

Unit 27 Council Meeting
 February 16, 2022
 11:00a.m. – 1:00 pm
 ZOOM meeting

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by County Director Johnson at 11:03 a.m.

Council members present:

Alexander/Pulaski	Johnson	Massac	Union
Ann Terry Shawna Rhine Derek Eurales Josie Eason	Jonathan Voelz	Cheryl Vanderford Megan Henderson	Chris Boyd

Staff present: County Director Johnson, Angela Ralls, Sarita Sawyer, Monica Meyer, Kimberly Rohling, Tiffney Stewart, Patsy Bishop, Tami Crest, Vickie Taylor, Erin Garrett, Shannon Pulliam, Lizz Cooley-Questelle, John Shadowens, Toni Kay Wright, Quin Colson, Destenie Sullivan.

Meeting minutes from December 15, 2021 were reviewed. Motion made by Derek Eurales and seconded by Ann Terry to approve prior minutes. Motion carried.

Council Business

- Extension Board meeting was held prior to this meeting and finances were discussed. A request to increase each county board levee by \$2,500 was approved by the Extension Board. County Director Johnson advised that no increase has been requested in at least five years. Motion made by Johnathan Voelz and seconded by Ann Terry to request same in FY23 budget proposals. Motion carried.
- Unit Council members
 - Replacement of Unit Council members – need suggestions for seven members ending June 30:
 - Johnson County – Phyllis Webb and Johnathan Voelz
 - Massac County – Pearl Meadows and one vacancy – Pastor McReynolds is willing to return
 - Pulaski/Alexander County – Ann Terry
 - Union County – Greg George, Chris Boyd, Margarita Bartolo and one vacancy

Suggestions and recommendations are appreciated for replacements.

- County Extension Director Report
 - Plan of Work / New issues or concerns in community – reviewed PowerPoint

slides outlining the focus areas of programming. No issues or new focuses raised but Johnathan indicated the continued need for coordinating with volunteers and interagency cooperation in the area.

- COVID procedures are still in place and continue to be monitored by campus.
- Budget update – Smith-Lever continues to receive \$300,000 per year and is used to offset expenses of the Unit. Trust account is around \$450,000 and no worries are foreseen. SNAP-ED unallocated account balance is around \$113,000 and this fund is specifically used for nutrition education programs and staff. Revolving account is a self-supported fund and consists of fee generated programs and expenses come out of that revenue, this balance is around \$16,000. Gift account currently has about \$1,400, is an unrestricted account and has no specific plans for use currently. Foundation account balance (\$5,455.02) was discussed. This money was donated years ago, and the campus finance director is wanting the balance reduced. County Director Johnson explained that he will discuss a spending plan with the donors.
- Still waiting on approval to hire for the vacant SNAP-Ed EPC position. One new hire has joined the team; Destenie Sullivan is a Research Assistant with the HEAT project focusing on southern Illinois food access.
- Facilities updates – Massac County meeting in March 2022 and is expected to request a rent increase; Pulaski/Alexander meeting will be held soon, and several improvements are needed at this facility and a lower rent request is going to be made; Union County is privately owned, and discussions are ongoing about increasing space at that site; Johnson County is meeting in March 2022 and is requesting a rent increase. Shawnee College continues to donate office space for Kristi Stout and has recently moved us to a larger office space.
- Civil Rights and efforts to reach underserved audiences are ongoing. Monica works with staff monthly to focus on a topic and keep records up to date. Unit 27 has an audit scheduled for the spring of 2023. County Director Johnson has been invited to participate in the Healing Illinois project by historical preservation, a community education project, being called the Community Remembrance Project in collaboration with the Equal Justice Institute in Montgomery, AL and will report more on that at a later date.
- Staff performance evaluations will be conducted for civil service in February and academic service will be held later.
- Other Activities
 - CREATE Bridges – Quin Colson and Susan Odum – online marketing to offer regional business maps and future hospitality training. A 360°-degree camera is available for pictures and video of retail space views.

- County Director Johnson and CED Educator, John Shadowens, recently visited with Shawnee Communications to discuss future plans of bringing fiber internet to the surrounding communities.

- AmeriCorps VISTA continues to grow. Brenda Hileman is working with Vienna grade school and Toni French on an after-school horticulture program using Extension's Jr. Master Gardener curriculum. The program will expand to Egyptian School in March 2022.

- Brenda Hileman is also working with Vienna High School on offering the MyPI Illinois program again this year focusing on disaster preparedness.

- Unit Reports

- SNAP/INEP– Patsy Bishop, Sarita Sawyer, Tiffney Stewart, Shannon Pulliam, Lizz Cooley-Questelle, Toni Kay Wright

Lizz started the SNAP program overview with sharing informational PowerPoint slides. Illinois Nutrition Education Programs (INEP) provides nutrition education to individuals and families across the state of Illinois encouraging them to make healthy choices in where they eat, learn, live, shop and play. SNAP programs use practical, hands-on classes and activities through in-person, virtual or online resources. The SNAP education program goals are to improve diet quality, increase physical activity, increase food access, and create community collaborations.

