

Tangipahoa Parish Joint Advisory Leadership Council

Minutes

Tuesday, May 14, 2013

Sandra Benjamin, Parish Chairman, opened the meeting at 12:30 after everyone finished his or her lunch. She welcomed and thanked everyone for coming. She had everyone introduce his or her selves.

Those in attendance were Tangipahoa Parish Agents- Sandra Benjamin, Parish Chair, JoAnna T. Pesson and Megan Roberts, 4-H Agents, and Kate Farbe, Nutrition Agent.

Committee Members in attendance were: Sandra Bailey-Simmons and Andy Anderson, School Board Member, Mike Delatte, Nursery Owner, Bernard West, President of Master Gardeners, Jessi Dominique, 4-H volunteer, J.A. Givgenti, Master Farmer, Mike Waller, TP Forestry Association, Brookie Hayden, Forestryman, Jessica Kemm, Amite Library Branch Manager, T. Wesley Ridgedell, Cattlemen's Association, Shayne Charles, SELU Headstart.

Sandra gave each committee member a packet and explained to them that it had an agenda, a parish profile, and a commitment form for serving as a member of the Advisory Leadership Council.

Mission of the LSU AgCenter – Sandra told the committee that the mission of the AgCenter is to provide efficient and efficient program that will serve the community in the best way possible.

Why You Were Chosen As Council Members – Sandra told them that they were chosen because of their Leadership, being respected in the community, and connectedness in the community as well.

Members Roles & Responsibilities – Is to take an active role in providing program direction for the Extension Program in this Parish by identifying & prioritizing the need of the people you represent and assist us in implementing and evaluating educational programs designed to meet those needs. To go and tell their story to local and state officials how important the LSU AgCenter is to them and to the community.

Sandra discussed the various programs and workshops offered to the public throughout the year, such as lawn management, school gardens, vegetable gardening, an organic gardening workshop, and an upcoming citrus workshop. She went over various accomplishments of the Master Gardeners and their efforts with the school gardens projects at various elementary schools. She informed every one of the \$2000.00 grant just received for the Roseland Elementary school garden program. She got information on whom to contact in the finance and grant writing departments with the Tangipahoa Parish School Board system to expand on the funds used with the school gardening projects. Sandra explained her work with the farmers and growers in the parish. Sandra also expanded on the Master Farmer program and what it will offer to the farmers.

T. Wesley Ridgell with the cattlemen's association discussed the problems cattle farmers are having with the expanding community, new zoning laws, etc. He discussed the issues within the government that inhibits our farmers from being able to easily sell produce within the state. He discussed the issue with the cost of grain going up. He noted that the Arena is adding an Annex building on.

Mike Delatte discussed the current nursery conditions, citing the late cold and the impact of rain on the start of the spring growing season, but said everything was beginning to look good. He inquired about any 4-H programs aimed at ornamental education. He stated that kids wanted to be inside more. He believes that a landscaping/ornamental program needs to be started in all schools as well as vegetable and fruit education.

Jessi Dominique mentioned a program offered through the Audubon Zoo institute and would like to see more teams from Tangipahoa in them. She stated that there were only 4-5 kids from the entire parish in the team event.

Mark Waller explained how the Forestry association sponsors a teacher to go through the forestry industry course available for teachers. He said it was a very good opportunity for teachers and Sandra noted that the Master Gardeners are sponsoring a teacher this year also. Ag Magic needs more Tangipahoa parish visitors and needs better communication with schools so that more students can attend this free, very educational program. He even stated how he went to the school board meeting to get them to help get the word out, but agreed it needs to be advertised as soon as possible so that they can have the time allotted for students to go well ahead of schedule. The school board members agreed to help push the free event to the schools as soon as they are notified of the date.

Jessica Kemm stated that as consumers of the programs offered, they greatly enjoy all of the programs and lessons put on by the Master Gardeners as well as Kate, the nutrition agent's broadband seminars. Offering programs geared toward the adults in the library setting is quite successful and the public turnout is very good.

Brookie Hayden noted that as a boy he enjoyed the 4-H programs, especially the 4-H Fun Fest (formally Achievement Day) which is still an annual event at the Florida Parish Arena. He noted that our parish 4-H leaders and volunteers are also recognized on this day.

Shayne Charles stated that he is thrilled to see the success of the school gardening program at the head start. The faces of the three and four year olds is a site in itself when they can plant, then see, touch, pick and eat the fruits of their labors. He would definitely be happy to see more gardens put in more spaces at more schools. It is also beautiful to see the kids grow with the gardens.

J.A. Girgenti also discussed getting grants and funding from other avenues in the privatized area of the parish. He suggested starting a grass roots effort to reach out to the private citizens to assist with funding. He stated that he grew up in the city and if it had not been for the programs of 4-H, he would not have been exposed to the agricultural community.

The entire committee and the agents agreed that the gardening & nutrition programs should be taught through high school.

All of the cattlemen especially agreed that it would be detrimental to the community if the Southeast experiment station closed down and they were happy to hear that it will continue to remain open at this time. They are dependent upon the research information from that station and deeply value its being in our community.

Megan highlighted the 2012-2013 Tangipahoa Parish 4-H Program Accomplishments:

Enrollment – Tangipahoa Parish 4-H enrollment is approximately 883 students. This is an increase from years past. We still reach over 1,700 youth across Tangipahoa Parish among various parish activities. We have 33 clubs across the parish (32 school clubs and 1 community club). We have already met with a principal at a school that will have a 4-H club in 2013-14.

