

**University of Illinois Extension  
Unit 2 – Serving Boone, DeKalb and Ogle Counties  
421 W. Pines Rd., Oregon, IL 61061**

**Minutes of meeting of  
Community and Economic Development (CED) Advisory Subcommittee for Unit 2  
August 2, 2022, at 12:00 pm – Virtual format**

Present: Gina Caronna, Sherrie Taylor, Liz Vos, Heather Wick, Teresa Schwarz, Mike Delany.

Meeting called to order at 12:13 pm.

The first order of business was to review and approve the minutes from the last meeting on Mar. 7, 2022. Mike asked Sherrie if there were any additions or deletions that needed to be made. She said no and made a motion to approve the minutes. Minutes were adopted by unanimous voice vote of those present at the time.

Review of Open Meetings Act training status. Mike explained that all Extension Council members are required by the University (and IL statutes) to receive training. He asked that members forward him the certificate of completion. Sherrie said she received the communication but has not completed it yet. Liz said that she has not completed it yet, either. Teresa S. explained why the certificates are collected, for compliance and the civil rights audit.

Mike introduced Teresa and explained her Extension role.

Mike reviewed the work from the Mar. 7 meeting on SWOT. It was his impression that everyone agreed that the “human connectedness” of the three counties was strong. He said Liz was a “key connector”. He said Extension’s research-based programming should be driven by assessment of current needs in areas being served; as a result, Extension wants a procedure to capture constituents’ views about needs. He is leading an internal process to try to create a regular assessment framework and reviewed the planned framework with the group.

He highlighted the contributions that the CED subcommittee could make in this process. The group then proceeded to discuss the respective members’ own assessments of key needs. Liz noted her top three as “housing, internet/broadband and transportation (e.g. Uber)”. For transportation, she noted that LOTS is great but is limited in its hours and private-sector companies might add beneficial services.

Sherrie identified food access, housing and transportation (more on the public side) as her top three. Her housing concern was focused more on “low income” populations. Gina highlighted the value of a focus on reduction of duplication of efforts in the realm of community development, and of the creation of a comprehensive reference for resources. She envisions a “listing of listings” especially since so many already exist, and notes this would also facilitate the conduct of needs assessments.

Heather noted access to resources for Latino-owned businesses, who themselves are interested in facilities investments and funding therefor, as well as workforce availability, and supply-chain issues.

As far as regional collaboration to address needs, the panel seemed generally positive on willingness of stakeholders across the region to work together. Gina noted that Covid might have helped many move more quickly to a posture of collaboration. Heather echoed this assessment. Gina noted the example of a Byron HS initiative to stand up a CNA training program, that Ogle and others are participating in.

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Mike then asked for input on the “Entrepreneurship Education” webinar idea for the LGE series. Heather noted that Growth Dimensions had worked with Transform Rockford and the ACE event and proposed a potential connection there. Gina encouraged contact with Sheila Hill from ThinkBig as a partner for this effort, esp. in light of her presentation abilities. Heather noted a recent comment that the economy has done a better job of teaching young people to be employees than to be entrepreneurs.

Mike closed out by soliciting everyone to identify people who should be included on the Needs Assessment interview list. Heather mentioned school superintendents and regional supers. Gina seconded that, and mentioned the super in Loves Park, who also covers the alternative school for the region, as well as Scott Bloomquist. Heather reminded the group about CEANCI, and also recommended Martesha Brown and Matt Simpson. Gina identified Terry Voskul, CEO of Woodward as well.

Mike concluded the meeting with an invitation and calendar reminder about the Council’s Annual Meeting on Sept. 27 at 6pm in Monroe Center, explaining what the meeting is about and who is invited.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:18 pm.