

Livingston Parish Overall Leadership Council Minutes
Livingston Courthouse – Courtroom 2
August 27, 2007
6:30 pm

Attending: Martha Latimer, Connie Arceneaux, Mary Broussard, Sharon Martin, Richard LaBranche Sr., Melissa LaBranche, Richard LaBranche Jr., Tinita Blount, Bronwynn Cobb, Merle Shannon, Stacy Shannon, Charles Kemp, Bea Kemp, Dale Cambre, Kenneth Sharpe, Laura Perault, Christy Sorenson, Bobbie Bingham.

Dinner was served at 6:30 pm.

Martha Latimer called meeting to order at 7:00 pm. She had everyone introduce themselves and then recapped the purpose of the meeting as stated in the previous minutes.

Minutes were approved as passed out.

Situation

Agriculture- \$51 Million industry in Livingston in Gross Farm Sales for 2006. Consist of \$29M in Forestry, \$4.2M Beef Cattle, \$4.7M Horses, \$4.3M Farm raised Alligators,\$2.0M Commercial Vegetables, \$1.6M Strawberries, \$1.75M Wildlife Leases, \$800,000 Hay and \$450,000 Sod.

FCS - – Median household income in Livingston Parish is \$40,210. The poverty rate is 12% compared to a state rate of 18%. Approximately 85% of Livingston Parish residents own their own home compared with 67% statewide. The average credit score in the U.S. is 676 with our average score of 661, out of a possible 850, below the national average. More residents filed for bankruptcy than earned a college degree or obtained a divorce. More college students are dropping out of college because of high credit card debt than because of academic failure

FNP – Our leading causes of death are affected by behaviors that could be modified. Healthier eating habits, regular exercise, weight control and not smoking are all behaviors an individual can control. Health issues affect the whole state since so many resources are consumed treating preventable diseases. Louisiana ranks 8th highest in the nation in obesity, 2003 estimated health expenditures related to obesity in Louisiana were \$1.373 billion; more than 60% of Medicaid population in Louisiana was obese.

FNP delivers nutrition education to food stamp recipients, applicants (people with gross incomes at or below 130% poverty level) and other low-income individuals and families, as long as it is targeted generally to food stamp participants and applicants. Also, at least 50% of a project target audience has a household income at or below 185% poverty level. The other 50% of the audience can be persons of any income levels.

4-H - There were 39 clubs last year with 1411 4-H members . There will be 41 clubs for the upcoming year, and the program focus for each meeting will be Health and Nutrition. The big events for 4-H coming up this year are Leader Training, Project Training Days, Food Festival, Demonstration and Public Speaking Days, 4-H Achievement Day, and both of our Parish Livestock Shows.

2007 Annual Report

The extension staff passed out the 2007 Livingston Parish Annual Report to Governing Bodies. Members were complimentary of the report and stated that it was professional, easy to read, to the point, showed impact, and had pictures as supporting material. Motion to approve the report by Martin and 2nd by Arceneaux, motion passed.

Reports from Program Area Advisory Councils

4-H

The 4-H Advisory Council met on June 28, 2007 to discuss goals for the upcoming year. The members were given the following question to answer: "If we never had a 4-H program how would you build it and what opportunities would you offer to prepare youth for tomorrow?" Council members brainstormed and came up with these six ideas: 1) Collaboration as a parish – have school clubs work together on service projects & other activities. 2) Character: youth & volunteers – should be good representatives of club character. 3) Diversity for Youth...encourage them to be themselves. 4) Challenge our youth...encourage them to go above & beyond. 5) Introduce 4-H earlier than 4th grade by having activities for younger siblings...ex. Project Training Days. 6) Recruit enthusiastic leaders who possess good leadership abilities.

The council voted on their top 3 choices of what they felt was of greatest importance or concern. The following were chosen. 1) Collaboration as a parish, 2) Character: Youth/Volunteer (good representatives of club character), 3) Diversity for Youth...encourage them to be themselves. These are the 3 goals that the council has decided to focus on for the 2007-2008 school year. These individual committees will be meeting in the near future.

The council was also given examples and a list of the lesson plans for the club meetings. They voted on the Health and Fitness module for the 2007-2008 school year.

FNP

Programs addressed: FNP delivers nutrition education to food stamp recipients, applicants (people with gross incomes at or below 130% poverty level) and other low-income individuals and families, as long as it is targeted generally to food stamp participants and applicants. Also, at least 50% of a project target audience has a household income at or below 185% poverty level. The other 50% of the audience can be persons of any income levels.

Major Concerns: Our leading causes of death are affected by behaviors that could be modified. Healthier eating habits, regular exercise, weight control and not

smoking are all behaviors an individual can control. Health issues affect the whole state since so many resources are consumed treating preventable diseases.

