

Cornell Cooperative Extension Orange County

Board of Director's Meeting

February 23, 2026

**Minutes**

**In Attendance:** Amy Minutolo, Nancy Rider, Kathi Nywening, Edwin Estrada, Tiffany Chapman, Thomas Manza, Jacky Guan, Paul Wiley, Dave Goggins, Rachel Carr, Lagwana Tyler, Diane Aboushi Saleh

**Staff In Attendance:** Lucy Joyce, Jill Van Aken, Shayna McGeady Russo, Cynthia Blomquist, Suzy McCormack, Amanda Sostre, Maire Ullrich, Leah Brown, DeAnna Sardella-Matthews

**Absent:** Jill Marie, Paul Ruszkiewicz, Patricia Claiborne

**Call to Order:** Meeting was called to order at 7:01PM by board president, Amy Minutolo.

**Roll Call:** Kathi Nywening; followed by the pledge of allegiance.

**Reading & Approval of Minutes:** January 26, 2026

Motion by Nancy Rider, seconded by Ed Estrada to approve the minutes from January 26, 2026. Vote taken – unanimous. Motion approved.

**Program Presentation:** Leah Brown, Community Outreach – Adventure Zone Program

- ❖ We used to have more clubs pre-pandemic
  - Backpack fliers no longer allowed
- ❖ Started reconnecting with schools
  - Pine Bush lets CCE put fliers in school hallways
  - Middletown allows CCE to post on social media
  - Newburgh allows CCE to post fliers on community board
- ❖ Incubation & Embryology program grew
- ❖ Targeting youth
- ❖ Adventure Zone
  - Travels
  - \$30 fee to library
    - Free to public
  - Partnered with Ramapo Catskill Library System
  - Room for growth
  - Maybe train volunteers

- Enrollment up to 62 members since 2025
- 4 new clubs:
  - Bright Buds (5-7)
  - Barnyard Buddies (5-7)
  - Clover Cubs – Homeschool (5-7)
  - Discovery Den – Homeschool (8+)

Leah and DeAnna excused at 7:30PM.

### **Program Reports:**

- ❖ *Agriculture – Maire Ullrich, Issue Leader*
  - No sign up for Ag careers at schools
    - Did get volunteers – maybe go to schools on career day
  - Dairy Day – March 25<sup>th</sup>
  - Coming soon:
    - Onion school
    - Post-Harvest Water Management
    - Agro-Forestry Presentation
      - Tour already full
      - All county legislators can go free
- ❖ *SNAP-Ed – Shayna Russo, Regional Project Manager*
  - Funding still available through 9/30/26
- ❖ *Family & Consumer Sciences & 4-H Youth Development – Suzy McCormack, Issue Leader*
  - 4-H coming up:
    - Animal Science Program
      - Calf & Livestock Sale 5/9
      - Cloverbuds
      - Incubation & Embryology
    - S.T.E.M.
  - Orange County Dairy Ambassador → Now NYS Ambassador

### **President's Report**

- ❖ *Arched Rood Old Dairy Barn*
  - Signed agreement to extinguish irrevocable easement

## **Executive Director's Report**

- ❖ Still waiting for county to release RFP for Education Center

## **Report of Liaison Representatives:**

- ❖ Orange County Executive's Office – Paul Wiley
  - ICE detention center – no updates
- ❖ CCE State Specialist – Patricia Claiborne provided written report to Lucy
  - Dutchess in early stage of Executive Director search
  - Civil rights and Sexual Harassment training due
  - B/R agreement signed

## **Committee Reports:**

- ❖ Finance: Nancy Rider
  - Financial Overview given
- ❖ Fund Development: Nancy Rider/Jill Van Aken
  - Park End of Year report got some donations
  - HV Gives
    - Money toward camp scholarships
  - Annual Sponsorships out
    - Please spread the word
  - 4-H Farm & Family Fair: Tom Manza
  - July 24<sup>th</sup> - July 26<sup>th</sup>
  - Annual Duck Derby
  - Bountiful Harvest
    - All cow milkers confirmed
  - Donor Recognition Event – June
    - Will have a committee
    - Will invite the \$500+ donors
  - Lucy's Retirement April 24<sup>th</sup> 5-7 at 4-H Park
- ❖ Park & Facilities: Tom Manza
  - Discussed completed grants and future grants
  - At next meeting will update the wish list
  - Logging completed – very nice job

- Looking to sell logs
  - Reviewed lighting projects
- ❖ 4-H Farm & Family Fair
  - Great committee
  - Pet Adoption Day
  - Tractor Train
  - 3 Bands booked
  - Possibly Drone show
  - More family activities
  - Hay Maze
  - Pony Ride

### **Unfinished Business:**

- ❖ Camp Update
  - Camp Clover
    - Registration opened 2/9
      - 21 people registered so far
      - 6 people for scholarships
      - 15 signed up from ages 6-8 years old

### **New Business:**

- ❖ 4-H Farm & Family Fair update: Lucy Joyce
  - Lions Club
    - Willing to allow us to have rides if we split proceeds.
    - Consensus agrees if we are able to contract with a suitable amusement company.
- ❖ Farm proposal
  - Farm owner looking to establish educational farm
    - Need conversation easement
    - Possibly could be run by CCE
    - 25 acres
    - Old home & barn

**Adjournment:** Motion by Nancy Rider, seconded by Ed Estrada to adjourn the meeting at 8:57PM. Vote taken – unanimous. Motion approved.