



Extension

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL, CONSUMER
& ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Extension Council Meeting Minutes

March 29, 2021

7:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.

Unit 21 Extension Council, serving Clay, Effingham, Fayette and Jasper Counties convened at 7:00 P.M. Present were Council members Deena Mosbarger, Barb McGrew, Ben Frazier, Lindsey Vogt, Jason Warfel and ex-officio Carl Baker, Mary Fischer, Michelle Fombelle and Dana Homann.

Public Comment Period was presented for members of the public to express matters of concern or opinion. There were no visiting members of the public.

County Director Update Council was informed that the upcoming 4-H Exhibitions in 2021 will be face to face, barring any setbacks and return to previous phases by the Governor. Baker continued to explain that masks will be required, along with 6 foot social distancing and the number of attendees. It was mentioned that the University will be following CDC guidelines, in concert with the Illinois Department of Public Health and the Governor's Office. The goal will be plan for the worst and hope for the best.

Baker updated the Council on the leases and what the current situation is in Jasper County office with the most recent purchase by the Sunrise Center by the Jasper County Unit School District. The other three offices have lease agreements in the works. Jason Warfel continues to work with Extension to find a new permanent location. For the time being Extension will be moving to the Chamber Building.

Baker wrapped up the county director piece with an update on the news release from the Effingham County Board meeting.

Program Area Updates Fombelle informed Council members of recent grant opportunities, statewide train virtual trainings for food service staff. She the discussed the Blessing Boxes. The Blessing Boxes pantry is an honor system with the philosophy of "take what you need give what you can." Based on SNAP data and ISBE data, free and reduced lunches Extension identified Brownstown, St. Elmo, and Ramsey as potential starter sites for the pilot project. Dena Mosbarger indicated that Clay City and Flora had Blessing Boxes as well as one in Vandalia all of which are well received. The boxes are open 24/7 with no locks. Ben Frazier thought there might be some seed money from the Fayette County YMCA to help with the start of a Blessing Box. All Extension Council members were in agreement that the project was good, worthwhile and needed. Fombelle was going to reach out to the Brownstown Superintendent to see if we



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could establish one on their campus and if the shop or ag class would be interested in building one.

Fischer delivered her report on Horticulture and how she is working on creating a Teen Master Naturalist Program. Effingham will be one of the first counties to pilot the program. She indicated she is working on getting a hybrid Master Gardener Program in the unit. Also discussed diversity, equity and inclusion and how to incorporate the principles into the Master Naturalist Program. Mary is also workin on potential program sponsorships or scholarships for the Teen Master Naturalist Program.

Homann summed up what she had discussed in the Expansion and Review Committee prior to the Extension Council meeting. Dana said she is working on drone programming for middle school and high school age students.

New Business – No new business

Next Meeting – May 24, 2021 Effingham County Extension Office (face to face) with Zoom connectivity

Motion to adjourn at 7:50 P.M. by Jason Warfel, Second by Barb McGrew – Motion Carried