

2009 RESOLUTIONS **ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE**

ACAAA RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 1

We commend Administration for paying \$400 to voting delegates, officers (officers must also be voting delegates), Distinguished Service Award Recipients, and National Award Recipients for travel expenses to attend the AM/PIC of National Association of County Agriculture Agents, the National Association of Family Consumer Sciences, the National Association of Extension 4-H Agents and Epsilon Sigma Phi.

However, with the cost of expenses (fuel, lodging, meals, and registration fees) increasing over the years, we recommend that administration consider increasing this amount to \$750.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

Budget constraints exist at all levels.

Resolution 2

ACAAA recommends that emphasis be placed on communication skills when employees are hired into Extension positions. It is critical that all employees be able to effectively communicate in English with all levels of Extension clientele.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

Extension is an employer that welcomes and embraces diversity among the organization. Extension will continue to hire the best qualified candidates; and in doing so, candidates will be required to have effective communication skills so that they will be able to serve all the residents of the State of Arkansas.

Professional development opportunities in communication skills have been offered Extension employees on several occasions and have frequently been canceled due to low employee interest. The offerings have included writing newsletters, writing press releases and public speaking. The communications unit will be pleased to offer communication skills during the coming year.

Resolution 3

We recommend that the search process in publications be simplified with our search engine. It is too word-specific as it is. We also recommend that publications be updated in a timely manner and that the publication number be printed on the front of the fact sheet for ease of filing and reference.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

The search routine in publications can search keywords in addition to category, author, secondary author, title. However, the effectiveness of the search of a particular publication is tied to how well the author(s) define those keywords.

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ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

Administration will refer this suggestion to the Publications Committee to take under advisement to determine if further training or standards that require a minimum number of keywords could improve the search experience.

The content management system will help ensure that content is current. Publications are being reviewed and revised on a four-year cycle. A master list of publications is sent to the counties. As publications are updated, the county staffs are reminded that old publications should be discarded immediately. The University and/or the employee may be found liable if outdated materials are distributed and recommendations contained in the publications are found to be harmful.

Comments on publications or the publication ordering system should be forwarded to Bernadette Hinkle.

Resolution 4

We recommend more training be made available for technologies such as pod casts, digital video, audio, text messaging, etc.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

Communications has offered and presented numerous podcast workshops during the past year and will continue to do so. If several contiguous or near-contiguous counties are interested in attending day-long workshops that concentrate on how to produce and post audio and video podcasting, contact Communications in the state office and arrangements will be made. In addition, look for scheduled workshops listed in the professional development offerings during the next year.

Resolution 5

The original purpose of the 4-H Center was to provide low cost educational facilities to conduct and support 4-H youth development programs. However, it has become cost prohibitive for counties and specialists to utilize this resource. We recommend that steps be taken to make it more affordable and accessible for 4-H and Extension programs.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

The Arkansas 4-H Foundation Board is committed to the 4-H program and wishes to keep the cost of the 4-H Center fees low so that more 4-H'ers can enjoy the beautiful facility. The 4-H Center's costs, like all other costs, have risen due to the increased prices of doing business.

In 1996, the Arkansas 4-H Foundation Board resolved to try to absorb the operational increases by passing on the increases to non-4-H groups and not 4-H'ers. In fact, 4-H rates were frozen in 1996 and did not increase for 5 years. In 2003, a 5 year rate plan was approved and it called for meals to increase 10 cents a year and lodging to increase 50 cents a year. We also instituted the flat facility fee instead of space rental fee.

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In 2002, the center had a peer review conducted by 4-H Center Directors from five different states. They concluded that "In comparison to similar centers...the rates being charged are somewhat low."

Just last year the Arkansas 4-H Foundation Board commissioned an independent assessment of the center and they pointed out that the average 4-H daily income per person was about \$20 less than average daily cost. The 4-H Center fees are very competitive for similar facilities in the state and much less than similar 4-H Centers around the country.

Administration is open to suggestions from the association as to how to handle this effectively.

