

Unit 27 Council Meeting
September 18, 2025
11:00a.m. – 1:00 pm

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by Ruby Lingle at 11:04am. Verbal introductions were made around the table and name cards were placed before each attendee. Civil rights information slips and meeting sign-in sheet were circulated around the room.

Council members present:

Alexander/Pulaski	Johnson	Massac	Union
Shawna Rhine (online) Denna Williams Patricia Wilson Curtis Marshall	Raymond Bieri Evan Coulson Kylie Vaughn (YOUTH) Chesley Williams	Tracie Key Orlando McReynolds Don Robbins James Walton	Ruby Lingle Chuck Weilmuenster

Staff present: County Director Jody Johnson, Erin Garrett, Ifeoluwa Adesoye, Kaylee Leach, John Shadowens, Monica Meyer, Shannon Pulliam

Meeting minutes from May 15, 2025, were reviewed. Motion made by Don Robbins and seconded by Curtis Marshall to approve prior minutes. Motion carried.

Council Business

○ Council Membership

Noted that 9 council members' terms end in December (fiscal-year to calendar-year transition).

Discussion about recruiting new representatives, especially for Union County, as many members will rotate off simultaneously.

Suggestions included recruiting from diverse professions (agriculture, healthcare, youth, etc.) and staggering terms (2- and 4-year terms) to ensure continuity.

○ Proposed Check Signers

County Director Johnson gave a brief explanation of the in/out checking accounts maintained by each County office and the purpose of dual check signers. Due to account consolidation, council approved new check signers. Motion was made by Denna Williams, seconded by Curtis Marshall for the following individuals to serve as check signers at the specified County office. Motion carried.

Alexander/Pulaski	Johnson	Massac	Union
Closed	Jody Johnson John Shadowens Kristi Stout Anne Townsend	Closed	Closed

An audit will occur in late September, led by Lynn McMahon, Angie Webb, and Heather Thompson, reviewing all four county accounts prior to final consolidation.

- A quick review of the campus holiday schedule was conducted by attendees to be aware of anticipated office closures.

County Extension Director Report

Leadership Transition

- New Extension Director Dr. Matthew Vann begins September 22; described as innovative and experienced in securing nontraditional funding.

Budget

- Trust Fund balance: ~\$251,000
- Revolving Fund: ~\$29,000 (mostly 4-H program fees and leftover royalties)
- Smith-Lever funds: \$200,000 for program and lease expenses
- SNAP-Ed budget (\$433,000) eliminated from federal bill — staff retained through February 2026, then significant cuts expected
- Other funding: USDA HFFI grant (\$750K ongoing); pursuing DCEO-WIU (\$30K, Oct–Dec); exploring ICJIA R3 funding using cannabis tax revenues to sustain youth positions

Facilities & Cairo Update

- Cairo classroom operational with AmeriCorps VISTA Steve Tarver facilitating programs (e.g., financial literacy workshop with Shawnee College, planning 4-H activities and partnerships with TRIO and Arrowleaf).

Civil Rights and Staffing

- Civil rights training continuing; honorary appointments letters issued; ongoing search for sustainable funding for SNAP-Ed staff.

Professional Development

- Staff completing cybersecurity training by Sept 30.

- Jody graduated from National Extension Leadership Development (NELD) and is pursuing a \$25,000 E-Extension Disaster Network grant with Kansas State, Missouri, and Wisconsin partners.

Advocacy

- Working with Carl Baker (UIUC Government Affairs) and Governor's Office to include Extension funding in the Governor's budget due to SNAP-Ed cuts.

Unit Reports

- Written reports were provided for:
 - 4-H Youth Development
 - Natural Resources, Environment, & Energy (NREE)
 - SNAP-Ed/INEP
 - Community Economic Development (CED)

Dates and Times of future council meeting

- December 11, 2025 @ Vienna – 11am-1pm (NREE)
- February 19, 2026 @ Vienna - 11am-1pm (SNAP)
- May 21, 2026 @ Vienna - 11am-1pm (CED)
- September _____, 2026 @ Vienna – 11am-1pm (4-H)

Motion to adjourn made by Evan Coulson and seconded by Curtis Marshall. No objections, meeting adjourned at 12:58pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Monica Meyer

Unit 27 - Office Support Specialist

For Unit 27 Unit Council secretary, Chesley Williams