

State Extension Advancement Council
Fall 2020 Virtual Meeting via Zoom - Thursday, November 19, 2020 - 9:00 AM–11 AM

Member attendees: Kermia Adams, Mack Beaty, Ray Boland, John Broadway, Ashley Burns, Bill Camp, Jesse Cannon, Breck Carmichael, Jason Creamer, Benson Driggers, Jason Eargle, Les Echols, Craig Harris, Betty Heath-Camp, Henry Houser, Kyle Kelly, Tripp Kemp, Johnnie Luehrs, Roberta McKee, Darnell McPherson, Daryl Milligan, Bynum Poe, Shannon Riley, Jimmy Sanders, Stephen Slice, Cathy Smith, Thompson Smith, Raleigh Ward

Staff Attendees: George Askew, Tom Dobbins, Edoe Agbodjan, Brian Callahan, Alma Harris, Kathy Coleman, Deborah Hardison, Boyd Owens, Steve Cole, Gerry Dukes, Michael Wright, David DeWitt, Renee Watson

Guests in Attendance: Lamin Drammeh, Nathan Smith, Adam Kantrovich, Kimberly Baker, Demier Richardson-Sanders, Marie Bolt, Blake Lanford, Deon Legette, Pam Ardern

Agenda

9:00 AM Invocation/Welcome/Introduction of New Members – Mr. Jesse Cannon, SEAC Chairman

Mr. Jesse Cannon welcomed all in attendance explaining our spring meeting was cancelled due to COVID and ultimately the decision was made to have a remote call. Jesse thanked Extension personnel for putting the meeting together. Dr. Coleman monitored the Zoom chat for any questions. Jesse announced new members referencing biographies emailed: Shannon Riley, Dr. William Camp, Jason Creamer, Dr. Betty Heath-Camp, Kyle Kelly, Bynum Pope, Lee Haddon. He explained the format for the meeting-normally we meet in committees in the afternoon portion of the agenda but that was cut out due to Zoom call. Committee assignments should have been received and Alma will set up committee meetings at another time. Mr. Cannon introduced each speaker prior to their presentations.

9:15 AM Clemson University Update – Dr. Tom Dobbins, Cooperative Extension Director

Dr. Dobbins thanked everyone attending the meeting and thanked Dr. George Askew, Vice President PSA, for taking time to attend the meeting and offered him time to say a few words.

Dr. Askew commended the council as a premier group for giving fantastic ideas, feedback, and criticism and is the reason for our successful programs and all that we do. Dr. Askew continued input from the council is part of the planning process and influences greatly how we go to the legislature for program funding. He thanked the extension personnel for doing a fantastic job being adaptive over the last few months to keep programming going and keeping our constituents satisfied as best we can and stated any insight the council can give would be appreciated.

Dr. Dobbins reported on program updates and organizational changes in Clemson Extension: Dr. Brian Callahan will head up our online initiatives, CU Online, and will elevate his role to a different level in the organization working with our IT folks; Dr. Susan Guynn is working on assessments to make a big impact to the general assembly. Dr. Dobbins stated, as we go forward, we need more support from our general assembly, from our counties and from the federal government, and we are making an impact. We must properly measure objectives with objectives that are measurable. We have gone through a strategic planning process and our 4-H group is going through a strategic planning process now. With our district directors and program team directors, we are putting together an evaluation system that will focus on measurable objectives and measurable outcomes. According to our HR, this will be an example for Clemson University to follow. It has been a year-long process with the Extension Leadership Team behind me. Dr. Dobbins continued with program and organizational updates: Blake Lanford and Deon Legette are heading up our Field Operations as well as continuing with current duties; Dr. Dobbins stated he is excited about the changes made to strengthen our organization even though under budgetary constraints. During COVID, we have had a strategic plan to get our counties back in operating status, and a lot of people need to know the Extension Service never stopped servicing the people of South Carolina; the Midlands 4-H group started online for each club and has reached 47 states in over seven or eight countries and have gotten memberships in all of those; HGIC has had more hits outside of SC than inside SC and are working around the clock to answer all the phone calls that keep coming in; our Agronomy team continues to serve the farmers across SC; COVID has given us time to train our five new Agriculture Water agents in each district. Their job is to educate the general public as well as work with farmers about agriculture water use. Dr. Matt Smith and Derrick Phinney head up the training and have done a superb job providing excellent training over the last six months; Dr. Kimberly Baker and her Food Systems and Safety team has done a phenomenal job during the

