

Extension State Advisory Council
I-Hotel and Conference Center
February 18, 2019
Minutes

Present:

Council Members: Janice Blanchette, Martha Brown, Sal Garza, Patsy Hirsch, Ruby Lingle, Lee Maki, Brian Mueller, Brittney Muschetto, Kathleen Piatt, Larry Richards, Robert Schafer, Carolina Schottland, Reginald Summerrise, Jeff White, Linda White, Tim Wells

Extension Leadership Team: Suzanne Bissonnette, Lisa Diaz, Tony Franklin, Ryan Hobson, Samantha Koon, Julie Ritchey, Deborah Seiler, Anne Silvis, Joe Toman, Steve Wald, Beth Welbes

Absent: Shelly Nickols-Richardson, Harry Clore, Jennifer McCaffrey, Amanda Taylor

The meeting was called to order by Chair Sal Garza at 8:30 a.m. with roll call taken. Present were those noted above. Self-introductions were made.

No public comments.

Director's Update –Tony Franklin

Shelly Nickols-Richardson was unable to attend the meeting, but provided an update for Tony to read.

1. The *Vision for Aligning University of Illinois Extension in the College of ACES with a Statewide Public Engagement Initiative* has been accepted by ACES Admin and the University. The final Visioning Paper has been provided in the meeting folder. Highlights include the vision statement: "The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign will be a publicly engaged institution, facilitated by the deeply rooted and historical Illinois Extension networks."

The four pillars for Extension over the next 10 years are:

- Focusing on a systems approach to engaging and solving societal grand challenges
- Balancing efforts to strategically address rural and metropolitan needs and issues
- Drawing on traditional strengths while incentivizing creative thinking and entrepreneurship and rewarding innovation to tactically address contemporary issues
- Aligning both competing and complimentary interests to facilitate the generation of collaborative outcomes with high impact

The Visioning Paper and Extension 3.0 Task Force Report have been merged. The goal is to make substantial progress on these action items over the next 6-10 years.

2. The Extension & Public Engagement Connection Center (EPECC) will be created to serve as a portal for faculty and staff system-wide to connect with the Illinois Extension network for stakeholder-engaged research, public engagement, and broader statewide impact. EPECC will help achieve the University's Strategic Goal #3: Make a significant and visible societal impact that has been established for the institution. An Investment for Growth Proposal will be submitted by March 1st to campus to help establish EPECC over a 3-year period. Deborah Seiler is leading this effort as coordinator of EPECC.

3. Illinois Extension is included in the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign's Strategic Plan. This is the first time in at least a decade that Extension has been specifically named in the University's strategic plan. Illinois Extension is also included in the Agriculture Transition Team's report to Governor Pritzker
4. Representatives Meier and Costello are sponsoring House Bill 2264 that amends the County Cooperative Extension Law to replace "may" with "shall." This bill provides a reason to contact your state legislators to remind them of the importance, value, and impact of Extension.
5. Discovery Partners Institute (DPI)-Illinois Innovation Network (IIN) is making progress on creating the DPI facility in Chicago. Extension has proposed to house a field staff member at DPI's current location in Chicago; the outcome on this proposal should be known by the end of February. Extension has also been involved in IIN proposals in Quad Cities, Peoria, and Decatur. Several other proposals for IIN hubs are in development.
6. Visits by Chancellor Jones and Provost Cangelaris are being scheduled for 2019. The goal is to visit two sites in each region. Visits scheduled so far are May 14th in Unit 17 (DeWitt, Macon, Piatt) and May 24 in Unit 11 (Fulton, Mason, Peoria, Tazewell). Anyone interested in participating in these visits should contact Shelly.

There was a question on whether Visioning Paper was created by a voting body. It was clarified that it was a group made up of 3 representatives from campus and 3 external people representing the council.

