



Extension Council Meeting Minutes

Time and Place: A meeting of the Extension Council Board was held on Thursday, March 6, 2025, at the Moultrie-Douglas County Extension Office.

Participants: The following members were in attendance: Kelly Barringer, Gary Gergeni, Scott Seegmiller, Tom Webb, Erik Stollard, Janet Blade, and Jessie McClusky.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm and a quorum of the Board was present. Tom Webb called the meeting to order.

Since this was the first meeting of the Council year and new members joined, Jessie McClusky facilitated a trivia icebreaker game.

Approval of September 5, 2025: The September 5, 2024, minutes are accepted as true and correct

Moved: Kelly Barringer

Seconded: Gary Gergeni

Motion carried

Program Spotlight

- Jessie McClusky shared a preview of the annual impact report for the unit and highlighted increases in 4-H from the year prior: membership up 6.4%, clubs up 10%, volunteers up 9.5%, and fair exhibits up 44%. She also mentioned a significant increase in produce provided by the Partners in Produce program from 108,000 pounds in 2023 to 137,000 pounds in 2024.
- Jessie McClusky shared the strategic plan for Illinois Extension, including an informative video (<https://youtu.be/m3Hgu6BNZuE?si=mCU1uU1YNR2AE9JG>) outlining the eight strategic priorities: community, economy, environment, food and agriculture, health, partnerships, technology and discovery, and workforce excellence.
- Jessie McClusky shared that the team will launch a needs assessment this spring to determine the focus areas for the next three years. Focus areas will align with the strategic plan. She encouraged input from the team to identify key stakeholders, including individuals unfamiliar with Extension.
- Jessie McClusky also expressed interest in developing an agriculture program in the unit, highlighting the potential benefits for local growers and small farms. However, the needs assessment will be used to determine the needs and support of the community.

Committee Reports:

- Programs
 - Jessie McClusky provided the following updates/information:
 - Fairs:
 - Shelby: July 19-23
 - Cumberland: July 16-22



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- Coles: July 27-Aug 1
 - Mo-Do: July 28 & 29
 - Multi-County Horse Show: June 28
 - School Programming:
 - Jessie highlighted the success of the unit's school programming, which was increased based on feedback from the previous needs assessment. The programs, including Junk Drawer Robotics, Welcome to the Real World, Your Thoughts Matter, Walk in My Shoes, and SEL programs, have been well-received and have led to increased demand for more programs.
- Marketing
 - Jessie McClusky shared that Morgan Jones resigned in November. The position will be posted in the next week or two but will be a part-time hybrid position.
- Membership
 - Jessie proposed reconvening the membership committee to help select a new slate of officers for the Council's chair, vice chair, and secretary positions. The committee, consisting of Gary Gergeni, Janet Blade, and Scott Seegmiller, would determine who to nominate.
 - Jessie McClusky noted the need for a minimum of 15 members, but the current number is around 8.
 - The committee has until the next meeting to finalize the nominations.
 - Concerns were raised about representing the various counties and contacting interested members.
 - Jessie McClusky will coordinate, via email, the membership committee and provide them with an updated membership list.
 - Council members are to email Jessie McClusky if they are interested in serving as chair, vice chair, or secretary.
- Financial
 - Jessie McClusky shared information on how campus funds, support, and resources help the local Extension offices meet the needs of the communities in the form of staffing, technology assistance, legal support, employee benefits, HR, accounting, marketing and communication, and professional development.
 - Jessie McClusky requested to remove Andrea McNeil from all Unit bank accounts at First Neighbor Bank and State Bank of Arthur and to add Krista Houk to the Unit's bank accounts at First Neighbor Bank and State Bank of Arthur.

Moved: Erik Stollard

Seconded: Scott Seegmiller

Motion: Carried



Old Business:

- Jessie McClusky announced the retirement of Susan Stollard and the hiring of Katy Titus as the Moultrie-Douglas Community Outreach Worker. Also, Krista Houk joined the team in November as a 4-H Youth Development Educator.
- Jessie McClusky also shared that the unit has a summer internship opportunity for individuals in college and is hiring part-time help for youth programming (positions open to those 16+).

New Business:

- Jessie McClusky shared a document on the roles and responsibilities of the Council. She emphasized its advisory role in guiding programs, including assisting with needs assessments.
- Annual membership agreement and demographic forms were handed out; members should complete them and return them to Jessie McClusky by March 31, 2025.
- Master Gardener Advisory Board representation: Jessie McClusky shared that the Master Gardener bylaws state they should have a member on Extension Council. Council members agreed they could have an at-large position.
- 2025 Meeting Schedule: Tom Webb shared the meeting schedule, and all agreed to the set dates of June 5, September 4, and December 4. All board meetings will begin at 6 p.m. at the Moultrie-Douglas Extension office and have a virtual option.
 - Committee meetings will be held as needed.
- Kelly Barringer brought up concerns over the new 4-H volunteer training requirements, stating they have become more demanding. Janet Blade agreed, especially for those who are already busy. Jessie McClusky advised them to discuss their concerns with their local program coordinator as there are multiple options to meet the requirements and explained that the training requirement change is meant to provide support and resources...to make the best better.

Executive Session: NONE

Public Comments: NONE

Adjourn: A motion to adjourn was made by Scott Seegmiller, and Erik Stollard seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:16 pm.

NEXT MEETING: June 5, 2025