pandemic working with all our school lunch programs, going overnight preparing meals to ensure safety criteria was met; Dr. Matt Burns and the Livestock and Forage team have done an outstanding job putting their programs online. Dr. Dobbins stated because of the virtual format, participation has increased in a lot of areas, people have been able to attend or go back and listen to the recordings. We are planning to do a mixed bag of information with what we have learned through COVID. We will continue to do one on one and face to face but we will not forget what we have learned providing online programming. This is where Dr. Callahan comes in helping us make sure we meet all standards required. The Horticulture team has been inundated with new processes and we are excited about the Hampton County project which will be very good economically for the horticulture people; in Forestry, Derek Phinney and his team are working hard and trying to purchase a portable sawmill to go around to small landowners to show them how they can harvest their products together and turn it into a profit center for them; our Agribusiness team has been doing a phenomenal job making sure our farms are getting the latest information. Dr. Adam Kantrovich led a tax school this year with record numbers attending. Our Rural Health program continues to grow with Dr. Michelle Parisi doing a great job tying Rural Health in with our Expanding Food and Nutrition Program. Even though our offices are closed to the public, our Extension Service people are not, and they have been working hard getting programs that are relevant and keeping our Extension System going. This advisory group is probably one of the premier advisory groups in the country and I continue to get questions about this group because we are not only servicing Clemson, but we are servicing South Carolina State as well. This is a unique joint advisory program servicing both land grant universities. We have many joint programs, but I would like to highlight one that Dr. Della Baker, Dr. Julie Northcutt from Clemson, and Boyd Owens from SC State have been working on and that is our racial understanding programs. They have been recognized all over the country through the programs they have put forth on racial understanding. It is an outstanding program and shows working jointly we are a lot better off than not working together. Dr. Dobbins emphasized the importance of this advisory committee and this committee is what we listen to. After this meeting, Dr. Askew, Dr. Belli and Dr. Dobbins will meet with the Advisory Council Leadership Committee which helps us greatly, not only in presenting our legislative outlook, but in presenting our programmatic outlook as well. Dr. Dobbins expressed his appreciation for the committee taking time out of their busy schedules to help make our Extension Services of both institutions a better place.

**9:30 AM SC State University Updates – Dr. Edoe Agbodjan, Associate Extension Administrator 1890 Program
Dr. Lamin Drammeh, Strategic Initiatives, Evaluation & Engagement Director**

Dr. Agbodjan thanked the committee for their time and doing a fantastic job. He proceeded with the SC State program updates and announcements: SCSU operates out of eight regions: Upstate, Piedmont, Capital, Midland, Pee Dee, Coastal, Low Country and Santee Wateree. The newest region being the Capital Region with main headquarters in Cayce. In Cayce, SCSU Extension will have a new building with a research lab and conference center and will be the biggest building we own; we are hiring to increase staff in our offices to provide adequate and efficient services to our stakeholders; the 4-H program has been assigned to Demier Richardson-Sanders and she will be coming up in the program with updates; we hired an Agricultural Program Leader to see all agricultural programs are offered in all regions; we added a new program “Education Innovation Support”. This new program will target our stakeholders and youth and offer career readiness and college prep; we will be hiring three or four positions for our biggest scholarship program which is Agriculture Innovation Scholarship; the Family Nutrition and Health Program is anticipating a split assignment for the program leader role position. We are targeting the Family Consumer Sciences Program to be a split assignment to cover all the Family Nutritional Program because COVID has brought up issues which need to be covered; we added two family life extension agents to make sure we address health issues we are having in the targeted regions; we hired two regional directors and are in the process of hiring five extension agents to make sure our regions have Extension agents in agriculture because that will be our bread and butter; we anticipate an increase in the number of 4-H agents because we want to have a contribution to the youth in our rural areas; for the committed Education Community Development Program, we plan to address the needs for the program in the next fiscal year 2122. Dr. Agbodjan continued with new programming ideas and results: Because COVID has given us a lot of challenges, we had to go back to the drawing board and figure out how we address our customer’s needs in other ways. So collectively the agents and administration came together and came away with the Home Series. We found most of our stakeholders are technologically challenged but also noticed the majority of them have a cell phone which gave the agents the idea to use the platform most of them have access to which is YouTube. The Home Series are short videos where we address a wide variety of subjects/topics like hand washing, mental health, cancer prevention. In total we have produced 17 videos and have at least 6000 views so far reaching people we did not expect to reach but because of the cell phone they were able to view the short lesson videos. Dr. Agbodjan continued with updates on the staff and working schedules: Staff are working on a reduced rotational basis, A and B rotation, five days a week and are anticipating fully opening offices on January 21 but are figuring

If legislators are asking questions of you, please contact Michael, Beth or me. Just let us know if you are hearing something or if they have questions about what we are doing in Extension. We are happy to answer those questions. Do not hesitate to contact us-communication is key.

10:15 AM **CU Program Team Update:**
Dr. Nathan Smith-Agribusiness Program Director: Farm Programs (presentation attached)
Dr. Adam Kantrovich: Farm Stress Management (presentation attached)

10:30 AM **CU Program Team Update:**
Dr. Kimberly Baker-Food Systems and Safety Program Director (presentation attached)

10:45 AM **SCSU Program Team Update:**
Mrs. Demier Richardson-Sanders-4-H Youth Development Program Leader (presentation attached)

11:00 AM **Closing – Mr. Jesse Cannon**

Mr. Cannon thanked everyone for participating and is looking forward to serving together once things get back to normal. Alma will arrange committees to meet.

The charge for the committees is related to COVID:

Strategic Partnerships and Advocacy-is there anything we should be doing differently during this pandemic when everything is not normal?

Programmatic-are there new ideas for improving program delivery as the pandemic continues?

Mr. Cannon gave an additional charge to both committees: Looking beyond the pandemic, are there things we have learned during the pandemic that we want to keep when circumstances are more normal again?

Meeting adjourned.

Minutes respectfully submitted:

Renee Watson – rwatso2@clemson.edu

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Quote by Lawrence Hughes, SEAC, Spring 2019: “Advocacy and advocating is really first and foremost, as an advocate, understanding what the needs and wants are of the person or parties to whom you are speaking. It is not just pushing a point of view but is understanding it in the context of how that position you are advocating meets the needs and wants of those you are trying to persuade.”