

Extension State Advisory Council
I-Hotel and Conference Center – Alma Mater Room
October 14, 2019
Minutes

Present:

Council Members: Janice Blanchette, Martha Brown, Sal Garza, Patsy Hirsch, Lee Maki, Brian Mueller, Robert Schafer, Carolina Schottland, Reginald Summerrise, Mark Ward, Jeff White, Linda White, Tim Wells

Extension Leadership Team: Dennis Bowman, Harry Clore, Lisa Diaz, Tony Franklin, James Hazzard, Samantha Koon, Deborah Seiler, Anne Silvis, Joe Toman, Steve Wald

Absent:

Council Members - Ruby Lingle, Brittney Muschetto, Kathleen Piatt

Leadership Team - Ryan Hobson, Jennifer McCaffrey, Julie Ritchey, Amanda Taylor, Beth Welbes

The meeting was called to order by Chair Sal Garza at 8:15 a.m. with roll call taken. Present were those noted above. Self-introductions were made. The February 18, 2019 minutes were reviewed with a motion made, seconded and passed to accept as distributed. A request was made to have the minutes distributed earlier so they can be used to give updates to Councils and other groups. Following the minutes approval Dr. Nickols-Richardson clarified verbiage about leverage of the CCI money explaining that the funding would be used as earmarked but there could be additional leverage by forming partnerships with other entities.

There were no public comments.

Dr. Nickols-Richardson acknowledged Bob Schafer for his two terms of service (six years) on the Council and thanked him for his efforts and presented him with a departing gift.

Dean's Comments – Kim Kidwell

Dean Kidwell thanked the group for their time and service and expressed that the voice of external is important. She is excited where Extension is today and where it is headed. She shared that in her three years of service as Dean several things have happened noting that Extension was stabilized by placing Shelly as the Head. The Dean has visited every unit and Shelly accompanied her on ten of those visits.

Dean Kidwell shared some accomplishments:

1. She has spent much time with the Director of the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA) and the relationship is being strengthened. The ability to work with Governmental Relations has also improved. Feels that presence in Springfield is much more obvious and influential with the same being true for D.C.
2. High priority was to create more Extension visibility and to tell the story better. For the last three years, the Provost has had an initiative to support things that move the university forward and a proposal was submitted and funded to develop the Extension Public Engagement Connection Center (EPECC). Almost every Dean signed off on the proposal. This Center is part of the vision to align Extension and Public Engagement and it is intended to create a gateway between the University and communities. The University is still reviewing the happenings with Public Engagement.
3. Extension made it into the University's Strategic Plan.
4. Extension is housed in several locations without a centralized location. A plan was made to bring the organization together under one roof with Research Park being a suggested location. Concern was expressed that the building would not be owned and there would be a lease bill. The plan is to build a facility to house all of Extension in the Arboretum with a community center connected to it. Master planning is currently underway and the Arboretum will come under the control of Extension. The goal is for it to be a gathering place and a huge

asset to the campus. A couple of donors have been identified. She will meet with the Chancellor in the next few weeks to make the ask.

5. Wants to ask for a gift of farmland in every county throughout the state to carry funding for 4-H in the counties. A couple units already have funding coming in. Wants to gather assets and resources to stabilize the portfolio to move forward.
6. Impact on Student Recruitment – Enrollment has increased this year reaching 2,800. A scholarship program started a few years ago with \$2,500 for each unit. 91 of 102 communities are represented within Extension. The next round the amount is being increased. Additional investment funds are being dedicated to enrollment with a plan to activate recruitment within Extension. A plan is being worked on to guarantee a four-year scholarship of \$2,500 each year for all 102 counties in the state with 4-6 being given per county. Additional details will be shared soon. ACES enrollment statistics were shared: 90% of graduates stay with the average in most states being 80%; 72% of enrollees graduate in four years; 40% of students participate in study abroad; 80% have internship as part of their academics; 86% have jobs after graduation; and over a 20 year career students make 21-22% more money than those from peer institutions. She said that that Illinois teaches resiliency and wants to make it known that there is added value of receiving a degree in the College of ACES.

