

The May 2018 Extension Council meeting was called to order by Chuck Fay at 6:32 p.m at the Piatt County Extension Office.

Those present: Chuck Fay, Jo Bauer, Betsy Barnick, Kathleen Bell, Renee Fruendt, Ray Spencer, Janell Baum-Thomas, Stephanie Block, Meggan Holt, and Kristi Pyatt.

Staff present: Doug Harlan, Jamie Boas, Doug Gucker, Emily Steele, Staci Coussens and Caitlin Huth.

There were no public attendees or comments.

There was not a quorum of the Council present in order to vote to approve the November 2017 and March 2018 minutes. The approval of the minutes was pushed to the pushed to the September 2018 Council meeting.

Fiscal Update: Doug provided the Council with an update regarding the Unit's 2018 budget. He stated that he had received news that Extension had received \$8.3 million from the State of Illinois in County Board Match. This money covers payments for Fiscal Year 2018 through March of 2018. It is the first payment we have received in three years. Doug told the Council he hoped the remaining balance of the \$10 million would be sent to Extension by the end of June 2018.

Doug told the Council that the \$325,000 in Federal Smith-Lever money will remain allocated to the Unit's budget.

Doug went over the Unit's and County's Income and Expense reports. He told the Council that the balance of our income would be showing up in the May and June Income reports.

Personnel Update: Doug told the Council that Jenna Ward had be hired for the open Macon County 4H EPC position that was vacated by Samantha Rusk. Jenna's start date is June 4, 2018. He also told the

Council that Amy Leman's open Educator position will be going through a credentials review for the applicants on May 18, 2018. He said that interviews for the position would be held on May 31st.

Programming Needs: Doug went over the Council's role in assisting with the identification of programming needs in the Unit. He asked for ideas regarding issues or areas in which the staff might begin planning educational programs. No new ideas were presented.

A question was posed regarding the Monticello Community Garden and availability of plots. Doug told the Council that there were plenty of available plots. He said that there were 13 gardeners this year. He also said that the Piatt County Master Gardeners were doing several demonstration gardening techniques. One such demonstration was a "Key Hole Garden."

Unit Marketing: A short program was presented by Emily Steele, Unit Promotion and Publicity Specialist, regarding marketing efforts in the Unit. She provided the Council with a handout that had been presented to Dean Kidwell, Dean of the College of ACES, during her visit to the Unit. The Unit's marketing goal is to provide the communities in the Unit with timely information regarding our educational programs. The marketing staff works in depth with all types of media to produce high quality materials. Emily presented a variety of material used for promotional purposes. She also showed the Council the new U of I Extension logo we will be using.

Program Updates:

Local Food Systems and Small Farms Educator Doug Gucker presented the program highlight for the meeting. He made a short presentation regarding Healthy Soils. He demonstrated two types of soils – one healthy and one unhealthy. He shared that tillage practices have a direct impact on the health of soil. He stated that tillage should only occur as

needed. He said that he was not advocating No Till Practices, but promoting not unduly stressing soils unless required to do so.

Doug shared that Dean Kim Kidwell, Dean of the College of ACES, had visited the Unit on April 16th. He shared that a luncheon was hosted at Richland Community College for her. He said that she is extremely supportive of Extension. Those that attended the luncheon heard her share her ideas to bring Extension back to the fore front of the University's Land Grant Mission.

Jamie Boas shared that she is in the process of working to start up 6 new 4H Clubs in Monticello, Bement, Cerro Gordo, Farmer City and Warrensburg. She also shared that the Unit was hiring a summer Intern to work solely on starting new 4H Clubs.

Caitlin Huth shared that she is now writing an article for the Friendship Center in Clinton every month and will be published in the Clinton paper as space allows.

Staci Coussens shared highlights of her programs.

Other program updates were placed in the Council members binders. Each Educator went over their written reports.

Doug thanked the following Council members for their service to the Extension Unit – Kristi Powell, Chuck Fay, Kathleen Bell, Anne Preston, Meggan Holt and Betsy Barnick.

With no other business, the meeting closed at 7:48 PM.

Next meeting is September 10th at 6:00 p.m.at the Macon County Office.