



Illinois Extension

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

**University of Illinois Extension
Sangamon, Menard, and Logan Counties
Extension Council & Board Meeting Agenda**

March 20, 2025 – 7 p.m.

Sangamon County Extension Office – 700 S. Airport Dr. Springfield, IL 62707

- **Call to Order** – Chairman Mendenhall called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
- **Council Members & Staff Present:** Samantha O’Neil, David Mendenhall, Maddie Atterberry, Reagen Tibbs, Jennifer Fishburn, and Terri Casey
- **Previous Meeting Minutes**

MOTION: Motion to accept the previous meetings minutes was made by Mendenhall and seconded by O’Neil. The motion passed unanimously.

- **Financial/Fiscal Updates**

Efforts are underway to seek additional State of Illinois funding for Extension. David Mendenhall recently joined Carl Baker, Assistant Director, Government Relations, and Steve Wald, ACES Director of Government Relations at the state capitol to meet with lawmakers about increasing Extension funding. David reported that the lawmakers he spoke to were supportive, however he sees difficulties given the current budget timeline and priorities.

Currently working on the FY2026 budget. The main focus will be mitigation of the continued effects of higher prices. Rising costs remains a concern. Working with our County Boards and their representatives on this Council, we are requesting an increase in our levy amount in all three counties equal to the official CPI increase of (2.9%) as allowed by law.

Annual Council Agreement: During the current fiscal year Logan, Menard and Sangamon Extension offices received donations totaling \$16,757.32.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mendenhall and seconded by O’Neil to approve the FY2026 Extension Council Agreement in the amount of \$16,757.32. Motion passed unanimously.

Menard Office update – The Menard County Farm Bureau sold their building to Menard County. The county is going to continue our current lease, and we do not expect any changes,

other than the county is going to be doing a fair amount of renovation and updates that we may have to work around.

- **Program Updates**

Casey handed out staff program reports and pointed out highlights.

- **Staffing Update**

The search process is currently underway for the new Local Food Systems Program Coordinator position. Interviews are scheduled to take place in the coming week. Thanks to additional financial support from Sangamon County, funding is now available for this role. The coordinator will work across the unit and surrounding area to strengthen local food systems by connecting producers with buyers, particularly institutions, identifying barriers, and linking resources, groups, and individuals to help build a more sustainable and resilient system.

- **Reaching New Audiences/Meeting Community Need**

Casey mentioned that there is currently an additional open seat on the council, and she is seeking diverse voices to join our Extension Council, especially those who understand the needs of historically underserved audiences, as well as serving audiences most at risk and in need of our services. She asked the council that if they know of someone who could represent these audiences and whose experience would be helpful, please reach out to her and she will reach out to them.

During a discussion on increasing engagement, O'Neil highlighted a key challenge: the limited participation of older 4-H members in meetings. She emphasized that one of the aspects she enjoys most about 4-H is its broad scope and that it's not centered on a single topic. Instead, it offers a wide variety of projects and experiences, allowing youth to explore areas that align with their personal interests. O'Neil also expressed interest in fostering more collaboration between 4-H and FFA, noting that both organizations often cover similar subject matter. Given how busy young people are today, she suggested that combining activities could help more youth participate in both programs, enhancing their overall experience.

- **Set Future Meeting Dates**

*Thursday, July 24 – 7 PM (Logan County Extension Office -Lincoln) *Rescheduled the Thursday, June 19, 2024, meeting, due to it being a holiday and the offices being closed.

Thursday, October 16, 2024 – 7 PM (Sangamon County Extension Office - Springfield)

- **Public Input**

There was no public input.

- **Adjournment**

MOTION to adjourn made by O'Neil and seconded by Mendenhall. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:52 pm.