Resolution 6

We recommend that state 4-H activities and award programs be moved off of Wednesday night so that youth and families do not have to choose between church and 4-H.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

The Arkansas 4-H Awards of Excellence program has traditionally been on Wednesday evening during the State 4-H O-Rama. Because we are there only two evenings and the other awards, which are presented on Thursday evening, are not complete until Thursday, which does not leave us with an option to change the event from Wednesday evening.

Resolution 7

We recommend that the coordinating specialist pursue funding for state 4-H activity winners to participate at corresponding national competitive activities.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

We have no problem encouraging faculty to pursue funding, but we cannot ignore the opportunity for agents to obtain local funding as well.

We totally agree with this recommendation and would ask for Dr. Tony Windham's and Dr. Anne Sortor's support in working with the faculty.

This should be discussed/coordinated with Brad Davis since he is heading up fund development. It is always appreciated when faculty take an active role in fundraising.

Resolution 8

With the current administrative push to bring a quota of 4-Hers to State O-Rama, we recommend that the cost and duration of State O-Rama be reduced.

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As it stands, the current program begins Wednesday at 1:00 p.m. and ends with the evening events on Thursday. Cutting the duration of O-Rama would be difficult and would not reduce the cost of transportation. The objective of the event is to provide an opportunity for 4-H youth to showcase their project knowledge, participate in a quality event on our land-grant campus and to develop life skills. We hope they will become motivated to attend college.

Resolution 9

We recommend that Administration reinstate the Extension intern program to aid in agent retention.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

Good idea! Needs discussion on how Extension can fund.

Resolution 10

We recommend that Administration reinstate the 4-H Livestock Specialist position.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

Good idea! Needs discussion on how Extension can fund.

Resolution 11

We recommend the hiring of an Extension Livestock/Forage Economist.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

There has been a need for a while, but where will the added money for a new position come from?

Resolution 12

We recommend the hiring of an Extension resource person to assist county agents solely with home horticulture questions. This person should be housed in the Little Rock State Office.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

Janet and Julie support county programs in ornamentals, and Craig Anderson has supported them in vegetables. Craig has been asked to pick up fruit/home food production, and he is willing.

County staff should contact Tony Windham to specifically identify areas of concern when counties are not being served.

Resolution 13

We recommend that Extension provide other options on health insurance besides QualChoice.

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The University of Arkansas System Board of Trustees adopts the benefit programs for UA campuses so that consistent benefits are offered. Extension employees on UA appointment are offered University of Arkansas System benefits, including health insurance through QualChoice. Extension administration cannot choose which benefits or vendors will be offered.

Resolution 14

We recommend that any retirement opportunity offered provide health insurance paid by the Division of Agriculture until the employee/retiree is eligible for Medicare.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

The University of Arkansas System Board of Trustees approves all early retirement incentives and all benefit packages. Due to the economic costs to implement such a retirement program, we do not see this as a possibility. The provisions of any early UA retirement agreement offering must be equitable for all eligible employees. A retirement opportunity that provided health insurance paid by the Division of Agriculture until the employee/retiree was eligible for Medicare would be inequitable.

Resolution 15

We recommend that Extension continue to work toward an agreement with Arkansas Natural Resources Commission to provide soil nutrient management education which allows producers to attain and maintain their Nutrient Applicators license.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

This position will be filled as a result of a signed MOU between CES, ANRC and ADEQ. A job description is being developed. Currently, Karl Vandevender and Mike Daniels are providing the training.

CES currently has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with ANRC and ADEQ. CES now pays one-third of the cost.

Resolution 16

We commend the Information Technology Department for the improvements in reducing spam, passwords with SPOT, and for implementing the use of the IT Call Center.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

IT truly appreciates this commendation and will strive to continue making positive changes to improve the organization's work environment.

Resolution 17

We commend and support the offering of crops in-service training in December.

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This needs to be expanded to cover all agriculture agents' responsibilities. Dr. Tony Windham has done a good job of providing leadership to agriculture.

Resolution 18

We commend the efforts being made by departments to form county based committees to plan programming based on clientele needs as determined by County Extension Councils. The Animal Science Department has especially done a great job with this effort.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

Thank you. I will share your thoughts with Dr. Keith Lusby and Dr. Tom Troxel.

