University of Illinois Extension Fulton-Mason-Peoria-Tazewell Unit

Extension Council Meeting Minutes February 1, 2021 12:00 PM via ZOOM

Members present

Kim Dunnigan, Maria Gottenmoller, Mark Gottenmoller, Holly Koch, Patty Wiegers, Tyson Walters, Shundell Broomfield, and Unit Director, Earl Allen

Meeting was conducted via ZOOM.

Call to order was made by Kim Dunnigan at 12:05 p.m.

Approval of minutes from October 5, 2020 were approved by consensus

Fiscal and Administration Updates:

- FY 21 Update
 - Earl explained that the unit received a lot of state matching funds from two different years (back pay).
 - The reserves are up leaving the unit with 9 months of reserves, usually the unit is sitting at 6-7 months of reserves.
- FY 22 County Levy outcomes
 - COVID has had a real impact on the counties, some to a greater or lesser extent
 - o Fulton and Mason levies stayed the same, but are facing some big reductions in revenue in the future
 - Peoria and Tazewell were faced with some big budget hurdles as a result of a drop in revenues due to COVID
 - Tazewell was a little less impacted but did reduce by about 10 percent (as they did with all external levies)
 - Peoria is still in a real difficult situation and reduced their levy by 50 percent (\$55,000); they see economic downturn for 1-2 yrs before they can recover
- Future county levy outcomes
 - O 2 coal-fired power plants are being shut down in Fulton and Mason Counties; Kathie Brown is working with a group of stakeholders, State Senator Dave Koehler, and the governor's office to see how they can help with revenues lost due to these closures.
- State Funding Outlook
 - o The State matching funds were received for FY2019 and part of FY2020
 - o Haven't received current year's matching funds yet
 - o The State is cutting university funding by 5%
 - The University is offering early retirement option to help with that reduction; this will have an impact on hiring moving forward
- 2020 local checking account audit approvals
 - Motion to approve: Kim Dunnigan
 2nd: Shundell Broomfield
 All approved motion passed

Staffing Update

- Master Gardener EPC
 - o Ian Goslin retired last year. Tara Heath has accepted the position. Will start later this month.
- 2 EFNEP staff have retired: Cheryl Russell and Petra Eberle
- Voluntary retirement incentive outcomes
 - o In the whole unit, there will be 9 positions to be filled; will hire about 1-2 a quarter
 - o The state voluntary retirement program has really affected hiring priorities
 - Our unit has 4 that signed up for it; names to be released at a later date. There may also be an offering to EFNEP staff, and could lose an additional 4 staff.
 - Will be losing experienced personnel
 - o Most likely will need to fill 2 out of the 4 positions right away
- Hiring priorities
 - o 1) 4-H openings
 - o 2) Educator openings
 - o 3) Snap-Ed
 - o 4) EFNEP

Communications and Programming update

- Annual Year-In-Review Report and Highlight Video
 - o Annual Reports have been mailed and emailed
 - o Earl encouraged everyone to read/watch it

Group Discussion

- 2021 4-H Shows and Fairs
 - o Feedback from 2020 virtual fair
 - Kim Dunnigan was a virtual judge. Said it was interesting and a learning curve. She enjoyed it and was glad it was there to keep kids doing things. It went well over all and will probably go easier in the future.
 - o Thoughts on 2021 shows and fairs
 - Campus is trying to decide whether or not to have everyone do the same thing (all remote or all face-to-face), some hybrid (some remote, some face-to-face) or let individual counties decide
 - Several would like every county to decide for themselves
 - One concern is that it could create divisiveness. Another concern is that it could require more judges if the fair was hybrid: one set for the online and one set for the face-to-face judging. Lastly, would there be challenges of 4-H members choosing to show in another county if they like how that county is doing their show. Would this create an influx of exhibitors in one county vs another?
 - o Adjustments and Precautions to take for a face-to-face
 - Community needs and priorities for programming as the pandemic subsides and we enter the recovery phase
 - Economic Development
 - Gardening

Civil Rights Update

• This fall Earl shifted the Civil Rights office support duties to Paula Lane in the Mason County office.

• Earl and Paula met in December and conducted the annual unit internal review

Other Business

- Recommendations for replacement council members
 - o 5-6 people are going off this year
 - o Before the April meeting, Earl would like everyone to provide him with a name of someone they recommend for a council member

Next Meeting April 5, 2021 Pekin Office

Meeting adjourned 1:02PM

Minutes submitted by Holly Koch