

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Columbia and Greene Counties
Board of Directors Meeting
Agroforestry Resource Center, Acra
May 13, 2025 – 6:30 p.m.

Present: Elizabeth Chiong, Roberta Keller, Paul Spoleti, Virgilia Tegiacchi, Sherry True, Cathi Annese, Angela Worth, Joe Sniado, Joyce Crawford

Absent: Amanda Pierro, Rebecca Pinder, Timothy Ooms, Jonathan Farber, Christie Ellis, Melissa Crozier, Danielle Hautaniemi

Staff: Lisa Gallina, Jackie Reese, Olivia Gordineer, Becky Polmateer

Guest: Matt Luvera

Call to Order – Association Board President, Virgilia Tegiacchi, called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

Agenda – Roberta Keller moved to accept the meeting agenda; Cathi Annese seconded. Approved unanimously.

Board Meeting Minutes – Cathi Annese moved to approve the minutes; Roberta Keller seconded. Approved unanimously.

Executive Committee – Virgilia Tegiacchi (no meeting, no report)

Finance & Human Resources Committee Report – Elizabeth Chiong

- January / February Financials – Olivia Gordineer (board approval)
 - Olivia Gordineer presented the January and February Financials and reviewed highlights. Discussion. Roberta Keller moved to approve the financials; Angela Worth seconded. Approved unanimously.
- HR Policies updates - (board approval) Roberta Keller moved to recommend board approval; Virgilia Tegiacchi seconded. Approved unanimously.
 - 603: Vacation Leave
 - 315: Separating from Employment
 - 501: Hours of Operation and Work Schedules
 - 606: Extended Medical Leave and Medical Assessment Form
- Staff updates – (informational)
 - New Hires:
 - Alyx Arslanian – Community Horticulture Program Assistant (Hudson Office - started May 5)
 - Emilie Latham – 4-H Agriculture Program Assistant (Hudson Office - started May 5)
 - Shonte Walker – Taste NY Market Associate (started May 5)
 - Teresa Bernardi – Taste NY Market Associate (started May 5)
 - Rebecca Dawes – Think Differently Educator (Hudson Office - started May 12)
 - Open Positions:
 - Operations Coordinator (Taste NY)

Program Reports

Environment & Natural Resources – Becky Polmateer

- Becky Polmateer, Deputy Director, informed the board of some updates within the ENR Program:
 - Another 5-year contract with WAC: looking for more community-based programs replicating Environment Awareness Days.
 - Eels – With the weather being so damp and rainy, the counts are low.
 - Hudson River Estuary contract solidified.
 - Soil & Water: Continuing work on the Batavia Kill Splash leaning towards more family focus.

4-H Youth Development & Families – Roberta Keller, Chair

- The 4-H Dairy Bowl was very successful, one student placed 5th in the State, but was too young for Nationals.
- The Senior and Junior teams placed in the Top 6.
- Public Presentation Days went very well.
- Fashion Revue was cancelled.

Agriculture & Community Horticulture – Lisa Gallina

- Lisa Gallina informed the board of some upcoming events:
 - Ag Expo Day is July 11.
 - Agroforestry Field Day coming up.
 - Spring Garden Days – Plant sale is from 9am – 12pm at both campuses on Saturday, May 17.
 - Hannah Case, our new intern from Cobleskill is starting Tuesday, May 27.

Government Representative Reports

1. Greene County – Sherry True

- Alex Johnk is excited about the Greene County Fair in July.
- There is a new building to host new equipment at the fair.
- Dock Dogs are coming back!
- New tourism building is being built at the old Stewart's location off Exit 21 on the Thruway. Great space to host tastings.

2. Columbia County – Tim Ooms (absent, no report)

Executive Director Report – Lisa Gallina reviewed highlights from her written report to the board.

- We will continue to operate an organization with a culture of openness and kindness. Our mission to educate from peer reviewed science has not changed.
- Continuous pursuit of new funding opportunities.
- The property survey of the Siuslaw Model Forest is complete.
- Highlights of attended committees, events and meetings:
 - 3/24 -Economic Development Columbia – Presented on value of Taste NY to Columbia County
 - 4/4 – Toured Camphill Village Copake and Wally Farm
 - 4/8 – Toured Hudson Fisheries
 - 4/13 - Hosted meeting of all members - Columbia County Youth Board
 - 5/7 – Presented to Greene County Legislature about Taste NY and our programs
- **Focus May – June:**
 - Monitoring funding streams/Maintaining relationships with funders
 - Locating and applying for new funding streams
 - Ensuring all new hires are properly trained and supported
- **On the Horizon:**
 - Planning for Farm Expo 2025, July 11th at Hudson Campus 5:00 pm – 8:00 pm
 - Fairs!

New Business –

- Memorial Day parade is Monday, May 26 at 2:00 pm in Catskill.
- Farm Expo is July 11 at the Hudson Campus – learn resources for agriculture, funding, insurance, products, FIT testing, local food, small petting zoo.

Adjourn - Virgilia Tegiocchi moved to adjourn the meeting; Joyce Crawford seconded. Approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.