Cornell Cooperative Extension Orange County
Board of Directors Meeting
Minutes
August 24, 2026, 5:30 PM
CCE Office, 18 Seward Ave. Middletown, NY 10940

In Attendance: Amy Minutolo, Tom Manza, Paul Ruskiewicz, Andrea Nilon, Dave Goggins, Ed Estrada, Paul Wiley, Jacky Guan, Kathi Nywening. Via Zoom: Nancy Rider, Rachel Carr
Absent: Diane Aboushi Saleh, Tiffany Chapman, Pat Claiborne
Staff In Attendance: Maire Ullrich, Jill Van Aken, Shayna Russo, Cindy Blomquist, Eli Bloom, Adhara Jimenez Banse, Amanda Sostre
Guests: Tonia Crown, Danielle Jennison

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 5:44 PM by Board President, Amy Minutolo; followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Moment of Silence held for the passing of board member, long-time Master Gardener, and volunteer, Brooke Moore.

Roll Call: Kathi Nywening, Board Secretary

Review and Approval of Minutes for June 22, 2026

Motion by Dave Goggins, seconded by Amy Minutolo to approve the minutes from June 22, 2026. Vote taken – unanimous. Motion approved.

Impact Statement Program Presentation:

Adhara Jimenez-Banse, 2 Gen Family & Youth Program Manager – **BIENESTAR**

- BIENESTAR is a parent support program that began in 2024 serving 13 families monthly with services in Spanish; attendance always have more than fifteen people
  - Response to families' need for a safe space to discuss policy changes
  - Addresses immigration-related fears and providing youth mental health support
  - Direct collaboration with Warwick Area Farmworker Organization (WAFO)

Special Presentation: 2025 Year End Audit Report – UHY LLP (Formerly Known As: RBT)

Tonia Crown, CPA, CITP (Partner); Danielle Jennison, CPA (Supervisor)

- 2025 Financial Audit – *Tonia Crown*
  - The auditors presented the 2025 year-end financial audit, noting that this was their first year auditing CCE Orange County.
  - CCE Orange County received an unmodified "clean" opinion on its financial statements.
  - Only 1 YE adjusting journal entry was prepared. It was regarding the change in classifying the rent agreement from long term to short term lease.
  - Total assets were $4.168 million at year-end.

- Payroll deposit increased due to increased payroll costs
- Audit included several recommendations, including:
  - Developing a spending policy for endowment/community foundation funds.
  - When disposing of an asset, be sure to inactivate the asset on the Fixed Asset List and Fixed Asset, Net Value schedule.
  - Review lease classifications.
    - 90-day cancellation clause in the office building lease
      - Lease is considered short-term and removed from the right-of-use asset and lease liability accounts
  - Board-designated funds are properly documented in board minutes
    - Should include purpose and amount of the designation

❖ 2025 Single Audit – *Danielle Jennison*

- Separate Single Audit was conducted due to the level of federal expenditures with the SNAP-Ed program.
- No findings or material weaknesses identified

Program Report Review

❖ Agriculture – *Eli Bloom, Ag Program Leader*

- Climate Stewardship Program started last week
- Small Engine Repair just started
- U.S. Department of Agriculture 2501 Grant for socially disadvantaged Veteran, farmer, and rancher outreach program will be ending at the end of September.
  - Due to conclusion of grant funding and the resulting loss of program funding for the Program Manager position
  - Despite efforts to identify and secure alternative sources of funding, none has been secured at this time. Accordingly, the Program Manager position will be eliminated.
  - The association will continue to pursue potential funding opportunities to reinstate the outreach program in the future.
- GleanMobile Donation Coordinator
  - Previous employee resigned
  - Interviews are currently underway for replacement

❖ SNAP-Ed – *Shayna, Russo, Regional Project Manager*

- Pending Grant Application
  - Creating Healthy Schools and Communities Grant – waiting for contract
- SNAP-Ed concludes on September 30th
  - Will present plan for future at next meeting
  - Social media presence will continue under a new program name, with the existing social media accounts remaining in place.
- NYS Pollution Prevention – received funding
- Unsuccessful Grant Applications
  - Farm to School
  - Mother Cabrini
- Grant Funding Opportunity
  - World Wildlife Foundation

- National Household Wasted Food Prevention Project – designed to reduce wasted food in the U.S. households by changing everyday behaviors.
- 15 applicants will be awarded
    - $75-$750K
- Deadline is September 1st

❖ Camp Update – *Maire Ullrich, Executive Director*
- Went well; final numbers are currently being compiled
- Scholarships
    - Provided 34 scholarships
    - Sufficient funds remain to provide 15 scholarships for next year
    - Recap will have funding available to provide several full four-week camp scholarships

President's Report – *Amy Minutolo, President*

❖ 4-H Farm & Family Fair – appreciation expressed to staff for their help and support with the fair
❖ Vacancies
- Two open board positions – submit any recommendations for potential candidates
- Finance and Personnel committees both need additional members – please let Amy know if you are available

❖ Bountiful Harvest September 18th – Jacky received complimentary ticket to the event as a part of the Board's annual sponsorship.