Resolution 19

We commend the work of the plant disease clinic for the development of the Plant Distance Diagnostic through Digital Imaging system. Turnaround time is fantastic.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

Great technology! Thanks. I will share with Dr. Rick Cartwright.

Resolution 20

We commend the work of Barbara Batiste in streamlining the civil rights reporting process. We recommend that reporting be cut further by streamlining the number of times information is pulled together in report format: performance narrative, report to the director, and program review data are all identical in nature. Continued work should be made to make the data reported into AIMS more useful in county reporting.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

Thank you. I will share with Barbara, as the process is continuing.

Resolution 21

We commend the efforts to provide the abandoned pesticides/hazardous waste program to 5 counties per year. We recommend more explanation and promotion of the program throughout the state and through our Extension ranks.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

The program is currently being conducted in 10 counties/year. Once the counties are selected, Ples Spradley will contact the counties to let them know about the program. Since the pace has picked up, it will be a good idea to inform and promote the program with all the agents. Also, for the past 2-3 years the basics of the program have been included in an Environmental Concerns slide that the agents use for PAT.

Resolution 22

We commend Administration for allowing technology, such as GroupWise access, to extend to cell phones, iPhones, etc.

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Thank you.

ESP RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 1

Whereas the holding of county agent positions beyond the period of time needed for unused annual leave or retirement incentives places an undue stress on existing county staff, therefore we recommend that district administrators open vacant positions in a timely manner and that positions that are funded at the county level be expedited for completion of filling the position.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

Positions vacated through the Voluntary Early Retirement Authority are intended to remain unfilled through the period of time needed for unused annual leave or retirement incentives and beyond, where possible, to realize appropriate salary savings. District administration will be working closely with me and Bernadette to determine when the filling of county positions should be expedited.

AACES RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 1

Whereas AACES continues to support the initiation of the policy for Off-Campus Duty Assignment, we request an update of its status.

Background: An Off-Campus Duty Assignment (OCDA) or sabbatical leave is an appointment that allows eligible faculty and administrators to pursue an approved project while being relieved of Extension and/or administrative duties during that period. The purpose is to enhance the individual's value to the Extension Service. In 2005, a committee proposed an OCDA policy to administration. Since that time, organizationally Extension has become aligned with academic departments, and job titles have changed to include academic standing, e.g., associate professor. Although OCDAs are available, they are by special request and are not according to formal policy such as sabbatical leaves on the Fayetteville campus.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

Dr. Tom Troxel chaired this committee. It is still with our legal department for review.

Resolution 2

Whereas flex hours for employees may allow for more incentive for good employees to remain with Extension, we recommend a formal policy be established whereby employees may request flex hours from Extension administration within the time from 6:30 AM to 6:00 PM, with approval of their immediate supervisor, for 8-hour work days. Studies show that Work-Family policies can positively affect employee loyalty (Roehling and Moen 2001), organizational productivity (Konrad and Mange 2000), turnover

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intentions (Rothausen 1994), absenteeism (Dalton and Mesch 1990), and commitment (Grover and Crooker 1995); flexibility to take on new assignments, help others, and make suggestions (Lambert 2000); and organizational performance (Perry-Smith and Blum 2000). Alternative work schedules (such as flextime, leaves, flexible place, flexible careers, and reduced time) are examples of family friendly policies . . . the challenge that remains is how to create work environments that truly support, welcome, and include those who have different ways of working due to their family and non-work demands. This objective is related to notions of the 'inclusive workplace' - a growing concept in diversity management."

Source: Work and Family in America: A Reference Handbook by Leslie F. Stebbins. (2006). Work and Family in America: Growing Tensions between Employment Policy and a Transformed Workforce, (Chap 4, pp 63-71), E.E. Kossek. ABC-CLIO, Santa Barbara.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

The Division of Agriculture recently addressed the question of flex hours for employees in PMGS-08-3, Flex Time Policy, issued 3/1/08. It states that flex time is "considered an exception to be used only in cases of hardship or special situations which benefit both the employee and the Division." Discussion about the viability of flex time for our employees included concerns about the difficulty of providing sufficient supervision for employees working from 6:30-8:00 a.m. and 4:30-6:00 p.m.; possible inequity because some employees are alone in an office or are located in courthouses or other non-Extension properties where building access may be limited to standard office hours; and the impact on clientele and volunteers.