Sarita outlined her direct education programs focusing on the Great Garden Detective curriculum she is teaching for the first year.

Tiffney outlined her direct education programs focusing on the Serving Up My Plate curriculum, which is a new program this year.

Patsy outlined her direct education programs focusing on the MyPlate For My Family curriculum she is teaching to her adult population.

Shannon outlined her direct education programs focusing on the OrganWise Guys program that is always a favorite of the younger students.

Toni Kay shared how SNAP uses indirect education and shared information on Unit 27 SNAP staff recently collaborating to produce and distribute video messages. One of the video messages was viewed and discussed and the website was made available for sharing. Videos will be shared on social media sites, partner agencies and at locations with screen available during on-site programs.

SNAP Education PSE work also focuses on emergency food access and availability. Toni Kay discussed her work with the Food Pantry Network and multiple other partners to help increase

cold food storage in pantries in the area. Having more refrigerators and freezers in the pantries is the first step in getting more variety and healthy food available. This network helped bring about \$180,00 worth of cold storage equipment to southern Illinois.

SNAP is collaborating on work with the HEAT project, BRIC project, Growing Together Illinois donation gardens, food bank growth and assessments. The Food Bank Health and Nutrition Assessment (FB HANA) is a working with a national partnership to release this assessment tool. Tri-State food bank, that serves Unit 27, agreed to go thru the testing and reliability assessments of this tool and has now gone thru it twice to help with the development.

Looking ahead, SNAP will be working on the Food Security Summit scheduled for the Fall of 2022 and rescheduling the School Wellness programs that were cancelled during the pandemic.

- Community and Economic Development – John Shadowens, Destenie Sullivan
John updated on CED activities by outlining the HEAT (Health Equity Achieved Together) project which is trying to increase food access to food deserts. Surveys are being conducted in Cairo and Gallatin County to gather information to make informed plans in the attempt to bring food outlets to the targeted regions. The survey project will determine the direction of the grant work moving forward.

Lt. Governor Stratton recently visited Cairo and spent a full day in the community. She met with the Extension team to learn more about the HEAT project. The Lt. Governor's team has already reached out to the Extension since the meeting seeking more information and offering ideas and input for the projects.

- 4-H Youth Development staff – Kristi Stout, Vickie Taylor, Dena Wood

Kristi reported that on February 28 there are three events going on at Shawnee College: a chick embryology workshop for teachers and teen teachers, public speaking event for 4-H youth and a nature workshop with Erin and Kim.

4-H show books for June/July are being worked on and created and school enrollments for the current year are coming in.

4-H will be doing some garden work at the Cairo school this year and will bring more school enrollment for those youth this year.

- Natural Resources Energy and Environment – Erin Garrett, Kimberly Rohling
Massac donation garden is partnering with the Regional Office of Education in Metropolis and is moving to a new location. This move will provide more visibility and an existing fence around the garden area. Hopefully the garden will be moved in the next three weeks. Currently, the big push is to get more garden volunteers for the Metropolis and Cairo locations.

Erin thanked for helping gather responses for the Nature Programming Needs Assessment she discussed at the last meeting.

Kim outlined her book club which she hosts every two months. The book club is now in its second year, and anyone interested in invited to join.

The first Trash Blast of the year will be at Dutchman Lake with Shawnee National Forest on Friday, March 4. Another has been rescheduled to focus on clean up at Cypress Creek near Sandusky Road.

On April 9th, Heron Pond and Wildcat Bluff will celebrate its 50th year of being a dedicated nature preserve. Events, tours, and educational programs are scheduled that day and can be joined by anyone interested. Go the Friends of the Cache Facebook page for more information or to register.

- Other information/questions – all upcoming dates/events can be found on our Facebook page and home page at <https://extension.illinois.edu/ajmpu/events>

Megan Henderson, Massac County Soil & Water, shared that April 8 is the fish sale date this year and forms are available at the Massac office.

4-H Soil and Water Forest Initiative Tree Planting is scheduled for Saturday, April 2 or April 9.

The Massac County Soil and Water Conservation District election for its Board of Directors is scheduled for February 28. You must be a Massac County landowner to vote, and elections will be held at the Massac County office. Megan can be contacted at 618-524-9367.

Dates and Times of future council meetings

- May 11, 2022 @ Vienna – 11am-1pm (depending on COVID numbers the meeting may be in person)
- September 21, 2022 @ Vienna – 11am-1pm

Motion to adjourn made by Derek Eurales and seconded by Chris Boyd. No objections, meeting adjourned at 12:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Monica Meyer

Unit 27 - Office Support Associate

For Unit 27 Unit Council secretary, Chris Boyd