There was a request for clarification on a passage on page 7 of the Visioning Paper "Community Health and STEM programs in Cook County.... 4-H programming requires strong support." Specifically clarify the "(CCI) funds can be better leveraged." It was determined that Tony would talk to Shelly to get clarification behind this statement to ensure there is no confusion and incorrect interpretations.

Financial Update – Tony Franklin

Harry was unable to attend the meeting but provided an update for Tony to read.

In FY 2018 a supplemental budget was approved with \$10 million for Extension to cover missed payments from FY 2016 and FY 2017. As of today, we have received \$4.15 million of this allocation. For the FY 2019 period the budgeted allocations for Extension were

- \$10 million in County Board Match,
- \$2,449,200 in Cook County Initiative,
- \$994,700 in Youth Development Funds
- \$786,400 in 4-H Premium Funds

As of today, we have only received \$497,861 of the Youth Development Funds – no other funding has been received for FY 2019.

We have word from the Comptroller's Office that some funding has been vouchered, but we are not sure which funds or how much.

It seems a certainty the \$15 minimum wage will be put into effect. It will be phased in between 2020 and 2025. There may be some exceptions for student employees. The effect for Extension:

- Civil services will have no impact until 2023, which will be minimal.
 - 2024 the total cost will be \$110,000 based on current wages.
 - 2025 the impact will be a total of \$432,000 annually (\$322,000 year over year)

- We have 133 Civil Service positions making under \$15 today.
- For any other employees (Extra Help, Academic Hourly, Students – assuming they are included) will have an impact beginning in 2020.
 - 2020 total increase of \$7,500
 - 2021 \$14,000
 - 2022 \$23,000 (\$9,000 year over year)
 - 2023 \$38,000 (\$15,000 year over year)
 - 2024 \$73,000 (\$35,000 year over year)
 - 2025 \$120,000 (\$47,000 year over year)

It was suggested that a projection be made of the rippling effects of the minimum wage increase across the entire organizational structure. A report should be created to answer the questions “What other raises are projected based on the minimum wage increases raising the bar?” What do we need to do to meet those projections?” Tony will relay this to Harry when he returns.

There was clarification requested on (1) what outstanding money from previous years still has not been paid, (2) where the money is being held up in the process – with legislators, with the Department of Agriculture/Comptroller, with the University, etc., and (3) if there are any moneys that we are owed that are being written off as not expecting to be paid. Tony will get clarification from Harry on these.

It was questioned if the moneys that have been trickling in are being used to fill holes in the University’s budget. Tony will check with Harry on this.

Extension Public Engagement Connection Center (EPECC) – Deborah Seiler

Deborah is currently 6 weeks into her EPECC Coordinator job. Deborah wished to welcome Samantha Koon into new position as Communications Coordinator. Her first few weeks in her positions have been spent on the Investment for Growth Proposal. Dean Kidwell has been advocating for us and getting other colleges to sign on for it. In drafting the proposal it has been important to think of ways to provide incentives in support of Extension services, but to not lock us into any specifics yet. The proposal will include:

- Support for consulting staff.
- Incentives for student and faculty ICE Grants that were offered for ACES Researchers. Part of the proposal is to take ICE Grants campus wide.
- Proposal for what are essentially student internships at state legislative offices.

Deborah is looking for suggestions on things that work well to connect field staff and campus.

There was a question on what is being referred to when redundancy in Extension is mentioned. Deborah clarified that there are many programs out there that are being duplicated and recreated by others because they are not connected to the Extension network. A big part of EPECC is raising the visibility of Extension as the outreach arm of the University.

Agriculture & Natural Resources (ANR) Accomplishments, Analysis – Suzanne Bissonnette

Suzanne presented some data gathered by use of our new reporting system, PEARS, which shows that the impact of all Illinois Extension Agriculture and Natural Resource programs is spread throughout the state. The current organization of ANR is Suzanne as leader, with all ANR, Master Gardener, and other programs falling underneath. Sea Grant now falls under ANR oversight. In Extension’s five focus areas,

ANR mostly falls under Environment, but also incorporates all other issues. The ANR educators are intertwined in each other's programming and bring expertise to each other's programs.

