



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

June 12, 2021

The Board of Directors of the Iowa Extension Council Association met via video conference on June 12, 2021. President Jamie David called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Board members present include Jamie Thompson, Brent Ness, Lori Donahoe, Gwen Hanson, Bruce Clark, Al Ralston, Paul Gieselman, Joy Prothero, Jamie David, Kim Rinker, Tyler Heeren, Kelly Jared, Le Ann Lawler, Mary Greiman, Sara Pinckney, Melissa McEnany, Mollie Scott, Connie Casson, Michael Ryan, Bertha Lammers, and Mark Davitt. Also present were John Lawrence, Bryan Whaley, Cindy Gannon, Jennifer Vit, and Julie Baumler.

Michael Ryan moved to approve the agenda. Mary seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The secretary's report was given by Connie Casson. Mary Greiman moved to approve the minutes from March 2, 2021. Joy seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Lori Donahoe gave the treasurer's report. The balance on hand is \$31,696.73 in checking. The following bills were presented:

- LMC Insurance & Risk Management, \$975.00 for D&O Insurance
- Whitfield & Eddy, legal services of \$1328.50 for April; \$1,168.50 for May; and \$250 for Divorce & Custody training. Total is \$2,747.00
- Julie Baumler, \$86.50 for printing
- MailChimp, \$29.84 for May, \$33.16 for June

Paul moved to approve the treasurer's report and the bills. Joy seconded the motion. The motion carried.

An ISU Extension and Outreach Update was given by Dr. John Lawrence, Vice President, Extension and Outreach. Dr. Lawrence is in the midst of visiting all 100 county offices prior to Labor Day. He has had some great discussions with staff and council members during these visits.

The retirement incentive option was taken by twenty-one extension and outreach staff plus eight extension faculty members. All will be done by June 30. All of the staff positions will be refilled. Dr. Lawrence anticipates that most of the faculty positions will be refilled eventually, but the timing is up to the individual colleges.

Richard Jauron from the Hortline retired in September. While his position has now been refilled, it is now structured differently. Clientele with horticulture questions are encouraged to contact their county office first, who will assist them using resources provided by the Horticulture extension and outreach staff members. If further information is needed, then they will then contact Aaron Stiles. He will be providing more information in anticipation of needs, being proactive when there are horticulture trends that he's noticing.

The Iowa legislature did not provide any additional funding to Iowa State University in this year's budget. However, Extension and Outreach is still in pretty good shape financially. The cost-savings in retirements will help. John feels good about our budget situation going into the new fiscal year.

There are 80+ counties using external bookkeepers who are independent contractors. Some of these bookkeepers work in multiple counties. Dr. Lawrence would like to explore ways to provide more continuity of service for this critical function in the event that there are resignations or retirements.

The board asked Dr. Lawrence about the amount of training on supervision of employees for regional directors, county directors, and program directors. Dr. Lawrence and Bryan Whaley, Director of Field Operations, shared that training has occurred and is ongoing. Some training is mandatory, while other supervisors seek out additional training for their own individual professional development plans. A few specific resources discussed include:

- Human Resources Learning hour – occurs monthly and is open to anyone who would like to attend. Occasionally, the same topic will be offered in one session for regional directors and in another for county directors, tailored to meet the needs of each position. These are not necessarily mandatory, but attendance is tracked and they are well-attended.
- The Directors of Field Operations (Bryan Whaley and Gene Mohling) also provide additional guidance and conversation concerning HR issues that come up in counties.
- The Iowa Employment Conference is held every year and is an excellent option for professional development.
- There is also an HR Committee among the Regional Director team. They identify needs in counties and ways to provide training and resources to counties to fill those needs. Most recently they discussed holding a 1-day HR conference to focus on hiring and supervision, among other topics.

Bryan Whaley, Director of Field Operations - North gave a County Services Update. New Regional Director hires include:

- Michelle Sackville – Region 8
- RaeAnn Gordon - Region 11
- MaryBeth Foster - Region 12
- Rick Woten - Region 25
- Cindy Hall - Region 26
- Region 21 is still unfilled and they extended the search

The regional directors met with Nancy Franz to identify core competencies that all regional directors need. This will inform training needs in the future.

Bookkeeper training is this next week to help with the year-end closeout processes. There are several counties who have found themselves with a larger than normal carryover projection this year. Many of them are contracting with ISU for services.

This year, all county audits are being handled by State of Iowa auditors providing much more consistency in the audit process and findings than in the past. Billing has been much slower than anticipated, so there are a fair number of counties whose invoices will not be issued prior to the end of the fiscal year. The County Services team has met with the state auditor to see if they can improve upon the process for next year. A couple of findings have emerged so far:

1. segregation of duties
2. signing of reports (including those that have not been required to be signed in the past)

3. requirements for recording of the minutes when councils approve wages
4. reimbursements made to staff and volunteers should not include reimbursement of any sales tax that may have been paid.

There will be a report of statewide findings, likely around the end of July. Each county should also receive an exit interview with individual county findings.

An IECA board election update was shared by Julie Baumler. Board members who were elected or re-elected to a 3-year term ending in 2024 include:

- Emily Schwickerath (Chickasaw County), Region 5
- Al Ralston (Woodbury County), Region 6
- Le Ann Lawler (Webster County), Region 8
- Sara Pinckney (Jones County) – Region 11
- Kim Rinker (Boone County), Region 14
- Joy Prothero (Mahaska County), Region 18
- Brent Ness (Iowa County) – Region 19
- Jamie David (Taylor County), Region 23

The board discussed participating in a planning for action (strategic planning) session in fall. It was decided to hold the meeting in person with a board meeting on the same day. Julie will send a Doodle poll to identify a date that will work for most.

The 2021 Legislative Insider was held virtually this year. We had 72 participants with the following breakout:

- 28 4-H members
- 2 non-4-H youth
- 4 extension council members
- 1 educator
- 37 staff

A committee of Mark Davitt, Paul Gieselman, Gwen Hanson, Mary Greiman, and Jamie David was appointed to explore the future of our legislative day, identifying strategies to reach out to more council members. The following questions will be explored:

- 1) Are there legislative issues that we could address when at the Capitol this year?
- 2) Are there ideas for adding value for council members and incentivize their participation?
- 3) Who is our target audience? Is it council members or 4-H members?

The extension council conference was held virtually this year on March 13. We had 179 registrants for the day with the following breakout:

- 106 extension council members
- 26 county staff
- 20 regional directors
- 27 other staff (including presenters)

The evaluations were mostly positive for the overall conference and for each of the individual breakout sessions. All content was recorded and is available for council members and staff to watch on the IECA website.

The 2022 conference will be held on March 5 in Ames, as an in-person conference. The board discussed pros and cons of different venue options and appointed the Communications and Networking Committee to discuss further and make a recommendation in their committee report.

IECA Board Officer Elections for 2021-22 were held. Nominations were taken from the floor. Michael Ryan nominated Paul Gieselman for president. Al Ralston seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Joy Prothero nominated Connie Casson for president-elect. Paul Gieselman seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Paul Gieselman nominated Michael Ryan for treasurer. Mary Greiman seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Michael Ryan nominated Mary Greiman for the secretary position. Paul seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The following committee chairs were appointed:

- Finance, Policy, & Legislation – Kim Rinker
- Communications & Networking – Kelly Jared
- Human Resources & Member Services – Bruce Clark

The committees met via breakout rooms and reported back.

The Finance, Policy & Legislation Committee discussed the need for an internal financial review/audit of the IECA Treasury before the transition to a new treasurer. Joy Prothero moved to appoint Kim Rinker and Emily Schwickerath to an audit committee, which will work with Gene Mohling, past-treasurer Lori Donahoe and future treasurer Michael Ryan to conduct an internal audit of the books. If any discrepancies are found, we will then employ an outside source to assist. Kelly Jared seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The committee recommended the following budget for FY2021-22.

Category Description	FY22 Budget
<u>INCOME</u>	
Membership Dues	\$ 25,500.00
EAP Payment	9,000.00
Extension Council Conf.	500.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 35,000.00
<u>EXPENSES</u>	
General	
Bank Charges	\$ 30.00
Copies	500.00
Office Supplies	300.00
Postage	275.00
Travel	6,426.00
Insurance	975.00
TOTAL General	\$ 8,506.00
Comm. & Networking	

Communications	\$ 400.00
Promotions	250.00
TOTAL Comm & Networking	\$ 650.00
Human Resources & Member Services	
Council Conference	\$ 1,000.00
EAP	9,000.00
Legal Services	15,000.00
TOTAL Human Resources & Member Services	\$ 25,000.00
Finance, Policy, & Legislation	
Legislative Contacts	\$ 750.00
TOTAL Finance, Policy, & Legislation	\$ 750.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 34,906.00
OVERALL TOTAL	\$ 94.00

Kelly Jared moved to approve the suggested budget (below) with a quarterly review to access the health of the budget. Joy Prothero seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The Human Resources & Member Services Committee discussed ideas for additional training needs of extension council members that we might be able to address through webinar offerings.

The Communications & Networking Committee recommended we use the Gateway Hotel and Conference Center for the 2022 Extension Council Conference. They also recommended a Friday night networking event for the conference.

The committee suggested that we create a one-page flyer of membership benefits that board members can share with council members in their region.

Jennifer Vit gave the Executive Director Report. She conferred with CPA Dave Hove from LWBJ regarding the IECA tax status. He confirmed that because IECA is registered as a non-profit and because the gross receipts do not exceed \$50,000, there is no filing requirement. If IECA's gross receipts ever exceed \$50,000, then there would be a filing requirement. If IECA decides to pursue a tax-exempt status in the future, then there would be a filing requirement every year. Hove provided his service complimentary to IECA. Vit will type up an official report of this information so that we have it for future reference.

Vit reminded the board that the legal services benefit provided to IECA member counties through Whitfield & Eddy resets on July 1. All counties are eligible to receive one complementary hour of legal services each half of the year. If additional hours are required, Whitfield & Eddy will invoice the county directly for those services. The next period runs from July 1 – Dec. 31, 2021.

IECA is currently sending out 3 regular newsletters:

- *Extension Council News* – provides timely updates for council members and select staff on topics of interest to councils

- *First Advantage User News* – communicates updates and policy guidance for background screening to active users
- *Employee Assistance Program: News of Your Benefits* – passes along helpful information about EAP benefits as well as articles and resources to improve employee health and productivity to staff in enrolled counties

Jennifer reported that a background screening advisory group has been put together to identify ways that we can continue to serve counties well through the background screening benefit. Last week background screening users were sent a survey to find out what's working, what's not, and how we might be able to better serve them. Those results will inform our steps moving forward.

Jennifer is working on conflict-of-interest training/information for council members from Whitfield & Eddy. The training will focus on "What is conflict of interest?" and how we can avoid the appearance of inappropriate actions. This will develop over the next 6 months.

Julie Baumler's position has changed. As of June 1, she is a permanent ISU employee and her hours increased 20 hours per week.

County Concerns/Issues were discussed. Tyler Hereen asked if there was a general consensus on county fair plans to address concerns with COVID-19 spread. Bryan Whaley shared that there have been bi-weekly meetings of staff to address some of these needs and the 4-H unit has also put out some guidance. Dr. Lawrence noted that the overall guidance has been that for the most part fairs will be "normal" this year, with potentially more social distancing and checking in with fair judges for levels of comfort. Bryan will make sure that guidance/information is shared with council members.

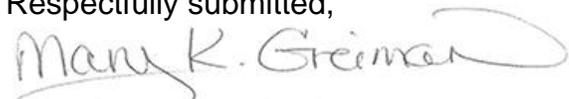
Advice and comments were shared from outgoing board members. Lori encouraged the board to keep up the conference and to stay engaged. Brian McNulty is also retiring from the board.

Julie will send a Doodle poll to set the next board meeting date.

Joy Prothero moved to follow the committee's recommendation to reserve Gateway Hotel for extension council conference on March 5, 2021.

Bruce Clark moved to adjourn. Joy Prothero seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



Mary Greiman, IECA Secretary