



Mission: To sustain and support our community through collaborations that put experience and research to work.

Vision: Honoring the past, preparing for the future through life-long learning; sustainable agriculture and natural resources management; healthy adults, youth and families; engaged communities.

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Schuyler County

Tuesday, May 12, 2026

Shared Services Building | 910 S. Decatur Street
Watkins Glen, New York 14891

ATTENDEES: Gail Walker, Janilyn Elias, Jill Kasprzyk, Jim Nolan, Mark McCullouch, Nigar Hale, Paul Bartow, Tim Davis (Zoom), Willie Hayes

EXCUSED: Larry Jaynes

ABSENT: Riqui Hess

STAFF: Mel Schroeder, Virginia Montopoli

CALL TO ORDER

CCES Board of Directors meeting called to order by Paul Bartow at 5:02 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

Paul Bartow passed around correspondence from Kim Seaman. Once read, you'll get an idea of the sentiment behind it.

MEETING MINUTES – March 19, 2026

Motion to approve March 19, 2026, meeting minutes made by Willie Hayes; second Mark McCullouch. **Motion unanimously approved.**

PRIOR BUSINESS

- *Year-end financial snapshot*
Mel went over the CCE Schuyler balance sheet and liquidity report, everything is in total balance.
- *4-H Thrive Lab*
Mel reported that funding for our SNAP-Ed Educator that she applied for was not funded. It was highly competitive, there were 27 applications and 3 were awarded (downstate, central and western).

- *Kentucky Bale Grazing*
John Burns, technical advisor on the project, gave a mini presentation to some of CCES staff. It was informative and well received. Mel asked if Board members would like to hear the presentation, she could schedule it. The consensus was to go ahead and make the arrangements.
Action Item: Mel will work with Brett Chedzoy on scheduling.

NEW BUSINESS

- *Community Foundation*
Mel reported that the \$3,000 mini grant that Dani Silva wrote was funded. The proposal focusses on women's health and young girls (older adolescents). It will be on foods, learning about bones, hormonal health, things that impact women's health.
- *Pro-Action Steuben and Yates*
CCES was written as a partner on their application to Office of Children and Family Services. A goal of this grant is to put a staff member in the Family Play and Resource Center. There is no private space there, so CCES will house their Family Support Specialist.
- *Strategic Planning for CCES*
The last strategic plan for CCES was around 2021. The benefit of revisiting what we already have would be to include the public. There are a lot of resources on the Cornell website that give various ways to engage the public. We also have a former board member, Sarah Agan, who has done strategic visioning would be a great resource.
Action Item: Mel will investigate the process.

UPDATES

- Board President, Paul Bartow
 - Paul shared with Board members his appreciation for their commitment and patience particularly as meetings have run much longer than anticipated over the past several months.
- Executive Director, Mel Schroeder
 - The funding stream that United Way of the Southern Tier (UWST) uses to fund the Dolly Parton Imagination Library (DPIL) has changed from the Library system to the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS). A single application per organization must be completed leading the UWST to let CCE know that to continue to operate the DPIL you need to submit for funding and enter your own Memorandum of Understanding with the DPIL. CCE will work with UWST to find the best way to recover the donor funds that were made to support the Library.
 - Hidden Valley 4-H Camp
 - NYS Parks Contract
We have a new contract with NYS Parks. In past years, we have operated under an extension, now we are year-to-year.

- Staffing
Kitchen staff, nurses, and a lot of junior counselors' positions have been filled, the only area lacking is senior counselors.
- Campers
To date, there are 217 campers, the numbers are up from last year; scholarships are low this year, but on the flip side, we will be able to extend scholarships to last minute people who want to send their child to summer camp.

COMMITTEES

Finance

January 2026, December 2025, November 2025, October 2025, September 2025, August 2025, July 2025, June 2025 financials have been accepted by the Finance Committee.

Motion to approve January 2026, December 2025, November 2025, October 2025, September 2025, August 2025, July 2025, June 2025 financials made by Mark McCullouch; second Janilyn Elias. **Motion unanimously approved.**

Nominating - Committee has not met

Governance – Committee has not met; discussion around current Human Resources manual out of date in some areas, particularly leave policy on vacation.

Executive – Committee has not met.

State Extension Specialist, Tim Davis

- Tim reported that CCES has completed their year-end audit that was due March 31st. He suggests that the Board should begin looking into the needs of the Nominating Committee for next year.

LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATIVE (Gail Walker)

Gail reported that the sales tax report is positive and ahead of what was projected for Schuyler

BOARD SHARING

Nigar Hale -- Passed out copies of the Chamber "Live Your Deam Magazine".

Jill Kasprzyk – Reported there will be a 100th Year Public Health open house.

Jim Nolan – Gave a few highlights on the Odessa Montour School budget. He also shared that the NYS budget passed.

Gail Walker – Shared about a recent leadership training and the relevancy to planning in our community

Paul Batow – Shared that he is the new President of the Schuyler County Historical Society

Mark McCullouch – Shared info on the Farm Bureau

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Next meeting is June 9, 2026, from 5:00-6:30 p.m. in the Shared Services Building, 910 S. Decatur Street, Watkins Glen, New York.
- Finance Committee will convene prior to the June 9th meeting at 4:30 p.m.

Motion to enter Executive session to discuss the ongoing challenges with the Watkins Glen School District that impacts the 21st Century grant at 6:30 p.m. by Willie Hayes; second by Mark McCullouch. **Motion unanimously approved.**

Motion to come out of Executive Session made by Paul Bartow at 7:11 p.m.; second by Nigar Hale. **Motion unanimously approved.**

ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn CCE Board meeting made by Paul Bartow at 7:12 p.m.

MINUTES

Submitted by Virginia Montopoli on June 5, 2026.