

CCE Schoharie & Otsego Counties
Finance and Human Resources Committee Meeting Minutes
March 7, 2025

Present: Tina Douglas, Tom Pullyblank, Alicia Terry, Carol Phelps, Mahla Zare; staff Mayra Richter and Liz Callahan

Tom Pullyblank called the meeting to order at 12:04 PM

1) Non-Capitalized Assets:

Mayra Richter presented schedule of non-capitalized assets for disposal and requested approval for recommended disposal of non-capitalized assets. These are old/outdated or broken minor office equipment. A motion was made by Alicia Terry, seconded by Carol Phelps to present to the board and recommend the approval of the 2024 Disposal of Non-Capitalized Assets; motion carried unanimously.

2) Designated Fund Balance Transfers:

Mayra requested approval for annual Designated Fund transfers to balance 2024 activity with either yearend deficit or gains for established specific projects.

Additional discussion ensued about elimination of some Designated Fund (DF) projects to better follow GAAP models.

- Mayra explained that under the “*Association*” DF category, only the “Initial Cornell Payment” DF has to be maintained because this is a required DF to maintain 1 month of association salary in reserve.
- The rest, however, are not necessary. For example, the Fleet DF is not necessary to separate minor vehicle repairs from regular Repairs & Maintenance and we are not considering purchasing a new company vehicle, nor would those funds be sufficient.
- Explained that the values of the DFs would otherwise just be included in the *General Fund* balance and spent when/where the need arose, always by Board approval.

Carol asked the reason for having Designated Funds. Mayra explained that a designated fund is like a promise that we will spend some of our *General Fund* balance for these specific projects. Mayra pointed out that this is a problem specifically for Otsego because the total value of the DF exceeds the amount available in their *General Fund* balance.

Mayra also recommended that the Committee consider capping the total amount that can be in a *Program Designated Fund* to \$5,000. Any excess would be swept into the *General Fund* like any surplus in all other program projects. This would also need a one-time transfer for three Otsego DF to bring them under \$5,000, and to make it so that the General Fund balance is sufficient to cover the amounts being promised in the Designated Funds.

Betsy asked for a clarification on the “blue items” in the draft being reviewed: These three accounts are the *Program* DF with balances higher than the \$5k cap that would be subject to the one-time initial transfer.

Mayra explained that the DF were established long ago most probably due to a fundraiser or an award specific to that project. For example, each year the 4-H do a donation solicitation for the Earn and Animal project. If they receive more donations than awards issued that year, the remaining “gains” are added to that specific DF rather than swept into the General Funds for the branch. This process would continue but now be capped at \$5K. Designated funds are supposed to be very

specific; all other projects are self-sustaining through donations, fundraisers or program fees each year. All regular 4-H clubs have a maximum cap of \$500; any revenue in excess of this must be distributed to the Association.

Additional discussion ensued and it was agreed that we would table these two changes until our next meeting for further investigation and clarification. However, we could get pinged in Cornell's review of financials because at this point, our designated fund promises exceed Otsego's actual available funds.

Mayra noted that CCESO received two checks from The Walter J & Anna H Burchan Charitable Trust in 2024. Only one was applied for its restricted use of 4-H Admin, so that is why the *Temporarily Restricted* Donation account still remains active.

Mayra noted that the debits or credits for the DF transfers are the losses or gains from the 2024 project activity.

Tom asked for a motion. A motion was made by Alicia Terry, seconded by Tom Pullyblank to present to the board and recommend the approval of the 2024 Fund Balance Transfers; motion carried unanimously.

3) 2024 Year End Financial Reports:

- Mayra reported the year end financials are in a good place, financially speaking, because we continue to be prudent; staff vacancies reduce expenditures.
- Mayra pointed to actual/transfers just approved, combined for the Association (we always finalize the yearend report as a combined entity as required by Cornell)
- Repairs were under \$5k, reductions in designated fund promise paid through actual cash on hand.
- Revenue was higher than anticipated, expenses were less than anticipated.
- The final report that the Board will approve will include the *Notes to the Financial Report* that will delineate the various worksheets presented today in an easier to read format.

A motion was made by Tom Pullyblank, seconded by Betsy Jensen to present to the board and recommend the approval of the 2024 Yearend Financial Report; motion carried unanimously.

4) Proposed 2025 Budget:

- Mayra explained that each program area has a separate balanced budget, both revenue and expenses are based on actual needs or projected from previous year (rounded/increased where needed.)
- Mayra noted that a balance budget is being presented, anything not applied to a specific program/administration was allocated to repairs & maintenance for the facilities.
- Planned Cobleskill office parking lot paving is under R&M.
- Association gains are swept into the General Funds for each branch unless otherwise reserved in a current Designated Fund.
- 2025 Otsego budget is higher than prior years because of SNAP-Ed, FTS, NYSEDA (self-funded, will be added), leading to increase in proposed revenue/expense; all in balance.
- Tina observed/asked: how does Otsego Co ever get ahead and generate the revenue needed to sustain its programs and its reserve funds?

- Schoharie has \$69K more in county appropriations, thus earning more State 224 funds by about \$10K, has rent revenue of \$32K, and additional interest income of about \$15K (Because there are new grants going into OC money market account, Mayra is estimating an increase of about \$5K in interest income for Otsego.)
- The association Finance, Human Resources and IT are funded through Schoharie.
- Carol and Alicia noted the importance of transparency for each county, and that Schoharie Co has emphasized that issue; not efficient but very important.
- Mayra noted that, additionally, even the grants are very specific about where the activities funded are being held.
- When presented to the Board each County's budget will be treated separately and voted on separately, but Cornell receives one combined workbook.

A motion was made by Alicia Terry, seconded by Tom Pullyblank to present to the board and recommend the approval of the 2025 Operating Budget; motion carried unanimously.

5) **Additional Discussions included:**

- Funding the cost of rehabilitation of the Cooperstown Extension building was discussed.
- Liz reported that CCE Onondaga has signed the overall SNAP-Ed contract and CCESO should receive the sub-contract soon.
- **Sustainability of 4-H After School Program (ASP):**
Enrollment is not sustaining the operations of the program and CCESO's ASP surplus will be exhausted before the end of the school year. Decisions will need to be made about if the program continues to the end of the school year if it is operating in the red, and if the program is offered again in the fall. If current enrollment patterns continue the cost per participant will need to increase at least \$100/month/child for the 2025-26 school year. Liz and Mayra have created several scenarios/projections which will be reviewed with at our next meeting.
- Kelly Doolin was hired at the beginning of February as our new Ag & Food Systems Educator and is jumping right in; Kat Cordero has accepted our offer of employment as the Association Program Coordinator and will be starting next week.
- **Retirement:** Cooperstown office Operations Coordinator Madelyn Sanchez Taylor just notified the Executive Director that she will retire at the end of April. Liz and Mayra are reviewing responsibilities and Association needs, a revised position description will be created and submitted to Cornell for review. The Association will do something to acknowledge and thank Madelyn for 28 years of service.
- Liz reminded the committee that the Executive Director's annual performance evaluation should be delegated and scheduled.
- The Committee will schedule a meeting for late April to review and recommend for approval the first quarter 2025 financial reports, revisit the proposed changes to designated funds, and provide an update for guidance regarding the ASP.

A motion was made by Carol Phelps, seconded by Tom Pullyblank to adjourn the meeting; motion carried unanimously.