

The May 28, 2026 meeting of the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Steuben County Board of Directors was called to order by President Jason Jordan at 4:30 p.m.

Members Present: Bill Joint, Jason Jordan, Fred Potter, Walter Konopski, Lisa Zawrotny, Hilda Lando and Chuck Susick

Members Absent: Kyle Lowery, Penny Kephart, Paul O'Connor

Staff Present: Tess McKinley and Robert Shirley

Approval of Notetaker: Robert Shirley was appointed notetaker.

Approval of the April 23, 2026 Board Minutes: Hilda Lando made a motion to approve the April 23, 2026 minutes. Second by Walter Konopski. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment Period: None

Reports:

- **State Extension Specialist, Paul O'Connor – there was no report, but Jason Jordan reported the following:**
 - There was an Executive Leadership Conference in Buffalo, NY earlier this month. Tess attended the conference.
 - The board development series of workshops has ended. We had several people from CCE-Steuben attend these workshops.
 - CCE-Steuben received the annual review from CCE Administration with very few findings. The two things that were addressed were the FDIC threshold of 250K being exceeded at times and the administrative expense rate of 36% was above the recommended 20%. Tess responded that we are the hub of the FLXSBN, which causes our budget to exceed the recommended threshold.
 - CCE-Steuben submitted their application to continue to be the FLXSBN lead. Tess does not anticipate any other association in the region to be interested in it.

- **Financial Report:** Robert Shirley presented the financials for the month ended March 2026.
 - He explained that even though we are showing a deficit, we are doing better than we were last year by ~3K and we ended up with a surplus of 24K. He further explained that all of our insurance premiums and association services are paid for in the first quarter and that many of the billings for AITC and Garden Grant are not done until June, which causes us to be in a deficit in the first quarter. We will make our money back in the second half of the year.
 - Motion to approve: Fred Potter
 - Second: Hilda Lando

- Motion carried unanimously.
- **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:
 - Tess explained the situation on why our part-time AITC educator submitted her resignation.
 - Tess has started an application for an ARC grant to hire a consultant for a feasibility study for a food hub and/or 4-H facility for workshops and our showcase.
- **Program Area Reports:**
 - Strategic Planning –**
 - Tess is going to send a Doodle poll to the committee for a meeting in July 2026.
 - Youth Development Committee –** Penny Kephart was not here to report. Tess attended the committee meeting in May and highlighted the following:
 - Planning for the 4-H showcase at the end of July is ramping up.
 - There was a discussion about changing the process for application for how the 4-H trips attendees are chosen. We are one of the few counties in the state that pay for our 4-H'ers to attend these trips. We pay for them with the donations that are received from the Tractor Supply Paper Clover campaign. Tess encouraged board members to contribute to this at checkout as the funds come back to our program.
 - Community Health and Well Being Committee –** Lisa Zawrotny reported that the committee will be meeting next week.
 - Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee –** Chuck Susick reported that the committee has not met since the last meeting. He highlighted the following:
 - Susan has been working hard on the Canisteo Community Garden grant, and it is really looking impressive.

Old Business:

- None

New Business:

- Tess sent the board a conflict-of-interest policy in the board materials e-mail. It was not, however, included in the hard copy board materials. Tess explained that we do not have an “official” policy in the CCE-Steuben HR policy manual and thinks that it would be a good idea to have one. The board discussed that they would like to table this policy until next month so that they could have a chance to review this more thoroughly. Walter Konopski explained that he reviewed the policy and is similar to other conflicts of interest policies that he has signed for other organizations and believes that it did not need to be tabled until the next meeting.
 - Motion to table Conflict of Interest policy until next month’s meeting – Bill Joint
 - Second: Hilda Lando
 - Vote – 6 – 1 in favor, with Walter Konopski voting no.

Other business, comments, concerns, questions: None

Hilda Lando made a motion to enter into executive session at 5:11 p.m. to discuss personnel matters related to the impending expiration of the SNAP-Ed grant on September 30, 2026.

Second by Walter Konopski. Motion carried unanimously.

Fred Potter made a motion to come out of executive session at 5:37 p.m.

Second by Chuck Susick. Motion carried unanimously.

Next Meeting: It is going to be on June 25 at 4:30. There will be a staff meet-and-greet at the beginning of the meeting.

Adjourn: Motion to adjourn at 5:39 p.m. made by Bill Joint. Second by Chuck Susick. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Robert W. Shirley, III.