

# Minnesota Rural Health Association

## Minutes

February 22, 2007

State Capitol Building

300 North

**Present:** Maddy Forsberg, Mark Schoenbaum, Tim Statton, Marnie Moore, Jenni Beech, Liz Quam, Barbara Muesing, Judy Neppel

**Guests:** Barbara Brandt, Laurissa Stigen, Angela Bolus, Brendan Ashby, Gwen Haalas, Kathy Huntley, and Linda Giersdorf

- 1. Welcome and Introductions:** President Quam welcomed the contingency of AHEC representatives and the guest from the Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging, Mankato Office and asked those in attendance to introduce themselves and talk about their positions. Considerable discussion about the focus of the AHEC work and it's congruence with the MRHA's ensued.
- 2. Discussion of Cyber Conferences:** President Quam discussed the cyber conferences that MRHA has offered for the past 4 weeks. There are 2 left but MRHA will be seeking additional presentation topics. The AHEC group agreed to participate in a cyber presentation after Easter. Presenters for topics on the legislative budget and new legislative proposals will be sought after mid April.
- 3. AHEC Discussion:** Dr. Brandt discussed the funding sources of the AHEC's and the Greater Minnesota Strategy, Community-Campus Partnerships in Action plan. The focus of the plan is to seek rural communities interested in hosting health professional students to complete an experiential learning rotation in local health systems, physician's offices, pharmacies, dental clinics, rural clinics, community health centers and social service agencies.
- 4. Policy Summit:** President Elect Muesing discussed the planning of a policy conference co-hosted by MRHA and the UND Center for Rural Health. The Summit will be in August, 2007, at UMC. Efforts to include other state rural health associations will be made. Suggested title concluded as "Upper Midwest Rural Health Policy Summit". Care to differentiate this conference from the Rural Health Conference on June 18 and 19<sup>th</sup>, 2007, in Duluth is important. Congressional members from MN and ND will be invited to present either in person or using a video format. Discussions have occurred with Congressman Peterson and Coleman's staff while the UND planning personnel have been in contact with their Congressman. We will extend the invitation to our Legislative

membership as well. Ideas discussed as potential topics included: federal policy (Medicare and Medicaid), Wisconsin Farmers Health Cooperative legislation , establishing a health insurance purchasing alliance to provide affordable coverage to farmers, the farm health insurance study, rural pharmacist story, disaster preparedness, showcase University of Minnesota and/or MN Department of Health, Office of Rural Health and Primary Care initiatives.

5. **Other:** Representative Mary Ellen Otremba, Health and Human Service, Finance Division, member joined the meeting. A discussion on rural health issues ensued. Maddy Forsberg discussed the Minnesota Association of Area Agencies on Aging's "Communities for a Lifetime Initiative".

The meeting adjourned at 10:30AM and the AHEC and MRHA groups began their visits to the Legislators.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Judith Neppel  
MRHA Executive Director