

# Cornell Cooperative Extension | Schoharie and Otsego Counties

## Board of Directors Organizational Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 26, 2024, 6:30 p.m.

Cobleskill Extension Center, Cooperstown Education Center & Virtual Meeting

- I. Call to order** – Vice-President Deb Gansinger-Hall called the Association Board of Directors to order at 6:35 PM. The president directed members to review the agenda and asked for additional agenda items. No additions were requested.
- II. Roll call** –Secretary Leslie Judd did roll call and the board members present were Christine Edwards, Tina Douglas (6:58PM), Deborah Gansinger Hall, Betsy Jensen, Leslie Judd, Shelby MacLeish, Tom Pullyblank, Steve Sinniger, and Alicia Terry (via Zoom). Also in attendance were staff Liz Callahan and Mayra Richter. Absent were James Bryant, Lynn Dunn, Danielle Hautaniemi, Andrew Marietta, Carol Phelps and Mahla Zare. A quorum was present.
- III. Secretary's Report** – Leslie Judd asked for any corrections or additions to the September 24, 2024 meeting minutes. With no corrections voiced, Christine Edwards moved to approve the minutes as distributed, Betsy Jensen seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.
- IV. Nominating Committee Report** – The committee did not meet since last report.
- V. Standing Committee Reports** (*Committee meeting minutes previously provided for review*):
  - **Finance & HR Committee** – The committee met on November 19, 2024.

Tom Pullyblank noted the highlights of the meeting reporting that there was nothing unusual regarding finances and asked for a motion to approve the reports as presented. Shelby MacLeish moved to approve the Financial Reports through October 2024 subject to audit; Steve Sinniger seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.
  - **Fund Development Committee** – The committee met on November 8, 2024. No action items or additional comments issued.
  - **Buildings & Grounds Committee** – The committee met on November 19, 2024. No action items. No further updates on the waterline as discussed at the meeting. At the suggestion of the Village of Cooperstown, Madelyn is going to schedule water testing.
  - **Annual Meeting Committee** – The committee did not meet since last report. Deb discussed the results of the after-event survey. All agreed that the event was well received.
- IV. Program Advisory Committee Reports: (Committee meeting notes previously provided for review)**
  - **Agriculture/Horticulture** – The committee did not meet since last report. No action items or additional comments issued.
  - **FCS** – The committee did not meet since last report. No action items or additional comments issued.
  - **4-H** – The committee met on October 22, 2024. No action items at this time. Liz mentioned a situation regarding a club request to use the Cobleskill Extension Center for a club fundraiser, and it will be brought to the next 4-H committee meeting to be discussed because

a fundraiser is not a education & outreach opportunity such as a program or a club meeting, and hosting a fundraiser at the Extension Center would require a staff member to be present and would possibly be a liability.

**VI. Executive Director's Report:**

Liz thanked Alicia Terry from Schoharie County Board of Supervisors and Andrew Marietta from Otsego County Board of Representatives for all their help with the county budget allocation process. Schoharie County went remarkably smooth and allocation was approved at level funding. Otsego County budget hearing went well but the budget has not been approved yet.

Liz reported that three new staff have started in the last few months. For the Agriculture & Food Systems Educator position, phone interviews are scheduled to be next week and in person interviews are anticipated to be completed on December 18<sup>th</sup>. Caroline Myran with the Office of Ag Development of Schoharie County and Tammie Harris from the Agriculture & Farmland Protection Board of Otsego County will sit on that interview committee as the staff members will be working with these two regularly.

Three staff members went to the Ag In-Service last week at Cornell. They each had different tracks including ag solar, sustainable farming and other agricultural/horticultural areas of programing. We were not able to go to the Farm to School conference in Syracuse which was at the same time. The Farm to School position description is being reviewed now and we hope to offer interviews in early January.

There is one to three Master Gardener Volunteers who unfortunately will not be returning next year. They have refused to provide their social security number, which is required to do a background check, every three years. This is required by all CCE volunteers and mandated by our Risk Management policies from campus. We have offered other ways to provide their social security number such as contacting the background check company, but they will not consent. Liz has worked with the CCE statewide volunteer coordinator, Danielle Hautaniemi, and Risk Management in CCE Administration, but there are no other options available.

Liz has been working with Tina and Deb regarding the strategic planning process and plans to tie things up in the first quarter and plans to present a draft at the March board meeting.

**VII. Otsego Board of Representatives Report** – Andrew Marietta was not present.

**VIII. Schoharie Board of Supervisors Report** – Alicia Terry reported that the county budget was adapted with a tax increase of 2.09%. Alicia also clarified that the current county administrator is leaving at the end of December. The board did offer the position to a gentleman on November 5 but he declined the offer. The board will be doing two more interviews in the month of December.

**IX. New Business:** No new business to present.

**X. Old Business:** No old business discussed.

**Adjournment:** Meeting Adjourned at 7:00 PM on a motion by Shelby MacLeish, seconded by Tom Pullyblank. Our next meeting will be our Organizational Meeting in January.