



# Illinois Extension

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

University of Illinois Extension  
Sangamon, Menard, and Logan Counties  
Extension Council Meeting Minutes  
October 29, 2020 - 7:00 p.m.  
Online Via Zoom

## Agenda Items:

- **Call to Order** – Vice Chairman Bill Bree called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

A moment of silence was observed in honor of Chuck Ruben (Council member representing Logan County), and Debra Bree (Bill Bree's daughter) who both recently passed.

Present: Bill Bree, Elise Ransdell, Nancy Dixon, Zach Dixon, David Opperman, Rachel Fishburn, Phil Sidles, Brian Satorius, David Mendenhall, Terri Miller

- **Previous Meeting Minutes**

A motion was made by David Opperman and seconded by Brian Satorius to approve the previous meeting minutes. The motion passed.

- **Introductions of Members**

For the benefit of new members, everyone was asked to introduce themselves.

- **Recognition of Retiring Council Members**

Outgoing Council members Amareon Naudain, Colleen Martin, and Ruthie Ruhl were recognized for their service on Extension Council.

- **New Council Members**

New Council Members were nominated to serve on Extension Council. Those recommended to serve were Elise Ransdell, representing Sangamon County (Metro Springfield area), and Sophia Schneider youth representative for Logan County.

A motion to appoint Elise Ransdell and Sophia Schneider to the Extension Council to serve a two year term was made by David Opperman and seconded by Brian Satorius. The motion passed.

A motion was made to reappoint Bill Bree, David Mendenhall, and Ed Whitcomb, Jr. to another 2 year term was made by David Opperman and seconded by Brian Satorius. The motion passed.

- **Nomination of Officers and Council Board**

A motion was made by David Mendenhall and seconded by David Opperman to accept the following slate of officers: Bill Bree as Chairman, Nancy Dixon as Vice Chairman, and Gary Letterly as

Secretary/Financial Reporter, as well as to nominate the following slate of Council Board representatives: Craig Hall, Janet Estell, David Mendenhall, Ed Whitcomb, Jr, Nancy Dixon, and Bill Bree. The motion passed.

- **Open Meetings Act Training Requirement**

Terri Miller explained that because Extension is a public entity they are required to follow the rules of the open meetings act which were established to ensure that meetings were held publicly and in an open manner. The training is offered for free on-line with the State of Illinois. All new members who have not already completed this training will need to do so. Once they complete the training, they should send her either a hard copy of their certificate of completion to our office, or they can send a digital copy to me via email.

- **Financial Report**

Terri Miller reported that the Unit 16 FY21 budget was completed and approved by the Regional Director and Extension Director. She mentioned that they are keeping a close eye on the fiscal effects of COVID-19 and how it will affect state and local funding and are continuing to watch the finances closely, as well as eliminating any non-vital expenditures.

### **Bank Account Signature List Approval**

A motion was made by Bill Bree and seconded by David Mendenhall to approve check signature authority for the current year. Those signors being - Logan In/Out Account: Carissa Davis, Patricia Huffer, and Terri Miller. Sangamon In/Out Account: Jennifer Fishburn, Carissa Davis, Kayla Swaar, and Terri Miller. The motion passed.

- **Program Updates**

Terri Miller gave an Extension programming report. She stated that the virtual 4-H shows were successful. She said that even though it wasn't the same as in-person shows, they were still very pleased with how they went and with the number of participants. She referred them to the 4-H staff reports sent via email for specific numbers. She also thanked the Sangamon County 4-H Foundation, Menard County Farm Bureau and the Logan County Fair Association for finding alternative ways to support the kids who normally sell livestock at the post fair auctions, and that they truly appreciate their efforts to help 4-H members.

She also reported that they had started doing a few face-to-face meetings and most 4-H clubs are planning in person meetings again soon following all CDC, State and University safety guidelines. Everyone is ready to get back in the swing and is excited. She added that they were still offering a lot of virtual and online programs and courses. Since they can't get into the schools they have been finding other creative ways to reach the kids and take some of the burden off of the already stressed teachers who are looking for good virtual learning content and someone to offer some virtual lessons as well.

She also report that there had also been a lot of Ag and Horticulture related workshops, seminars, and programs taking place virtually. Extension even held its annual Pumpkin Day and the annual Ag Field Day events virtually this year and they were very successful.

### **Office Holiday Closures**

A motion was made by David Mendenhall and seconded by Bill Bree to accept the 2020-21 holiday office closures of December 24 – January 1, 2021 and also on December 11, 2020 for all staff meeting. The motion passed.

- **Staffing Update**

Terri shared that they had hired Sherri Bishop as the new Logan County office support associate. She started on October 13 and is doing great.

- **Reaching New Audiences/Meeting Community Need**

Terri Miller said that one of the positive side effects of having to go virtual is that they are seeing an increase in new participants in their online programming and that they have even had interest in starting new “virtual” 4-H clubs and spin clubs. This has opened up new opportunities with people they have not previously served, which is very exciting.

She mentioned that the Unit recently started a committee of staff members devoted to cultural competency and inclusion called the “Navigating Differences Committee”. This committee is a follow up to the Navigating Differences training that all staff took part in last year. The committee meets every other month to discuss professional development opportunities for staff related to cultural competency and inclusion topics and puts out a weekly email called “Wednesday Wisdoms” to Unit staff highlighting a topic, article, video, or online resource to help us better interact, include, and meet the needs of diverse communities.

She mentioned that she is seeking diverse voices to join the Extension Council, especially those who understand the needs of historically underserved audiences, as well as serving those audiences who are most at risk and in need of services. She asked council members to contact her if they know of someone with a good understanding of, or who works with underserved audiences, and whose experience would be helpful, so she can reach out to them.

- **Set Future Meeting Dates**

The following dates were set for this year’s upcoming council meetings. Meetings will be held via Zoom until such time as the Council is able to meet in-person safely.

Thursday, January 14, 2021 – 7 PM (Location TBD)

Thursday, March 18, 2021 – 7 PM (Location TBD)

Thursday, June 17, 2021 – 7 PM (Location TBD)

Thursday, October 21, 2021 – 7 PM (Location TBD)

- **Public Input & Adjournment**

There was no public input. A motion was made by David Opperman and seconded by Bill Bree to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed. Meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.