

Livingston Parish Overall Leadership Council Minutes  
Livingston Courthouse – Courtroom 3  
August 28, 2006  
6:30 pm

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm

All attending were introduced and Laura Perault gave the group the purpose of the meeting. The function of the Parish Advisory Council was stated to be:

1. Receive reports and recommendations from programs area and commodity advisory councils on programs conducted and problems experienced and legitimize their recommendations.
2. Gain a clear understanding of the role, scope and mission of the LSU AgCenter and Extension and how it operates
3. Generate public awareness of the value of extension programs and help assure extension faculty is meeting the needs of people in the parish.
4. Identify and/or prioritize broad issues of parish wide concern and appoint appropriate task force to address the issues.
5. Review and monitor any task forces appointed
6. Receive annual reports from advisory groups and task forces and help develop annual report to the local government stakeholders.

### **Situation**

Kenneth Sharpe is an Ag agent with specialization responsibilities for Animal Science in Livingston, St. Tammany and Tangipahoa. He has a multi-parish Beef Advisory Council, Forestry Advisory Council and a work group that established the Livingston Farmer's Market.

Laura Lea Perault is a Family and Consumer Sciences agent with multi-parish responsibilities in Livingston, East Baton Rouge and St. Helena. She has a parish FCS Advisory Council and a multi-parish Family Resource Management Advisory Council.

Christy Sorenson and David Williams are 4-H agents with a 4-H Advisory Council.

A Food and Nutrition Agent (FNP) will be hired shortly.

### **Advisory Council Reports**

**4-H - Programming efforts** include: monthly club meeting in all public schools grades 4 -12. Parish, District and Statewide contest. Monthly member newsletters. Monthly leader newsletters and email updates.

**Greatest Concerns** – Lack of responsibility. Too much TV, video games and computer time. Need for more parent involvement. Lack of good youth role models, Need for greater financial literacy.

Recommendations – More 4-H media coverage and publicity. Club meeting focus for 2006-2007 will be Workforce Preparedness to include moral and business issues, financial literacy, moral commitment to work and appropriate dress for interviewing. Include job fair/career day in Project Training Days. Conduct a fashion, interviewing and grooming workshop. Conduct a technology day for 4-Her's in computer projects.

**FCS - Programming efforts** include: special interest meetings, workshops, newsletters, and media work (KSLU & Florida Parishes Magazine Cable TV) addressing initiatives of Family Resource Management, Nutrition & Health, Family & Child Development. Leadership and Volunteer Management addressed through the Livingston Volunteers for Family & Community with 5 organized clubs and an overall Council in the parish with monthly club meetings and monthly newsletter. Programming includes: "Raise-A-Reader" project at Head Start and Health Unit; "Preparing the Emergency Box To Go" at local churches; "Crock Cookery Food Safety"; "Safe-Handling of Take-Out Foods"; "Food Safety for Seniors"; and Understanding the New Food Guide Pyramid "Nutrition & Fitness: Yours Keys to Coping with Stress" at Council on Aging and senior adult groups. Family Resource Management programs include: "Identity Theft" "Who Gets Grandma's Yellow Pie Plate?"; "Protect Your Credit" and "Credit Scoring"; "Money Matters: Personal Finance for the New Year"; "Year-End Money-Saving Strategies"; "Louisiana Saves"; "Financial Records: File or Shred?"; and "Avoiding the Holiday Bill Blues". The High School Financial Planning Program is an on-going summer program for teachers - targeting Free Enterprise teachers as well as others: FCS, ROTC, etc...

Greatest Concerns - health issues: childhood obesity, adult-onset diabetes, food safety and nutrition (especially new food guide pyramid); literacy issues; financial literacy and identity theft; and hurricane preparedness.

Recommendations - Continue literacy efforts with young children through "Raise-A-Reader" project and promoting new library system in parish; hurricane preparedness with LCES Fact Sheets and Emergency Box to Go program; continually update Identity Theft program as statistics change; and develop new FRM program on "Protect Your Privacy" addressing the new privacy laws in matters of health & financial information.

## **Agriculture**

**Beef - Programming efforts** - Quarterly Beef Newsletter, field days, demonstrations, master cattle producer classes, master farmer classes and certifications, Beef Quality Assurance certification classes, farm visits, phone consultations.