Report of Liaisons/Representatives

❖ Orange County Executive's Office – *Paul Wiley*
- Freedom Fest – well attended
- Budget season – rough
- 90-day cancellation clause – required by county law department

❖ Orange County Legislators – *Paul Ruszkiewicz*
- Budget season
- Bob Fagione resigned
    - Now Director of Community Engagement

Committee Reports

❖ Personnel Committee – *Kathy Nywening, Committee Chair*
- Gender-Based Violence and the Workplace Policy

Motion by Ed Estrada, seconded by Andrea Nilon to adopt the Gender-Based Violence and the Workplace Policy. Vote taken – unanimous. Motion adopted.

❖ Finance Committee – *Tom Manza, Vice President*
- May 2026 Financials
    - Total assets were $6.19 million, with total net assets of approximately $4.27 million
    - Accounts receivable $1.213 million
    - $1.2 million transferred to Schwab in US Securities.

        - Revenue was at 55% of the annual budget
        - Expenses were at 39% of the annual budget

Motion by Kathi Nywening, seconded by Andrea Nilon to accept the May 2026 Financial Statements as presented. Vote taken – unanimous. Motion accepted.

- June 2026 Financials
    - Total assets were $6.09 million, with total net assets of approximately $4.29 million
    - Accounts receivable $1.093 million
    - Revenue was at 47% of the annual budget
    - Expenses were at 45.5% of the annual budget
    - Fundraising expenses were above budget due to:
        - Fair expenses
        - Master Gardener trip expenses

Motion by Jacky Guan, seconded by Paul Ruskiewicz to accept the June 2026 Financial Statements as presented. Vote taken – unanimous. Motion accepted.

- Ameriprise

Motion by Kathi Nywening, seconded by Paul Ruskiewicz to approve Susan McCormack to become a signer on the Ameriprise account. Vote taken – unanimous. Motion approved.

Motion by Kathi Nywening, seconded by Paul Ruskiewicz to approve closing the Ameriprise account and rolling money into First Federal Savings CD at 4% once Susan McCormack is set up as signer. Vote taken – unanimous. Motion approved.

- Mileage Reimbursement effective 8/1/2026

Motion by Jacky Guan, seconded by Kathi Nywening to approve the mileage reimbursement increase from $.725/mile to $.76/mile per IRS rate change. Vote taken – unanimous. Motion approved.

- 2025 Year End Audit

Motion by Dave Goggins, seconded by Jacky Guan to approve the 2025 Year End Audit. Vote taken – unanimous. Motion approved.

- 2025 Single Audit

Motion by Dave Goggins, seconded by Kathi Nywening to approve the 2025 Single Audit. Vote taken – unanimous. Motion approved.

❖ Fund Development – *Jill Van Aken, Development Officer*

- New York Providing Local Access to Essential Sustenance capital grant – expanding the organization's capacity to safely store, manage, and distribute food
    - Up to $125K
    - If awarded funds will go towards Gleaning Hub
    - Application submitted last week; should hear back by October
- Bountiful Harvest
    - Sponsorships coming in
    - Subcommittee established for legacy giving

- ❖ Strategic Planning – *Rachel Carr, Committee Chair*
  - Meeting held earlier this month
  - Data has been collected and is being organized to create a database
  - Survey was developed to give feedback regarding collaboration between university research faculty and Extension staff
    - Feedback will be used to better understand current research communication practices
    - Looking to improve collaboration and strengthen connections between university research faculty and Extension staff
- ❖ Park & Facilities – *Tom Manza, Committee Chair*
  - Meeting held in August; next meeting October 1st
  - Gleaning Hub
    - O&R completed the electrical connection
    - Harry F. Rotolo & Son, Inc is expected to establish electrical service to the cooler in two weeks
  - Challenge Course – complete
    - Surrounding area still needs to be cleaned up and wood chips need to be spread near the course elements
    - Archery expert and challenge course expert both came out to the park for advice in their areas
  - Site Plans
    - Met with Todd today
    - Site plans are expected to be ready for submission to the Town of Mount Hope Planning Board next week

Ed excused at 7:06PM

- ❖ 4-H Farm & Family Fair – *Jill Van Aken*
  - Overall received positive feedback from the community
  - Transportation Grant
    - A few participants who attended last year returned again this year
    - One bus broke down after picking up participants
      - This affected the schedule and resulted in some those participants being unable to complete all planned activities
  - RECAP meeting scheduled for September 8th

Adjournment

Motion by Kathi Nywening, seconded by Amy Minutolo to adjourn the meeting at 7:24PM. Vote taken – unanimous. Meeting adjourned.

Executive Session

The Board remained after adjournment of the regular meeting for an executive session discussion. Executive session was called to order at 7:27 PM to discuss a personnel matter. The Board discussed the performance evaluation process. No action was taken. Executive session was adjourned at 7:37 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathi Nywening, Board Secretary

Amanda Sostre, Recording Secretary