



## Minutes of the Board of Directors of the Iowa Extension Council Association

**November 15, 2025**

The Board of Directors of the Iowa Extension Council Association met at the Story County Extension Office on November 15, 2025. Those present: Sara Kuboushek, LeAnn Lawler, Cheryl Beaver, Ann Leonard, Christy Saylor, Matt Rohrig, Marisue Hartung, Megan Fagle, Hayley Moss, Bruce Clark, Roberta Hersom, Julie McVay, Paige Grandgeorge, Joan Wiskus, Jenny Colbert, and Roger Helmrichs. Also present were Andrea Welchans, Dr. Jason Henderson, Jennifer Vit, and Julie Baumler.

President Sara Kuboushek called the meeting to order. No additions were made to the agenda.

Ann Leonard moved to approve the minutes from September 10, 2025. Roger Helmrichs seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The treasurer's report was given by LeAnn Lawler. There is a checking balance on hand of \$59,464.32. The following bills were submitted:

<b>Payee</b>	<b>Item/Service</b>	<b>Total Amt</b>
Plymouth County Extension	Refund of extra special dues payment	\$ 500.00
Whitfield & Eddy	Legal Services - October	1,825.00
Paul Gieselman	Legislative travel 10/29/25	402.07
Paul Gieselman	Legislative travel 11/10/25	209.02
Ann Leonard	Legislative travel 11/10/25	37.80
MailChimp (EFT)	November	48.15
Schonert's	Board meal	431.42
Julie Baumler	printing	163.15
Cyclone Awards	nametag	7.00
Jennifer Vit	refreshments	120.58
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$3,623.61</b>

Jenny Colbert moved to approve the treasurer's report and pay the bills. Roger Helmrichs seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Dr. Jason Henderson, Vice President for Extension and Outreach ISU Extension and Outreach provided an ISU Extension and Outreach Update. He talked about how Extension can position to meet the needs of lowans in the current economy. Extension's role is to help increase our standard of living by increasing productivity through innovation. We need to invest in research – and then take that out to communities through extension. We need to move from teaching people how to think (part of our original goal in extension) to teaching people (youth) how to work. We need to look beyond

public funding to meet these needs. We need to think about partnerships with funders, community organizations.

Dr. Henderson also reported that a new ISU president has been selected. Dr. David Cook will begin his role in March. He is familiar with extension in North Dakota.

Jennifer Vit, Andrea Welchans, and Roger Helmrichs provided an MOU Committee update. This will be a 1-year MOU for 2026-27 due to uncertainty in funding for both counties and ISU. The hope is that there will be a 3-year MOU for 2027-2030. Board members are encouraged to read through the documents and share with their counties. This final feedback period is now through Dec. 10. There will be an MOU review and Q&A webinar on Nov. 19.

A legislative update was shared by Jennifer Vit. Cornerstone has been working to get meetings set up with legislative leadership. To date, Jennifer, Roger Helmrichs, Ann Leonard, and Paul Gieselman have met with Senate Majority Leader Mike Klimesh, Speaker of the House Pat Grassley, Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Mike Naig, House Ways & Means Chair Carter Nordman, House Minority Leader Brian Meyer, and Senate Ways & Means Chair Dan Dawson. Additional meetings are being scheduled.

County Extension Councils need to know the importance of local contact with legislators. Extension councils and staff are encouraged to invite their state senators and representatives to an extension program or to visit the county office. It's also recommended that extension council members attend every local political forum.

IECA Board members are being asked to provide legislative updates to the chairs in their region – especially counties who provided support for the special dues assessment. Jennifer Vit will send out talking points and continue to update counties as there is progress legislatively.

Jennifer Vit and Andrea Welchans walked through an activity with the board to help talk about county funding, particularly when talking with legislators and other stakeholders. This activity may be included in the spring extension council conference on the road. Andrea will provide county financial data by region to each board member so they can, in turn, help their councils understand that data.

A County Services update was shared by Andrea Welchans, Asst. Vice-President for County Services. She reported that a new regional director has been hired in Region 5. Current searches are happening in Regions 7 and 29. She also reported that the Iowa 4-H Foundation has invested in a cost-share to help counties hire Rising Stars interns for the summer of 2026.

The Extension Council Conference On the Road will take place in 9 locations in Feb, March, April during the evening:

- February 2 | Hancock County Extension Office, Garner
- February 12 | Carroll County Extension Office, Carroll
- February 16 | Cedar County Extension Office, Tipton
- February 26 | East Pottawattamie County Extension Office, Oakland
- March 2 | Clay County Extension Office, Spencer
- March 24 | Wayne County Extension Office, Corydon
- March 31 | Iowa Valley Business and Community Solutions, Marshalltown
- April 7 | Events on Frederick, Oelwein
- April 14 | Jefferson County Extension Office, Fairfield

The conference will focus on county extension finances as a tool to fulfil our extension mission. The IECA conference planning committee will be meeting to work on details of the mini-conferences.

The IECA board committees met.

The Finance, Policy, & Legislation committee discussed the upcoming legislative day, *Extension & 4-H Voices at the Capitol*, on January 21. The event is a partnership with Iowa 4-H with a goal to spotlight the impact that 4-H makes on youth.

The committee also discussed IECA dues for 2026-27. With county funding being unknown for the future, they recommended leaving dues the same for the next year.

The Human Resources & Member Services committee reviewed a member benefit survey to be sent to extension councils at the end of January with a request to have them completed by April. They recommended that IECA offer the Calm app again in 2026-27 for councils to provide as an employee benefit.

The Communication & Networking committee focused on recruitment ideas for the Extension & 4-H Voices at the Capitol event. Board members are encouraged to share the flyers with the counties in their region. Regional Directors will also be provided with a copy of the flyer to share. Carpooling and personal invitations will be encouraged.

The committee also identified some potential ideas for the Extension Council Conference on the Road. They updated the conference evaluation form.

The board celebrated the completion of our 3-year action plan. They decided to focus on legislative activity and preserving our funding for this year with a goal to come back to action planning in another year.

Jennifer Vit shared her Executive Director report. The county personnel policy template has been updated and available for approval by counties (with some county-specific information). County fiscal policy is still being reviewed and will be available for adoption soon.

Jennifer also gave an update on the background screening vendor transition to C4 Operations. We are 9 months into the transition. Their customer service is much better than our previous vendor. The screenings are slightly more expensive. We are working to educate staff members about ways they can control costs.

Roger Helmrichs moved to approve travel expenses of \$2,380.70. Ann Leonard seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The next meeting date will be at the end of January or beginning of February. We will meet via Zoom. A poll will be sent to determine the date.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

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Jenny Colbert, Secretary