Resolution 3

Whereas AACES appreciates and commends the changes in the e-mail system to update it periodically and specifically to increase the mailbox size from previous levels, we recommend that the mailbox size continues to increase to double its present size as soon as possible. Doubling the inbox size would allow additional documents, such as PowerPoint presentations, to be mailed and also to be stored for brief periods of time without having to be saved in other files.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

The e-mail committee recommended the organization move to a hosted solution for Zimbra. Once administration approves the purchase and the implementation plan submitted by IT, migration will begin. The new service provides a 7GB mailbox size.

Also, we recommend that the server that houses the e-mail system needs to be upgraded or clustered to handle the large number of employees that access it simultaneously, especially on Mondays and following holidays.

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The server will be eliminated once the migration to Zimbra is complete. Archive2Go software has been purchased to allow users to move their GroupWise archived mail to their desktops before the server is decommissioned.

Additionally, we recommend that e-mail system be configured to better enable access of e-mail system on PDA's/Smart Phones/iPhones, etc., without depending on the web interface.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

IT has had a push-to-mobile solution in place for several months, NotifyLink, which pushes e-mail, calendar and contacts directly to Windows Mobile and iPhone devices. The new e-mail system also has a mechanism to perform this function.

Resolution 4

Whereas retired faculty and staff have served the University of Arkansas for many years and may continue to assist with programs after their retirement, we recommend that Extension work with other University personnel so that retired faculty and staff and their families be given the same privileges as working staff pertaining to tuition benefits within the University system.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

UA Board of Trustees policy 475.1, Emeritus Status, indicates that waiver of fees for enrollment in university courses may be approved on a space available basis for non-classified employees who have been granted emeritus status (not to dependents or non-emeritus retirees). However, that policy was last revised June 16, 1989. The UA Treasurer's Office indicates that tuition reduction/waiver is no longer a privilege granted to retirees or their dependents. Because Cooperative Extension is not able to offer credit courses with tuition reduction to employees/dependents of other UA campuses, we greatly appreciate the fact that tuition reduction privileges are extended to our active employees by those campuses, and we are unlikely to pursue tuition reduction for retirees.

Resolution 5

Whereas, we commend Extension and the work of the Extension Excellence Awards committee for their efforts in recognizing outstanding employees and programs within Extension, then we recommend that these awards for Extension faculty be recognized at the Division of Agriculture awards banquet, Galaxy Conference, or other venue that provides distinction and recognition due to award recipients.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

Thank you. We will continue to work so we can offer the Excellence Awards in an appropriate venue.

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Resolution 6

Whereas a timely feedback of resolutions enhances the value of the process, AACES recommends that written responses to the annual resolutions from the professional associations and administration be distributed back to the associations within 60 days of the associations/administrators resolutions meeting.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

We will work to get our response disseminated within 60 days of meeting. We will also post on SPOT.

AEA4-HA RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 1

Whereas there is a need to increase the number of minority participants in extension programming, the language barrier of Hispanic adults severely affects county extension agents effectiveness. While many Hispanic residents are able to understand spoken English, they are unable to understand written English. A limited amount of program materials, fact sheets, and curriculum have been translated in some program areas. We recommend that 1) A coordinated plan be developed to translate program materials, fact sheets, and curriculum from all program areas be translated into Spanish 2) administration provide the resources to cover the cost of translation and 3) they then be made available to all county extension offices.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

Establishing priorities for material to be translated is critical. Translation costs are high and are difficult to incorporate into regular unit M&O budgets. 4-H Youth Development has paid to have several top priority pieces translated: Health Card, Application for Membership, Youth Protection Policy, and all of the documents (4) for Youth and Parent Guardian Release forms, and 4-H Project Listing C-425. In addition to the initial costs, these items need to be monitored and updated on a frequent basis.

The association should work with the 4-H and Youth Development unit to prioritize a couple of items for translation and send them to Dr. Lyles. He will assume responsibility for the cost of translating the prioritized materials.

