

**Carroll, Lee & Whiteside Counties
Extension Council
MINUTES
September 16, 2024**

Call to Order:

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

Attendance:

Karen Stenzel, Lupita Serrano, Emily Zimmerman, Eileen Piper, Daniel Swihart, Gordon Kelm, Teresa Galloway, Abby Noble, Pam Martinez, Cilvia Rivera, Karla Belzer, Mike Delany, Bruce Black, Martha Ebbesmeyer, Kara Schweitzer

Public Comment: None.

Reports:

Minutes:

Minutes from May 2024 were reviewed. Motion made to approve minutes as written made by Daniel, seconded by Teresa. Motion carried.

Budget Update:

Karla gave a positive budget report, noting that state funding is timely and current funding levels should sustain operations. She also discussed the new reporting method for county boards designed to engage members more effectively through visual presentations and a newsletter style report. Karla also provided an update on the strategic planning process, explaining the mission of lifelong learning and community support. She highlighted the Extension's priorities in areas like food, health, agriculture, and technology, emphasizing collaboration and inclusivity.

Programming Updates:

Martha Ebbesmeyer: Shared 4-H programs including the leaders training event, start of Health Rocks program, and Trade Manufacturing Careers Day. Martha highlighted the Passport to the World workshop in partnership with Sauk Valley Community College as well as a club leadership event scheduled for November.

Kara Schweitzer: Shared information on the upcoming Child Care University program as well as several programs with the Lee County Council on Aging.

Bruce Black: Learning in Lawn chairs programming in Carroll County has been successful. Bruce also highlighted the pumpkin smash event as well as conservation days programming.

Mike Delany: Shared updates on the past six months, focusing on the Lee County team involved in a broadband training program. This 16-week program aimed to educate community leaders about broadband internet, funding sources, and planning necessary for community preparation. Mike also shared ongoing community economic development programming including a local government education online seminar series and new program on marketing rural tourism. Mike also promoted the upcoming Poverty Simulation.

Grants: West Carroll STEAAM Hub, CDC Action Grant:

Karla provided a brief update on the West Carroll STEAAM hub project noting that funds have been received, but not yet authorized to spend. Even so, the search for programming staff is ongoing. The

position offers flexible hours and competitive pay. The CDC Action Grant is also ongoing with efforts in the second year of the grant cycle focused on providing poverty simulations.

New Business:

Election of Officers and New Extension Council Year: Karla shared with the council that there is currently an Extension taskforce working on updates to the Extension Council guidebook. The task force is recommending that the council operational year be moved to align with the calendar year. This change aims to enhance participation and engagement among council members. Council will continue to meet quarterly with the new council year starting in 2025. Election of Council officers will take place at the February 2025 meeting.

Extension Council Hearings – Whiteside County: Karla provided an update on the Extension Council budget hearing in Whiteside County sharing that the hearing went very well and that the county remains supportive of Extension programming and funding.

Discussion on community needs and efforts to target underserved audiences: Council members discussed addressing food insecurity through weekend meal programs for students and the collaboration between the local food pantry and school nurse.

Other Business:

Next meeting: **December 2, 2024**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:05 p.m. made by Elieen Piper, seconded by Pam. No further discussion. Motion carried.

--Emily Zimmerman, Secretary