Program Suggestions: All members were very receptive about the Smart Bodies Program being offered in our elementary schools. Members discussed how important it is to reach our lower grades to make any impact on students at an early age. A discussion on our busy lifestyles and media influences followed with member's mentioning how these affect our families and their well-being.

FCS

Programs addressed in Family Resource Management being conducted this past year included "Identity Theft" (which is constantly being updated), "Who Gets Grandma's Yellow Pie Plate?", "Protect Your Credit", "Clean Up Your Credit", and "Credit Scoring". Other programs offered have included: "Money Matters: Personal Finance for the New Year"; "Year-End Money-Saving Strategies"; "Louisiana Saves"; "The Color of Money", "Financial Fitne\$\$", "Small Steps to Health & Wealth", "Financial Records: File or Shred?"; and "Avoiding the Holiday Bill Blues". The High School Financial Planning Program is ongoing targeting Free Enterprise teachers. A new program just developed in FRM is "Protect Your Privacy", which addresses the new privacy laws in matters of health & financial information. Leadership and volunteer management is addressed through the Livingston Volunteers for Family & Community with five organized clubs and an overall Council.

Major Concerns: Financial literacy, identity theft, financial & online privacy, increasing debt (especially credit card debt), and credit scoring.

Program Suggestions to address concerns: Continually update the "Identity Theft" program as statistics change and new scams and frauds arise; offer the "Protect your Privacy" program to address the new privacy laws in matters of health, online & financial information; develop financial fitness program focusing on budgeting, credit repair and credit scoring. Continue High School Financial Planning Program with Free Enterprise students..

Beef-

Programs addressed from last years committee meeting were: held a joint beef meeting with 6 parishes at Idlewild Research Station in May, 2007. Provided information on Website to buy and sale cattle on-line. Formed a working group to start a Select Replacement Heifer Sale. Held the Master Farmer Model Farm Workshop to complete Phase II training for Master Farmer certification.

Major Concerns : Urbanization and suburban sprawl, marketing cattle, inability to get cattle pregnancy checked, high corn prices, high nitrogen cost, how horse slaughter issue might adversely affect beef markets.

Program Suggestions to address concerns: Make producers aware of marketing alliances and other marketing opportunities. Conduct Farm Safety Programs for youth and producers (ATV Safety in place). Educate the public about the value of Agriculture/Beef Production. Conduct palpation classes for producers in conjunction with an AI school. Pursue a Replacement Female Sale for Florida Parishes (have formed a non-profit corporation to provide the frame work for a March 8, 2008 Select Heifer Sale in Amite, LA)

Forestry

Programs addressed from last years committee meeting include a Fall Tour to Tembec Paper Mill to learn about marketing opportunities.

Major Concerns; Post Katrina timber markets and production practices to clean up the forest. Knowledge of factors that affect the timber markets. Tax changes that affect private forest landowners. Legislation that affects property rights and marketability of timber.

Program Suggestions: Sponsor a teacher for the Teachers Forestry Tour to promote forestry in the school system through new curriculums.(Sponsored one teacher Summer of 2007) Educational programming on “Where are we going”. (Had director of Southern Forest Products Lab speak on Factors influencing timber markets short and long term.) Continue the educational fall tours.

Farmer’s Market Workgroup

Major Concerns: Continue Farmer’s Market year round and be able to supply the product year round. Locate the market in a physical place with easy access and accommodations for both vendors and patrons. Promote Livingston agriculture; promote a sense of community and a place where producers and consumers can interact together.

Program Suggestions : Grower Production meeting, increase advertising of Farmer’s Market, expand vendors , include featured guest at market such as chefs cooking seasonal crops, hold a first anniversary celebration with market patrons.

Update Financial Situation

The LSU AgCenter has come out from under financial exigency with very little visible differences for Livingston Parish.

Parish agents had reported last year the need to increase local funding to the 10% level. We were able to accomplish that task by getting an increase in the Parish Council budget. We currently have a little over 11% in local funding.

Council Comments/ Additional Parish Issues

Sharon Martin with the Council on Aging indicated that the COA was very appreciative of the Farmer's Market participating as a vendor for the Seniors Food Nutrition Coupons. She said that many of the seniors were on very limited income and the coupons went a long way. Since the farmers market has opened more seniors have applied for them and the parish allotment has been increased. She felt like this was a great partnership for the parish.

Stacy Shannon commended the work of financial planning and said that in his experience people need a lot help understanding percentages and what they mean in terms of loans, investments and even buying a item on sale at the local store.

Martha Latimer concluded the meeting and said that she has long been on state wide planning groups and advisory committees for the AgCenter and she has met many capable agents in her travels but there was no staff she had met better the Livingston Parish agents.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.