

Unit 17 Extension Council Meeting – March 9, 2020

The meeting was called to order by Nancy Derby at 6:32 p.m.

Members present: Jo Bauer, Janell Baum Thomas, Nancy Derby, Zach Howell, Trinity Mata, Dave Mills, Ray Spencer, David White, Jamie Boas, Staci Coussens, Doug Harlan, Trinity Johnson, and Caitlin Mellendorf.

Minutes from the September 10th, 2019 meeting were read and approved. No meeting was held in November of 2019 due to weather.

Doug Harlan presented the Fiscal Report to members present. He informed the Council that 100% of State's County Board Match money had been received for 2018. He also told the Council that the \$11 million for 2019 and one-half of the 2020 County Board Match funds had been received as well. Expenditures were about 28% of this year's budget. No major expenses are expected and that we were doing well. Motion made and seconded for acceptance of budget.

Doug gave the personnel update. The Unit hired a new Horticulture Educator, Sarah Vogel. She will start March 23, 2020 and will be working out of the Decatur office. He told the Council that the Macon County Master Gardener Program Coordinator, Vasthi Schwarz, had resigned. Her position had already been posted for advertisement. Finally, Doug told the Council that the Unit had another SNAP-ED Community worker resign. However, he will be doing interviews for the positions in the next couple of weeks. He said that the Unit's Consumer Economics Educator position was offered to a person, but she turned the offer down. The position was considered a failed search and would be re-advertised again in the near future.

Doug shared that one of the identified program needs has been Mental Health First Aid for Farmers and Agribusiness. He said that the Unit is already planning on hosting a First Aid training.

The program highlight was on nutrition and wellness. Caitlin Mellendorf presented a short power point on her program partnership with SNAP Ed. She stated that a variety of fruit and vegetables were available to the users of food pantries. However, they did not know what to do with the items nor have recipes using the items. Caitlin has developed recipe cards that that gave at least 5 useful recipes for the fruits and vegetables. The cards have both written and visual instructions regarding cooking with the various fruits or vegetables. The example

given was spaghetti squash and how to cook and eat this vegetable.

Trinity Johnson of Macon County 4H gave handouts and noted the popularity of the Macon County 4-H International Day. The Junior Naturalist Club, Art Workshops and Little Dreamers all were hits with other 4H participants. She also stated that a program was given on Black History Month at Stevenson Elementary School in Decatur and was well received.

Jamie Boas updated us regarding the positive response of the Blue Ridge Teen Teachers program.

Staci Coussens shared updated information on the SNAP-Ed Programs. As noted in her report, a \$20,000 grant was applied for and granted to update electrical in the pantry to serve college students at Illinois State University at Heartland Community College and Illinois Wesleyan University. She stated that her program had been working with the Monticello 1st Christian Church and the 1st United Methodist Church had food pantries. These efforts were also a part of a grant and partnered with the Piatt County Master Gardeners and their community garden. The Master Gardeners will be providing vegetables to both food pantries.

Caitlin Mellendorf presented a food program for the Piatt County 4-H students on foods in history. One event involved the entire 5th grade class taking a field trip to 4-H Memorial Camp to continue learning about food that the pioneers ate.

No further business was conducted. A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed and meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Next meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 11th at 6:30 p.m. at the Piatt County Extension Office.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo Bauer