

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

The Saline County Extension Board met on Wednesday August 16, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. Present were Michele Renner, Sandy Krivohlavek, Deb Steuk, Austin Nicholson, Aaron Niederklein, Kay Kottas, Theresa Vernon (Ag Society Representative) and Johanna Pesante-Daniel (DEI Liaison). Staff present were Nathan Mueller, Melanie Kunc and Becky Vales.

The meeting was called to order by Austin Nicholson at 5:07 p.m. Roll call was taken. A motion to approve the agenda and past meeting minutes was made by Kay Kottas and seconded by Sandy Krivohlavek, motion was approved.

Treasurers report: Melanie Kunc presented the financial report. The total spent for July was \$8,953.13, which does not include overtime hours from county fair. Those will be reflected with higher salary amounts on the August statement. A motion to approve the financial statement was made by Deb Steuk and seconded by Kay Kottas, motion was approved.

Nathan introduced Johanna Pesante-Daniel, the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) Liaison for Saline, Gage and Fillmore Counties, with offices in Crete, Beatrice and Geneva. Johanna serves as a coordinator for Public Health Solutions to help solve coordination problems and health equity problems by lining up interpreters, providing equity and accessibility to everyone. She has formed a health worker committee workforce to be the bridge between organization services and the community. She also helps on the Crete Public school parent advisory committee. Johanna has worked in the public health field for 20 years. She will provide an advisory/liaison role for our Extension board.

Nathan gave a presentation on his role as Water and Cropping Systems (WICS) Educator for Gage, Jefferson and Saline counties. He is one of 24 Crops and Water Educators across the state. He talked about his role in cropping systems. 1) Improve profitability and sustainability of farm operations. 2) Reduce environmental risk associated with crop production. 3) Encourage resource stewardship of natural resources. 4) Enhance resiliency of cropping systems and climate variability through crop diversification. 5) Expand consumer awareness of Nebraska crop and production systems. Nathan talked about his job description and the nine things the University expect from him. He works with NRD, NRCS, etc. To verify his reach, he tracks everyone who calls in or asks a question. Year to date he has logged 462 hours, 1,840 one-on-one requests for information or assistance, from 4 countries and 11 states. He started Crop Tech Café, one of 3 blogs in the state in 2014. There you can find information including USDA crop reports and the U.S. Drought monitor.

Program area reports:

Water and Integrated Cropping Systems – Nathan Mueller presented a written report. He reported Ritika Lamichhane, WICS Educator for Johnson, Pawnee, Nemaha and Richardson counties started on August 7, 2023. Nathan will be serving in a partial interim role for the Nebraska On-Farm Research Coordinator from Sept 2023-March 2024. He has completed Red Cross first aid, CPR and AED training through UNL. Nathan included in his report a list of recent programs he helped offer in southeast NE. Of these he provided one-on-one client support from May 17-August 15 to for 152 requests. He held a winter wheat management field day for Gage, Jefferson and Saline counties in June; attended the UNL SCAL weed Management field day on June 28th at Clay Center and attended the Weather Ready Farms Mini Conference in Lincoln in July. Upcoming programs include; Southeast Nebraska Alfalfa & Wheat Expo, Corn and Soybean Clinic at ENREEC, which is open to producers, Earth Festival near Fairbury at Camp Jefferson for fifth graders and State Range Judging Contest at Homestead National Monument, for high school students.

Early Childhood – Ingrid Lindal was not present but provided a written report. She and a colleague taught a training on Cultural and Linguistic Diversity in Early Childhood at Public Health Solutions in Crete. They had 6 early childhood providers from Wilber, Crete, Lincoln and Falls City in attendance. The training explored the definition of biases, stereotype and cultural diversity. Ingrid was the main content developer for this training. Ingrid also did a learning activity for the Crete library summer reading program regarding pollination, which reached 50 children ages one to ten. Ingrid is currently in Costa Rica and provided a presentation on CHIME to undergraduate students that are studying Bilingual Early Childhood Education in English. She will also be training fourth year students at the University of Costa Rica on Strategies for Managing Challenging Behaviors based on the Pyramid Model.

Youth Diversion and Clover Kids – No report

4-H Youth Development – Maddie Werner prepared a written report but was not present. Becky went over some highlights of the report. Clover days on May 23rd and 24th were well attended. Camps Renegade and Venture were combined due to lack of participation. County Fair went very well and the new Kid Zone was well received. Since livestock judging was not included at county fair time, Maddie will be setting a date in the Spring for that event, prior to State FFA contests. Maddie, Becky and Melanie will be helping at the Nebraska State Fair. Maddie attended two professional development events: Excellence in Ag Sciences Day and NE Farm Bureau Foundation's Making the Connection Conference. She continues to work with 4-H Council on becoming financially compliant with the Nebraska State 4-H policy.

4-H Council – Sandy Krivohlavek reported the council met last week. They went over the audit and are working on compliance with the 4-H Foundation.

Ag Society – Theresa Vernon reported the number in attendance at the county fair was way up. There were approximately 1,500 attending the figure 8 races, approximately 1,000 attending the concert and the rodeo drew in approximately 1,800-2,000 people.

County Commissioners – No report

DEI Liaison – Johanna Pesante-Daniel reported on the community back to school picnic in Crete. There were approximately 500 attendees and 35 providers. That is an increase from last year's 24 providers. There were activities for children and a speaker from Guatemala, talking about his experience as a professor. The City of Crete is trying to get a certification of "Welcoming City". She has held living will meetings, clinics and workshops, while also teaching people how to manage their chronic diseases. She has a walking group that walks the trails at the Crete Hospital.

Old Business – None

New Business – Sandy noted the salaries were published in the Crete Newspaper and it appears they were unchanged. This is due to the change happening in January. Ingrid will advertise for the two extension board positions that are open, the NE position replacing Michele Renner and the NW position replacing Deb Steuk. Per the audit, extension board members will need to sign mileage forms stating they are attending the meetings.

A motion to adjourn was made by Michele Renner and seconded by Aaron Niederklein. The meeting was adjourned at 6:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Deb Steuk, Secretary