



EXTENSION SENATE

## MINUTES

**August 12, 2021**

### **Business Meeting**

Members Present: Ben Boyles, Andrew Jeffers, Mark Cathcart, Matthew Fischer, David Dewitt, Heather Coleman Benjamin, Janet Watt Steele, Christopher Burt, Lindsey Craig, Jaime Pohlman, Karen Jackson, Haley Marie Parent, Weatherly Thomas, Jason Gore, Charlotte Maxwell, Travis Mitchel, Lauren Hood, Chase Ballie, Kerrie Roach, Mallory Maher, Ben Powell, Brian Bolt, Adam Kantrovich, Jordan Franklin, Richard Wiley, Daniel Anco, Thomas Dobbins

**Welcome**

**President - Mark Cathcart**

### **Previous Meeting Minutes**

- Drew Jeffers distributed the March 9, 2021 meeting minutes via email to all members, and asked if there were any questions.
- Motion made by Jaime Pohlman to accept the minutes
- Seconded by Jason Gore
- Vote passed to accept the minutes

### **Administrative Update**

**Dr. Thomas Dobbins**

- Dr. Dobbins feels that Extension Senate is a great opportunity for him to connect with agents and that it serves a vital role in the organization.
- COVID-19
  - We are still going through COVID-19 operations, the emphasis is on caution and safety.
  - Dr. Parisi has sent out test kits for county offices. This is meant as a convenience for staff members to be able to send off saliva tests.
- Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA)
  - COLA increases went out for classified staff (administrative assistants, etc.)
  - The provost has not released additional money for unclassified staff. As soon as that money is released, he will get with PTL and DED to get those distributed.
- Budget
  - We are being cautious with the budget process for FY 21/22
  - We have a \$2.7 million increase, however we are being cautious
- Personnel matters
  - Working on getting extension associate and specialists to market value
  - Working on reducing salary compression.
  - Salaries tend to be higher for new positions because we have to hire at market value
  - We are looking at how to correct salary compression of seasoned personnel.

- The university is looking at a merit based bonus system, but it only works if all employee salaries are at market value.
- EPMS documents are being prepared for planning stages
- Asked PTL and DED to work on a merit pay system, so if and when we are allowed to do so we can implement it.
- Working to move TLP administrative assistants to FTE
- Dr. Dobbins is looking to make our Wellness and Nutrition and Wildlife and Natural Resource Initiatives are top State Legislative Priorities.
- Question by Senate member – Are all COVID-19 policies on the extension employee website now? ANSWER: Yes they are all on the website and updated as information becomes available.

### President's Report

**President Mark Cathcart**

- District director's evaluation
  - Only 20% return on those.
  - This needs to be improved, so we can provide meaningful feedback
  - To make these effective, we need 50% return or higher
  - Data is compiled outside the university, so it is anonymous
  - Relay this to folks in your area

### Association Reports

- **SCACAA** **Zack Snipes, President**
  - Kerrie Roach reported
  - Professional Development training August 16, 2021, more to come soon.
  - Planning in person meeting for May 2022
  - Next board meeting is October 5, 2021
  - Membership drive this October
  - Award applications are coming soon
- **SCAE-4HA** **Lauren Hood, President**
  - New slate of executive board members
  - 3 year strategic plan is being developed.
  - Having a retreat for the board to work on the 3 yr plan
  - Jessica Simpson is pushing membership drives
- **SC-ANREP** **Karen Jackson, President**
  - Only had 1 meeting
  - Nothing to report

### Committee Reports

- Organization and Policy
  - Nothing to report
- Recognition

- Nothing to report
- Welfare Committee
  - Nothing to report

### **New Business**

- **No new business from committees**
- **Landgrant Game**
  - Need content for “Did you know” videos – informational videos that play during game
  - Mark reached out to communications team but has not heard back yet.
  - Extension Senate is ahead of the game on prepping this content.
- **Extension having a larger presence on campus**
  - Communication with Dr. King Bertrand is going good. She is willing to help us get in classroom
  - We need guest speakers.
  - We need to think about ideas to send to her. Email those to Mark or Drew
  - **Mallory Maher moved to form an ADHOC committee to compile ideas to increase the presence of extension on campus.**
    - Weatherly Thomas seconded the motion
    - Kerrie Roach called question
    - Motion to form an ADHOC committee to compile ideas to increase the presence of extension on campus carried.
    - Members: Matt Fischer, Kerrie Roach, Mallory Maher, and Lauren Hood
    - They will elect their own chair
- **PSA Conference**
  - Ben Powell asked about the PSA conference taking place next year.
  - It was planned before COVID shutdown, but have not heard anything else
  - Mark Cathcart mentioned he has not heard anything, but will check administration.
- **Cost of Living**
  - Dr. Dobbins working on that, but he will keep us updated.
  - Rick Wiley – staff senate is drafting a letter to address the COLA increases not being merit or performance based, but should be given equally to all employees since it is a COLA increase.
  - Extension Senate will draft a similar letter to work with Staff Senate to present a uniform case to administration.
- **COVID-19 Policy**
  - Anonymous questions was asked about why unvaccinated team members must use leave when quarantining because the telecommute policy is not acceptable.
  - Senators recommended working with supervisors to find that policy in writing.
  - Will check with administration.
- **Future Meetings**



- Future meetings will be in November or December.
- Motion to adjourn by Adam Kantrovich
- Seconded by David Dewitt
- Meeting adjourned.