policies (i.e. it is anticipated that 13 million more acres of agricultural land would be needed to grow enough fruits and vegetables for everyone to consume the recommended five servings per day). In addition, Heim stated it is anticipated that a family of four would have to spend $10 a day on just fruits and vegetables to meet the recommendation.

The Farm to School Program connects K-12 schools and local farms with the objectives of serving healthy meals in school cafeterias, providing agriculture, health and nutrition education opportunities, and supporting local and regional farmers. There are currently 100 school districts engaged in the Farm to School Program in Minnesota, with many featuring local products at the beginning of the school year, and then utilizing stored root crops, whole grains, beans, and meats during the remainder of the year. On average, Minnesota schools serve over 780,000 meals a day, and when students learn more about healthy choices, that knowledge is taken home and shared with family members. Many school districts are also using the sale of local products for fundraising to replace the wrapping paper or pizza sales. Heim also reported that the Sustainable Farming Association works with school districts to provide an educational experience for students through a better understanding of how healthy food choices affect their community, their farmers, and their environment. Heim noted, however, that there are opportunities for improvement as well because the program does require extra prep-time and additional costs.

Judge-Dietz stated the Olmsted County Health Department is focusing on three areas (increasing physical activity, reducing tobacco exposure, and improving nutrition). Judge-Dietz commended RCTC on implementing a smoke-free campus policy, and working with the Olmsted County Health Department to provide healthier choices in vending machines. The College is also looking at the possibility of using campus land for a potential community garden. Judge-Dietz challenged the Council Members to participate by providing healthier choices at meetings, supporting the Eat Smart program, purchasing products locally, and providing non-food items as incentives at recruitment fairs.

Meeting adjourned at 8:38 a.m.

Next meeting:  Wednesday, April 6, 2011 – 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.  – CF206

Winona State University Rochester Update