CHI EPSILON SIGMA RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 1

Chi Epsilon Sigma (CES) commends Dr. Lyles and administration for allowing the annual support staff training to continue and also for allowing CES to hold their annual meeting during this training. CES also commends those involved in the preparation and planning of the annual support staff meeting.

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ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

Background: It is valuable in that it affords a great opportunity for support staff to learn and network away from the office. Networking not only allows staff to learn from each other, but provides social contacts for future peer assistance.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

Thank you.

Resolution 2

CES commends Dr. Lyles and administration for supplying the necessary training, information, and financial support for the classified pay plan that was put into place. It has been a long learning process, which has benefitted many.

Background: The classified pay plan was implemented by the U of A according to the laws of the AR State Legislature. Administration, especially Donna Rothberg, worked long and hard to see that classified employees receive the mandated annual state salary increases prior to the plan implementation.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

Thank you.

Resolution 3

CES commends administration for the continuing support of our organization and all classified staff. We request continued support in observance of our hard work and dedication to the organization. We commend Dr. Lyles for allowing us to hold our board meetings on official time.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

Thank you.

Resolution 4

CES commends Dr. French for purchasing the nice shirts for classified staff. This act of recognition created good feelings amongst the support staff and improved morale. Many times, agents are provided with gifts but classified staff members are ignored. This gesture on Dr. French's part means a lot to us.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

Thank you.

Resolution 5

CES commends Dr. Lyles for the nice personalized pen for the same reasons as stated in resolution number 4.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

Thank you.

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Resolution 6

CES recommends further professional development opportunities for classified staff whether it be district/area locations or via Centra.

Background: There are very few professional development opportunities for classified staff. Some classified staff members are unable to attend the offered trainings due to scheduling or travel restrictions. (The limited availability of "Work Only When Needed" personnel as well as time spent away from the office.) Classified staff members are imposed with more and more responsibilities and also have challenges as do the agents. Many times the secretaries are not informed and/or provided with information that is supposed to be supplied to them via the agents.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

By way of this response, I am requesting Chi Epsilon Sigma to provide me with a list of requested in-service training by subject. I will forward those subjects I am willing to support to Program and Staff Development.

Resolution 7

CES requests that the Winthrop Rockefeller Center be considered as the location for the 2009 Annual Support Staff In-Service Training. Training could be offered at various University and Extension locations around the State.

Background: The AR 4-H Center is nice and the support staff training has been held there for many, many years. However, it would be nice to hold our meeting at another location and give staff the opportunity to appreciate the University's other facilities along with the beautiful and educational surroundings that the center has to offer. Most classified staff members have not been to any of Extension's facilities besides the 4-H Center and the State Office. A tour of the chosen facilities would be included as part of the training.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

Cost has to be considered but will explore.

Resolution 8

CES recommends that our GroupWise mailbox size limit be lifted (secretaries only).

Background: Secretaries receive volumes of e-mail with a lot of it for informational purposes. However, the secretary does need to know about agents/PA's opportunities/in-service's, 4-H, etc., which increases the amount of e-mails received.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

The e-mail committee recommended the organization move to a hosted solution for Zimbra. The new e-mail service provides a 7GB mailbox size.

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Resolution 9

CES recommends goals and/or criteria be set for advancement of classified personnel. Is it possible for job titles to be changed in order to accommodate growing responsibilities?

Background: Many classified staff attend college, online trainings and/or staff development opportunities just as do the non-classified staff. Many classified staff hold degrees and feel they should be compensated accordingly.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

Currently, an employee in a classified position that does not require a degree may not be given additional compensation for having a degree. Salary ranges for classified employees are based on the responsibilities of the position and the minimum qualifications required to perform those responsibilities. If the responsibilities of a position change substantially in regards to skills necessary to do the job, the position may be reclassified through a formal position reclassification process which requires advance Legislative Personnel Committee approval. Fortunately, the new State Pay Plan effective 7/1/09 may address changes in job title to accommodate growing responsibilities without formal position reclassification. At this point, we don't have any details about how this might be accomplished.

