

STATE EXTENSION COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES/NOTES  
FEBRUARY 25-26, 2020  
EMBASSY SUITES  
1801 NEWTOWN PIKE, LEXINGTON KENTUCKY

At 4:30 pm (EST), on February 25, 2020, Dr. Ken Jones, Director of Program and Staff Development, Cooperative Extension Service of the University of Kentucky, led the orientation for new delegates. Dr. Laura Stephenson, Associate Dean & Director for Extension at the University of Kentucky was in attendance. Dr. Stephenson thanked everyone for their service to Extension. Among other attendees were Extension staff, new Extension delegates, including extension officers President Ann Porter, Vice President Karen Hill and Secretary Juan Pena. The orientation ended at 5:20 pm EST.

At 6:00 pm, President Ann Porter of Mason County, started the evening meeting and the Award Banquet. She welcomed and thanked everyone for attending the meeting. She introduced Vice-President Karen Hill of Henderson County and Secretary Juan Pena of Shelby County. She asked everyone to introduce themselves. Ms. Porter encouraged everyone to get to know each other, get to know the staff of UK and KSU Extension and to share ideas to further the work of Extension. Ms. Porter highlighted the goals of the meeting, which were to prepare delegates to advocate, to be public relations ambassadors for Extension Offices, and to provide advice to extension programs with greatest impact for citizens of Kentucky.

Vice-President Karen Hill shared information that Epsilon Sigma Phi, National Extension Professionals' Organization awarded President Porter with the National Friend of Extension Award at their 2019 national annual conference in Colorado. Ms. Porter was recognized for her endless volunteer work and outstanding leadership in Extension. Karen then shared the Thought for the Day.

Dinner was served.

President Porter introduced Dr. Courtney Owens, Interim Associate Extension Administrator for Program and Staff Development for the College of Agriculture, Communities, and the Environment Cooperative Extension Program at Kentucky State University (KSU). He delivered greetings from KSU President M. Christopher Brown II, and Dr. Kirk Pomper, Director of Land Grant Programs for Kentucky State University. Dr. Owens gave an update about Extension Office programs at KSU. He mentioned KSU was having its annual legislative meeting, which is a program when state legislators have an opportunity to learn about KSU and its Extension programs.

President Porter introduced Dr. Laura Stephenson, Associate Dean & Director for Extension at the University of Kentucky. Dr. Stephenson gave an update of the UK Extension Service programs. She mentioned that UK Extension is finishing with its reorganization and filling vacancies. She said that UK Extension is implementing some other changes to enhance programs in collaboration with county extension councils.

Ms. Deb Cummings with TEconomy Partners gave a presentation about the 2019 Kentucky Cooperative Extension Community Needs Assessment. Ms. Cummings spoke about the importance of the Community Needs Assessment. She said the community-based assessment will help to increase accountability, communication, programs, and measurement of programs. She explained how county extension councils should use the information from the assessment to have the most impact in their communities.

Ms. Ashley Holt, Assistant Director of Diversity for the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment presented the State Diversity Awards. The Diversity award recognizes an individual and a team for special efforts to include groups of people not previously served by Extension. Ms. Holt mentioned that 21 nominations were submitted. The 2019 Individual Diversity Award was given to Reda Fugate, Nutrition Education Program Assistant for Perry County, for her strong commitment to reach visually impaired clients. She worked tirelessly to print curriculum materials in Braille. Her work has led to the translation of the same curriculum into Spanish, French and Swahili offered across the state.

The Team Diversity Award was given to Metcalfe County Extension for their successful programs targeted to individuals with special needs, including individuals diagnosed with autism, down syndrome. The award was received by Heather Shaw, Nutrition Education Program Assistant and Lynn Blankenship, Family and Consumer Science Agent for Metcalf County.

