



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

January 19, 2022

The Board of Directors of the Iowa Extension Council Association met via Zoom on January 19, 2022. Board members present include Kim Rinker, Paul Gieselman, Sara Neuzil, Sara Pinckney, Gwen Hanson, Brent Ness, Al Ralston, Jamie David, Roberta Hersom, Michael Ryan, Connie Casson, Mary Greiman, Melissa McEnany, Alyson Palmer, LeAnn Lawler, Mark Davitt, Bruce Clark, and Ryan Freese. Also present were John Lawrence, Andrea Nelson, Cindy Gannon, Jennifer Vit and Julie Baumler.

President Paul Gieselman called the meeting to order. There were no additions to the agenda. Connie moved to approve the minutes from November 20, 2021 with corrections. Michael seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The treasurer's report was given by Michael Ryan. The balance on hand is \$31,074.95. The following bills were presented:

- MailChimp, \$33.16
- Assured Partners (formerly LMC), \$792.50 for event insurance for the extension council conference

Michael moved to approve the treasurer's report and bills. Mary seconded the motion. The motion carried. It was noted that some of the budget lines are already over budget significantly. Michael, Paul, Jennifer, Julie will work to create an amended budget.

Jennifer reported that Whitfield & Eddy will be increasing their rates starting on July 1, 2022. Their current billable rate from 2016-2022 for legal services is \$205/hr. (through June 30, 2022). Effective January 1, 2022, travel time will be charged at \$125/hour (half the full hourly rate). Effective July 1, 2022, hourly rates will be as follows:

- Members (Partners): \$250/hour (most common usage; Kay Oskvig & Jaki Samuelson)
- Associates: \$175/hour (no change)
- Paralegals: \$100/hour
- Law Clerks: \$70/hour (up from \$60/hour)

Whitfield & Eddy will continue providing free training at the annual meeting in March and offer an additional free webinar upon mutual topic/date agreement.

Options for paying our Whitfield & Eddy monthly bill were discussed. Michael moved to continue paying by check. Al seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Whitfield & Eddy suggested changing our member benefit to counties from a 1 hr./county/6 months to a 2 hrs./year system due to counties struggling to pay the correct amount of their bill. In analyzing this option, it would significantly increase our exposure for legal services fees to do this (about 1/3

more per year, if using this year's hours). Michael moved to continue the legal services benefit as 1 hour/county/6-month period. Mary seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Jamie David moved to appoint Sara Neuzil, Winneshiek County as the Region 5 Board Member to complete the vacated term expiring in 2024. Connie seconded the motion. The motion carried.

An ISU Extension and Outreach update was provided by Dr. John Lawrence, Vice President for Extension and Outreach. Covid recovery initiative activities were reported statewide. Some of the report findings were shared via Dr. Lawrence's Monday Message on 1/17/22. Counties offered 494 educational offerings with 211 different educational programs. Counties indicated that they need help with evaluation of the recovery initiative education programs. The goal of having focused recovery initiatives was for multiple counties to be working on the same programs with the same goals across the state. There was a narrow list of about 30 recommended programs that fit those recovery initiatives, all of which had evaluation options attached to them. For the upcoming year the leadership team hopes to help staff members better understand what it means to focus as a system.

A County Services update was shared by Andrea Nelson, Asst. Vice President for County Services. There are no regional director vacancies at this time! Courtney May is the new Region 26 regional Director. On January 4, performance review feedback surveys were sent to all council members to provide input on their regional director's performance. Please take the time to complete the survey. In 2020, the legislature passed a law that went into effect on Jan. 1 this year mandating that public employees who use lodging for work must use a lodging provider that has completed *Combat Human Trafficking* training. Staff and councils are being recognized in area awards ceremonies taking place this winter.

Jennifer Vit shared an Executive Director report. She reported that the reenrollment period is coming up soon for EAP. The enrollment year runs from April 1 – March 31. Last year, we had 94 counties participated in EAP. Employee & Family Resources (EFR) has increased the rate by \$1.40/employee. Mary moved to leave our rate for counties at \$25/employee for the upcoming plan year. Al seconded the motion. The motion carried. Jennifer reported that EAP Usage for 2021 (January – December) was 5.5% of enrolled members, which is higher than the usual usage rate of EFR's clientele. This is also an increase from our usage rate last year of around 3%.

Board terms will be expiring in Regions 1, 3, 12, 13, 15-16-17, 20, 25, and 27. Nominations are due on April 1. Current board members in these regions are eligible to run for re-election, with the exception on Region 20 (Michael Ryan has reached his 3-term limit).

Jennifer reported that IECA is sponsoring two webinars this month:

- [4-H Event and Fair Guidance webinar](#) was held on 1/11. Mike Anderson explains Positive Youth Development guidelines to aid county extension staff and extension councils in navigating possible behavior and rule infractions as they pertain to fairs and events.
- [Serving All Iowans webinar](#) was held on 1/20. Regenea Hurte presents a discussion about diversity, equity, and inclusion in our councils and our programs.

The board discussed dues for 2022-23. There is concern that we may need more funds coming into the next fiscal year. The Policy, Finance, and Legislation committee will meet to form a recommendation.

A committee is working to make some key updates to the 2015 *4-H Core Principles* document to better reflect our current practices, policies, and procedures. There are also updates that need to be made to the roles that extension employees have in their relation to the 4-H youth development program. This will not significantly change how we do business in most counties but is rather

documenting already existing processes. We have IECA board members on the committee representing the viewpoint of extension councils.

We are finalizing the details for the Iowa Legislative Insider. Registration is still open. We have confirmed Governor Reynolds to come speak with our group, as well as mingle with the participants for a while. We will meet with legislators at the Capitol building and will then end the day at the Botanical Center for workshops. Board members are encouraged to promote the program with councils in their region.

The agenda for the Extension Council Conference has been finalized. Dr. Lawrence will open the day by sharing what he heard at his county listening tour. and will end the day with a discussion of the MOU. There are 16 breakout sessions, and most have been finalized. All board members are expected to attend and help with the conference. Board members should promote the conference with councils in your region.

Kim Rinker reported that Boone County office had a waterline break the week of January 1. They have had to move out of their office. They would recommend that everyone check their insurance coverage for their building annually.

The next meeting date will be the week of February 21 via Zoom to do pre-conference work.

Michael moved to adjourn the meeting. Mary seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary K. Greiman". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Mary Greiman, IECA Secretary