

Carroll, Lee & Whiteside Counties

Extension Council

MINUTES

May 13, 2024

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 5:59 p.m. in person and by Zoom

Attendance:

Emily Zimmerman, Karla Belzer, Martha Ebbesmeyer, Mark Ward, Gordon Kelm, Bruce Black, Eileen Piper, Daniel Swihart, Cilvia Rivera, Lee Reese, Teresa Galloway, Danielle Gapinski, Kara Schweitzer

Public Comment: None.

Reports:

Minutes:

Minutes from November, 2023 were reviewed. Motion made to approve minutes as written made by Daniel, seconded by Mark. Motion carried.

Minutes from February, 2024 date was corrected and Mark was added as attending. Motion made to approve changes and minutes as written made by Cilvia, seconded by Mark. Motion carried.

Budget Update:

Due to the great relationships being developed, Karla is confident with the budget requests. The new Lee County administrator has acknowledged a need for broadband, in which extension can help with. Whiteside and Carroll are also doing well. Mary, the fiscal secretary, wanted to close the May reports before giving final numbers.

Programming Updates:

Martha Ebbesmeyer is working with 14 schools (35 classrooms, 690 students) in Lee and Whiteside Counties. Twenty eight incubators were brought in along with 840 eggs to see the life cycle of chicks. Although the hatch has not been 100%, it has been a wonderful experience according to teachers who have provided feedback.

Kara Schweitzer, family life educator, the brain health initiative is going very strong, and now has been able to expand to 6 sites. According to the survey, the largest impacts are as follows: social connections, making new friends, and challenging the brain by thinking/working in a different way. They're also more aware with problem solving.

Danielle Gapinski, youth development educator was able to connect with 406 students in a mindfulness program. AFC has already invited her to come back next year. Evaluations were done at the end,

Bruce Black: The class wrapped up with the entry to horticulture class (partnership with SVCC). It was a small class of 3, but many things were accomplished, including growing plants for the Lee County Master Gardener plant sale. The space tomato was a highlight of their harvest.

New Business:

Karla: Discussed HB5792, which is a bill that extension has put in front of the HOR to increase extension funding state wide. Currently, there is approximately \$10m, and we have asked for an additional \$5m, specifically geared towards ag education. This will help support local producers in a variety of areas of agriculture.

West Carroll STEAAM Hub is slowly progressing. Funds are being held with HUD and an environmental review needs to be completed before any funds can be spent. Karla and Janice are in contact with HUD to discuss options.

CDC action grant partnership focusing on food insecurity, and our role is going to be teaching a home grown healthy programming to get people comfortable with gardening and producing their own food so they can become more food secure. Whiteside and Ogle Counties will be the first target, Lee and Carroll Counties will be a focus next year.

Daniel is hoping to hire a director at his church with grant money to help focus on a mental health program for the community.

Counties can ask for an extension council meeting to hear a budget request. Whiteside County asks each year, and Karla along with a few board members discuss the budget and why there is a need and what extension can do with those funds for the community. There is not a date set this year yet, but there will be an ask soon if anyone can attend.

FY25 extension council pledge agreement: there are donations that are funneled into a gift account that can be accessed once per year and monies pulled out. Donors can specify where they want the funds to go, or it can go to general use. Motion to approve \$6000 for Extension Council Budget Agreement made by Emily, Eileen seconded. Motion carried.

Other Business:

This is the last official council meeting of this council year. The board will need a new member in Carroll and Lee, and two from Whiteside County.

Next meeting: **September 16, 2024**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at **7:05 p.m.** made by **Eileen Piper**, seconded by **Teresa Galloway**. No further discussion. Motion carried.

--Emily Zimmerman, Secretary