ANR is an essential partner for State agencies and organizations to help achieve state regulatory and policy goals. There are informational and educational resources available such as newsletters, a new podcast about soil nutrients, and more. ANR has generated \$8.6 million in grant funding working together with ACES. Projects include Nitrogen management, nutrient reduction, reducing runoff, cover crop strategies. A number of educators received ICE Grants for these works. ANR has done a good job of collaborating with ACES and sharing ideas. ANR Provides direct and indirect program support. Indirect examples include Pesticide Safety Education Program (PSEP), Certified Livestock Manager (CLM), and FSMA. Direct examples include Master Gardener/Naturalist training and volunteerism, green infrastructure and landscapes, and community gardens.

Overall there are good opportunities throughout the state, however areas where we don't see much programming are where there are not educators available. Extension and ANR focuses its services on supporting the State's producers and businesses related to agriculture and green industry – strengthening the economy and supporting Illinois' ability to be competitive. ANR Extension provides expert assistance and personalized information that is exactly tailored which helps build trust.

There was a question about the fate of Extension's Master Canner Certification that used to exist. Suzanne said that we do actually have the ability to do this again, we just need to have people trained on it. Food preservation is a growing program of interest.

A Master Gardener Statewide coordinator is being hired this week. The plan is to make a Statewide Master Naturalist position who would coordinate all of the programs across the state. They would still need local support from an educator. An online Master Naturalist program could be something a Statewide Naturalist could develop.

On the Pollinator Crisis, a group was created to get citizen scientists to work on this issue. We are involved through our agricultural programs and we hope to be involved with our citizen scientists.

Guest Robert J. Baren arrived and introduced himself. He is senior advisor on legislation and policy to the Illinois Treasurer.

PILD Conference – Steve Wald

PILD is a 3-day conference. A core part of the 3 days is a day spent on Capitol Hill to visit with legislators. 3 people are designated from this association to attend. The conference dates are April 14-17, 2019 this year. Over the next couple months, the group attending the conference will meet over Skype to prepare for this meetings. The field staff going this year so far include: Dennis Bowman, Carl Baker, Susan Odum, Amy Funk, and Carissa Davis (who are all downstate people). Steve Wald will attend with the group.

When they meet with the delegates, they leave behind about a page of information, as well as provide some information in advance of the meeting. Scheduling is done by OGR. Usually staff are well-informed on Extension, but occasionally it can be a first introduction to Extension. We try to organize the members who might have a connection to the constituent for the meeting. The conference is framed by the Cooperative Extension system nationally, and so the materials they give out at the conference are the national information. We translate that information to the delegates for what that means to Illinois and to their district.

It was asked if the bill we asked for support for last year happened. Steve replied that he was pretty sure it did not go through.

It was suggested to the group to have a letter formed by Extension and signed off on by the group to send to the delegates in preparation for these visits. Steve mentioned that such a letter should be done relatively soon so that it is done before PILD. The letter should be circulated electronically for review and approval by each member ahead of time. It was also suggested to possibly email instead of mail this letter.

Reginald Summerrise motioned to have this “Warm-up letter” drafted and submitted for review. The motion passed.

Jeff White motioned to open the floor for nominations for volunteers for region 3 for PILD attendees, Robert Schafer seconded.

Kathleen Piatt self-nominated, Martha Brown seconded.

Lee Maki motioned to close the nominations.

The motion was passed.

Lee Maki motioned to approve the nomination of Kathleen Piatt.

The motion passed.

Legislative Affairs Update – Steve Wald

Coordination is the key to organizing all efforts to support Extension in the government. Council on Governmental and External Relations (COGER) has representatives from all campuses and is a great opportunity to work with people we otherwise might not meet. An Extension Government Affairs Advisory Committee is being proposed; this would be a way to add more value and increase visibility for Extension.

