

**Funds Development Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Friday, March 20, 2026, 9:00 AM**

Cobleskill Extension Center & Virtual Meeting

**ACTION ITEMS:**

- Ask Board Members to seek donations for silent auction items
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1. **Call to Order** – Liz Callahan called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.
2. **Roll Call** – Liz called attendance. Present were Andrew Marietta, Jim Hayes, Jason Stone, Shelby MacLeish. Staff present were Liz Callahan and Nicole Thompson.
3. **Updates on Current Grant Funding for Programs** –
  - a. CCESO’s SNAP Ed program will be funded through 9/30/26 with surplus funding held by the NYS Office of Temporary Disability Assistance.
  - b. Although there are multi-year contracts in place, CCE leadership regarding NYS funding for the NYSEDA Energy Hub and federal funding for the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) is navigating these very carefully in current funding uncertainty
4. **Pending Funding** –
  - a. Farm-To-School grant request to support the program from Jan ‘27 through Aug 28 was submitted to the NYS Dept Ag & Markets
  - b. Support for the rehabilitation of the Otsego Education Center:
    - Congressionally Directed Spending requests to Reily, Schumer, Gillibrand submitted
    - Renew America’s Nonprofits (RAN) (for energy efficiency improvements)
      - Application review has been stalled at the US Department of Energy
    - NYS Consolidated Funding Application
      - 2025 application was not funded
      - Building relationship with MVEDD and will apply to 2026 round, will request matching funds from local foundations
5. **Online Fundraising Auction Planning** –
  - a. CCESO has a Yeti cooler worth approximately \$400 which can be sold as a fundraiser
  - b. Action item:
    - The Fund Development Com will ask Board members seek donations of other items
      - Maybe: “outdoor” and/or spring/garden items, antiques/vintage, branded packages (ex. Farm Credit East, Preferred Mutual), quilts, services/admission tickets - for example Baseball Hall of Fame, museums, Howe Caverns) to “fill-out” a slate of items for an online Spring fundraising auction
      - Andrew suggested a minimum of 25 items, depending on value
    - Action timing:
      - Collection of auction items by mid-April (April 20<sup>th</sup> at latest)

- Launch auction by May 1<sup>st</sup> and promote/display auction items at plant sales, maybe Earth Festival
- Close auction after May 16<sup>th</sup> plant sale

c. The committee plans to:

- use an online action platform (like 32auctions.com) and run auction for 2+ weeks
- promote the auction via Connections, social media and at May events (plant sales, EarthFest)
- Liz will coordinate with program, so we are not overlapping with program requests (Earn-an-Animal, FFD sponsorships)

d. Jim asked if we could set minimums on donated materials?

- Andrew said yes, a starting bid should be set at least 50% of item's value (for example Yeti should start at \$250)

6. **Upcoming Items –**

a. Late summer/early fall: Appeal + Mohawk Valley Gives Campaigns

b. 2027 County Allocation Requests to Otsego County & Schoharie County

- Program staff have asked to advocate for increased funding for their programs.
  - Jim suggested that Liz start a conversation with Alicia
- Jason noted that the process of managing internal dynamics and external perception needs to proceed with caution
- Shelby would like staff to write something to advocate for their programs
- Andrew noted that it is unlikely that CCESO's 2027 Otsego County will increase, and that CCESO must be aware of fiscal challenges in each county. He said that CCESO should ask for more money, but we must recognize each county's situation
- Jim suggested that CCESO gather data, Liz explained the information she has asked staff to collect as "data"

7. **Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 10:00 AM.**