Resolution 10

Due to the increase in 4-H and EHC reports, CES recommends more in-depth instructions for handling the IRS and other forms we are required to complete. Examples of completed forms are needed as well as someone to insure timely submissions.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

CES Administration does recognize the complexity of the IRS requirements and other reporting requirements for non-profits. The Affiliated Evaluation Committee is working to address the training and reporting needs of the organizations.

Background: Within the last several years, secretaries have been given more and more responsibilities in the financial area which includes: P-Card, Quicken, and IRS reporting for 4-H and EHC. It takes a great deal of time to compile the information, contact the leaders, await the information (sometimes having to send second requests and make phone calls), compose and submit the information to LRSO contact(s) and file as instructed. Secretaries have not been trained in a lot of these areas and have been given second hand information, if given at all, but are expected to manage and make sure the information is accurate and submitted. Very few of us, if any, are accountants or have accounting skills. Even though the responsibilities of financial management were added to our evaluations, we don't feel that we should be expected to perform as a CPA among all our other responsibilities.

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I am forwarding to Program and Staff Development. However, in response to Background, CES Administration in its legislative personnel requests, every other year, has asked the District Directors and unit managers if Extension should staff the county offices and departments with accountants instead of secretaries. The answer has been to keep the secretaries and their titles. Accountability and responsibility for money matters will continue to be required. It is possible that management will decide in the future that more bookkeeping skills are needed and request for accountants in these offices.

Resolution 11

CES recommends transferring P-Card account manager duties to a designated agent.

Background: P-Card holders receive training in order to get a p-Card. Training covers the uses and regulations concerning the account. The account holder should be responsible for purchases and reporting those purchases. The account manager is usually a subordinate of the account holder; therefore, they have no control over the account or the account holder. A subordinate should not be required to verify their supervisor's purchases.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

P-card holders are held accountable for the appropriateness of their purchases and to know the regulations. It is the p-card holder's supervisor's responsibility to verify the purchases of the p-card holder, not the p-card account managers. Business purpose justifications should be included in the documentation so that everyone reviewing the p-card receipts will know what the expense is for.

NEAFCS-AR RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 1

We commend the administration for the support in using indirects to pay professional organization dues for agents.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

Thank you.

Resolution 2

Whereas the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service has the commitment to support 4-H youth programs and provide balanced programs as well as meeting client's needs, we recommend that District Directors examine counties individually and the responsibilities of 4-H and distribute the 4-H program duties to ensure a balanced 4-H assignment among agents.

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County programs and staffing are reviewed annually. District teams are doing this. But if we go to a county and "distribute" it does not mean that changes suggested/required are actually carried out when we leave. This depends a lot on the staff chair and whether or not he/she agrees with the "re-distribution."

Resolution 3

Whereas the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service has the commitment to support FCS programs as well as meet client's needs; and whereas, County FCS Agent positions may be unfilled for a period of time due to retirement incentives and unused annual leave of exiting employees, we request district administration set up a structure to temporarily assist in filling gaps (such as, providing assistance to clientele, guiding EHC officers and providing needed subject-matter information-not to include programming) created by the vacancy including coordination of multiple FCS agents in counties surrounding the vacancy. In addition, we request that money for travel for this purpose be provided as needed, separate from county travel dollars. We offer this solution realizing the reality of lengthy vacancies in filling existing positions and with the desire to continue to offer FCS services to clientele in the absence of an agent.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

This request is reasonable, and is and has been done in the past when vacancies have occurred.

Resolution 4

Whereas the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service has the commitment to support FCS programs to meet client's needs; and whereas Extension loses experienced agents through retirement, more of the county work force will be new people with limited knowledge of the Extension organization and limited experience in program planning, teaching and leadership skills, we recommend that retired FCS agents be hired (part or full-time) with grant money to train new FCS agents.

ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

I have lots of questions about how and who. Would this person work with District staff, program leaders, have access to professional development opportunities that would help them keep up with technology, subject matter information, etc.?

I think the District staff can handle this. I also think that while this is a great concept, things have changed very rapidly over the past few years. I think an agent who retired as few as three years ago would have difficulty getting up to speed enough to really offer much in training to a new agent.

Administration will continue to review processes for effectively maintaining quality programs.