Extension has 4 units where 2/3 of the population of the state live - 3 are active units. There are 3 members of congress who do not have an Extension office in their district. Similar situation with the Senate. Steve is working on putting together a useful chart to look up the congressional district and county director for that district.

There is a bill HB2264 that is changing “may” to “shall” to address the financing issue that what is received does not line up with what is appropriated in the budget. This is not an Extension sponsored bill, but it is from Extension Partners.

NIFA and ERS are planning to relocate out of DC, and this seems to be moving forward. Champaign is one of many proposed location for them to move to. The biggest reason for their moving is the cost of doing business in the DC area.

Year in Review Video – Samantha Koon

Samantha has been in her position here about 6 weeks. She previously worked in communication and marketing consulting in higher education. The goals for communications include:

- Providing strategic direction for communications function
- Creating and sharing new tools, methods, and resources for advocating for our mission
- Enhancing the great work already being done

Samantha presented a “Year-in-Review” Video from Fulton-Mason-Peoria-Tazewell Unit that highlighted programming and partners that supported the programs. The video helped visually portray Extension in a professional manner and showed the diversity of programs and efforts in Extension. There will be more tools such as this video being created to help support the mission.

Communications Update – Samantha Koon

Samantha presented on goals for Communications:

- To specifically identify target audiences. We are currently missing a creation of personas – a deep understanding of what people care most about reaching through programming.
- To support the digital transformation – digital first strategy. The Illinois system manages 600-800 social media accounts, probably closer to 1000. Public Affairs wants to help support this.

Ways to accomplish these goals:

- Increasing communications staff at state level with intention of adding in expertise.
- Build morale, expertise, and precision for Extension communications across the state.

Vast majority of units do not have anyone in their units to work on communications. And expanded statewide team would be able to fill in those gaps and would be an investment in accomplishing these tasks for all of Extension. We have not yet systematically built out a platform to provide these resources.

Sal suggested implementing new things in small batches before rolling out broadly. Samantha agreed with this.

4-H Health & Wellness Initiatives – Amy Leman/Pat McGlaughlin

Lisa Diaz introduced Amy Leman and Pat McGlaughlin and presented the current state of 4H. 4H has a long history of tradition and innovation. They are experimenting with some new things with implementing “Digital First.” Amy is innovating with a cooking app as an additional way to access learning support. At the state level, 4-H is seeing an impact from the retirement changes. We have a growing civic engagement arm. We have a new specialist position in environment and they will oversee shooting sports. Google has provided money to hire a 3-year STEM specialist position to help that area grow. There is also a new minority engagement specialist position. It’s an exciting time of growth for 4H.

Amy Leman is responsible for healthy cooking and nutrition programs. Programs include Health Jam, Illinois Food Challenge, and Illinois Junior Chef. Amy led the group in an activity about caffeine that is done in the Illinois Junior Chef program. It is a program taught by teens to kids, there is physical activity built in, and they also use this program to practice math skills for kids.

Pat McGlaughlin presented on being more intentional in teaching social and emotional learning. A big goal of these programs is teaching kids to be resilient. Be SAFE (Safe, Affirming, and Fair Environments) is a bullying programs that establishes a sense of belonging and looks at helping young people process their emotions and think about choices they have. Pat presents an activity where a jar filled with 2 different materials is shaken for each concern that someone states. This program is to help calm down kids’ thoughts and give them time to settle, and the jar gives them a visual reminder of this. Another program is Health Rocks – it helps young people think about substance abuse issues. These are great programs to use in partnership with others because they are community-wide issues. There is also a military partnership between the Department of Defense and the Department of Agriculture. Because of this, 4-H exists on all military bases around the world, so 4-H is a constant for these military families.

The presenters asked the group to think about partners that we should be working with or should we be mindful of in scaling or programs.

A researcher out of Oregon 4-H created a model showing impact of these programs on youth. 4-H helps youth recognize sparks of interest, and helps them stay in programs in depth in their interest area. There is a developmental program survey to see if youth are getting out of programs all that they can.

