

University of Illinois Unit 25 Extension Council Meeting
Tuesday, March 26, 2024
Edwards County Farm Bureau Meeting Room
15 S. 5th Street
Albion, IL 62806
6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Members Present: Jim Brewer, Doug Raber, Tonya Potts, Lily Simpson, Julie Clodfelter, Karissa Anderson, Michelle Piller and Justine Basnett (via Zoom)

Members Absent: Paul Bruinsma, Terry Bruce, Kelly Biggs, Megan Daugherty, Jan Ridgely

Staff Members Present: Tara Buerster, Katie Bell, Samantha Gaither

CALL TO ORDER

Jim Brewer called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes from the January 31, 2024 meeting were reviewed by the council. Tonya Potts made a motion to add a correction to the minutes and then motioned to accept the minutes as reviewed after correction. All were in favor, motion passed.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Tara Buerster presented the Unit 25 Financial Report as of March 2024. Doug Raber made a motion to accept the financial report as presented, Julie Clodfelter seconded the motion. All were in favor, motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

- a) County Office Spaces: Edwards County will begin the 2nd year of their 3 year lease in the new office building. Richland continues to be an office of concern due to age and space restrictions, also Extension taking over Ameren bill, paper products, and cleaning company. Tara is working to find building options that meet the needs of the Richland County staff. Lawrence will continue with their lease, also added 2 more spaces at no additional cost. Wabash will continue for now. Wayne will be taking over water because of greenhouse and pollinator garden,
- b) Open Meetings Act Training: All council members are required to take the training. All members have completed training requirements.

- c) Council Vacancies: One vacancy for Kelly Biggs. Michelle will serve another term. Lawrence and Richland have 2 vacancies, one could be a student. Wabash has no vacancies. Wayne, Lilly Simpson will serve another term.

NEW BUSINESS

- a) AG Day at the Capitol: Tara and Katie attended to represent Extension and Unit 25. 5 4-H members were present. Extension will be asking for an additional 5 million dollars in funding. The Department of Agriculture and Soybean Association have been advocates. Every Unit in the state will be getting an Ag educator for a total of 27. 5 of the positions will be dedicated to college relationship building. Shawnee and Richland College. Those 5 positions will get program coordinators to assist. Representatives and Senators were open and willing to discuss extension
- b) Collaboration with IECC: Sharmela from IECC requested a meeting to collaborate on youth programming, My P.I., and other programs like drones, robotics, and cooking. Possibly adding a community garden on the pollinator site. Plans to evaluate programming in the schools and communities.
- c) Broadband Cohort – Lawrence County: Lawrence county is involved in plans to bring Broadband to underserved communities. Intense training for 16 weeks to learn about applying for money to bring broadband to the region. Currently working on a survey of those in the Lawrence counties through schools, farm bureau members, and the rest of the community. The committee will choose the vendor to work with. The survey is being created and promoted by Illinois Extension. Facilities and structures to attach antennas for receiving internet and increasing service areas.
- d) Engaging Diverse Audiences: Tara reviewed with the council again that as part of the Unit's DEIA goal we are to work to serve underserved audiences in our areas. She reviewed with the council that she and Katie attended the mandatory Navigation Differences training in Effingham. Tara also discussed the upcoming efforts to reach out and serve youth with IEP's as part of this goal. She also mentioned the possibility of staff attending EDP training.

STAFF REPORTS

County Director: Tara has been doing poverty simulators most recently in Louisville. She was on a 4-H professional development podcast. School programming has seen a big spike. Southern Illinois Regional Showcase is offered for members in the region new this year. Donors will be providing ribbons, rosettes, and t-shirts. Please advertise this to the community. Snap is wrapping up school programming, and planning to start summer cooking school. Master Gardeners are members at 11. Governance Committee, State volunteering, Business committee.

- a) **4-H youth development: Sam** Colors training for staff development and youth. Spark at the library, welcome to the real world in many schools and counties, your thoughts matter, Illinois food challenge with a unit competition and then a state competition in June. Food, Fun, 4-h, and school. We Connect, Ready for Work, embryology for 3rd and 5th grade, Cooking 101, an inclusive show for

Lawrence Counties for youth with different abilities to be involved in a swine show. Fair books are being printed and sent out. Shooting sports training

b) Ag: Katie Beginning Gardening in Wayne County 7 sessions, Olney Public Library Gardening classes 3 sessions. Annie's Project education for farm women. Webinar Equine Pasture Management, fruit tree pruning. Caterpillar tunnel installed in Wayne County and pollinator garden improvement. Farmer and Community support Farm visits, phone calls, emails. Twilight meeting planning for the summer. Youth flower basket workshops in Richland and Edwards County.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was made.

FUTURE MEETING DATE

The next Council meeting will be May 8, 2024 at the Edwards County Extension office meeting room.

ADJOURN

Tonya Potts made a motion to adjourn the meeting. All in favor, motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.