

University of Illinois Extension – Serving Christian, Jersey, Macoupin, and Montgomery Counties
Extension Council Minutes
Hybrid Call due to COVID-19
December 16, 2021

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chair Connor Ashlock

Those in attendance from Extension Council: Terry Trader, Paige Cox, Connie Beck, Dennis Rahe, Connor Ashlock, Venise McWard, Vicki Joiner, Mark Dugger, Tiffany Blasa, Sandy Hefner, Caleb Grover, and Jerome Eplin. Staff in attendance: Lisa Peterson, Sara Marten and Amanda Cole.

Everyone introduced themselves, their roles and the county they represent.

Announcement both Amanda Cole and Lisa Peterson had their contracts extended. Amanda Cole will continue to support the Unit but is primarily serving as the Interim Association Director of Field Operations for Extension. While Lisa Peterson is the current Acting County Director, managing the day to day offices and is in person for the Unit.

Minutes, October 21, 2021 Presented. Sandy Hefner motioned to approve minutes as presented. Terry Trader seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carries.

Fiscal Report: FY22 October and November Trust & Revolving Reports presented by Amanda Cole. For October the unit should be at 33% of its budget. And the income is actually at 47%, and right on target with 33% expenses. For November, the unit should be at approximately 42% of its budget. The income is actually at 58%, receiving 97% of the projected income from the local tax levies, and 61% of the budgeted State Match, which is actually back payments. In regard to expenses, the Trust funded ended November at 39% of what was budgeted which is under target. Amanda briefly went over the incomes sources and expenditures related to the Unit's revolving account. Explaining this is where 4-H program fees, Master Gardener funds, and other programming income and expenses are paid. Terry Trader motioned to file the financial reports as presented. Sandy Hefner seconded the motion. All in favor.

OLD BUSINESS

Staffing Updates:

- *SNAP-Ed, Community Worker:* Lisa Peterson shared that an offer to an acceptable candidate has been made. This is for the open SNAP-Ed Community Worker position based in Christian County.
- Also, a brief discussion about hiring summer extra-help occurred. Once plans are finalized for the summer of 2022, the goal would be to solicit candidates in February or March for summer positions.
- No other staffing changes are planned at this point in time.

Community Partners Award 2022:

A brief history of the Unit 18 Community Partners Award program was shared. It started in 2020, with one partner named in each of the four counties within Unit 18. The council members reviewed the proposed application for 2022, with a March 1, 2022, deadline for submission.

Needs Assessment:

Lisa Peterson explained that the Unit will refrain from offering its own needs assessment and will instead participate in the State needs assessment which will help provide input for the upcoming three-year plan of work, starting fall of 2022.

Open Meetings Act Training

The official website is down. Once the website is back up, all Council members will receive an email to complete the training.

New Business

DEI Representation and Programming Goals Shared for 2021-2022

Sara Marten, shared the strategies 4-H youth development is taking to ensure they reach diverse audiences and conducting expansion and review meetings within the local communities to have members and individuals from the public help reach audiences that we may not have thought of. Lisa Peterson shared the DEI programming goals for community and economic development, horticulture, and Ag. Literacy goals to reach a more diverse audience in 2022. Sandy Hefner and Connor Ashlock suggested working with Journeys, a safe school in Delhi. Their contact is Brad Tuttle in District 100. There was also the suggestion to reach out to the Alternative School in Nokomis about potential programs.

Accommodation Requests Fulfilled

Since our last meeting, Lisa has had a request to translate the monthly “Bathroom Buzz” newsletter into Spanish. She was able to meet the need for December, but the Unit is working on a long-term plan to have a professional translator perform the task moving forward due to the statewide distribution of the newsletter. Also, Sara shared in 4-H, most of the request relate to dietary concerns.

Other – Extension Partnering with Local County Fairs

Connor shared a potential opportunity for Extension offices to partner with local county fairs to do activities year long and to use the fairs to promote the depth of services and outreach we provide to new audiences. Amanda was able to share a few options that have occurred in the past such as the Commodity Booth, Christian County Ag. Literacy and a Petting Zoo, and booths within the 4-H Building at the Macoupin County Fairgrounds. The first step was decided to explore options in Jersey County, and determine capacity to add additional events/outreach efforts. Realizing each fair and fair grounds is different.

Educator Reports

Sara Marten, 4-H/Youth Development Educator, shared some of the successes that Alexis McDowell has had in Christian County with the 4-H program, she just joined the staff in June. She also shared that since October all four of the county 4-H programs hosted their achievement nights.

Lisa Peterson, Nutrition and Wellness Educator, shared she has food safety classes scheduled out until June, and will resume more programming once she is no longer in the Acting County Director role.

Amanda shared some of the projects that Jennifer Russell, CED Educator, is working on, such as Mythical Mississippi, Coal Mining Promotion – Macoupin County, research on economic value of tourism – Grafton/Jersey County. And that Valerie Belusko, CED EPC, has been working on Broadband project in Montgomery County.

Lastly, it was shared that Andrew Holsinger, Horticulture Educator, just finished two successful hands on wreath workshops one in Macoupin and one in Montgomery Counties this month.

Next meeting is Thursday, March 17, start time 7 pm, at the Macoupin County Extension office, Carlinville.

Sandy motioned to adjourn at 8:00 pm, Terry seconded. All in favor, motion carries.

APPROVED – March 17 2022