



Illinois Extension

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

**University of Illinois Extension
Bond, Clinton, Jefferson, Marion, and Washington Counties
Unit 23**

Multi-County Council Minutes

August 21, 2024; 11:30 am

@ Washington County Extension Conference Center

Call to Order:

Meeting called to order by Jordee Koehler at 11:35 a.m.

Roll Call:

Council members present answering to roll call included: Julie Brooks, Dee DeMoss, Wesley Gozia, Julie Karmeier, Diane Koertge, Julia Miessner, Bernard Myers, and Natalie Shook. Staff in attendance were Jordee Koehler, Lauren Sharp, Chris Lueking, Jamie Mahlandt, Kara Boozer and Rhonda Mueller. Guest in attendance was Destiny Fisher.

Diane Koertge was welcomed to the council and she gave an overview of her background.

Approval of Meeting Minutes from April 17, 2024:

Due to not having a quorum present, approval of the minutes was tabled until the next meeting.

County Director Updates:

Jordee informed the members that we are “by law” required to have an Extension Council and the role of the council is to serve in an advisory capacity and to work with Extension staff to plan, implement and market educational programs. Council members are also encouraged to assist with any financial leads or opportunities that they are aware of. Extension services are volunteer led and staff assisted. Council members are Extension’s liaison to help spread the word about things that Extension has to offer.

Jordee then shared the Unit Organization Chart showing all positions in the Unit and where they are located.

Educator Program Updates:

Lauren Sharp – Youth Development/4-H

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Lauren gave a recap of events and activities that happened in each county over the summer months.

Bond – Project 24 - was a 6 week/1 x a week program where 66 youth attended. It offered a variety of STEAM-related topics, including SNAP circuits, robotics, UV Safety and Entomology.

Clinton – Ag in the Sky – A workshop where kids learned about the local use of drones in agriculture and explored career opportunities in the field. Bill Waggoner from Kaskaskia College led the session. There were 23 participants.

Marion – Participated in the Kaskaskia College KICK Sessions offering Pollinators where 14 youth attended the 2 hour workshop and learned what pollinators are and their importance. They built their own Bee Hotel and Seed Balls to promote habitats in their backyard. Snap Circuits were also presented and had 18 youth in attendance. The youth learned how electrical currents operate, what promotes electrical currents and how to build circuits to perform different tasks such as turning on lights, laying music, using motion sensors, and using Morse Code.

Unit Programming – Youth teamed up with Ag and Natural Resource team to present a Jr. Master Naturalist 10 week course that focused on nature, the importance of preservation and how to become more educated about what our environment has to offer. This was done in conjunction with an adult class running simultaneously

Summer Shows - (unit totals)

Horse Show – 250+ class entries

Livestock Shows – 2,500+ class entries

General Projects Shows – 870+ class entries

2024 – 2025 Youth Focus

- ✓ Increasing interest in robotics (utilizing Spike Prime Robotic Kits)
- ✓ Increasing Agriculture programs (hosting Ag Discovery Day in Washington County)
- ✓ Increasing Career Readiness

Regional Showcase – event that was available for 4-Hers in Region 3 (the lower 49 counties) held at the DuQuoin State Fairgrounds in conjunction with the DuQuoin State Fair. General Projects had 55 youth (110 entries) and Livestock had 110 youth (300-400 entries). The event saw 34 of the 49 eligible counties participate.

Chris Lueking – Agriculture & Natural Resources

The summer ANR programs reached over 950 youth and 50 adults through direct professional educational workshops. ANR partnered with Youth on several events including Kids Day at the Fair where they conducted an educational booth at all 5 county fairs reaching over 758 youth and families through the various activities.

Chris provided two professional development workshops down at SIU Carbondale for District 5 Illinois Agriculture Teachers and had 12 local teachers attend an Ag in the Classroom workshop in Clinton County.

