

## **The County Extension Council Annual Meeting**

*Defining Responsibilities, Electing the Executive Board\**

\*See Handbook for Extension Councils and District Governing Bodies

Congratulations! You are a locally elected government official, a member of the county extension council. When your fellow citizens elected you, they gave you certain responsibilities under the Kansas County Extension Council law.

The law prescribes that the 24 council members are responsible for planning and conducting an educational program in agriculture, family and consumer sciences, 4-H youth development, and community vitality for the people in your county. The law clearly outlines how you, as a council member, should proceed in developing a successful educational program.

The law cannot give you an educational program. It only gives you the right and responsibility to plan and conduct the program in partnership with the local extension agents. You, the other council members and the extension agents, are the only ones who can create a successful program. It is your responsibility to learn more about extension programs and procedures, and how they can bring social and economic benefits to the people of your county. In doing so, you become a successful elected official, carrying out your duties under the law.

### **A SUCCESSFUL TEAM**

You not only became an elected official when you were elected to the extension council, but you also became an important team member of Kansas State University and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

### **As the land-grant university, Kansas State University performs three important functions for Kansans:**

- It prepares students for careers.
- It conducts research to discover ways to solve problems.
- It provides people throughout the state with an extension program in agriculture, family and consumer sciences, 4-H and youth development, and community vitality.

The county extension council is a legally constituted part of Kansas Cooperative Extension Service and, through it, is a part of Kansas State University. The County Extension Council/Cooperative Extension Service is also the educational arm of USDA.

The county extension council does not shoulder the entire responsibility for funding an educational program. Federal, state and county governments share in financing your extension program, each funding approximately one-third of the total. The figures include the total cost of the program, not just the figures that appear in the extension council budget.

### **EXTENSION COUNCIL'S RESPONSIBILITY**

The Kansas law outlines the responsibilities of the county extension council. It says the council's sole purpose is to give instruction and practical demonstrations in agriculture, family and consumer sciences, 4-H youth development, and community vitality to all the people in the county.

### **To meet the law's requirements, the council has five main functions:**

- To meet annually between October 1 and December 20.
- To elect nine council members to the board.
- To plan the county extension program.
- To help with the educational program.
- To hold election meetings for council members.

## **ANNUAL MEETING**

One of your first tasks as a council member is to attend the annual meeting of the county extension council. The annual meeting is a legal requirement to obtain federal, state and county funds for the extension program. A council member is duty-bound to attend and participate in the annual meeting. The law provides for neither substitutes nor proxies.

The annual meeting provides an opportunity to also invite legislators, county commissioners, other influential stakeholders and the media.

The chair of the executive board presides over the annual meeting. The following agenda for the annual meeting is suggested:

1. Call to order by the chair.
2. Roll call of council members
3. Reading of the minutes of the preceding annual meeting.
4. Program reports presented by agents and/or PDC members.
5. Recognition of Extension Council Appreciation and other awards.
6. Recognition of extension council members completing their terms.
7. Election of a new nine-member executive board.
8. Invite County Clerk or another notary public to give the Oath of Office to the newly elected board members.
9. Election of chairpersons of the program development committees.

## **EXECUTIVE BOARD**

The law requires the election of a chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary, treasurer and five additional members.

The law states that at least one member must come from each program development committees. The other five may be any mix of PDC membership. If the council members are elected on the county commission district basis, then three members of the board must be elected from each district. If council members are elected at-large, then members of the executive board are elected at-large.

## **ELECTION PROCEDURE**

The council should use the following order of election: chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary, treasurer, and then five additional board members.

In some counties, a nominating committee selects two candidates for each officer's position. For the remaining five positions, the committee selects one person and adds the nominee who was not elected as officer. An opportunity must always be given for nominations from the floor.

The nominating committee should contact candidates before the annual meeting to be sure they will accept the position if elected.

Only members of the county extension council may be elected to the executive board. Any member may be elected to any position on the executive board. Only council members for the new calendar year may vote. The term of office for any position on the executive board is one year. Board members may be re-elected as long as they are members of the extension council.

When electing public officials, including the executive board, the voting procedure must take place under the Kansas Open Meeting Act. This means that your vote on motions must be recorded in the minutes for a public record of your vote on an issue.

Voting may be done by ballot, show of hands or roll call as long as the votes are recorded in the minutes. If all members vote aye or nay, the secretary may record a unanimous vote. If the vote is not unanimous, each member's vote should be recorded.