Met with Director of IDOA. She has been in Springfield and wants to be sure that funding for Extension comes through every year. Cash flow at the state level is a problem and she wants to be sure they are aware that we are in need of the money and that payment is always sent in a timely and consistent manner. She stated that the Governor is giving money to the squeaky wheels and that those were greased last week.

Questions and answers:

- **Question** – What is the timeline/vision for when the new facility will be built?
Answer – The Dean wants it to be in three years or less. The preference is for one donor to cover the cost for the full building with an estimated cost of \$45-\$50 million. This is the Dean’s biggest priority and the largest ask that the campus is working with. A Council member expressed that having an Extension Center meeting the vision generates dividends in the process as the vacated spaces also affords expansion by other units.
- **Question** – The vision paper was referenced and the project for Cook County – how does that work?
Answer - Shelly responded that Cook County Initiative (CCI) funding is being leveraged. She explained that CCI funding is protected money and is subject to cash flow ability for the State. When money is available it will be received. CCI is only used for Cook County activities. It is dedicated for those initiatives due to the nature it was written into the state budget. The Dean added that MetroFest major was just approved.
- **Question** – Are there initiatives to retaining Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists? There are college students within local communities that may be lost while raising families.
Answer – Dean Kidwell responded that the Arboretum will help and perhaps there could be a Master Gardener program for students. The Arboretum is a portal to give Extension more visibility and having a young co-hort might help accomplish that.
- **Statement** – There is excitement about Extension getting more visibility as many in the communities are not aware, including some legislators.
Response - The Dean feels that everyone should know the value of Extension in their community. Steve Wald responded that he is working on an impact report for each county that can be shared with the legislators and others.
- **Statement** – With there being a new President for FFA, there will be a direct connection to building relationships.
Answer - Dean Kidwell agreed and reported that Anna Ball was hired to be Associate Dean of Academic Programs with her Specialty is in Ag Education. Formerly FFA students received four year scholarships and those were reduced to one year. Last week that was changed back to four years. There are several possibilities to building relationships.
- **Statement** - At a recent alumni event in Lake County where President Killeen was presenting, he talked about the University but not Extension. Concern was also that the President does not mention Extension in the budget. Can 4-H be a feeder system? Also asked about U of I for on-line resources and possibly using Extension offices for opportunities for laboratory work, etc.

Answer - Dean Kidwell responded that she is talking to the Provost about it today. On-line education certificate programs, PSEP on-line, etc. could be a large expansion possibility. Extension is currently being reviewed as free and it cannot afford to do so.

Director's Update – Shelly Nickols-Richardson

Shelly reflected on 2019 being the year of Extension and what was accomplished.

