

Unit 27 Council Meeting
 April 28, 2021
 11:00a.m. – 1:00 pm
 ZOOM meeting

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by County Director Johnson at 11:18 a.m. Council members and staff present introduced themselves via ZOOM meeting and gave a brief introduction of their service to the Unit.

Council members present:

Alexander/Pulaski	Johnson	Massac	Union
Anganetta Terry Shawna Rhine Josie Eason	Zach Garrett		

Staff present: County Director Johnson, Sarita Sawyer, Monica Reid, Patsy Bishop, Vickie Taylor, Brenda Hileman, Kristi Stout, Angela Ralls, Shannon Pulliam.

Meeting minutes from February 25, 2021 were reviewed. Motion made by Ann Terry and seconded by Zach Garrett to approve prior minutes. Motion carried.

- Council Business

Unit Council members - no terms will end in FY21, but two members are stepping down due to personal matters; replacements needed for Massac County and Union County. No replacement suggestions were made, County Director Johnson will continue to seek new members.

Extension Board - County Director Johnson will be scheduling a future meeting, probably in May, to discuss budget and finance matters. Each County Board has appointed and/or recommended a Commissioner to serve on the Extension Board.

County Director Johnson reminded everyone of the need to complete the Illinois Open Meetings Act training and to provide a certificate of completion for University records.

- County Extension Director Report

Plan of Work / New issues or concerns in community – County Director Johnson did a brief overview of the Unit’s “grand challenges” and statewide issues. Much of Unit 27’s POW focuses on food access and it has been a top priority but not a sole focus.

Budget – Harry Clore (Extension Fiscal Director) still speaks highly of the fiscal direction and position of Extension. County Director Johnson shared the account types and balances that exist within Unit 27. All three Extension Regional Directors have announced their retirement and interims will serve in their positions. Brenda Hileman, Union County Office

Support Assistant, will be retiring effective June 30, 2021 after 28 ½ years. County Director Johnson offered that it has been a pleasure to have Brenda work in her capacity and he appreciates all her work and efforts.

New SNAP-Ed Educator – interviews have been completed and County Director Johnson is waiting on an announcement from campus on the hiring status.

AmeriCorps VISTA project is coming to Vienna High School and Extension is helping VHS complete their application and get this program implemented.

County Director Johnson continues to serve on the State Extension Fiscal committee and the State Disaster Preparedness committee.

MY PI Illinois disaster preparedness program is being held again at VHS with five CNA students participating.

COVID-19 Vaccination Awareness campaign is coming. Shawna Rhine (Southern 7 Health Department and Unit Council member) offered information on population vaccination percentages and numbers. Pop-up clinics are now being offered in each county with the help of IDPH. Meeting attendees discussed ideas to help increase vaccination awareness and ways to encourage more to vaccinate.

County Director Johnson continues to work with SPARC (Shawnee Preparedness and Response Coalition). He attended a recent meeting and there is leftover COVID money so County Director Johnson is working with campus to complete a mini-grant application for \$7,000 to purchase 100 disaster backpacks for future MY PI programs. The backpacks are a large expense of the program and will help sustain the program's longevity.

County Board meetings are all complete and funding from each of the five counties is agreed to, signed and submitted with no issues. No increase of funding was requested or made. Budget will be submitted on time and one remaining lease is to be signed and collected.

General updates - County Director Johnson is hoping to obtain facility updates in the Pulaski/Alexander County office with updated windows. New signage is in place for the Union County office and County Director Johnson is working toward funding to update the sign for the Massac County office.

- Unit Reports

SNAP/INEP– Lindsey Sadler, Patsy Bishop, Sarita Sawyer, Tiffney Stewart, Shannon Pulliam
Sarita Sawyer advised that her schools continue to be very cooperative and she is almost finished with the Healthy Cents program with Pulaski/Alexander Housing Authority. Next, she will be doing Healthy Cents with Arrowleaf participants and is planning for cooking schools using the Illinois Junior Chef curriculum.

Patsy Bishop reported that as a group, SNAP has been taking turns offering programs to headstart in the lower seven counties in the form of a parent group setting and this has now ended as the series is completed. Headstart has given SNAP positive feedback that they will want the program repeated again next year. Her schools are still requiring virtual programming but with each month more and more teachers are reaching out for lessons.

