**University of Illinois Extension**
Clark, Crawford and Edgar Counties
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Unit Extension Council
Thursday, May 28, 2026
Clark County Extension Office
15493 N. State Hwy 1, Marshall, IL
9:00 am

Council members present included Dru Shotts, Kim Ross, Doug Roberts, and Christine Hilliard. Staff in attendance were Susan Sloop, Jennifer Bishop, and Meredith Probst.

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m. by Chair Doug Roberts at the Clark County Extension Office.

**Approval of Minutes**

The previous meeting minutes were presented for review. Dru Shotts made a motion to approve the minutes, Kim Ross seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

**Staffing and Unit Updates**

Susan Sloop provided an overview of staffing changes and ongoing initiatives across the unit. She announced the retirement of Rebecca Schiver, concluding her role as Agriculture and Natural Resources Educator Program Coordinator. Susan shared that interviews are scheduled for June 24 for the Local Food Systems and Small Farms Educator position.

Susan reviewed current programming efforts, including preparations for upcoming 4-H fairs and continued agricultural safety programming such as the Ride Right Rally held in Edgar County. She reported a successful plant and bake sale with approximately ten vendors participating.

Jennifer Bishop reported on community engagement initiatives, including planning for poverty simulation events in both schools and community settings. She shared updates on her involvement with United Way and noted plans to distribute Mindful Me kits to Clark County schools. Jennifer emphasized opportunities for council members to assist with and promote upcoming events.

Meredith Probst introduced herself as the new Food and Nutrition Educator and discussed her transition into the role. She outlined her work in food preservation programming and partnerships with Paris Community Hospital and the Be Well Coalition. Meredith also reported on the deer donation program. She further discussed developing relationships with local food pantries through the newly formed coalition.



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**Additional Business**

The council engaged in discussion regarding strategies to improve awareness and participation in Extension programming. Members emphasized the importance of expanding outreach beyond digital methods. Ideas included creating printed newsletters or flyers with QR codes, utilizing library partnerships and digital signage, increasing social media presence, and offering satellite office hours at libraries.

Additional discussion included leveraging partnerships with organizations such as Farm Bureau and using high-traffic locations for promotion.

Discussion centered on community partnerships and engagement opportunities. Members highlighted the value of collaborating with libraries for outreach and expressed interest in volunteering for upcoming programs. Additional topics included food safety education, gardening programs, and support for local entrepreneurs. Members also noted the importance of increasing public awareness that Extension events, including fairs, are open to all community members.

**Impact: What Is Your Role**

Susan led an impact gallery walk activity to demonstrate how Extension measures success beyond participation numbers. She introduced the concept of impact chains, focusing on participant learning, behavior changes, and broader community outcomes.

Council members reviewed program impact examples and discussed how they could support Extension efforts. Opportunities identified included volunteering at 4-H fairs and Ag Safety Day, assisting with judging or mentoring, and promoting events within their personal and professional networks.

**Public Input**

The Robinson Library's 50th Anniversary Celebration on June 6 was shared as a community outreach opportunity.

**Adjournment**

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:17 am

Future Meeting Dates

August 27, 2026 – 9:00 AM

December 10, 2026 – 9:00 AM