1. There has been a disconnect with Extension faculty specialist positions in ACES departments and those are being realigned to reconnect what is happening with campus and the field. In doing so an investment was made in co-hiring faculty within departments. Over a four year period of time Extension is investing \$1.3 million in the hires. Positions included are: HDFS (mental health/substance abuse); ABE (Farm safety/occupational health and Safety/AgrAbility); Animal Sciences (Livestock specialist (Instructor)); ACE (Ag/Farm Policy & Farmdoc); FSHN (Metrofest/Food Safety).
2. Expanding on the Extension Public Engagement Connection Center (EPECC). Shelly mentioned that a three year plan was submitted in an investment for growth proposal to campus and \$1.68 million was awarded. The goal is for EPECC to become self-supporting/self-sustaining. It is an ever evolving process in the campus vision for moving forward. Extension will be bridging the divide across campus.
3. In the proactive state related to the budget and where we are with funding. If Extension ceased to exist, commitments to employees would have to be honored if everyone had to be released. A plan has been made on days to zero and how to honor those commitments.
4. Looking at where to invest remaining funds in cash reserve.
 - Core Facility (EPECC); Discovery Partners Institute, Illinois Innovation Network (had to have \$500 million matching money. Once that is met, state will release the funds to create the DPI in Chicago.
 - Core personnel process to ensure there is a minimum of personnel in the units as they are able to support and staff those in the counties.
5. Partnered Dixon Springs Agriculture Center (DSAC) with Unit 24 County Director position. When the director of DSAC and the Unit 24 county director positions were vacated, an opportunity came about to combine the two and make one position with the goal of being able to promote opportunities within the unit and the area. The search is underway. A community member is on the search committee, and a community forum met with the candidates. An offer has been made and is pending. As soon as accepted, Shelly will share the information.
 - Investing in a grants manger to promote and encourage thinking about avenues where additional funding can be sought.
 - TEconomy study to look at inputs and outputs to come up with economic impact of what Extension provides to those who receive services from us. Hoping to have preliminary plan in January and completed report in February.
 - Beginning Major Extension Endowment Efforts - \$67million for 4-H Educators (one 4-H educator in every unit throughout the state) so as to not rely on state money for these investments. Interest from endowment can be used to fund the positions and cover salary and benefits. Other money could be used in other areas. 4% investment on portfolio. Angie (4-H Foundation) has been having discussions. Shelly is interested in feedback on strategies on how to plan and move forward
 - DPI – Shelly has transitioned out of chair of food and ag working group and Alex Winter-Nelson will take over the leadership. Approval received for Extension educator to be located at DPI. Until the building is built, educator will be housed at S. Wacker Drive in Chicago where DPI is currently located.
6. Extension to ACES Scholarships - All units (38 for fall 2019) were represented except one unit (27- Cairo area).
7. Chancellor/Provosts visits – September 5-6 visited units 1 and 5 (Provost attended). Shelly shared that they are open for suggested future visits. Anyone interested in hosting is encouraged to work with the county director to make the visits happen.
8. JJK Initiative – uses food and ag as a platform for youth who do not have other opportunities. Two donors will provide funding for three years to support a Local Foods Small Farms (LFSF) educator position. Will develop program around LFSF and a career path. Wants students in E. St. Louis to consider University of Illinois for their college education then return to their community. JJK & board are contributing to the effort.

9. The new Extension website was launched with over 400 sites updated. Now moving into the next phase. James and Sam were thanked for their work.
10. Plant Clinic – The clinic is physically located in Turner Hall and receives samples from throughout the state. It is Extension related but operationally managed under the Department of Crop Sciences. Extension pays a portion of salary for an individual within the clinic. We receive a benefit but do not physically run it. Clinic materials will continue to be co-branded.
11. Dennis Bowman has been serving as the Interim Assistant Dean, Ag and Natural Resources. Consideration is being given and feedback is being sought about splitting the programmatic area into two categories 1) commercial agriculture and 2) natural resources, environment and energy.

Questions and answers:

- **Question** – Will the TEconomy information be broken down by local county for feedback?
Answer – Tony responded that the information will be received for legislative districts.
- **Question** - How to get the word out and where do you anticipate the money coming from for the endowment?
Answer – Starts with the who and why. Need to determine who might be interested. Several options, one donor versus several who can participate. Conversations need to take place with key individual(s) who might be the donor(s). This will be part of the campus promotion that is underway. Draft of the concept note will be taken to the potential donors asking for their feedback so they have input. Important to also include industry. Goal is to be certain that all youth across the state can participate.
- **Question** - What about the remainder of Extension services and plans for those?
Answer - Shelly talked about the gift of land to promote Extension. Some are for scholarships, some youth. When speaking about gifts of land, areas where income from the land would be beneficial. Need to communicate in a more systematic fashion with IDOA on funding. Will continue working on the plan.
- **Question** – What is the idea on gift of land?
Answer – Looking for farms that are currently in operation with a tenant working the land with income from the land. Advancement/Development can accept agreements, including gifts of land.

PILD Conference & Hill Visits Recap – Sal Garza

Sal asked Steve to give an update of the April visits. Steve shared that a letter was sent ahead of time about funding and Smith-Lever anchoring the Extension funding in Illinois. This letter was referenced during the visits. The goal was to be in the local districts as well rather than just once a year in D.C. Having both ESAC members and educators on the visits seems to be the most effective. Legislators were back in their districts but the opportunity was extended for discussions with staff members. Overall, visits were very positive. A question was raised about the cost of the DC trip. Harry will provide that information.

Financial Update – Harry Clore

- Questions raised at the last meeting and those received via email were answered. He reported that raffles were eliminated in 2012 due to the state asking municipality to create a licensure system and not being able to keep up with compliance. He shared that depending on the value that tax reporting is required and there was not activity prior to 2012. Foundation can support the event.
- There will not be much of a burden due to the impact of the minimum wage law until 2025 when minimum wage reaches \$15/hr. At that time, there will be a cost of approximately \$400,000/year.
- Provided an overview of types of funds
 - Local – tax referenda
 - State – County Board Match (CBM), general revenue (State to University to Campus to Extension)
 - Federal – SNAP-Ed/Smith Lever (very stable). FFY 2019 one of the largest funding sources. EFNEP (targeted SL funds)
 - Trust – CBM/local referenda/local income
 - ICR – Overhead from grants (Campus to College to Extension)
 - Self-Supporting/Cost – any time income is received

- Gifts/Grants/Contracts
- Plant – any time building a building. The only building Extension owns is 4-H Camp at Allerton
- Extension funding sources FY14 - FY19
Shared the breakdown – 2014 state was 35%, 2019 was 25%
EFNEP/SNAP-Ed – in/out money (cannot carry over)
IDOA funds received since 2017
 - 2017 \$10M – CBM nothing received , CCI and Youth received
 - 2018 Received \$13,350 (\$10M most received). Received about ½ CCI and ½ YD
 - Received the \$5M from Governor Rauner
 - 2019 – CBM – \$0 received, ½ CCI received and all youth received
- Payments are behind. Has been made up with the ability and foresight to build up state funds in as much carry-over as possible. Like the process completed in 2015, a “what-if” scenario was shared and it was explained that a program has been implemented with the local units asking how to manage in uncertain times and what core is needed. Information is being gathered. He anticipates answers being the same as in the past and if funding is not received it will go into the Smith-Lever (SL) carry-over and the 2023-2024 excess funds will be depleted. If CCI is not received by 2022 the fund will be empty and Youth Development will be empty in 2023. A determination will need to be made on how to fund. Feels it important to be more proactive in grant writing as there are many large grants that have not previously been pursued. A grant writing position has been established and has been open for four weeks. The job description will be sent to the group and he asked that it be shared among colleagues.

Questions and Answers

- **Question** – Have the local counties been paid by the university to their programs?
Answer – 70% comes from local funds and 30% from central funds to Educators
- **Question** – What is the status on money from the State? Has it been received?
Answer – Shelly shared that she met with John Sullivan at IDOA last Tuesday. Had CFO give explanation of status for 2020 requiring paperwork and it has been completed. They have made the first set of vouchering to comptroller and if that is okay it will move forward to the next step. If not, it goes back to IDOA. It is a time consuming process. All have been vouchered and at Comptroller’s office but transfer authority must be given to write the checks. At a place where they believe they can write a first check for 2020 near the end of this month. Looking at monthly payments but at full payments since beginning of the year. Is not comfortable in forgiving the debt the State has to Extension on the advice of Governmental Relations. Vouchers will stay there until they can be paid. 2018-2019 can sit until the State has the money then they can begin paying retrospectively. Will leave the Extension request in the vouchering stacks. Working on getting money for 2020 but also want to get past money if there is opportunity for vouchers to be paid. Have to be aggressive and assertive as to why Extension voucher needs to be moved to the top so the cash can be moved into Extension’s hand. Funds in 2018 were received. FY 2020 is the last year that the central funds provided are guaranteed to units. Position has been held that 28 current educator positions are not being filled. Harry has been asked for insight as to possibilities.