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There were 17 Master Naturalist trainees that participated in the program this year in conjunction with the Jr. Master Naturalists program. This program is a great opportunity for diversity, equity and inclusion to get all people involved. Nature appeals to people of all ages, genders and backgrounds.

The Hort team created a Pollinator Plot at the Clinton County Fairgrounds in cooperation with the Clinton County Farm Bureau, the Clinton County Extension Education Foundation, the Clinton County Fair Board along with the Master Gardeners. Both Native plants and annuals were incorporated into the display. This has also been placed on the Monarch Way Station which is a National watch system. There was also educational signage placed at the plot to explain the plot and plants that were used.

Horticulture How-To Videos have launched. The stats are:

2023 5,672 views

Jan-July 2024 – 11,733 views

Strawbale gardening has 1.2K views

In Bond County they have a partnership with the Kingsbury Park District at Patriot's Park and Bond County Farm Bureau (who funded the entire sign project). There are 18 different topics that are explained on the interactive sign.

Some of the upcoming events are:

Ag Discovery Day in Washington County on October 5

Pollinator Palooza in Clinton County on October 14

In-person Back to Basics Series and Hort for the Holiday Workshop Series for fall/winter

Annie's Project for Women in Agriculture – Washington County – launching Spring 2025

Give the Gift of Flowers – launching Spring 2025

Mt. Vernon Fruit Tree and Vegetable School (Regional Program)

Everything Local from Flowers to Food Conference (State Program)

Jamie Mahlandt – Family Consumer Science

Events that FCS participated in this summer:

- ✓ Family Pop-Up Event (Mt. Vernon) – 225 participants
- ✓ Finding Financial Balance – 1,524 article views/for 2023 & 2024 an average of 218 views/month
 - June – Building Wealth Through Saving
 - July – Cost Effective Ways to Beat the Summer Heat
 - August – Take the Drivers Seat in Learning More About Transportation
- ✓ Money Basics – 6 webinar series February – July (463 live participants)
- ✓ Shopping for Snacks and Saving Money – collaborated with SNAP - Trenton
- ✓ Bond County Resource Fair

Upcoming Financial Education Focus

- Grocery Planning Program with Educational Resource Kits
- The Maschhoff's Family Day
- Shopping for Snacks and Saving Money
- ROE Teacher Conference
- Strategies for Debt Repayment
- Estate Planning 101: Know the Basics

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- Savings Goal Setting
- Inflation: How it Affects a Fixed-Income Budget
- Finding Financial Balance
- Quarterly Companion
- Mindful Mondays

Kara Boozer – Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Recently presented the ABC of School Nutrition Summer Learning Institute at the Centralia High School which was a 6 hour training for Food Service Staff. There were 94 food service staff in attendance with 30 schools being represented. This is grant funded and this training was the largest one in the State.

Family Fun Pop-Ups – in Mt. Vernon partnered with C.E. Brehm, Memorial Public Library District, Mt. Vernon Tourism, The United Way and Rotary Club of Mt. Vernon. All sections of Extension were represented.

There were 8 Illinois Junior Chef classes held this past summer with 105 participants in attendance throughout Jefferson and Marion County.

They do a lot of Eat Move Save-Booths mainly at food pantries. This past year they have had to find recipes on chickpeas and lentils due to large donations being received.

Financial Update:

Funding meetings are in the process of being held with the various County Board representatives and the Extension representatives. The status of each county is:

Bond: meeting scheduled for 8/21/24 @ 6:00 p.m.

Clinton: Budget Committee Meeting in September

Jefferson: Letter request sent

Marion: Letter request sent with budget hearing 8/26/24

Washington: approved a 1% increase

Position Openings:

Family Consumer Science – Extension Program Coordinator

Ag & Natural Resource – Extension Program Coordinator

Old Business:

There was no old business for discussion.

New Business:

Due to not having a quorum in attendance Election of Officers is tabled until the October meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 1:03 pm.

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