

Unit 18 – Christian, Jersey, Macoupin and Montgomery Counties

Thursday, March 21, 2024

Macoupin County Extension Office – 60 Carlinville Plaza, Carlinville, IL

Call to Order – Vicki Joiner called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

Welcome & Introductions – Council members in attendance were: Connie Beck, Mike Cross, Mark Dugger, Anna Fessler, Vicki Joiner, and Venise McWard. Staff members in attendance were Andrew Holsinger, Lisa Peterson, and Sara Marten

Minutes from December 2023 – Minutes were reviewed. Without quorum, minutes were not approved and will be presented at the next meeting.

Fiscal Reports – Sara Marten reviewed the fiscal reports for both the trust and revolving accounts for December 2023, January and February 2024. Expenses seem to be in line to stay within budget this year.

Priority Area Highlight – Lisa Peterson led a review of current extension programming within one of the unit's four strategic priority levels – chronic disease prevention and management. Health rankings of the unit were reviewed, showing that many of our counties are physically inactive and rank high among chronic disease diagnosis (obesity, diabetes, heart disease, etc.). Of current programming, questions around the success/attendance depending on time of day that the program is held. Current and potential community partnerships were also discussed (Jerseyville Hospital, Pana Wellness). The issue of travel to health care appointments remains a key factor within the unit, as well.

Sara shared that at each upcoming council meeting, a new priority area will be presented for review and discussion. June's topic will focus on workforce preparedness and advancement.

Unit Updates

STAFFING – Taylor Pope is the new 4-H program coordinator in Christian County and started on March 4. The Jersey 4-H EPC interviews took place last week and an offer should be extended soon. Both the Christian and Macoupin SNAP Community Worker positions closed and interviews took place a couple weeks ago. Waiting to hear back from campus to extend offers.

PHONES – Sara shared that the unit is experimenting with a shared phone system through their internal communication system (Microsoft Teams). Phone calls will be able to be easily forwarded to staff throughout the unit, regardless of their physical location. This will hopefully save phone long-term as multiple lines and external phone forwarding won't be as necessary.

TASTE OF EXTENSION – Sara reminded everyone of the upcoming Taste of Extension event in Montgomery County, taking place on April 19. All council members should have received an invite and flyer to help promote. The goal of this event is to expose new audiences to extension programs and focus on interdisciplinary program delivery.

Old Business

- **Community Partner Awards 2024 Applications** – A total of six applications were received. Without quorum at the meeting to vote, it was agreed to send out an online survey for all members to determine each county's winner. There was currently no nominations for Montgomery County, but Sara would check with staff to see if there was a last-minute nominee that could be included.

New Business

- **2023 Unit 18 Impact Report** – Still in draft form but close to finalizing and printing. All council members will receive a copy in the mail once it is printed. The report highlights our four key priority areas as well as our community partners from 2023.
- **Unit Newsletter Beginning April 1** – The unit is in the process of creating a unit-shared newsletter (emailed) to share upcoming programs and monthly topical highlights. The first issue will be sent out on April 1 and will focus on financial literacy month.
- **DEIA Updates & Discussion** – Unit staff reviewed parity and census data at a recent unit-wide staff meeting. Sara led a brief discussion on those findings and opened the floor for further comments. Overall, our unit has goals to increase reach in Hispanic and black populations as we are consistently unrepresented in those groups. It was discussed if the local prison populations are included in our census data, believe that it is.
- **FY25 Budget Planning & FY25 Unit 18 Extension Council Agreement** – The upcoming fiscal year budget is being developed and will be presented to council in June prior to submitting. Extension Council also secures an agreement within the budget for various donations to the unit. The council president needs to sign the agreement for FY25 to be submitted with the budget.

Staff Program Reports – Andrew Holsinger, Horticulture Educator, and Lisa Peterson, Nutrition & Wellness Educator, gave verbal reports. Both have had successful classes over the winter. Valerie Belusko, Community and Economic Development Educator, and Jessica Jaffry, 4-H Youth Development Educator, were unable to attend. Sara reviewed some of their programs from the past few months.

Next Meeting – The 2024 meeting schedule was shared. Meetings will continue to be held on the 3rd Thursday of the following months. All meetings will begin at 7:00 PM.

- June – Thursday, June 20 (Jersey County Extension Office)
- October – Thursday, October 17 (Christian County)
- December – Thursday, December 19 (Montgomery County)

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:53 PM.

DRAFT