Recommendations - Hold a joint production meeting of Livingston, St. Tammany and Tangipahoa beef producers in the spring of 2007. Topics to include National Animal ID, Premise ID and using EPD's.

Look into the possibility of a marketing website within Louisiana for selling cattle online.

Explore the possibility of starting a Florida Parishes replacement heifer sale.

Look into an in-state tour as an educational trip.

Solicit the state to get the Master Farmer model farm set up so those who have had the classes can complete the requirements.

**Forestry – Programming efforts** – Newsletter, Legislative Updates, Annual Production meeting –last year “ Effects of Hurricane Katrina on Southeast Louisiana Timber Markets”, annual tour – last year “Louisiana Cypress Mill and Acadian Hardwoods, farm visits and phone consultations.

**Recommendations** – Include summary of educational programs in newsletters to inform more clientele who are unable to attend meetings.

Planned 2006 Annual meeting and wanted Legislative updates from LFA and results of Hurricane Katrina on timber markets.

Wanted group to fund 1 parish teacher to attend Project Learning Tree.

Want to tour a paper mill in Fall of 2006

Want to recognize the 4-H Forestry Achievement Day winner with a Livingston Forestry Association Cap.

**Farmer’s Market Workgroup** – A group of farmer’s contacted the County Agent with a desire to explore the possibilities of starting a Livingston Farmer’s Market in July of 2005. After numerous meetings and site location trips the market began on June 3, 2006 at the municipal building parking lot in Denham Springs. The market is open every Saturday from 7:00am to 12:00 pm. The market has a vendor list of approximately 23 and has been widely accepted and supported by the community.

The group is looking to expand its vendor list and to add promotional venues to attract a wider audience base. Promotion ideas include guest chefs, cooking demonstrations and including an artesian component to the market once a month.

The market would like a more visible location and one that might give more opportunity for expansion. Market organizers and vendors will be on the search for such a location for future needs.

### **Financial Situation**

The LSU AgCenter has filed for and received a declaration of Financial Exigency, which is an opportunity for financial restructuring. The organization has 18 months to complete the task. The situation arises from years of unfunded mandates, an unstable funding stream and increases health care and operating cost. Most changes to date have been confined to the Dairy at the Hill Station and some changes at Chase Research Station.

The LSU AgCenter is in a campaign to get local funding in Louisiana up to 10%. At the beginning of the initiative local funding was at 2.8% while the southern average was 21%. The school board appropriated their part of the local funding in July of 2005. The parish council has not. Agents met with the Finance Committee chair and Parish

President and are attempting to get funded in the 2007 budget. In 2005 after 2 hurricanes we were told there were not funds for 2006 and they would try again for the 2007 budget.

### **Council Reactions**

Advisory council members expressed a willingness to assist with local funding issue and make contacts if that became necessary. The members felt sure there would be wide spread support from parents and other constituent groups if called upon. The Advisory Council would send a letter in support of the increased funding if needed also.

Parish staff should meet with the Finance Committee Chair and Parish President and report back to the committee on their progress.

The council members were very complimentary of the brochure developed by the Extension Staff that is used as an annual report to the Livingston Parish School Board and Parish Council. It was suggested that this brochure be also used with other agencies and businesses to inform them of LCES programming in Livingston Parish.

The Council was very supportive of Farmer's Market and believes that efforts should be continued and expanded. The Senior's Food Coupon currently being accepted at the Market has been very favorable among elderly residents.

Were interested if parish had a Master Gardener program and could it be helpful to programming. Suggested that those parish residents trained through the East Baton Rouge program be contacted to assist with programming at the Livingston Farmer's Market and other projects.

Ask if there was a way through 4-H to assist with getting Farm Bureau's Ag in the Classroom incorporated into the Livingston Schools.

### **Officers**

Martha Latimer was elected Chair of the Overall Advisory Leadership Council and it was decided that the extension agents would take care of minutes and other secretary duties.

### **Other Business**

Council members were made aware of the upcoming Community Leadership and Economic Development Program (CLEED) which would start in Livingston Parish on September 11, 2006. The program will be a 10 week class on Monday nights from 5:30p.m. – 8:30pm which will teach participants how to make a difference in their community through involvement and problem solving. Council members were invited to enroll.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm.