

Association Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, July 28, 2026, 6:00 PM

Cobleskill Extension Center, Cooperstown Education Center & Virtual Meeting

ACTION ITEMS:

- The Annual Meeting committee asks that each Board member bring two small Annual Meeting “door prize” items to the September board meeting.

1. **Call to Order** – President Shelby MacLeish called the meeting to order at 6:17 PM. Shelby directed members to review the agenda and asked for any new business items. No additions were requested.
2. **Roll Call** – Secretary Jessica Hill did roll call and the members present were Nicole Blanchard, Tina Douglas, Christine Edwards, Deb Gansinger-Hall, Jessica Hill, Jim Hayes, Danielle Hautaniemi (6:32), Betsy Jensen, Shelby MacLeish, Andrew Marietta, Carol Phelps, Tom Pullyblank, Jason Stone and Alicia Terry. Absent was Jerry Hughes. Staff present were Liz Callahan, Maegan Freeman, Mariah Goodwin, Michelle Leveski, Nelta Miller, Mayra Richter and Nicole Thompson. A quorum was present.
3. **Public Comments:** No public comments presented.
4. **Secretary’s Report** – Shelby MacLeish asked for any corrections or additions to the May 26, 2026 meeting minutes. With no corrections voiced, Tina Douglas moved to approve the minutes as distributed; Deb Gansinger-Hall seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.
5. **Standing Committee Reports:**
 - a. Finance & HR Committee – The committee met on July 16, 2026.
 - The committee recommended the Board approval of the Otsego County Financial Statements through June 2026 as presented. Jason Stone made the motion to approve the financial statements as presented subject to audit; Betsy Jensen seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.
 - The committee recommended the Board approval of the Schoharie County Financial Statements through June 2026 as presented. Alicia Terry made the motion to approve the financial statements as presented subject to audit; Jessica Hill seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.
 - The committee recommended the Board approval of the new Cornell/NYS required HR Policy 405: *Gender-based Violence and the Workplace*. Carol Phelps made the motion to approve the policy as presented; Nicole Blanchard seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.
 - b. Fund Development Committee – The committee met on July 13, 2026.
 - Liz Callahan explained the mid-September Mohawk Valley Gives (MVG) campaign and encouraged Board members to participate in promoting giving to CCESO through it. Liz explained that the annual appeal letter and MVG will be done together as one solicitation.
 - Andrew Marrietta asked about the dinner we are hosting on August 5 at 5 PM at the Otsego Co fair during the annual Fireman’s Parade. We have two rsvp’s thus far, but all staff and board members are encouraged to attend to mingle with the elected officials who often attend the Fireman’s Parade and walk-in at the dinner.
 - c. Buildings & Grounds Committee - The committee met on July 16, 2026.
 - Liz Callahan asked the Board to authorize expending the insurance reimbursement money received for the necessary repairs at the Cooperstown building as indicated in the damages claim and, if

available, any additional related repairs from the original estimate. Tom Pullyblank made the motion to authorize the expenditures; Christine Edwards seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

- d. Nominating Committee Report – No new meeting
- e. Annual Meeting Committee – The committee met on June 29, 2026.
 - The annual meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 21, 2026, at 6 PM, in the Craven Lounge in the Morris Conference Center at SUNY Oneonta.
 - The committee made a recommendation to approve an expense budget of up to \$1,000 for the 2026 annual meeting. Deb Gansinger-Hall made the motion to approve the budget; Jessica Hill seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.
 - The committee asks that each Board member bring two small Annual Meeting “door prize” items to the September Board meeting. Andrew suggested that these be lower-value items, and asked Board members to prioritize acquiring higher-value items for the annual on-line auction in the Spring.

6. FCS Program Presentation: Mariah Goodwin, Maegan Freeman, Nelta Miller, and Michelle Leveski

- a. Program staff gave presentations on the purpose and activities of their respective projects: Farm to School, SNAP Ed, EFNEP and Healthy Connections.
- b. Liz mentioned that staff from across the FCS, Hort and Ag programs made a presentation regarding local foods, food insecurity and food systems for a Cooperstown Graduate Program Foodways class, and if anyone is interested in pursuing other presentation opportunities please let us know.

7. Executive Director’s Report

- a. Began with introductions all around for new board member Nicole Blanchard.
- b. Staff is preparing for both county fairs, the state fair and Family Farm Day, which are all occurring in August. Board members were asked to let staff know if they will be visiting any of the participating FFD farms so staff can factor that into farm check-in planning.
- c. Judson Reid has been named as the new Director coordinating the statewide Ag Teams. Liz hopes that with new leadership there will be more transparency and data regarding the Teams’ activities in our counties.
 - The CNYDLFC Team had a well-attended program at SUNY Cobleskill in early July. It included updates on their statewide research regarding neonicotinoid seed trials.
- d. We are included in a couple of grants applications as collaborators with other CCEs/Cornell staff:
 - Farmer’s Market Promotion Program to help us build capacity to help improve farmers market promotions in our communities;
 - Industrial & Labor Relations School grant to do outreach to determine additional educational programs and resources our agriculture communities need and introduce the work that ILR is doing to address agricultural labor needs in our communities, the Cornell Law Clinic’s resources for farmers and ag workers.
- e. Most staff participated in our periodic recertification of CPR, AED and first aid training.
- f. We are working with the CROP Advisory Committee to determine the best way to continue to provide coverage for nutrition classes with the loss of our SNAP Ed funding.
- g. Liz has attended meetings with several collaborators and county committees including:
 - NYCAMH, RISE, Soil & Water Conservation Districts, and Ag & Farmland Protection.

- Participated in capacity building training through the Community Foundation of South Central New York on cultivating major gifts.
 - Participated in a NYSEDA Mohawk Valley Stakeholders forum in Herkimer County regarding clean energy. Otsego county residences were the majority of in-person attendance.
8. Otsego County Board of Representatives Report – Andrew Marrietta reported that they’re moving into budget discussions; the committee isn’t meeting again until September or October. We may be looking at a budget reduction of about \$13,000. Other county departments are expecting personnel cuts. We need to be realistic that the county is looking to reduce direct services.
 9. Schoharie County Board of Supervisors Report – Alicia Terry reported that the US Dept of the Treasury and Empire State Development did approve a \$12.3M increase and change in scope in their Broadband project to address cable installation issues. The Schoharie Farmer’s Market is looking to hire a manager and grant funding for a new building at the fairgrounds. The budget process is beginning with a new deputy. The Gilboa Dam Overlook is now open after stabilization to address safety concerns.
 10. **Old Business** – N/A
 11. **New Business** – Jessica Hill asked the Board to go into Executive session at 8:05 PM.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM with on a motion by Tom Pullyblank, seconded by Betsy Jensen. Our next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 22, 2026.