

Dodge County Extension Board Meeting Minutes
December 11, 2023

The regular meeting of the Dodge County Extension Board was brought to order by Kathy Kniefl, Extension Board Chair at 4:00 p.m. on Monday, December 11, 2023, at Nebraska Extension Office located at 1206 West 23rd Street, Fremont, NE.

Board Members Present: Kathy Kniefl, Rossana Jaeger, Joel Kerkman and Kelly Abrahams. No quorum was present. Staff members Shane Ahrens, Lisa Poppe, Ian Peterson, Beth Nacke and Mary Spath were in attendance.

The Nebraska Open Meetings Act was available to review as it is posted in the meeting room.

No additional items were added to the agenda.

Minutes from the past three meetings (Aug 14, June 12, October 16, 2023) were reviewed.

Welcome and introduction of Tyler Quick, Extension Instructor in the program area of Rural Prosperity Nebraska. Tyler covers the counties of Burt, Dodge, Douglas, Sarpy, Saunders and Washington.

Financial Reports

Lisa Poppe presented the General Tax and Extension Program revolving account financial reports with no questions from those present.

Unfinished Business

An individual has been moved forward to the in-person interview phase for the opening for our Dodge County 4-H Educator position. A tentative interview date of January 3, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. for Jayden Fleishman will be held here at the Dodge County Extension office. Extension Board members were asked to save this date and time in their calendars.

New Business

The 4-H Administrative Assistant position has not been filed at this time. The application process will be opened again in January of 2024.

Updates from Council / Boards / Staff

Shane Ahrens reported that the 4-H Council will meet later this week to look at dates for the upcoming 2024 year. Shane told the group that he is busy bringing School Enrichment programming to Fremont schools. Some of the programs are FMS Career Classes, FPS 3rd Grade PE Heart Health, STEM Days, CSI: DNA, Maker Day and Share Day with State 4-H Staff.

The 4-H Achievement Celebration took place on November 5, 2023. At the celebration seventeen volunteers, over 150 members and six 4-H clubs were recognized for their accomplishments in the 2023 4-H year. Awards and scholarships were handed out to those in attendance and a fun evening was had with a "Tailgate Theme".

Shane is helping with the teaching of some STEM Day events to learn the curriculum and then bring ideas to the Dodge County 4-H program. He will bring the 4-H Ambassadors, Klayton Hilbers and Alexa Brodd to UNL in March for leadership events on campus.

Lisa Poppe reported that Mailson Oliveira is currently in Brazil and working remotely and then a vacation time. He will return to Nebraska in January. The Easter Nebraska Corn & Soybean Expo will be held on Thursday, January 25, 2024 at ENREC. This year is the first year that the Corn and Soybean Expo's will be combined. This event will rotate between being held at the ENREC and Christensen Field in Fremont.

Lisa Poppe highlighted the social media campaign, Big Emotions, that is available online for families and childcare providers to access with valuable information. These Social Media Campaigns are a part of the multi-state Fit and Healthy Kids Programming. Lisa also gave the group information on the One Hour, Once a Month Classes that are web-based training sessions for Early Childhood Professionals. Participants watch live or recorded training sessions and received valuable information and training hours needed to keep their Childcare licenses.

Tyler Quick reported that he is going to do some shadowing in Wayne to learn more about Rural Prosperity programming. He also said that he has completed the training necessary to be on a Search Committee for staff hirings.

Beth Nacke reported on the PE programing that she is involved in at Johnson Crossing Academic Center for 5th and 6th grade students. She also reported on the Little Free Pantry project that will be at eight Dodge County sites and 18 additional statewide sites. She has worked with an undergraduate student who designed a pamphlet to describe the project and the 3-year commitment to the program. Monthly Meal Kits – Food Security program for Middle and High School students touches over 1900 individuals across the state.

Ian Peterson reported that he is continuing to answer many horticulture questions from the public. He presented at Haskel Ag Lab on the different careers in the Horticulture field to high school and FFA students. He has 5 new Extension Master Gardeners signed up for training. Two in Dodge County, 2 in Washington County and 1 in Burt County. He is planning a ProHort seminar for industry professionals in February and will work on a spring seminar for specialty crop growers covering pesticide information, marketing and conservation. Ian is also developing a survey for outreach to Certified Pollinator Habitat participants.

There were no reports from the Extension Board members.

Pat Tawney, Dodge County Board of Supervisors reported on the progress of the highways being constructed in and around Dodge County. He reported that the old Hwy 30 has been renamed to Platte River Road. Pat will request that the January 24, 2024, Appreciation Luncheon be put on the Board of Supervisors agenda for that day.

Meeting Adjourned

Next Meeting: Appreciation Luncheon to be held at the Dodge County Extension office, January 24, 2024, at 12:00, noon. This will be an appreciation meeting for the County Supervisors and the “retiring” and new Extension Board members.