

Draft
Cornell Cooperative Extension of St. Lawrence County
Board of Directors Meeting
July 27, 2023, 6:00 p.m.
Extension Learning Farm – Front Classroom

Board Members Present: Gavin MacKellar, Mark Berninghausen, Tina Cobb, Larry Denesha, Bob Zufall, Lori Sheffield, Pete Smith, Sharon Poole, Lynzie Schulte, Paul O'Connor.

Absent: Mark White, Loni Recker, Sarah Bentley-Garfinkle, Patty Gilbert.

Staff Present: Patrick Ames, Badra Rouhi, Erin Farrell, Tammy Hill, Kayla Gugin.

Other Guests: Stefan Grimberg.

1. Call to Order:

Lori Sheffield, President, called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

Patrick Ames introduced Stefan Grimberg to the board and explained that he was here to give a program update on the Coast to Cows to Consumer project.

Stefan explained that the project is a partnership between Bigelow Labs, Clarkson University, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Colby University, Syracuse University, Miner Institute, University of New Hampshire, Kansas State University, Wolfe's Neck Center, and The University of Vermont. He said that their goal is to determine if feeding kelp to cows can reduce methane emissions while also improving cow health. Stefan gave an overview of the project for the board.

4-H Youth and Family Team Leader, Tammy Hill, gave an update on the upcoming St. Lawrence County Fair.

2. Approval of March 23, 2023 Minutes:

Larry Denesha made a motion to approve the board meeting minutes as presented (attached). Lynzie Schulte seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

3. Finance:

3.1. Financial Reports – Financial Dated March 31st, 2023

Badra went over Statement of Operations gave an overview of the Statement of Operations and Balance Sheet. Some of the revenue shortfall is due to the 21st Century Community Learning Centers contract being fully executed nearly three quarters late.

Patrick explained that he expected to be in the red, due to investments in facility, but ended up in the black due to surplus from Northwind, Ag Education, General 4-H, and the Farm-to-School.

Patrick also explained that the board wouldn't see revenue from Farm Day Camp until it was over and that there was currently \$110,000 sitting in deferred revenues.

Pete Smith asked if payroll was up for staff. Badra answered yes, due to the 21st Century Grant and that Extension would be hiring more part-time afterschool educators in the coming months to staff the program.

Lori Sheffield asked if there were any questions on the financial reports.

Seeing no additional questions, Tina Cobb made a motion to accept the financial reports as presented (attached). Gavin MacKellar seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

3.2. Financial Resolutions

Patrick Ames presented Resolutions #2023-21, #2023-22, and #2023-23 to the board (attached).

Linzee Schulte: How much ARPA funding did the Association receive from the SLC IDA? Patrick: We asked for \$38,000 and received \$16,000.

Seeing no further questions, Tina Cobb motioned to approve resolutions #2023-21, #2023-22, and #2023-23. Pete Smith seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

4. Unfinished Business:

None.

5. New Business:

5.1. Policy 403 Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Prevention

Patrick Ames explained that Extension was updating its policy on sexual harassment and discrimination prevention and would now be required to use the NYS training and test component. He also explained that the policy updated reporting structures and the report form itself.

Lori Sheffield, asked if there were any questions.

Seeing none, Mark Berninghausen motioned to approve Policy 403. Linzee Schulte seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

5.2. 2024 Budget Process

Patrick said that they were not as far into the budget process as he'd like, due to just finishing the audit, but that he was expecting to have more updates at the next board meeting. He stated that he was targeting a 3% cost of living increase for employees in 2024.

5.3. Nominating Committee

Patrick explained that Lori Sheffield, Loni Recker, Tina Cobb, and Linzee Schulte were all up for possible election of a 2nd term. Patrick said that he would be emailing each of them to confirm if they would like to be considered.

Patrick also stated that he was considering dedicating the new Ag Classroom to former New York State Senator Patty Ritchie, because she was a champion for the Ag Studies Academy and BOCES make it a reality. Patrick asked what the board thought of this decision. Larry Denesha said that he thought it was a good idea, and was okay with it because she was no longer in her role as senator. Other board members agreed.

Patrick also told the board that he was considering the IDA as a Friend of Extension recipient at this year's Annual Meeting. Tina Cobb asked if he was considering anyone else for Friend of Extension. Patrick said that he wasn't at the moment, but was open to suggestions from board members if they had any thoughts and encouraged them to bring ideas to the next meeting.

6. Reports:

6.1. Legislative Representative:

Larry Denesha gave his legislative report to the board. He explained that the county was well into its budget process and that this would be the 6th year in a row they were able to offer St. Lawrence County residents a tax cut.

6.2. Executive Director

6.2.1. Grant Updates

Patrick announced that the USDA Rural Business Development Grant was funded, but not official yet. He explained that the proposal was rated #1 in the State of New York and complimented Kayla Gugin on her efforts. An overview of the scope of work was presented.

Patrick said that he was still waiting to hear if Extension had been awarded the USDA Local Food Promotion Program grant, but was optimistic.

6.2.2. Staff Update

Patrick announced that Casey Caswell had recently been reclassified as Association Issue Leader and take on 20% of the duties of Director of Operations.

6.2.3. Strategic Planning for the Extension Learning Farm – Perspective!

Patrick Ames told the board that he wanted to highlight the farm proposal that Dairy Outreach Educator, Malorie Jordan, had submitted to him.

6.2.4. Facility/ARPA Updates – COMPLETE!

Patrick let board members know that the new Ag Academy classroom was officially completed.

6.3. Program Reports

Ag Program Manager, Kayla Gugin, gave a program report on the Ag Department.

Tammy Hill handed out a program report (attached).

7. Executive Session:

Tina Cobb motioned to move into Executive Session for Contract Negotiations. Larry Denesha seconded. All in favor, motion carried. Moved into Executive Session at 7:39 pm.

Mark Berninghausen moved to leave Executive Session. Bob Zufall seconded. Motion Carried. Executive Session ended at 8:20 pm.

Tina Cobb moved to execute the six-month termination clause in the North Country Regional Ag Team MOU effective immediately and empowered the Executive Director to collaborate with his counterparts across the region to develop a viable agricultural outreach plan moving forward. Seconded by Lori Sheffield. Motion Carried.

8. Adjournment:

Tina Cobb moved to adjourn the meeting; Mark Berninghausen seconded. All in favor, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m.