

Horticulture Advisory Meeting Minutes
February 16, 2023
Tech Center Room 134
11:30 AM

ATTENDANCE

Jen Banda, U of I Extension; Leah Brennan-President, Vermilion County Master Gardeners; Terri Cummings-Dean of Business & Tech, DACC; Gina Davis-Perkins/Foundation, DACC; Terry Goodwin-Dean of Adult Ed-DACC; Lauren Highland-Owner, The Thicket Plant Shop; Amanda Krabbe-Faculty, DACC; Terry Light-Owner, Berry's Garden Center; Kent Miles, Illinois Willows; Paul Sermersheim, Danville Country Club; Mynda Tracy, U of I Extension

OLD BUSINESS

The meeting started with an update on the changed names in the Floral Design certificate to Floral Design I and II.

NEW BUSINESS

Curriculum. Extensive discussion ensued surrounding the previous cannabis curriculum. Area students are interested in how to grow the plants and the horticulture program grew from 4 students to 24 students that semester. However, the college faces a dilemma with many hoops to jump through with ICCB and State requirements. Several pros and cons were thrown out by the members. 1) Con: the high cost to be in compliance. 2) Con: the negative connotations surrounding cannabis. 3) Con: The feasibility of students being able to obtain jobs if we offer a degree or certificate. Will the local job market support it? 1) Pro: Bring in interested students. 2) Pro: There is a booming trade in Denver, CO-could Vermilion County repeat this success? 3) Pro: The U of I is offering a certificate through crop science that includes this 'specialty' crop. 4) Pro: local nurseries would need to expand their access to the chemicals such as cal-mag fertilizer needed for cannabis. 5) Vermilion County could already have an industry source that wants to be a grower through Offutt Development.

Other comments: DACC would have to set-up clear objectives for the program. Money would have to be obtained (perhaps through grants) to secure the greenhouse and supply the specialty equipment needed for the program. Amanda threw out the suggestion that a medicinal plant class could be developed that would include cannabis, but also focus on other medicinal plants.

Design. Conversation turned to technology in landscape design. The members debated over the efficacy of having students use costly software to learn to do 3D imaging. Our industry partners said only large firms require employees to know landscape software. Locals want students to know plants: growing conditions, watering needs, as

well as knowing how to invoice and charge customers. Therefore it's important they can plot a design on paper with a slide rule. Terri C. suggested Amanda ask for drafting tables in the budget request. The college would still like to see the students introduced to some software, even if it's free versions.

Recruitment. The plant sale will be coming back to DACC this year, date TBD. This is a fantastic community event that brings people to campus. There will also be a pond build this summer with Aquascapes that can involve former students, current students, faculty, staff, as well as the Master Gardeners. Date for pond install TBD. The peer court kids have started coming back out to help in the greenhouse, this event exposes them to campus life. Some of them have come back to take horticulture classes.

The number of jobs in the golf course industry has grown in the last few years after it had been trending down. A renewed love of golf is the driving force behind this need for golf course managers. Paul S. expressed a need for DACC to bring back the Golf Course Management degree. Jobs in this arena are \$40K or more across the country.

ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR

Horticulture students are required to do 3 internships, the long internships allows students to immerse themselves into the industry. Terry from Berry's stated that he is in need of people for landscape and would even work with those who want to start their own business. He has not seen any students from DACC apply or express interest.

DATE of NEXT MEETING

TBD 2024

MINUTES SUBMITTED by:

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa J. Osborne

Lisa J. Osborne
Administrative Assistant
Business and Technology