Shannon Pulliam has completed her first six months and has received a lot of different training. She is starting to offer programming and is currently doing the Organwise Guys curriculum with one of her Union County schools. She is calling in to this meeting from an Eat, Move, Save booth she is offering on behalf of the Shawnee Development Council where she is helping conduct a survey to help understand what their clients would like grown in their community garden for the local food pantry.

4-H Youth Development staff – Kristi Stout, Vickie Taylor, Dena Wood

Youth fair is scheduled in Massac County and general shows are scheduled in each county office; dates are coming up quick and will be available on our website. Show books have been mailed to members and books are available in each local office.

Union County recently hosted a Public Speaking Exhibition with numerous youth participating while still complying with COVID restrictions.

4-H is doing a nature club with Erin Garrett's help. Nature kits have been mailed out to participants and many great pictures are being submitted to show progress and activities. 4-H is also offering cooking school kits, with 22 being delivered to Goreville School today. These types of kits are evidence of one way that 4-H is still delivering educational programs while youth are learning from their own homes.

Health Rocks curriculum is being delivered at Shawnee school in Wolf Lake. This program involves a pedal kart that the kids can "drive" while wearing goggles that simulate drunk driving, impairment by marijuana and distracted driving by texting. This looks to be an impactful program by providing hands on experience of real-life scenarios. 4-H is partnering with local agencies to offer this curriculum to achievement more awareness.

Kristi Stout spoke of the way 4-H premium monies are received from the Illinois Department of Ag and dispersed to the local counties to award 4-H members for the projects they exhibit. Historically, the money comes from the State and to the individual county based on their enrollment within each county. The premium is then further divided based on how many projects the members exhibit. Each exhibit usually results in a blue, red or white ribbon which is then given a certain number of points. Throughout the years, the different exhibits have been given more or less points based on what the project actually was. **In the last several years it has been viewed that the ribbon and points systems need to be revised to make sure it is not discriminatory, and all members are being treated fairly. In the views of diversity, inclusion and equality 4-H wants to make sure that the award system is in compliance.** Starting with the 2020-2021 show, anyone receiving a ribbon will be rewarded with premium on an equal point system throughout all five counties, not just their individual show county. This will change how premium amounts are calculated to be based on enrollment by Unit versus enrollment by County.

With this information being presented, Unit 27 would like Council members to consider whether this change should be implemented, and all funds pooled together to make project premiums equal throughout the Unit. It was decided that due to limited attendance at this meeting, this conversation and topic would be revisited again at the next meeting when a larger majority of Council members are present.

With the help of local and campus partners, 4-H will be offering a Minecraft camp focusing on ages 7-10 to teach computer creativity via virtual simulator game building a world made from blocks. You can plant gardens, build structures, create animals and simulate an entire world. The Minecraft world activities will teach the kids lessons while they learn by playing.

ANR Environment and Energy Stewardship – Erin Garrett, Kimberly Rohling

Erin Garrett and Kim Rohling are unavailable to their attendance at a virtual conference. County Director Johnson provided updates that two community gardens are in place, one in Cairo and one in Metropolis, and provided video and pictures of each. Meridian FFA students built and delivered raised beds to the Cairo garden and filled with compost. Egyptian FFA students built another set of special boxes to be used in the sensory garden at Cairo for autistic and sensory special needs population. Some water issues and fencing erection remains at Cairo before planting and donations to Day Star food pantry can begin. Sarita Sawyer is working with groups in the area, Mounds Lions Club and the Alexander/Pulaski County NAACP, in their response to volunteering and desire to enroll and complete the Master Gardener course. Unit 27 is looking to bring a class to this area to provide accommodations for this request.

With the assistance of IDNR, Kim Rohling has been organizing and leading several ‘Trash Blast’ hikes and clean up opportunities in the Shawnee National Forest. County Director Johnson shared a video highlight of volunteer work with the volunteers showing the clean up efforts which involved removal of trash and invasive plant species.

Another video update made by Erin Garrett was shared showing the Metropolis garden progress and showing harvested items that have, and will continue to be, donated to COPE food pantry.

Dates and Times of future council meetings

- September 29, 2021 @ Vienna – 11am-1pm – tentatively planning to be in person

Motion to adjourn made by Zach Garrett and seconded by Josie Eason. No objections, meeting adjourned at 12:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Monica Reid

Unit 27 - Office Support Associate

For Unit 27 Unit Council secretary, Chris Boyd