

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

The Saline County Extension Board met on Wednesday October 25, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. Present were Michele Renner, Sandy Krivohlavek, Deb Steuk, Austin Nicholson, Theresa Vernon (Ag Society Representative) and Johanna Pesante-Daniel (DEI Liaison). Staff present were Maddie Werner, Melanie Kunc, Becky Vales, Nathan Mueller, and Ingrid Lindal. Also, present was Jason Tuller, Rural Prosperity Educator. Nathan reported that Kellen Novak has resigned his position on the board.

The meeting was called to order by Austin Nicholson at 5:00 p.m. Roll call was taken. As there were only four members present, no quorum was attained, therefore meeting minutes and financial report will not be put to vote.

Treasurers report: Melanie Kunc presented the financial report. She also stated the 2024 budget has been approved by the Board of Commissioners. As of September 30, 2023, \$9,379.36 has been spent which is 17% of the budget. A motion to approve this financial report will be needed at the next meeting.

Program area reports:

Water and Integrated Cropping Systems – Nathan Mueller presented a written report. Nathan stated the past open position for Water and Cropping systems is now filled. Also, regions have been redistricted because of UNL budget cuts, there are now 23. Megan Burda is the new program director. Nathan will be serving an interim roll as the Nebraska On-Farm Research Coordinator through March of 2024. He has recently submitted several grant proposals for research. He collaborated on a publication on Irrigation increases on-farm soybean yields in water-limited environments without a trade-off in seed protein concentration. The good news is quality irrigated vs. dry land is still just as good. Nathan also helped offer several programs in southeast Nebraska the period of August 16 through October 15, including: one-on-one client support, 74 requests; biweekly news columns and KWBE radio spots and interviews. Programs include: Rainwater Basin Joint Venture Symposium, invited speaker-40 attendees; Corn and soybean clinic soil fertility sessions-30 attendees; Southeast Nebraska Alfalfa & Wheat Expo-55 attendees; Otoe County NRCS Soil Health meeting invite speaker- 13 attendees; Earth Festival-soil is a filter session-321 fifth graders; State Range Judging contest at Homestead National Monument-400 high school students. Upcoming programs include: UNL Agronomy department seminar series, Southeast Nebraska Successful Farmer series, Lincoln; and the Lower Big Blue Phase 2 Nitrogen Training which is required every 4 years.

Jason Tuller, Rural Prosperity Nebraska Regional Educator, talked about his role serving 10 counties and 85 communities in Southeast Nebraska, which includes Saline County. He tries to get to every community every year. Rural Prosperity is a University of Nebraska initiative that offers the breadth and depth of research-driven resources, learning opportunities, faculty experience and a collaborative approach to community development. Community engagement is the main goal. Jason does news articles periodically. He talked about the focus areas and programs such as people attraction and retention, leadership and community capacity building, economy and entrepreneurship and regional food systems. After research they take findings back to communities and work with businesses, but don't give advice. There are many programs available for communities to use as tools for growth and development.

Early Childhood – Ingrid Lindal presented a written report. Her focus at this meeting was her Rooted in Relationships Coaching: Pyramid Model. She is a coach for this program in Saline, Gage and Jefferson counties. They have 15 providers participating in the program. She coaches one provider in Wilber, and two providers in Crete. She does one and a half hour observations and then a one-hour coaching session

for each, monthly, with the purpose of helping them implement the program in their center. Teachers get paid to go to these trainings. She coaches using art, blocks, music and books. Upcoming events include a Block Party at the Friend Family Literacy event on September 27th and in Crete on November 2nd with Six Pence.

4-H Youth Development – Maddie Werner presented a written report. Maddie helps with the Wilber Library after school programming on Thursdays, on a six-week rotation. Twenty youth participate in this program. She has various livestock advisory meetings coming up and Winter workshops focusing on a variety of county fair-only projects. In January there will be YQCA training and state fair eligible projects. 4-H week and the 4-H Tailgate were well attended and we gained a potential 7 new families.

Other reports:

4-H Council – Sandy Krivohlavek reported the budget for 2024 will be set at the next meeting. They are discussing county fair suggestions and date changes. They will have recruitment at the Awards night on March 10, 2024.

Ag Society – Theresa Vernon reported the dates have been set for the 2024 Saline County Fair, July 16th-21st. No other plans have been made yet. They will hold their annual meeting in November and there are a couple spots available on the board.

County Commissioners – No report

DEI Liaison – Johanna Pesante-Daniel talked about the assessment of health in Saline County and the needs of the communities. They conducted in-person surveys on social determinate health; the education, transportation, economics, access to care for the elderly, disabled, homeless, veteran and LGBTQ communities. There is a need for mental health care, transportation, access to resources in different languages within communities. Public Health Solutions has a language access plan, appropriate culturally to educate other organizations. DHHS is working hard to reach out to the population, listening to the needs of the community, using part of a new grant for Health Equity.

Old Business – None

New Business – There are two new applications for the two upcoming vacancies on the Extension Board to review. We cannot vote on acceptance without a quorum; therefore, they will be tabled until our next meeting. We need to make plans for our December regular or holiday meeting. Those in attendance thought December 2nd or 9th would possibly work. It was decided Ingrid will send out an email survey asking everyone what their preferences are. Someone asked about liability insurance for a caterer and Darlene Hoesche is already approved. Ingrid will check to see if she would be available. Our next meeting will be on January 24, 2024. Mileage forms were signed by those in attendance.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Deb Steuk, Secretary