University of Illinois Extension Unit #9 - Grundy, Kankakee & Will Counties Unit Council Meeting Minutes

January 5, 2021

Call to Order

Due to the Covid-19 regulations, this meeting was conducted electronically.

In attendance: Alex Tyle-Annen, Janice Blanchette, Isaac Brockman, Jamita Brown, Herb Brooks, Christine Frederick, Sasha Grabenstetter, Johari Kweli Vice chair, Sara Mitchell, Shannon Range, Lin Scharnhorst, Randy Seggebruch, Sally Skoff, John Tamblyn, James Theuri, Doug Tweeten Secretary, Jennifer Wick, and Megan Walsh Director.

Additions to the Agenda

Megan congratulated Sally Skoff who was recently honored with an Outstanding Master Gardener Award for the state of Illinois.

Extension 101

Megan greeted the new Council members and outlined the procedures, term of appointment, and expectations of Council members. She gave an overview of Unit 9 Extension programs.

Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes were reviewed. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Doug and seconded by Randy. The motion passed.

Financial Reports

A. Extension Financial Update

The fiscal year closed as expected and is reflected in the budget report. We are one month into the FY fiscal year.

B. Agreements

Megan explained some of the budgets in the packets. The Trust Account is held at the state office in Champaign. The Self-Supporting Account is local and accumulates funds paid by users for classes and services charged by Extension and this account is used to pay the costs of services and classes.

C. FY21 Budget

This budget is in the Council packet and covers anticipated expenses, rent, supplies, salaries, etc. The budget is subject to change as we move through the fiscal year.

Business

A. Election of Officers

Janice Blanchette accepted the nomination of Chair and was approved. Johari Kweli accepted the nomination for vice chair and was approved. Doug Tweeten accepted the nomination for secretary and was approved. Randy Seggebruch accepted the position of Financial Officer. The Finance Committee will consist of Herb Brooks, Sally Skoff, John Tamblyn, and Herb Brooks.

- B. The new Council members for 21-23 were approved.
- C. Bank Signatories

The Council reviewed the bank signatories. They are Brooke Baker, Megan Walsh, and Victoria Wax for Grundy County; Janice Blanchette, Debra Koch, Ron Strawson, and Megan Walsh for Kankakee County; Tycee Bell, Nancy Kuhajda, Dianne Ross, Megan Walsh for Will County.

- D. Open Meetings Act
 - Megan explained the Open Meetings Act. All Council members must complete the Open Meetings online training and present a certificate of completion to the Extension Office. Those who completed the training last year do not need take it again this year.
- E. Impact Report 2019
 - This document covering Unit 9, has been completed and it is available on the Extension website. It includes program descriptions, evaluations, and data. It is a valuable resource for planning and for anyone presenting a program on the Extension.
- F. Economic Impact of University of Illinois Extension
 This state wide study of the economic effect of all extension
 activities throughout Illinois will provide information on the impact
 of the Extension on the economy of Illinois. No report yet.

Local Program Reports and Priorities

Jamita Brown's priorities include shifting to virtual programming, provide pick-up activity kits for youth, forming partnerships with

groups such as Master Gardeners, Master Naturalists, and Snap-Ed to increase opportunities to introduce STEAM topics.

Shannon Range explained some of the exciting activities she has planned for the 4-H youth in Grundy and Kankakee counties. Geocaching, night photography, bio blitz scavenger hunt, fishing (including DYI fishing poles) to name a few. She is looking for help in finding ways to reach underserved youth and would like suggestions on where to find some experts to offer advice and teach some topics.

Brook Baker-Katcher and Anthony Warmack are 4-H Youth Development Coordinators and submitted a written report detailing their activities and providing 4-H statistics.

Debra Koch, the 4-H Youth Development Coordinator for Kankakee County, submitted a written report describing her activities, locations served, and programs.

James Theuri stated his priorities include working small farms by assisting the owners with livestock including sheep, goats, rabbits, and poultry. He also provides advice fruit and veggie crops. In the seminars he offers he emphasizes produce safety, productivity, and safe use of pesticides. In the written report submitted by James he recorded the webinars, grant writing activities, client interactions, articles written, and professional development activities he has participated in.

Sasha Grabenstetter, the Consumer Economics Educator, reported on a statewide webinar on Money Matters presented which attracted 600 participants. Sasha included a list of programs she will be presenting Through November. Among her most popular programs are "How to Save Money on Food" and "Let's Talk Money" (a webinar series). She mentioned that she appreciated the suggestions given at the prior Council meeting and has tried, with limited success, to implement them.

The SNAP-ED report was given by Deloris Walker and a supplemental report was given by the Community Workers, Fernanda Ariza, Victoria Klimkiewicz, Donna Denault, and Janet Moody. They listed popular after school programs teaching children nutrition and healthy eating habits. They have formed partnerships with agencies and institutions to reach adults with nutrition information. Deloris also reported on upcoming initiatives and asked for feedback from Council members on their knowledge of schools, agencies, etc. having nutrition education,

food access programs and physical activity. Deloris continues her activity on the statewide Racial Equity Committee. After completing the four week webinar series they are planning the next steps.

Nancy Kuhajda, the Will County Program Coordinator for Agriculture and Natural Resources, submitted a written report. Her report described where, who (including racial demographics) and how the programs serve the communities in Will County. The how explains the shifts that have been made to accommodate the Covid-19 restrictions.

ESAC

Jan reported on her communications with the Extension Statewide Advisory Council. The office in Champaign has added four new employees covering various areas. They are planning more webinars.

ADJOURNMENT

Megan announced she will survey the members to schedule meeting dates for January, April, June, and September 2021

Herb Brooks moved and Sally Skoff seconded the motion to adjourn. Jan Blanchette declared the meeting adjourned at 8:42 pm.