

Draft
Cornell Cooperative Extension of St. Lawrence County
Executive Committee Meeting
December 14, 2023, 3:30 p.m.
Extension Learning Farm – Conference Room

Board Members Present: Loni Recker, Gavin MacKellar, Lori Sheffield, Patty Gilbert.

Staff Present: Badra Rouhi, Erin Farrell, Casey Caswell.

1. **Call to Order:** Lori Sheffield, President, called the meeting to order at 3:32 pm.
2. **Unfinished business:**
None.
3. **New Business:**

3.1. Finance Statement and Balance Sheet 9.30.23:

Association's Finance Manager, Badra Rouhi, gave a brief report on the financials dated September 30, 2023 (attached). Badra explained that on the balance sheet current liabilities had gone from zero to \$19,993.67 because of the IDA loan. Gavin MacKellar asked about the life of the loan. Badra responded two years.

Patty Gilbert moved to accept the financials dated September 30, 2023 as presented. Loni Recker seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

3.2. 2024 Budget:

Operations Director, Casey Caswell, went over the proposed 2024 budget with the executive committee. She explained that the Association was able to offer staff a 3% cost of living increase this year. She explained that the county had only been able to give a 1.5% increase in appropriations this year in comparison to 5% last year.

Casey explained that this budget included funding for a Farm Business Management position from June forward. She said it would be starting in June because contracts with other Extensions would be ending later. She went on to state that tentatively Lewis and Jefferson Counties would be providing Dairy and Agronomy Specialists in a tri-county partnership.

Loni Recker asked what caused the increase in publicity expenses. Casey Caswell responded that \$65,000 of that publicity money is for SNAP-Ed billboard advertising. Loni asked where does that money go? Does it stay local? Casey stated that the money is primarily spent on bus wraps that are made by a local company. SNAP pays for the

design, printing, and 15 months of advertising it. This money would be paying for a new bus with a new message.

Loni also asked if there is there feedback about how impactful this type of advertising is? Casey shared that SNAP-Ed is partnering with Clarkson University on a survey to collecting data through December to determine the impact of these advertising methods.

Gavin MacKellar asked what caused the \$200,000 increase in fringe benefits? Badra responded that it was due to hiring additional staff to run the 21st Century Community Learning Centers. Gavin also asked what is causing the rental to drop? Badra reminded the committee that St. Lawrence University will no longer be renting the Sustainability Farm from us, so we won't be seeing that rental income anymore. There are plans to use that space for something else now, such as a new SNAP-Ed office or as a satellite office for other organizations now.

Lori Sheffield asked if there were any final questions?

Seeing none, Patty Gilbert made a motion to approve the 2024 Budget, Loni Recker seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

4. **Adjournment:**

Patty Gilbert moved to adjourn the meeting; Lori Sheffield seconded. All in favor, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 4:08 p.m.