

## Minutes of the Meeting

The Saline County Extension Board met on Wednesday, October 26, 2022, at 5:00 p.m. Present were Kellen Novak, Sandy Krivohlavek, Deb Steuk, Austin Nicholson, Aaron Niederklein, Gary Baxa, Theresa Vernon (Ag Society Representative), Phil Hardenburger (Commissioner Representative). Educators and Staff present were Eric Stehlik, Melanie Kunc, Becky Vales, Nathan Mueller, Ingrid Lindal and Megan Burda.

President Kellen Novak called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m. Roll call was taken. A motion was made to accept the agenda by Gary Baxa and seconded by Austin Nicholson. A motion was made to accept the minutes of the July 27<sup>th</sup> meeting by Austin Nicholson and seconded by Gary Baxa. Both motions were unanimously approved by the board.

Treasurer's report – Melanie presented the report noting the total expenditure for September was \$11,802.82. A motion was made to accept the report as presented by Deb Steuk and seconded by Austin Nicholson, motion passed. Some discussion was had regarding increasing the salary paid to Extension board members. The current salary is \$15.00 per meeting plus mileage. Phil suggested that we put it in the budget for next year so the county commissioners can consider approving it then.

Water and Integrated Cropping Systems – Nathan updated the board on our Lead Educator. With the help of Megan Burda, Saline County's Engagement Zone Coordinator, he defined the roles of the Educators in our county office. It was decided that Ingrid Lindal will now be the liaison for the Extension board. Nathan attended some professional development training, attending a corn and soybean production clinic for approximately 25 agronomists. They looked at field plots at Mead, NE and looked at nitrogen management among other things. In September he held an Alfalfa and Wheat Expo of which about 45 producers attended. Feedback was positive. There were also Extension Beef Educators attending. He attended Husker Harvest days in early September. Soil Health booth and the Nebraska Wheat Board booth were well attended. He also helped with the Ag Festival in September. Questions coming into the office have slowed down somewhat, which is normal for the season. He will soon be conducting 18 pesticide trainings across the counties.

Early Childhood – Ingrid presented her report and a handout on CHIME (Cultivating Healthy Intentional Mindful Educators). She taught several early childhood teachers at St. Marks Kidzone in Lincoln. They met once a week for a total of eight sessions. She taught mindful activities to do with kids they can take back to their classrooms. She delivered Pyramid food training in Crete and will hold a class at Doane University in November on cooking with young children.

Youth Diversion and Clover Kids – Melanie provided an update as Anita was not present. Ingrid, Becky and Melanie have been filling in for her duties. They have been doing the Clover Kids programs throughout the county, with 5-12 attendees at each location. They have changed things up a bit, with a lesson and an activity and are sending a sheet with the lesson info home to the parents. There are approximately 46 total Clover Kids county-wide.

4-H Youth Development – Eric reported they had 135 4-H Achievement and Activity records turned in for review, plus 23 Clover Kid records. Those turning in records received their County Fair and Premium Auction premiums, totaling nearly \$43,204. Becky collected youth numbers and they reached 1,892 youth, which is a high for about the last 15 years for the county. Three Lottery hog bids were received and Baade Genetics was the successful bidder. Ag Festival was held the end of September which was offered to fourth graders this year instead of third graders, which are already begin reached through the

Embryology program. Susan Chrastil, a former 4-H leader in Saline County received a \$5,000 grant from America's Farmers Grow Program offered by Bayer. She asked that the money be used to offer 4-H workshops with little to no cost to our local participants.

Nathan recognized Becky for her 25 years of service to the program with a gift and cupcakes which were shared with all present.

Food, Nutrition and Health – Tara Dunker provided a written report, but was not present. Tara has strong connections to Crete, therefore has developed strong partnerships there. Programs include: afterschool healthy living programs at the Intermediate School, Sixpence program with 6 weeks of nutrition and cooking education, Servesafe Food Handler programs every semester at Crete High School and a column submitted every two weeks for Saline county newspapers.

Rural Prosperity Nebraska – Jason Tuller provided a written report, but was not present. Highlights of his report was regarding his travels. Connecting Entrepreneurial Communities Conference in Columbus. Extension Amplify in Lincoln, which ideas were discussed on how to amplify Extension's reach to all of Nebraska's communities. Indianapolis, Indiana for a national gathering for Community Development Extension Professionals. He did a presentation on some of the tools they have developed for Cooperative grocery stores. The National Rural Grocery Store Summit in Wichita, Kansas. He talked about the importance of rural grocery stores. The Marketing Hometown America program in Bozeman, Montana, where he talked about communities coming together to have conversations and then to create actions from those conversations.

Extension Zone Coordinator – Megan shared with us a printout on Nebraska Extension's Strategic Direction as a result of the new Dean, called The Big Three. These are Strengthen Nebraska Agriculture and Food Systems, Inspire Nebraskans and Their Communities and Enhance the Health and Wellbeing of all Nebraskans.

4-H Council – Sandy reported they read Award Books at from Clay County at their meeting. They also have scheduled Achievement night in March of 2023.

Ag Society – Theresa reported the dates for the 2023 Saline County Fair will be July 18<sup>th</sup> through the 23<sup>rd</sup>. Some contracts are already signed for events. Ingrid also attended their meeting and they discussed setting up a play area in Ag Hall with sensory tables for the younger youth. They will hold their annual meeting on November 9<sup>th</sup>.

Saline County Commissioners – Phil reported the final tax levy has been set and it is a little lower than it has been. Because of elections being on November 8<sup>th</sup>, their next meeting will be on November 7<sup>th</sup>. The Hometown Housing project kicks off November 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup>. The team will be meeting individually with employers of the county, such as school superintendents, builders and suppliers. They approved the county extension budget for fiscal year 2022-2023. Extension staff discussed benefits and how to reach the benefit director with questions.

Old Business – A new meeting room policy was developed by extension staff and a written copy was provided to all board members in attendance for review. It was decided we would have the new County attorney review it as well and will discuss at a later date. Eric and other staff have been working to clean out the storage area at the old jail and they found some interesting artifacts which will be given to the Saline County Museum at Dorchester.

New Business – With Eric's retirement we discussed the new 4-H Assistant position. This will now be a county funded-UNL paid position. UNL will handle everything for that employee. The county will fund

the benefits, UNL will offer tuition benefits. The commissioners have approved the arrangement so the position will soon be advertised. Nathan will be the search committee chair, and that committee will handle the filling of the position.

We watched a short video on Extension Board Meeting Basics. Nathan has set up a page online for Extension board members and meeting minutes. There will be two board vacancies to fill at the end of this year. We will have one more meeting this year, December 3<sup>rd</sup>, which will also be our holiday gathering.

Kellen adjourned the meeting at 6:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Deb Steuk, Secretary Pro Tem