

University of Illinois Extension
DuPage – Kane – Kendall Unit Council Meeting Minutes
February 4, 2020, 6:45 pm at DuPage County Office in Naperville

Council members present: Nancy Bell, Claire Gustis, Cheryl McGarrity, Laura Reppy, Emily Reppy, Sydney Reppy, Steve Gustis, Colleen Haas, David Pileski, Steve Wolf, Tahiti Weaver
Staff members present: Deanna Roby, Amy Henschen, Nayaab Sattar

Call Meeting to Order

Tahiti Weaver called the meeting to order at 6:45 pm. Members and staff did introductions.

Minutes of October 24, 2019

Cheryl McGarrity moved to approve the minutes. Motion was seconded by Steve Gustis. Minutes were approved as presented.

Financial Reports

Deanna reviewed the financial reports which were distributed via email prior to the meeting. She explained that there have been changes to what we're reporting to the Unit Council. Columns were added to include additional sources of funds/accounts, which makes a clearer picture of the finances. She explained the limitations on the Smith-Lever funds, which can only be used for certain items and need to be used each year. Deanna fielded questions about the new format and members expressed that the new format was easier to understand.

Written Staff Reports

Staff reports were sent to members in advance via email. Deanna asked members if they had any questions on the reports. Colleen Haas expressed pleasure with the more consistent format this time. Others expressed that the photos were nice, and it was nice that it was shorter. Steve Gustis congratulated Donna on her National Service Award and Amy on her Communicator Award.

Unfinished Business

- Budget
 - Deanna gave an update on the budget.
- Staffing Updates
 - Deanna provided a staffing update. Kim Olson the secretary in the Kendall Office is retiring as of February 29. They are in the process of accepting applications (position closes February 13). She is still trying to hire a community worker in DuPage for SNAP-Ed. They may change the structure for how the position is filled to try to get someone in. They are looking at having someone come on as extra help and learn the position, then apply for the full-time position after they've gotten some training and experience. They may have someone coming in next week to try out this model. Starting salary was identified as a potential barrier to

getting someone in that position. Another potential retirement is coming in June or November. Information will be shared as Extension has it.

- Affirmative Action and Open Meetings Act
 - Deanna reminded members that if they haven't done the Affirmative Action and Open Meetings Act training and shared their certificate with the office, please do it as they can. Deanna will resend the link to everyone and let folks whose certificates are outstanding know. Youth members also need to complete the training, but may watch it with their parents and add their names to their parent's certificate.
- Secretary Position
 - Madison Solomon has resigned from the secretary position. The group discussed potentially filling that position. It was suggested that staff could potentially take minutes at each meeting, if allowed by bylaws. This item was tabled until the next meeting, pending a look at the bylaws to see what it specifies in regards to the secretary position. Amy took minutes at this meeting.
- Kendall Bank Signatory
 - Deanna explained that they are going to leave the old signer (Tina Heidrich) on the account for the time being because of staff turnover in Kendall.

New Business

- Kane County Riverboat Grant Application
 - David Pileski moved to apply for \$100,000 in the Kane County Riverboat grant application. Steve Wolf seconded. Motion passed.
 - Deanna will start working on the application for 2020. It's due March 2.
 - Group discussed "mandate" for each county to fund Extension in some way. No amount is dictated, and it's more of a recommendation. If no county funding is provided, Extension can provide no services to that county.
 - Steve Wolf asked if there was a reason that only the Elgin riverboat contributes funds and the Aurora casino doesn't. Deanna said she'd investigate.
- Expansion and Review
 - Deanna explained this is federally mandated group that needs to meet 2 times a year to examine the 4-H program in each county. This group is supposed to help identify community needs and come up with ideas on how to reach underserved populations. Staff feel it's important to think about expansion and review for all of our program areas and asked the group if they had any idea of community needs, new program locations, new audiences or partnerships.
 - In discussion programming topics members suggested staff consider include: Food insecurity (especially on college campuses); Food pantry/school garden in Willowbrook that Master Gardeners assist at (pair nutrition with this site); teaching folks to use produce from community gardens and pantries that is more novel/unfamiliar (get planting lists from community gardens early in the season

to know what the needs might be); Kendall Master Gardeners also have a garden that supports the food pantry that doesn't have nutritional education associated with it yet

- Nancy Bell talked about leveraging partners. She works with another non-profit (GardenWorks Project) that does raised bed gardens in partnership with food pantry clients. There is a possibility to partner to offer nutrition in partnership with these types of organizations. Nayaab mentioned that some partnerships between SNAP-Ed and this organization were already in place. We'd like to get another community worker in place to be able to do more direct education in DuPage County. Deanna encouraged folks to let us know about potential partners or connections that we can investigate.
- David Pileski suggested we send a spreadsheet out with contact groups (food pantries, senior groups, community gardens, etc.) so people could fill in some connection suggestions based on our core programming.
- In regards to communities to reach, Tahiti Weaver asked about serving senior citizens. Deanna mentioned that Laura does the most work with this community among staff.
- Amy suggested that if you're at a community event and think Extension should be there, let staff know (example: Environmental Summit each February sponsored by Conservation Foundation). Deanna will be at a soil health event at a library in DuPage County next week to promote Extension.
- Steve Gustis shared that one group is doing STEM outreach in partnership with the Census. He suggested this was a good example to start thinking outside the box about potential upcoming events to partner with from a new angle.
- There was discussion of proper food storage as having potential cross programming potential with gardening (Laura has done some of this with Master Gardeners in the past).
- The group mentioned that there is not a lot of recognition of what Extension does, even among volunteers. For example, a Master Gardener might not know about 4-H, or vice versa. There is a need for better communication internally and externally to change this.
- Deanna mentioned that if folks have other connections with media or county elected officials or anyone else who can help Extension raise their profile, they should let staff know.
- It was suggested that there is potential for using nurse interns for nutrition education with community gardens and food pantries, as a volunteer opportunity.
- Future Meeting Dates
 - Deanna will send a Doodle poll to members to schedule upcoming meetings, which are tentatively scheduled for the following months and locations:
 - April 2020 (Kendall County)
 - June 2020 (Kane County)

- Other
 - Cheryl McGarrity recognized Deanna for digging in and trying to strengthen the local program.

Adjournment – David Pileski moved to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Nancy Bell. Motion to adjourn passed.

Respectfully submitted by:

Amy Henschen