The evening meeting ended at 7:50 pm

On February 26, at 8:00 am, Vice-President Karen Hill opened the meeting with a Thought for the Day. She welcomed everyone and thanked them for their work with Extension. Vice-President Hill introduced Dr. Laura Stephenson, Associate Dean & Director for Extension at the University of Kentucky. Dr. Stephenson joined Extension as the Associate Dean and Director on August 1, 2019. Dr. Stephenson gave an update about the implementation of the 2019 community needs assessment as well as structural changes coming to Extension. She mentioned that with the new changes local extension programs will continue. It will increase agent time available for programming, streamline fiscal accountability and compliance, increase supervisor mentoring opportunities and reduce staff to supervisor ratios. Dr. Stephenson said that there are 1092 employees and 7 district directors. Under the new administrative structure, there will be three regions and 28 areas. The regions will be filled with three regional Extension directors with the application deadline being 2/23/20. The next phase will be hiring of 28 Area Directors with that being completed by 1/1/21.

Dr. Dan Kahl gave a presentation to highlight the community assessment process. Dr. Kahl is a Cooperative Extension Specialist serving as an Assistant Professor of Community and Leadership Development and the Associate Director of the Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky at the University of Kentucky. Dr. Kahl explained how the 2019 community assessment was done. He said there were surveys, interviews, focus groups, and meetings with Extension employees. The effort was to get the input of all stakeholders and residents in the community. He added that 31,470 usable surveys were completed with approximately 300 interviews with key informants and approximately 230 focus groups held across the state.

Dr. Ken Jones, Dr. Dan Kahl, Ms. Hayley Pierce and Ms. Christianah Ogunade explained how to utilize the Community Needs Assessment. They said that each county has different priority needs but all of them should be able to use the assessment. They conducted activities with attendees to show how the assessment can be used.

At 11:00 am there was a panel discussion that included Mr. Joe Pfeffer, Mason County Judge Executive, and Ms. Lacey Holleran, Tourism Director of Maysville-Mason County Convention & Visitor's Bureau. They said that they have found the community needs assessment to be a great resource. Mr. Pfeffer said that the response from the Mason County residents to the community needs assessment has reaffirmed that residents are benefiting from Extension programs. He said the assessment is helping his county government to work collaboratively with Extension.

Around 12:00 pm, Vice-President Hill introduced Dr. Cox, Dean of the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment for the University of Kentucky. Dr. Cox thanked delegates for volunteering and giving their time to Extension. She mentioned the changes that Extension has been going through to ensure financial compliance, that programs are working and there is better communication in Extension. With the changes, she said Extension should be able to explain better about their work to Kentucky legislators, policy makers and all other stakeholders. Dr. Cox thanked President Porter for helping with interviews for the hiring of the new director for Extension.

Lunch was served around 12:15 pm

Mr. Gill Finley, KSU State Specialist for Community Resource Development, spoke about the importance of the upcoming US Census. He encouraged Extension delegates to let the community know about the upcoming census. He said that Extension depends on data from the census.

Dr. Ken Jones, Director of Program and Staff Development, talked briefly about the role and importance of Extension county council and district boards. He encouraged the delegates to proactively share information about Extension in our communities.

At 1:15 pm, President Porter called the business meeting to order. President Porter asked for the approval of the minutes for the August 7, 2019 meeting. Curtis Rosser of Mason County motioned to adopt the minutes as written. It was seconded by E. T. Pendley of Muhlenberg County. The motion was carried.

There was no old business.

The meeting proceeded with new business to discuss the summer meeting. President Porter said the summer meeting would be held on one of three possible dates, August 11, 18 or 19. She said that she would let everyone know when the date is decided.

Dr. Ken Jones took the opportunity to conduct an evaluation and requested feedback about the meeting. He thanked everyone for participating.

President Porter asked the officers to meet with KSU administrators after the meeting to discuss the summer meeting.

President Porter ended the business meeting at 1:23 pm. She thanked everyone and adjourned the meeting.

Notes and the minutes of the business meeting are provided by State Extension Secretary Juan Pena of Shelby County.