Community and Economic Development Update – Anne Silvis

Anne Silvis gave an update on the Community and Economic Development (CED) team referring to the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development (NCRCRD) and the University of Illinois Extension CED handouts in the meeting folders. She shared that the back side of the CED hand-out includes facts of signature programs and broad areas in which CED educators work. The second hand-out is an impact report from NCRCRD which is a compilation of impact data from all 12 states in the NC Region. Data profiles are prepared by Zach Kennedy. Anne provides this profile information to those attending the leadership academy. She then shared an update on staffing mentioning that there are two new regional specialists, both who moved up from unit positions. The hope is to refill the two vacant educator positions. The Region 1 specialist position search is pending with Joe Toman handling the search. A suggestion was made to offer continuing education as part of CED webinars. Anne appreciated the suggestion and will look into it.

CED Grocery Study – Zach Kennedy (CED Specialist)

Anne introduced CED specialist Zach Kennedy who focusses on data and planning. Zach acknowledged other staff, Kathie Brown, Nancy Ouedraogo, and Zaheeda Darvesh. The Greater Peoria Economic Council provided funding for the website to get the project going and staff support. This was part of a larger effort. Zach acknowledged colleagues and others who made the project possible. He mentioned that the project touches all five Extension focus areas: health, economy, community, food, and environment. He shared that the project started due to the closure of two Kroger stores in poverty areas in Peoria. State Senator Dave Koehler put together a community based group tasked to examine the impact of the closures on the local residents and what could be done to provide appropriately priced food in poverty areas in Peoria. He shared the following:

1. Study looks at macro trends and happenings at a national level effecting at the local level.
 2. Demographic and market analysis of local landscape reviewed to understand characteristics about the area. Found declining populations since the last census and limited lower household income. There is a high concentration of poverty. Looked at SNAP-Ed and there is a high level of usage.
 3. Reviewed how much money the store is bringing in as opposed to what is being spent by population there.
 4. Surveyed the population to determine how the closure effected them. What does the population want to see as far as shopping in the area.
 5. Talked to the local grocers to determine what was working well and the benefits of being located in the area. Conducted a survey. Not just numbers for them as they want to be seen as community-engaged supporters.
- The group then came up with a series of 14 recommendations then narrowed those down to the next steps. More information on the project can be found via the web at www.regionalfreshfoodcouncil.org. If there are questions or demographics needed for a particular portion of the state, please let Zach know.

IT Update – James Hazzard

- James gave an update on the new website which launched on August 16. He thanked the team who worked diligently to complete the project. The update covered 27 units, 3 regional offices, and 4 research institutes. Phase 2 will begin within 6-9 months with major upgrades to be made during this time. 2020 will be spent working on core functional applications to support the new sites.
- Technology Services is still focusing on broadband. Hiring has been a challenge with failed searches, staff leaving, etc. Time has been spent managing the transitions to new systems while retiring or replacing existing web systems and services. More information will be provided at the February meeting.

4-H Program Updates: Addressing Issues Facing Illinois Youth – Mark Becker, Pat McGlaughlin, Curt Sinclair

Curt Sinclair (Shooting Sports Specialist) shared examples of hands-on activities for 4-Hers to get them active and involved right away including:

- Citizens Sciences Project - Barred owl nesting boxes. 4-Hers make the boxes, track how they house the birds then return the data back to perhaps change the IDNR recommendation on the best type to use.
- Junior Solar Sprint (JSS) model - an introduction to get young people excited about renewable energy and how transportation will be used in their lifetime. Every unit has ten kits (\$270/per unit). 4-Hers make their own design and the hope is to have a state competition next year.
- Fishing – Building lures is a learning experience and helps one to better understand the design and why it is used. Council members were given a hands-on opportunity to make a spinnerbait lure for largemouth bass. Curt explained that bass fishing gets kids excited and spinner is the best bait. The pieces provided can build a lure for .17 cents which is much less than if purchased in a store. Conservation is funded in Illinois by fishing licenses and there has been a decline. Increasing interest helps to increase funding.
- Partnership with US Soccer Foundation – this combines mentoring and health education with non-competitive soccer. It is being pilot tested in a few places around the state to get kids active, outside, and interested in new things.

Mark Becker (Food Systems Specialist). Began with an activity where small groups in the room talked about favorite food memories. He then shared about food production and food access. A pilot program is being developed with a

company out of California who is looking at similar issues and creating more of a hybrid and food production at a small scale – Farmbot. Currently working with the student sustainable farm to build capacity and see what can be done and how to target youth around the state who are interested in food production. Also working with the IL State Board of Education in Illinois to create a collaboration between 4-H and FFA as there are some great partnerships. A local group with an adult volunteer will go through the program in three phases 1) define food insecurity 2) determine food insecurity in local area 3) make a comprehensive action plan (what to do and how to create change). Matt will then support the group in putting their action plans into practice. The goal of the project is to create youth leaders who can talk with local leaders and create lasting solutions to food insecurities.

Patti McGlaughlin – Health Rocks Program – Inspired to be substance free. This program is a healthy living program for young people with the goal of bringing youth, families and communities together to reduce tobacco, alcohol and drug use. The program provides youth with the skills to make healthy decisions and lead healthier lifestyles. There is much power in mentoring and young people need to know they have someone to talk to. Teen mentoring is a way to make an impact. Work is being done across communities to bring attention to the program. She is excited that there are new specialists on campus with a focus on substance abuse and social/emotional aspects. More information on the program can be viewed on the web at <https://4-h.org/parents/healthy-living/health-rocks/>.

Engaging Stakeholders and Legislators – Steve Wald

- Group was given the opportunity to share what is happening at the local level and each council member was able to share what is happening in their units.
- He is working to strategize with counterparts on campus, within Extension and the College of ACES to stay on top of the issues related to the state budget. Continual inquiries and visits around the state will be helpful.
- There is a national initiative for NIFA funding of the house bill verses the senate.
- Worked with Senator Durbin on a bill in the Senate – introduced American Grows Act, SB 2458 to increase USDA funding for the next five years. Letters of support have been submitted through the University, College of ACES and Extension.
- Farm Bill - College of ACES took the lead with \$5 million competitive fund for innovative Extension projects. On a national level, language is in the bill but not yet funded. Pushing to get the full funding and College of ACES is in good position to compete for the funding.
- The University Office of State Relations started a pilot program last month with a few staffers entitled “in district events”. This is to encourage engagement in districts and interaction with an elected official i.e., things that are new in the district where a partnership can be formed with the University. Pilot went well. Language is subject to revision and feedback.
- Continuing to watch the state budget and working to strategize

Council members were given an opportunity to provide feedback and ask questions. Comments included:

- Discouraged forgiving the debt from the state.
- Don't be afraid to make calls.
- Visit with State Representatives – don't give up.
- Continue making the case to receive State funding.
- **Question** - Was funding owed or a gift?
Answer - Steve replied that his understanding is that the vouchers at the Comptroller's office are payable when the money flows. Harry mentioned that the contract reads that it would be paid monthly. Shelly feels that there is a sincerity that if there is money to put in to pay out that they will do so. There is great interest and great collaboration but they do not have the cash to do so. Believes that IDOA understands the urgency around the funding. She encouraged positive momentum moving forward and to keep the positive pressure on to get where we need to be.
- Counties support Extension.
- Thankful for local legislation. Those communicating well should be thanked. More communication at the ESAC level would be better. Steve said that if the legislator supports Extension that they can inquire with the Comptroller's office about the funding which is very helpful.

- Extension needs to be promoted as an overall part of the University. How can we partner with other colleges and promote them? Need to have a commitment to partner, be very proactive and develop a tactful plan. Resources are available but when is the optimal time to be making visits? Who are other viable partners on campus rather than being stand-alone? Our footprint needs to be increased. We need to take advantage of campus partners to increase the amount of positive leverage. There needs to be constant reinforcement. Steve will contact Sal to discuss how to engage ESAC.

ESAC Business (Old/New) – Sal Garza

Sal will contact each member to discuss old business.

Bob Schafer thanked the group for allowing him to be a part of ESAC.

There being no further business, a motion was made, seconded, and passed to adjourn the meeting at 3:18pm

Next Meeting

February 17, 2020

iHotel and Conference Center