

DeWitt, Macon, Piatt County – Unit 17 Extension Council Meeting

March 14, 2022

The March 14, 2022, Unit 17 Extension Council meeting was held via Zoom.

The March 14, 2022 meeting was called to order by Doug Harlan at 6:30 p.m.

Those present at the meeting: Sonya Anthony, Brett Brown, Angi Carter, Nancy Derby, Kathi Drozs, Morgan Drozs, Jerry Edwards, Megan Murphy, Tayisha Nelson, Kallee Steinkamp, Ben Suckow, and Jennifer Suckow

Staff present at the meeting: Doug Harlan, Doug Gucker, Caitlin Mellendorf, and Louise Hyneman

There were no public attendees or comments.

Minutes from the November 2021 Extension Council were presented. There were no corrections or additions. A motion was made by Megan Murphy to approve the minutes and was seconded by Angi Carter. Motion passed.

Doug Harlan reported that we have received all the State Board match last month. We are waiting on our first payment of FY22 County Board Match. This should be arriving soon. Good news is State is making payments.

Fiscal report was presented by Doug Harlan. Income report shows that we are on track. The expense report shows that we are a little underspent, but doing very well. However, as we begin in person programming the expenses will increase. Doug reported that we will likely finish the year underspent but in a more normal pattern. Doug asked if there were any questions or comments on the report. There were none.

Doug made an announcement about our 4H Scream Robotics Team participated in the State Competition and will be advancing to the Worlds competition in Houston, Texas. Congratulations and well wishes were expressed.

Personnel Update presented by Doug Harlan. Louise Hyneman is the new SNAP-Ed Educator. The SNAP-Ed EPC position will not be replaced. Stephanie Hale has been hired to fill the open Macon County 4H EPC position. Stephanie will begin on March 21, 2022. ANR/Master Naturalist EPC position close date had to be extended 2 weeks to March 22 as there were no applicants. The Macon 4H Youth Development Educator position only had one applicant and there is a requirement of two. So, this position will be extended another three weeks until March 25, 2022. This position did have 2 applicants as of today. There were no questions.

Doug provided a COVID update. The mask mandate is gone for the office and 4H. Cooking program restrictions have been lifted as well. We do still have to abide by any partnering facilities guidelines when working at their facilities.

Doug asked the council if they had any new programming needs that the staff could address. A suggestion was made that we try to partner with Kirby Hospital on community health needs assessment.

Program highlight on Nutrition and Wellness, Caitlin Mellendorf reported that the Deer donation program will include 12 different counties. Currently assigning partners; hunters, food pantries and meat processors. Also working with SNAP-Ed to encourage trying the venison and providing videos on recipes and how to prepare the meat. Monetary donations to this program will go to reimbursing the processors.

Jerry Edwards provided information on an electronic recycling site in Piatt County at the soil and water conservation district. March 30<sup>th</sup> from 9 to 11, or until the truck is full.

Doug Gucker reported on 2 sessions for in person pesticide testing. There were 28 in attendance. Also, Avian Influenza has been found in birds in McLean County and geese in Will County. A statewide news release has gone out. Nine people are currently training to be Master Naturalists. They will be graduating on March 29. He indicated that it has been a very busy winter.

Jamie Boas provided a report on DeWitt and Piatt County 4H. Blue Ridge High School STEM Club hosted an afterschool program at Schneider Elementary in Farmer City. Activities include engineering, slime, bouncy balls, circuits, and food science explosions. Club members and leaders participated in a club officer training workshop.

Sarah Vogel provided a report on Horticulture. Crossing Healthcare received a \$2000.00 grant with the support of Extension staff. This partnership will provide low resource individuals and families in Macon County access to fresh, locally grown produce. In November Horticulture staff led a terrarium workshop in Piatt County at an assisted living facility. A winter seed sowing workshop was conducted in January.

Louise Hyneman reported on programming in numerous schools. Community workers are currently scheduling summer programs. She is working with Eisenhower school staff to determine the school's nutrition and wellness needs. The school is hoping to implement a backpack program next year. She is working with DMH and St. Mary's to understand the needs of food insecure patients.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Megan Murphy and seconded by Jennifer Suckow.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Next meeting will be held on May 9, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.