

Davidson County  
UT-TSU Agricultural Extension Board Meeting Minutes  
June 4, 2019

The Davidson County UT-TSU Agricultural Extension Board met on Tuesday, June 4, 2019, at 1:00 p.m. at the Davidson County Extension Office, Metro Southeast Bldg., at 1417 Murfreesboro Pike, second floor.

**Members Present:** Mr. Mark Kerske, Chair, Dr. Thelma Sanders-Hunter, Mr. Ed Smith, Ms. Sylvia Ganier (via phone)

**Members Absent:** Ms. Sherri Smith, Mr. Bobby Edwards, Mr. Will Nesby

Mark Kerske called the meeting to order. A quorum was present for the transaction of business.

**Reading and approving the minutes:** The minutes were sent to the board members before the meeting for an opportunity to review. A motion was made Ed Smith and seconded by Sylvia Ganier to approve minutes as written. There was no discussion, and the motion passed unanimously.

**Officer Report:** Mr. Kerske led some discussion regarding weather patterns and the changing climate and the effect that this might have on agriculture and the future of agriculture production. Some of the specific topics included change in low/high temperatures, droughts, floods. The board wanted to state their concern about climate and its effect on agriculture in the State of Tennessee. They also discussed the need for more education about weather patterns and the consequences that weather has on agricultural crops and commodities and consumer education in understanding the flow of agricultural goods into the market. The board asked Mr. Barry to relay their concern on this topic to the region and state level administration of UT-TSU Extension. The board asked Mr. Barry if he could prove some statistics from USDA and/or other statistical services on climate / weather change, include rainfall, temperatures, etc. Mr. Barry mentioned that he would forward their concerns on to the region and state administration of UT-TSU Extension and would gather some climate / weather statistics and have a report for the Ag Board at their next meeting.

**Old Business:** Mark Kerske called on Mr. Barry to address the budget. He addressed the group that the budget is still being discussed in Metro Council. The budget that Mayor David Briley presented to Council has no designated savings for 2019-20 and includes a 3% COLA for Metro employees. Mr. Barry also stated that the relocation of the office was still in the Capital Improvement Budget, which is separate from the Operating Budget.

Mr. Barry then gave an update on current staffing at the Agricultural Extension Office. Mr. Barry announced there are three Tennessee Extension college interns in the office. Ms. Saron Tolossa is mentored by Ebone' Colclough, Ms. Oluwatosin Ekundayo is mentored by Elizabeth Sanders, Ms. Kasey Harmon is mentored by Michael Barry and the Governor's Residence. The office will be hosting one Metro Opportunity Now high school intern at the office during June and July.

Mr. Barry shared with the Board the quarterly reports for the period January-March 2019. The quarterly reports showed each agents outreach and impact in their programs.

Andy Lantz and Lindsey Harrison presented a handout 'Davidson County 4-H by the numbers' to explain to the Ag Board the growth in the 4-H program over the past year, including number of schools, clubs,

project groups, camps, and members. In addition, they highlighted the number of participants who participated in project work and how that project works is connected to Tennessee school curriculum standards.

Mary Wakefield gave the Ag Board a report of the National Urban Extension Conference that she and Lindsey Harrison attended in Seattle along with Extension employees from forty other states. Mary was selected to present a poster educational session on her train the trainer sessions in nutrition with Metro social services.

Sandra Bush reported that she is working on the committee in Tennessee to plan the celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Expanded Food & Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP). Sandra was also recently honored with a certificate of appreciation for her nutrition education work that she conducts at Meharry Elam Center. Sandra has conducted educational programs for the staff and participants at Meharry Elam Center for 24 years.

Mr. Barry pointed out to the Ag Board that several agents in Davidson County has been recognized this spring from their professional associations for excellence in communication materials created during the past year.

**New Business:** Mr. Barry was asked to share his yearly Performance review. It is his responsibility as Department Head to evaluate and hold Performance Reviews for all staff members. It is the responsibility of the Ag Board to approve or disapprove the joint staff evaluation of Mr. Barry. This evaluation process is a combined effort using the UT Extension Staff Evaluation Model for this process. There was discussion about the process for the Ag Board conducting its own performance review or utilizing the UT Extension evaluation instrument in the future for the performance review of the Extension Director. After discussion and review of the Evaluation document, a motion was made by Mr. Ed Smith and seconded by Ms. Sylvia Ganier for approval of Mr. Barry's 2018 performance review. The vote was unanimous to approve Mr. Barry's 2018 performance review.

Mr. Ed Smith brought up discussion on the topic of creating a 'Friends of UT-TSU Extension', similar to the 'Friends of the Farmer's Market.' Mr. Smith mentioned that the Friends of the Farmer's Market assists with events, volunteering, and fundraising efforts to help with the mission of the Nashville Farmer's Market.

**Next Meeting:** The date for the next Board meeting was decided. It will be on Thursday, August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at the Agricultural Extension office.

**Close/Adjourn:** A motion was made by Sylvia Ganier and seconded by Ed Smith to adjourn. The motion was passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned.