

The August 28, 2025, meeting of the Cornell Cooperative Extension Board of Directors was called to order by Bill Joint at 4:31 p.m.

Members Present: Bill Joint, Fred Potter, Walter Konopski, Kyle Lowery, and Charles Susick

Members Absent: Jason Jordan, Gabe Smalt, Lisa Zawrotny, and Hilda Lando

Staff Present: Tess McKinley, Robert Shirley, and Jenny Groen

Approval of Notetaker: Robert Shirley was appointed notetaker.

Approval of June 26, 2025, Board Minutes: Fred Potter made a motion to approve June 26, 2025, minutes. Second by Chuck Susick. There was no further discussion, and the motion was carried unanimously.

Public Comment Period: None

Staff Presentation: Tess McKinley introduced 4-H Program Leader, Jenny Groen. She highlighted the following items to the board:

4-H Showcase:

- She thanked the board members who were able to make it to the 4-H Showcase.
- There was an increase in participation by a couple hundred animals and 4-H projects from last year.
- Changed to a three day schedule this year, which was well received by participants.
- There was an increase in the number of 4-Her's who participated in the Maker's Market, which they are able to sell their homemade goods to the public.
- There was an increase in the number of participants in the Market Animal Sale.
- The overnight sleepover on Saturday night was a big hit with the 4-Her's who participated in it.
- Barnyard Olympics was another popular event at the showcase.
- The same number of projects are being sent to the NYS State Fair and there is an increase in the number of animals that are being sent.
- Chuck, who was a 4-H poultry judge this year, commented that he was proud of the quality of the poultry that Steuben 4-Her's brought to the show. He was extremely impressed.

Agriculture in the Classroom:

- The program is going really well. We are now in all 13 of the school districts in Steuben County having added: Addison, Avoca, Prattsburgh and Hammondsport.

- CCE-Steuben 4-H has one 4-H member who has committed to attending the National Youth Leadership Conference in Washington D.C. and another member who has been asked. Jenny is excited about having one of members attend this conference which we have not had in many years.

Reports:

- **State Extension Specialist, Paul O'Connor:** None
- **Financial Report:** Robert Shirley presented the financials for the month ending June 2025.
 - He explained why we have a surplus of 70K at the mid-year point compared to a significant deficit this time of year last year. The two main reasons are that last year we needed to make significant capital investments, being the first year of our showcase. This included a new storage shed, a new trailer to store and haul horse equipment, livestock scale, and panels. The second reason is that we have increased our AITC class fee from \$50 to \$75 and we have many more classes this year.
 - Motion to approve: Fred Potter
 - Second: Walter Konopski
 - Carried unanimous.
- **Executive Director Report:** Everything she has to update the board on is in her biweekly e-mail updates to the board. She highlighted the following:
 - We received a two-week notice from our SNAP ED Nutrition Educator, Erica Harris. She has accepted a job helping the homeless population with the Monroe Plan. We are incredibly happy for her to find employment.
 - Our SNAP Program Manager, Justine Patterson, has accepted a job as the Executive Director of Office for the Aging of Schuyler County. Her last day here is September 19th. Justine has done a tremendous job for our SNAP ED program for the past 10 years and we wish her nothing but the best in her new role.
 - Brooke Bloodgood, Katie Weigle, and Amy Heale still remain employed here and will focus on responsibly closing out the program which has been extended to December 31, 2025. They will continue to seek employment elsewhere with the program at the end of December 2025.
 - As Jenny has already reported, the Agriculture in the Classroom is doing really well as we are now in all 13 school districts in Steuben County.
- **Program Area Reports:**
 - **Strategic Planning –**
 - Tess told the board that with so much turmoil of the SNAP ED program being eliminated and people losing their jobs that our staff is not in the best headspace to be doing a strategic plan. She asked the board if they would like to postpone the planning workshop until the first couple of months of 2026. There was a discussion, and the board came to a consensus that it would be best to postpone the workshop until 2026.
 - **Youth Development Committee - None**

- **Ag & NR Program Advisory Committee** – the committee has not met since the last meeting and is scheduled to meet September 9, but Chuck Susick highlighted the following:
 - Pest Management Workshop at Crooked Line Orchards was a tremendous success with a good turnout. He noted that Susan Walker and Laura Mills did a terrific job with the workshop.
 - The pasture he talked about at the last meeting in Woodhull was also an enormous success.
 - There is going to be another pasture walk in September that will be visiting three different farms in Steuben County. Susan Walker is helping with registration.

Community Health and Well Being – None

Old Business:

- Tess explained that the SNAP ED updates were already discussed earlier in her report and there is nothing else to update the board on.
- Tess passed out a copy of the updated CCE-Steuben Volunteer Handbook that reflected the changes that the board recommended at the June 2025 board meeting.
 - Motion to approve CCE-Steuben Volunteer Handbook as presented – Bill Joint
 - Second – Fred Potter
 - Carried unanimously

New Business: None

Next Meeting: Wednesday, September 24, 2025, at 4:30 p.m. State Extension Specialist, Paul O'Connor will be in attendance to complete Executive Director, Tess McKinley's reappointment review.

Adjourn: Motion to adjourn at 5:59 p.m. made by Kyle Lowery and seconded by Charles Sussick and the motion was carried unanimously.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Robert W. Shirley, III.