



Illinois Extension

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

**University of Illinois Extension
Sangamon, Menard, and Logan Counties
Extension Council & Board Meeting Minutes
June 8, 2023 - 7:00 p.m.
Logan County Extension Office – Lincoln, IL**

- **Call to Order** – Chairman Dixon called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm.
- **Council Members & Staff Present:** Brad Miller, Elsie Ransdell, Nancy Dixon, Sophia Schneider, Clay Irwin, David Opperman, Zack Dixon, Bill Kennett, and Terri Casey.
- **Previous Meeting Minutes**
A motion was made by David Opperman and seconded by Elsie Ransdell to accept the previous meeting's minutes. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Introductions of new council and board member**
Casey welcomed Brad Miller to the council. He will be replacing Craig Hall as a representative of the Sangamon County Board.
- **Open Meetings Act Training Requirement**
Casey explained that because Extension is a public entity, they are required to follow the rules of the open meetings act which was established to ensure that meetings were held publicly and in an open manner. The training is pretty straight forward and is offered for free on-line with the State of Illinois. All Council members who have not already completed this training will need to complete this training. Once a member has completed the training, they should send Casey either a hard copy of their certificate of completion to the Extension office or send a digital copy to her via email to terrim@illinois.edu. This training must be done within 90 days of being appointed. A link to the online training can be found here: <https://foiapac.ilag.gov/>
- **Staffing Update**
Casey reported that they had filled the open Menard County 4-H Program Coordinator position, which had been vacant since Sharon Lounsberry retired in 2021. Stacie Skelton started Tuesday, January 17. Her position is 60% time (or three days a week) and is housed at the Menard office two days a week, Monday and Wednesday (both days that the Menard office is open), with one day a week at the Springfield office allowing for collaborating with Unit 4-H Staff.

Shawna Stake-Charron filled the open Logan County Office Support Assistant position. She started on January 4, 2023.

Casey reported that they have three summer extra help workers.

Amanda Gray is returning to assist with 4-H logistics in Logan County.

Rachel Fishburn is returning as a summer intern to assist with 4-H activities in Sangamon County.

Debby Stephenson is joining us to assist with Horticulture and Master Gardener activities in the unit.

Open Positions:

Unit Commercial Ag Educator position closes June 14 and applicants must apply online.
SNAP-Ed Community Worker (Sangamon County) position closes June 22 or until filled.

Casey announced that she will be promoted to County Director Level 2 on August 15. She will maintain her current position, however the state promotions committee voted to recognize her contributions and gained experience by promoting her to a level 2 designation. Casey explained that the highest level that can be achieved is level 3. She also reported that Jennifer Fishburn, unit Horticulture Educator, had been promoted to a level 3 Educator after 20 plus years of service to Extension.

- **Financial/Fiscal Updates**

The FY2024 budget is currently being completed. The Unit is in solid financial shape and because of an increase in state match levels, and several unfilled staff positions, less was spent than budgeted on staff salary and accompanying costs such as travel and supplies. Because of this, she would seek to maintain county levy requests at last year's amount. Next year, after getting all the positions filled, the unit can look at appropriate funding needs and opportunities. Casey expressed her gratitude to both the community and county boards for their past and continued support of Extension.

- **Program Updates**

Casey handed out staff program reports and pointed out highlights from the 2nd quarter of 2023. She reported that staff were busy preparing for the upcoming 4-H shows and summer programs.

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

Casey reminded the council that there is an open seat on the council, and she is seeking diverse voices to join the 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 requested that if the council members knew of someone who could represent these audiences and whose experience would be helpful, to please let her know so she can reach out to them.

This year the unit is undertaking a three-year plan of work process. Staff are currently conducting a needs assessment and will be reaching out to community partners, organizations and stakeholders to better understand the challenges our communities face, so that we can identify ways Extension can be a part of the solution. At the end of the process, staff will create a three-year plan of work which will help guide and focus efforts where they are most needed, and where Extension can have the greatest impact. She also reminded everyone that she welcomes feedback and ideas at any time, and folks need only reach out to her.

- **Future Meeting Dates**

Thursday, October 12, 2023 – 7 PM (Sangamon County Extension Office - Springfield, IL)

- **Public Input**

There was no public input.

- **Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was made by Bill Kennett seconded by Zack Dixon. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:41pm.