

University of Illinois Extension Council Meeting Minutes

Henry, Mercer, Rock Island, and Stark Counties

Tuesday, February 20, 2024, via Zoom

Council Members Present: Barb Chiles, Dave Dyer, Logan Goerks, Spencer Griffin
Emily Herricks, Janet Hill, Jill Milroy, Bob Mueller, Tami Rouse, Dianna Saelens

Illinois Extension Staff Present: Kristin Bogdonas, Jenny Garner, Tayler Louscher,
Elaine Kaple, Russell Medley, Emily Swihart

Public Comments: Not applicable.

Previous Minutes: The minutes of the last meeting on August 15 and October 17, 2024, were approved as read on a motion by Tami Rouse and seconded by Barb Chiles. Motion carried.

Fiscal Report:

- The Unit 7 Trust and Self-Supporting accounts ending January 31, 2024, were provided for review by Jenny Garner.

Council Reports:

- No report.

Staff Programming Information:

- Russell Medley updated the Council on the housing study for Henry, Mercer, and Stark counties. Four graduate students from the Department of Regional and Urban Planning have interviewed local economic development representatives and have developed a number of reports, maps, and tables that will form the basis of the regional report. ECQC (Emerging Cities of the Quad Cities) networking group is serving as the steering committee for the project.
- Kristin Bogdonas reported Fit to Strong! program which is a group physical activity and behavior change for persons with arthritis. 73% of participants completed this 12-week evidence-based exercise for osteoarthritis.



- Tayler Louscher began working on a tray waste study with Rock Island School District. Their food director identified a school that has a large amount of waste and an unpopular meal to host the study. More to follow.
- Elaine Kaple talked about a new in-school program with Washington Junior High School, Rock Island, which involves teaching a visual arts program series to a special education class.
- Emily Swihart reported Master Gardener volunteers and unit horticulture staff hosted another successful Nursery School was held this past weekend with 220 attendees choosing from multiple workshop sessions.

Announcements:

- Our unit developed an agreement that started in January 2024 with the University of Illinois Broadband Lab to house their digital navigator Gracie Clucas at our Galva office. She shares space with Nicole Haverback, our watershed outreach associate made possible through a partnership with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency.
- The Rock Island County youth development program coordinator position will be posting soon on the University of Illinois Extension job board. The goal is to have someone hired prior to summer to experience and learn about the summer 4-H shows.
- The Milan Extension office remodel to convert to single use, gender neutral and American Disability Act compliance has been completed.

Concurrence of In-and-Out Accounts:

- Tami Rouse reviewed audit committee findings and reported ending balances of the in-and-out accounts as follows: Henry/Stark at \$6,845.78, Mercer at \$3,095.20, and Rock Island at \$2,547.38.
- Concurrence of the unit's in-and-out accounts were accepted on a motion made by Jill Milroy and seconded by Barb Chiles. Motion carried.

Review of Community Needs Assessment:

Jenny Garner gave a brief overview of community needs assessment conducted by the unit and the Council began reviewing at our 2023-2024 meeting schedule. Council members engaged in further discussion on Health, Enhancing and Preserving Natural Resources and Landscape Environment:

- Discussion was held about systemic barriers for persons in poverty. A Rooting Out Poverty event is scheduled for the evening of February 28 at the Moline Public

Library. Rev. Dwight Ford is driving this effort. Another Poverty in Health conference is scheduled for April 18 at the Rhythm City Casino.

- The public are confused about how to access Medicare and where to go for assistance.
- The unit has had success reaching farmers through direct mail. It was noted that an online component is still needed for younger farmers and women.
- The Gardening In the Air live webinar series seems to build more than single webinar events. It was noted that an online version of Nursery School might be viable.
- NCRS and Soil & Water conservation districts focus on conservation and are a good starting point for small farmers.

Adjournment: There being no further business to come before the meeting, a motion was made by Tami Rouse and seconded by Barb Chiles that the meeting be adjourned. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Milroy