A question was asked on if 4-H is expanding STEM instead STEAM. Lisa responded that there is an initiative that incorporates this. There will hopefully be more to report on this at the next meeting.

There was a question on what we might be doing for youths that spend a lot of time with video games – not to scorn them but to help them strike a balance. Lisa responded that you look to take that spark of video games and take that opportunity where they are a consumer and help them become a creator; help them see the connection to future careers, such as programming. There was some interesting research on CEOs that spend time playing video games and how these things could be beneficial. We should be trying to take these interests and turn them into a benefit for these youths.

IT Update – James Hazzard

James updated that we have hired our IT Trainer position, and we are starting training. We are also in the process of updating to Windows 10 for everyone on Windows 7. The new SCCM software center will allow people to install their own software, without giving them administrative access to computers which risks viruses. Zoom software is being expanded to all of campus and Extension. Everyone will get Zoom accounts – these will make webinars more accessible to external people and easier to use. IT is working on the Green Board Project of making broadband improvements (make the map of broadband speed for Illinois all green). There is a proposal in with DPI-IIN for rural broadband improvements.

The website redesign for the main site and unit sites are in pre-launch phase. For a website this big and complicated there is a big checklist, they are hoping to launch it in March. Training for Extension Web Manager is underway. The web team has become consulting project managers, which means the web team can't do everything, so they are going to help by finding 3rd party vendors to make sure that things are done properly and the units can get the things they need. The website strategy is redesign, refresh, or retire. With development of the main site, we will be able to take a theme and create a site within the site using the same tools. They are also building content migration tools, so that individuals will be able to launch new websites with minimal effort. There needs to be a person in charge of each website in order for it to launch, otherwise if there is no responsible person it will be retired.

Challenges IT is facing include hiring (failed searches, Academic Professional is being reevaluated as Civil Service), and cultural challenges (reputation and communications change for web/app/software projects). Extension has also inherited Distribution Services from ITCS, so this is something that needs to be figured out going forward.

For filling out the team, there are a number of vacant positions. They are looking to fill 4 positions (of a team of 18). They are looking to replace DCMS with a public user portal. They are still looking into it to make sure it will meet all of our needs. IT is also trying to step in and help with program support for STEM programs such as 3D Printers, widgets, etc.

ESAC Business (Old/New) – Sal Garza

Sal proposed motion to approve meeting minutes for October 2018 Meeting.
The motion carried.

A question was raised of how to increase communications that could be helpful on a daily basis between regular meetings. Tony and Steve and Sal will be facilitators in terms of having sessions for a working group – these groups may be specifically focused on a certain initiative. We want to be able to have more in-depth discussions that will maybe lead to an initiative of their own. The group was encouraged to think about where their time will be the most valuable in terms of Extension and the College of ACES. Volunteers are a tremendous asset, and they want to be sure we are fully utilizing all talents and resources.

It was also brought up that the group wants to continue to build and move forward so that it is beneficial, instead of feeling like they have to start over when a new chair takes over. Sal suggested an ESAC member could be a part of a presentation that is given to the rest of the committee, so they are reached out to ahead of time by the presenter and more involved in the activities.

The idea was expressed that they think the group should be a part of things on the creation end as opposed to hearing about things after the fact when there is no advice to give that would be able to effect the implementation. The group should be involved more on the front end as opposed to the back end. Implementing sub-committees was suggested. It was also suggested that the agenda could be more forward looking as opposed to covering things that have already occurred or have been decided. There was a recommendation have Shelly identify the top 2 or 3 challenges and the top 2 or 3 opportunities in advance of the meetings. Everyone would have time to think about it ahead of time, and then have the meeting regarding solutions and actually making helpful advice.

Sal has had discussions with Shelly, and wants to know how we can capitalize on the experience and knowledge of this committee. He will be reaching out to everyone and see what their opinions are.

There being no further business, a motion was made, seconded, and passed to adjourn the meeting at 2:46 pm.

Next Meeting is October 14, 2019.