

Unit 27 Council Meeting
September 26, 2024
11:00a.m. – 1:00 pm

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by Ruby Lingle at 11:02am. Verbal introductions were made around the table and **civil rights information slips and meeting sign-in sheet were circulated around the room.**

Council members present:

Alexander/Pulaski	Johnson	Massac	Union
Ethan Bradley (YOUTH) Curtis Marshall	Evan Coulson Chesley Williams Kylie Vaughn (YOUTH)		Kristen Cameron Ruby Lingle Chuck Weilmuenster

Staff present: County Director Jody Johnson, John Shadowens, Vickie Taylor, Dena Wood, Ifeoluwa Adesoye, Tami Crest, Eleazar Edwards, Monica Meyer

Meeting minutes from May 23, 2024, were reviewed. Motion made by Chuck Weilmuenster and seconded by Chesley Williams to approve prior minutes. Motion carried.

Council Business

○ **Elect Officers**

- Current officers: President Ruby Lingle (Union Co)
 Vice- President Cheryl Vanderford (Massac Co)
 Secretary Chesley Williams (Johnson Co)
 Financial Reporter Ethyn Bradley (Pulaski/Alexander Co)
- Nomination made by Jody Johnson for Ruby Lingle to serve as President.
- Nomination made by Jody Johnson for Curtis Marshall to serve as Vice-President.
- Nomination made by Jody Johnson for Chesley Williams to serve as Secretary.
- Nomination made by Jody Johnson for James Walton to serve as Financial Reporter.

Motion made by Kirsten Cameron to approve all nominations, seconded by Evan Coulson. Motion carried.

- **Open Meetings Act** - County Director Johnson advised that is a state law that if you serve on any public board, you must complete the Illinois Open Meetings Act training. This is a one-time training and County Director Johnson will send an email to Council members with a link to the training.
- **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. Motion was made by Evan Coulson, seconded by Chesley Williams for the following individuals to serve as check signers at the specified County office. Motion carried.

Alexander/Pulaski	Johnson	Massac	Union
Jody Johnson Sarita Sawyer Dena Wood	Jody Johnson Tiffney Stewart Kristi Stout	Jody Johnson Norma Korte Vickie Taylor	Jody Johnson Linda Poston Anne Townsend Dena Wood

- A quick review of the campus holiday schedule was conducted by attendees to be aware of anticipated office closures.
- Extension Board – Each County Board is to appoint someone to the Extension Board; County Director Johnson will work with all five counties to have their appointments made. Officers from Unit Council are asked to serve on Extension Board, two male and two female are preferred. Nomination made by Kristen Cameron for Ruby Lingle, Patricia Wilson, James Walton and Evan Coulson to serve and motion seconded by Chuck Weilmuenster. The next Extension Board meeting will be February 13 prior to the Unit Council meeting.
- County Extension Director Report
 - Grand Challenges/Plan of Work/ New issues or concerns in community – University just finished a two-year strategic planning process, and ten Grand Challenges have been identified - Community, Economy, Environment, Food and Agriculture, Health, Partnership, Technology and Discovery and Workforce. Handouts provided and questions were invited. Extension has one more year in the current Plan of Work focusing on the core areas of Community, Health, Environment, Economy and Food and all the subcategories of each.
 - Budget - County Director Johnson shared Unit 27’s account balances as of the meeting date and general discussion showed that no concerns were raised on fiscal matters. Per correspondence from Harry Clore, Finance Director for Extension, Extension has received all money owed by the State of Illinois and is in the best financial position since he has held his position. County Director Johnson expressed

thanks to County Commissioners and the County Boards in their continued payments and cooperation.

- Civil Rights and efforts to reach underserved audiences –The Unit passed an audit a few years ago and there is potential for another surprise audit this year to evaluate civil rights reporting and compliance.
- Vacancies – 4-H Extension Program Coordinator (Unit wide), SNAP Community Worker (Union), three Visiting Community Economic Development positions (housed in Union), Office Support (Massac) due to retirement
- General updates (Facilities, vacancies, and other)
 - MY PI Illinois – 14 students at Vienna high school
 - AmeriCorps Vista – 2 current working, hoping to bring one two more by late winter
 - R3 grant - \$100,000 for Cairo, Mounds and Harrisburg youth development program activities
 - Professional Development – Strategic planning (October); annual conference (November); staff development day (December); County Director Johnson to attend North Central Extension Leadership Development in 2025; 4-H Educator, Kristi Stout, to attend national conference (October)
 - One Shawnee Reginal Summit – Building Capacity for Regional Changemakers to be held October 11 at Vienna High School to help regional leaders with local resources
- Unit Reports
 - 4-H Youth Development staff – Kristi Stout, Vickie Taylor, Dena Wood
 - In January, Unit 27 coordinators took on different roles with Dena taking on school programs, Vickie taking traditional and spin clubs and Angela taking STEM, but Angela how now resigned.
 - Dena - In January schools were contacted for classroom clubs to sign up, from January to May 85 signed up plus 4 cooking schools plus embryology and butterfly programs; this school year has 92 classrooms signed up which will be over 1,900 youth participating
 - Vickie – traditional clubs are seeing a big change and Johnson County has lost two clubs; Vienna has 40 kids at the high school and are participating as Teen Leaders; Cobden is also participating and will add education rising teachers; Teen Leaders are trained and will come back to their local school and teach younger students.

- Health Rocks program recently invited Unit 27 to attend the conference in Mississippi following their work with this grant
- Project book for 4-H activities was provided to Unit council for review and comments
- NREE – Erin Garrett, Anne Townsend – staff was attending Master Gardener training and unable to attend; Unit Council members were directed to the updates and information provided in their packets.
- SNAP/INEP staff – Ife Adesoye, Patsy Bishop, Sarita Sawyer, Tiffney Stewart
 - Community workers focusing on hands-on direct education with youth and adults; Educator is working on training and developing partnerships and upcoming conferences to attend.
 - Health Outreach and community exercise workout environments in the park programs and grants are being pursued.
- CED – John Shadowens, Destenie Sullivan - CED Team is working on three contracts to serve as technical assistance providers on the \$20 million Illinois Grocery Initiative and the Healthy Food Financing Initiative.
 - **Illinois Grocery Initiative Research Project** - statewide data project examining food desert landscape, causes of small grocery store closures and forecasting emerging food
 - **Illinois Grocery Initiative Technical Assistance** - Along with our partners, provided technical assistance to independent grocery stores who are applying for grants
 - **Healthy Food Financing Initiative** – \$1 million USDA grant over the next 3 years and will allow capacity-building work with grocery stores throughout the 16 southernmost counties in Illinois. Services will include help with marketing, business model development, market analysis, succession planning, and advisement on equipment efficiency and inventory management; also working with local lending institutions and the Community Foundation to develop lending products for grocery stores.
 - Currently in the process of hiring three new “Extension Outreach Associate” positions to work on this CED team to serve the 16 southernmost counties.

Dates and Times of future council meetings

- December 5, 2024 @ Vienna – 11am-1pm
- February 13, 2025 @ Vienna - 11am-1pm
- May 15, 2025 @ Vienna - 11am-1pm
- September 18, 2025 @ Vienna – 11am-1pm

Motion to adjourn made by Evan Coulson and seconded by Curtis Marshall. No objections, meeting adjourned at 1:06pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Monica Meyer

Unit 27 - Office Support Specialist

For Unit 27 Unit Council secretary, Chesley Williams