
Sponsor: Public Health

Meeting Date: 11/19/2024

Title: Memorandum of Agreement with University of Minnesota Extension for 4-H Youth Development and Extension Volunteer Program

File Number: 2024-534

Background and Rationale:

Ramsey County has previously partnered with University of Minnesota Extension (Extension) to support two public education programs under two separate agreements:

- The 4-H Youth Development Program (4-H)
- The Extension Volunteer Program (formerly known as The Master Gardner Program)

Minnesota Statute 38.34 authorizes a board of county commissioners to incur expenses and spend money for county Extension work. Ramsey County currently provides funding for the general operations and employment of Extension Educators to administer these programs to county residents. Public Health will fund both programs for the proposed 2025-2027 agreement.

4-H Program:

4-H Youth Development Program (4-H) is delivered in a county-based funding model across the state of Minnesota. This historical partnership between Extension and counties have allowed the rich resources at the university and in local communities to be exchanged for greater understanding and benefit.

4-H is a positive youth development program for young people of all beliefs and backgrounds in grades K-12, empowering them with skills to lead for a lifetime. Through hands-on non-formal learning experiences, young people engage with peers and caring adults to develop a spark for learning while nurturing and growing their leadership, civic engagement, and life skills.

In Ramsey County, the 4-H Youth Development program:

- Supports hundreds of member youth from across Ramsey County to engage in 4-H clubs, camps, showcases and other 4-H learning experiences. This includes recruitment, screening, and training of over 150 volunteers, interns, and partners to support these youth experiences.
- Partners with Ramsey County Library to offer enrichment experiences for young people.
- Builds sustainable funding out of the 4-H Ramsey County Leaders' Council that supports Ramsey County 4-H youths' participation in the larger 4-H program and reduces barriers to participation.
- Provides youth worker training and technical assistance to youth-serving organizations.
- Will support public education opportunities and programs related to waste management and recycling.

Extension Volunteer Program:

St. Paul - Ramsey County Public Health has contracted with the Extension Service since the 1990's to provide programs and employ Extension Volunteer Coordinator staff, specifically in support of

public education opportunities related to waste management. The program teaches residents gardening skills and strengthens community health and environmental stewardship through composting, recycling education at public facing events, and through gardening projects with area schools and with community organizations. Investment in this program leverages close to 10,000 hours of volunteer time annually in Ramsey County, reaching thousands of residents in various locations throughout the county.

The Ramsey County board recently engaged in discussions with Extension about updating the name of this volunteer program by removing "Master" from contracts and program documents. This Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) submitted by Extension for the current contract cycle reflect this consensus, replacing "Master Gardener Program" with "Extension Volunteer Program" across all documents.

Recommendation:

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners resolved to:

1. Approve the Memorandum of Agreement with University of Minnesota Extension for administration of the 4-H Youth Development and Extension Volunteer Program education programs for the period of January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2027.
2. Authorize the Chair and Chief Clerk to execute the agreement.
3. Authorize the County Manager to approve and execute amendments in accordance with the provisions of the agreement, provided the amounts are within the limits of available funding.

A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Frethem, seconded by Commissioner Xiong. Motion passed.

Aye: - 6: Frethem, McGuire, Moran, Ortega, Reinhardt, and Xiong

By: 

Jason Yang, Interim Chief Clerk - County Board