School Enrichment outreach is increasing in Tangipahoa Parish. We offer: Character Counts!, Snap-Ed/FNP Education through Smart Bodies/Body Walk and school gardens, Youth Energy Program, and the Youth Wetlands Program. Character Counts! packets were distributed via the Tangipahoa Parish School Board to schools within the parish. These Character Counts! packets reached a total of 18,452 students within Tangipahoa Parish. Many science teachers within Tangipahoa Parish also took advantage of the Youth Energy Program offered this year. Two different schools in the area have checked out Youth Energy Program Kits reaching 2,100 students. Within Tangipahoa Parish, the Tangipahoa Parish Volunteers for Family and Community (TVFC) organization handed out "5 a Day Book Bags" to Pre-K through 3rd graders in Tangipahoa Parish. The TVFC organization reached 4,150 children within Tangipahoa Parish this past school year. Other school enrichment programs include the Youth Wetlands Program and the School/Home Gardens maintained in Tangipahoa Parish (see descriptions below).

Wetlands – 100% of Tangipahoa Parish 4-H Clubs and 100% of Tangipahoa Parish Schools were given the Youth Wetlands Program Packets

School and Home Gardens - 100% of Tangipahoa Parish 4-H Clubs were given the opportunity to work with the Tangipahoa Parish Master Gardeners on building and maintaining square foot gardens at their schools. 30% of Tangipahoa Parish 4-H Clubs have chosen to plant a school garden at their school.

\*Outdoor Skills – Florida Parishes Outdoor Skills Shooting Sports Program, Fall Field Day, 4-H Fest Contest, Wildlife and Fisheries booths at 4-H Fest, and multiple practices/shoots. These programs run from September 2012 – May 2013. The Tangipahoa Parish Outdoor Skills Program continues to grow in enrollment each year. We have many youth members in the FPOS Shooting Sports Program with multiple volunteers to assist/train them. 7 4-H members qualified to attend the National Shooting Sports Competition during the summer of 2012. 5 adult volunteers from Tangipahoa Parish accompanied these youth competitors to Nationals. 32 Tangipahoa Parish Shooting Sports members will attend the Regional Shoot April 25 - 28, 2013, and we hope to again have 100% of them qualify to attend the State Shoot on May 23 – 26, 2013. The Tangipahoa Parish Shooting Sports program continues to show growth and excel every

year. Over 150 youth members in Tangipahoa Parish participated in the other outdoor skills activities offered this past year. These activities give youth the opportunity to learn more about outdoor skills and master a discipline of the outdoors.

- \*Tangipahoa Parish Fair – 324 youth 4-H members and approximately 210 youth in the parish exhibited handicrafts, posters, their talents, pets, poultry, rabbits, and livestock during the fair which was held from October 2 -7, 2012.

- \*Parish Officer/Leader Training – over 150 officers were trained in their particular office (33 out of 33 clubs attended the training) at the training held on October 30, 2012.

- \*Sewing Workshop – 20 youth members and 14 adult volunteers participated in the sewing workshop held on November 19, 2012.

- \*Bike Hike/Duck Box Day – 60 4-H'ers, leaders and adult volunteers joined with Tickfaw State Park to build, mount and maintain duck boxes.

- \*Cookeries, Fashion Show and Talent Show – Over 655 entries were entered in our Dairy, Seafood, Egg, Poultry, and Beef Cookeries, Fashion and Talent Shows.

- \*Livestock Shows – 41 enrolled 4-Hers exhibited 127 market and breeding animals at the parish, district, and state livestock shows.

- \*Horse Project Club – approximately 50 youth members are enrolled in the Tangipahoa Parish Horse Project Club.

- \*Pet Parade – the Pet Parade is a community wide event that raises proceeds to benefit a Tangipahoa Parish Scholarship that is awarded to a graduating 4-Her at 4-H Fest each year. Approximately 1,500 people from across Tangipahoa Parish and the surrounding parishes attend the event each year. This is the 8th year that Tangipahoa Parish 4-H has hosted this event at Zemurray Park in Hammond.

- \*Overnight Camps – 17 Junior Leaders participated in Junior Leadership Conference (4 of the Junior Leaders were either on the executive board or instructors of a classes at JLC); 31 4-H members attended 4-H Camp in 2012 and we are continuously recruiting youth to attend the 2013 4-H Camp; 9 youth members attended Challenge Camp November 12-14, 2012; 1 4-Her participated in Fashion Camp as a State Fashion Board Member; no one participated in Food & Fitness Camp this year; 6 4-Hers attended LOST Camp in 2012 (4 attended as counselors/state board members) and we already have two 4-Hers signed-up for the 2013 LOST Camp; 36 teens and 4 adult leaders attended 4-H U in 2012 and we are currently recruiting for the 2013 4-H U. These camps provide our youth with knowledge, independence, decision-making skills, and leadership qualities.

- \*4-H Fest – the Tangipahoa Parish 4-H Fest (formerly called Achievement Day) was held on April 16, 2013. We had approximately 380 4-Hers and 100 leaders, volunteers, and parents attend our 2013 4-H Fest

- \*Ag Wonders – some of our Junior Leaders assisted with this event on April 23, 2013 at the Florida Parishes Arena. They had the opportunity to demonstrate leadership by serving as tour guides and table hosts for pre-K through third graders from across the region.

- \*4-H Day at the Capital – many of our youth members attend 4-H Day at the Capital annually in May.

- \*Dairy Day – an annual event for dairymen and kids is currently being planned.

Kate Farbe covered her availability for nutrition education to the public, adults, and children. She explained the available programs she has to offer if they wanted to utilize her to teach them.

Meeting adjourned at 2:00pm

Lunch was furnished by the Tangipahoa Master Gardeners.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Melissa Ordoyne.