



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

November 20, 2021

The Board of Directors of the Iowa Extension Council Association met in Ames on November 20, 2021. Board members present include Tyler Heeren, Paul Gieselman, Connie Casson, Mary Greiman, Al Ralston, Joy Prothero, Michael Ryan, Brent Ness, Jamie David, Bruce Clark, Kelly Jared, Gwen Hanson, Le Ann Lawler, Alyson Palmer, Sara Pinckney, and Jamie Thompson. Also present were John Lawrence, Andrea Nelson, Nancy Franz, Jennifer Vit, and Julie Baumler.

Board members spent the morning doing future planning led by retired extension professional Nancy Franz. The question used to guide the discussion: *Imagine we have fully engaged County Extension Councils, what should IECA do by 2025 to enhance this engagement?* Three main goals were identified for 2022-2025:

1. IECA has a broad set of benefits that are well-used by counties to improve their services
2. More council member involvement in IECA to improve council effectiveness
3. Improve effectiveness of local councils

Following lunch, President Paul Gieselman called the business meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. There were no additions to the agenda. Joy moved to approve the minutes from the June 12, 2021 board meeting. Connie seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Treasurer Michael Ryan gave the treasurer's report. We have a balance on hand of \$36,618.93 in the checking account. The following bills were presented:

- Jennifer Vit, copies (\$248.39) + Microphone (\$180.83) = \$429.22
- Julie Baumler, copies (\$181.05)
- Whitfield & Eddy, legal services \$661.50

Mary Greiman moved to approve the treasurer's report and paying the bills. Gwen Hanson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

A moment of silence was held in memory of Region 1 board member Bertha Lammers who passed away in June.

Michael moved to appoint Ryan Freese as Region 1 Representative (term expiring in 2022). Connie seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Jennifer Vit reported that Region 5 is now also vacant. Emily Schwickerath has resigned from her local council and the IECA Board. Regional Director Kraig Tweed is helping to identify a potential council member to fill the position.

Board Process Issues outlining how the board will conduct its business for 2021-22 were reviewed. Alyson moved to approve the Board Process Issues as currently written. Al seconded the motion. The motion carried.

An ISU Extension and Outreach Update was given by Dr. John Lawrence, Vice President, Extension and Outreach. The following initiatives will remain ongoing: Structured for Success, implementing My Data, and recovery initiatives. The next focus will be on doing a better job of program planning. A process to help program units think this through will be starting soon. This will include input from councils to address local needs. The goal is to have a process in place by summer to be implement in Oct. 2022. Additionally, Dr. Lawrence and the leadership team continues to evaluate communication efforts throughout the system, assessing ways to continually improve communications.

Dr. Lawrence addressed questions from the board. The high turnover of CYCs remains a problem for many counties. Dr. Lawrence shared that there is no easy answer to this problem, as there are many reasons why CYCs leave their positions. He said that we need to keep asking if we have appropriate training and support for these positions. This is something that extension and outreach is continuing to evaluate. The 4-H Unit is currently working on a strategic plan and soon the 4-H Core Principles document will be reviewed by a committee representing councils, CYCs, YPSes, Regional Directors and state 4-H Youth Development program staff. There is a committee working on the supervisory/training piece as well. 4-H Youth Development Program Leader Debbie Nistler has been working on professionalizing the position. She has offered to pay NAE4-HA dues for all state and county staff, encouraging them to engage as professionals – not just employees.

An additional concern brought to Dr. Lawrence's attention is the need to balance the time that staff spend in online informational, committee, and training meetings with having enough time to accomplish local goals and education. What is the balance of being able to provide information to and involve county staff on state committees?

A County Services update was provided by Andrea Nelson, Asst. Vice President for County Services. She spent time explaining the Shared Service Support Fee and the Regional Director Cost Share Fee paid by county extension districts. Nelson also shared a statewide financial analysis for a cumulation of all county extension districts.

Executive Director Jennifer Vit gave her report to the board. She has been working with Gene and Bryan to do some finance trainings in the spring. She asked how council would best want to receive that information. There was consensus that looking on their own county financial reports while they are learning would be helpful in a face-to-face setting. Jennifer will work with Gene and Bryan to work on scheduling some regional/area meetings.

Jennifer asked for feedback from the IECA Year in Review mailing that went to all county extension council members across the state. The consensus is that it fits into our goals to communicate to our membership, but we may still need to determine if the delivery should be electronic vs hard copy/mailed.

Jennifer reported that Regenea Hurte, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisor, is looking for council members to be diversity ambassadors to help take diversity efforts statewide in a way that is larger than one person can do. IECA has scheduled a diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) training titled *Open for All* on Jan. 20 at 5:30 p.m. This will be an introduction to DEI targeted for council members.

The following 3-minute videos are being planned for Jennifer to record:

- Dec – budget process

- Jan – legislative day
- Feb – council conference

Kelly Jared updated the group on plans for the Extension Council Conference on March 5. The conference theme is *Meaningful Connections*. The conference will be held at the Gateway Hotel in Ames this year. The committee is working on a final structure/agenda for the day and is looking at a keynote speaker this year. Several breakout session topics were brainstormed.

The Legislative Insider is scheduled for Feb. 9. The focus is extension council members and 4-H members. Our morning will be spent learning about the legislative process and the afternoon will have 3 breakout sessions: Youth Rights, Civil Discourse, Youth-Adult Partnerships/Youth Voice. We really want to encourage council members to attend and learn along beside the 4-H members as well as share their knowledge with 4-H members. There is no limit on how many 4-H members may go per county. We are looking for council members to serve as guides/mentors for groups who are less experienced in working with the legislators.

Committee reports were given.

The Finance, Policy & Legislation Committee recommended updates to IECA financial procedures. Michael Ryan moved to approve the following amendments to the IECA Procedures Manual:

- Invoices should indicate check # and date paid.
- Reimbursement should include a reimbursement request form.
- A financial review shall be conducted yearly following the conclusion of the fiscal year (in August or September) with sampling of expenditures.

The motion was seconded by Joy. The motion was carried.

Dues for 2022-23 were discussed. Depending on what our goals are from the action planning, we may need to explore increasing dues in the future. Connie moved to table this to the committee to continue to explore this in the future. Mary seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The Communications & Networking Committee report was given by Kelly Jared. The IECA website will be updated once all of the county websites have received their updates. Suggestions for the website can be shared with Julie or Jennifer. Board members are encouraged to help promote the website.

Jennifer and Julie will develop talking points for board members to use with councils to help promote the extension council conference & Legislative Insider.

The Human Resources & Member Services Committee discussed board management software. Jennifer talked with regional directors to determine if they thought there would be an interest. Overall, the consensus is that it is not worth pursuing. A better option may be to work with Dr. Lawrence and Andrea to help the county directors and regional directors manage the process better to consolidate handouts, etc. prior to council meetings.

The board discussed the next steps for future planning. Jennifer and Julie will compile the information from the futuring session to create a master report. An action planning team of Jamie David, Paul Gieselman, Connie Casson, and Sara Pinckney will work to consolidate similar outcomes and then develop action plans. It was suggested that every time we have a meeting, we should place our goals at the top of the agenda so we can keep them in mind as we do business so we can evaluate our progress. We need to communicate our story of how we are exploring other benefits, even if we determine the proposed benefit isn't worth pursuing further.

County concerns and issues were discussed, including the following:

- Council meetings in some counties take several hours. Councils are encouraged to work with regional directors to identify ways to streamline meetings so that business can be conducted more efficiently.
- Event insurance - Fundraising as a part of an event will require a special insurance policy for the event. This includes 4-H club fundraisers, especially if there is food being served. Andrea suggested that one thing that counties could do is help fund that event insurance since it benefits the county. The insurance policy really protects the extension district. They can levy for tort funds if they qualify. They can also utilize 4-H Fund dollars.
- Turnover with Extension's University HR partner - Extension and Outreach does not hire our own HR person. They work for University HR. We have two individuals interviewing right now and we hope to be able to hire someone for that position soon.

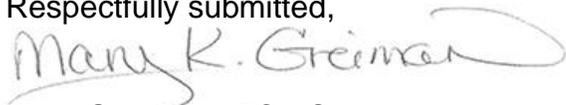
The board recognized past presidents Michael Ryan and Jamie David with a desk clock in appreciation of their service.

Mary Greiman moved to approve board travel expenses of \$2,211.44. Joy seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The next meeting date will be in January. Julie will send out a Doodle poll to determine the next meeting date.

Michael moved to adjourn. Connie seconded. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mary K. Greiman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Mary Greiman, IECA Secretary