

University of Illinois Unit 25 Extension Council Meeting
Wednesday, January 31, 2024
Edwards County Farm Bureau Meeting Room
15 S. 5th Street
Albion, IL 62806
6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Members Present: Terry Bruce, Justine Basnett, Jim Brewer, Doug Raber, Kelly Biggs, Paul Bruinsma, Tonya Potts, Michelle Piller, Lily Simpson, Julie Clodfelter, Megan Daughtery (via Zoom), Karissa Anderson

Members Absent: Tonya Potts, Haleigh Buchanan, Jan Ridgely

Staff Members Present: Tara Buerster, Katie Bell

CALL TO ORDER

Jim Brewer called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Council and staff members introduced themselves to all in attendance.

COUNCIL ORIENTATION

Tara Buerster presented an orientation slideshow to the council reviewing the history and inner workings of U f I Extension.

OFFICER NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Council Chair: Jim Brewer was nominated to remain as out Council Chairperson by Julie Clodfelter and seconded by Terry Bruce. Jim accepted the nomination. No other nominations were made. Council members voted unanimously, Jim Brewer was elected to remain as Council Chairman.

Council Vice Chair: Terry Bruce was nominated for Council Vice Chair by Julie Clodfelter and seconded by Doug Raber. Terry accepted the nomination. No other

nominations we made. Council members voted unanimously, Terry Bruce was elected as the Council Vice Chairman.

Secretary: Justine Basnett was nominated to remain as Council Secretary by Jim Brewer and seconded by Michelle Piller. Justine accepted the nomination. No other nominations were made. Council members voted unanimously, Justine Basnett was elected to remain as the Council Secretary.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes from the March 28, 2023 meeting were reviewed by the council. Michelle Piller made a motion to accept the minutes as reviewed, Terry Bruce seconded the motion. All were in favor, motion passed.

Minutes from the November 28, 2023 meeting were reviewed by the council. Terry Bruce made a motion to accept the minutes as reviewed, Julie Clodfelter seconded the motion. All were in favor, motion passed.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Tara Buerster presented the Unit 25 Financial Report as of January 2024. Michelle Piller made a motion to accept the financial report as presented, Justine Basnett seconded the motion. All were in favor, motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

- a. County Office Spaces: Edwards County will begin the 2nd year of their 3 year lease in the new office building. Richland continues to be an office of concern due to age and space restrictions. Tara is working to find building options that meet the needs of the Richland County staff. There is discussion of offering to pay some of the utilities in the Wayne County office.
- b. AgrAbility Program: A new service offered by Unit 25 Extension, funded by a federal grant, to help disabled farmers in the area. This program will allow assessments to be made to offer plans and recommendations for safer/easier use of equipment and devices. It will also offer educational opportunities and informational resources on a variety of topics. Tara Buerster and Katie Bell are trained as ambassadors for the program.
- c. Open Meetings Act Training: All council members are required to take the training. At this time Karrissa Anderson and Lily Simpson are the only council

members that have not yet completed the training, as they are new council members. Tara will be sending them information on how to complete the training.

- d. Council Vacancies: Tara provided a handout that was reviewed of Council member terms, as well as current and upcoming vacancies.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. Approval Check for Signors for In/Out Accounts: A list of all in/out account check signors was presented to the Council members. It was recommended that we remove Kacie Haag from Lawrence County and replace her with Megan Daugherty. It was also recommended that we add Katie Bell to Richland County. Terry Bruce made a motion to approve the recommended changes, motion was seconded by Justine Basnett. All were in favor, motion carried. Signors for In/Out Accounts are as follows:

Edwards County

Tara Buerster
Samantha Gaither
Kathy St. Ledger
Doug Raber

Lawrence County

Tara Buerster
Samantha Gaither
Kacie Haag – **remove**
Megan Daugherty - **add**
Debbie McDaniel

Richland County

Katie Bell - **add**
Tara Buerster
Samantha Gaither
Deborah Mitchell
Tammy Williams

Wabash County

Tara Buerster
Samantha Gaither
Tonya Potts
Katrina Glick

Haleigh Buchanan

Wayne County

Tara Buerster

Samantha Gaither

Paul Bruinsma

Melinda States

Pat Vaughan

- b. Engaging Diverse Audiences: Tara reviewed with the council again that as part of the Unit's DEIA goal we are to work to serve underserved audiences in our areas. She reviewed with the council that she and Katie would be attending the mandatory Navigation Differences training in Effingham. Tara also discussed the upcoming efforts to reach out and serve youth with IEP's as part of this goal. She also mentioned the possibility of staff attending EDP training.

STAFF REPORTS

County Director: Tara Buerster reviewed poverty simulations that she has facilitated, as well as plans to facilitate more in the near future due to requests coming in. Tara also reported on the disaster preparedness training offered in partnership with Carle Richland Hospital and TRiO Upward Bound at IECC. This is a program that will be offered again. Tara reviewed updates on each program area and staffing. She mentioned the opportunity to open a Marketing position and the possibility of a third educator for the Unit in the near future.

Youth Development Educator: Samantha Gaither was unable to attend the meeting but provided a written report of the current and upcoming programming in youth development. Each council member received this written report.

Local Foods Small Farm Educator: Katie Bell gave a quick overview of the programs she is currently working on in the communities. She has also been assisting with some 4-H programming when needed. She provided handouts to the council members on upcoming programs, Annie's Project and Spring Introduction to Gardening Series, and gave a brief description of these upcoming programs.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was made.

FUTURE MEETING DATE

Council members discussed and agreed to move future meeting time to 6:00 p.m., while remaining in the Edwards County Farm Bureau Meeting room. The next Unit 25 Extension Council Meeting will be March 26, 2024, in the Edwards County Farm Bureau meeting room.

ADJOURN

Terry Bruce made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Michelle Piller seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.