

CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION ERIE COUNTY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
December 22, 2020
Public Meeting, 7 PM via Zoom
21 S. Grove St., East Aurora, NY 14052

Present

Jack McGowan, Sara Root, Kathryn Franco, Sam Basile, Matt Agle, Conor O’Gorman, Diane Held, Amelia Kermis

Absent

Matt Janiga, Gail Wells

Staff

Guests

Beth Buscaglia, Li Shen, Brett Kreher

1. Call to Order

- a. Jack McGowan, *President*, called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

2. Agenda Review

- a. Jack inquired if there were any additions to the agenda.
- b. No changes or additions were requested.

3. Approval of Board and Committee Minutes

- a. Motion to approve the November 17, 2020 board meeting minutes was made by Matt Agle and seconded by Conor O’Gorman. Motion approved by all attendees via voice roll call:
 - i. Jack McGowan
 - ii. Sara Root
 - iii. Kathryn Franco
 - iv. Sam Basile
 - v. Matt Agle
 - vi. Conor O’Gorman
 - vii. Amelia Kermis
- b. Motion to accept the November 14, 2020 4-H Program Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes was made by Amelia Kermis and seconded by Jack McGowan. Motion approved by all attendees via voice roll call:
 - i. Jack McGowan
 - ii. Sara Root
 - iii. Kathryn Franco
 - iv. Sam Basile
 - v. Matt Agle
 - vi. Conor O’Gorman
 - vii. Amelia Kermis

- c. Motion to accept the July 14, 2020 Agriculture Program Committee Meeting Minutes was made by Sam Basile and seconded by Conor O’Gorman. Motion approved by all attendees via voice roll call:
 - i. Jack McGowan
 - ii. Sara Root
 - iii. Kathryn Franco
 - iv. Sam Basile
 - v. Matt Agle
 - vi. Conor O’Gorman
 - vii. Amelia Kermis

4. Finance Update

- a. Currently the October financial report is receiving a final review of the PPP loan forgiveness portion of the funding before submitting to the board for approval.
- b. October and November reports will be prepared for review and approval at the January board meeting.

5. Reports

a. Committees:

- i. Capital – Property in Orchard Park has accepted CCE’s offer; currently working on early stages of planning and zoning approvals. Committee looking for an experienced architect and engineer to prepare for the zoning approvals.
- ii. Finance – Nothing new to report, outside of inquiry on the 2021 county budget. Diane indicated the final county budget has not yet been posted on the website, but it appears that the legislature did not increase CCE Erie’s funding to last year’s level so we will sustain a 2.5% reduction in our county appropriation from 2020.
- iii. Operations – Nothing new to report.
- iv. Development – Committee has not met since the last board meeting. However, the update is that Total Fundraising Solutions/Marketing Tech have prepared the annual appeal materials which were mailed as of Mon., Dec. 21. It is crucial to have 100% donor participation from the CCE board members.

b. Cornell Cooperative Extension:

- i. Currently working on updating the financial operating software. Should have available for use at the end of Q1 2021.
- ii. CCE offices close 12/24/20 and reopen 1/4/21; CCE Erie County office building in East Aurora will be closed as well. Some staff will be working remotely, but many are using remaining vacation days.

c. Executive Director:

- i. Have been using a CCE system unemployment insurance pool that everyone has paid into, but 2020’s events have impacted this. Most of CCE Erie’s unemployment expense is due to former Taste NY Store staff who are unemployed.
- ii. Sharon Bachman applied for a state DEC grant and should have heard about it in Spring 2020. Diane/Sharon were recently notified that the grant was approved for urban forestry that will be held in the City of Buffalo.
- iii. The 4-H division has been an ongoing challenge for COVID resiliency, but a recent idea has a lot of potential. Projects-in-a-Box will be offered with take

- home kits and virtual learning to go with each. The first one is Culture and Cuisine, and currently has 25 kids signed up and more spots still available.
- iv. The Taste Kiosk in the Buffalo Central Terminal has opened! Staffing and sales ramp up expected early 2021.
 - v. Annual Report provided by Diane on Tues., 12/22 for board members to take a read through. Aimed to be positioned from a storytelling perspective and looking to build on this approach for future editions as well.

6. Old Business

- a. **RCC lease** – Current lease ends June 30, 2021; current cost of lease is increasing and causing reason to re-evaluate staying until new building is available. Diane will discuss lease and cost with RCC.

7. New Business

- a. **Approval of Master Gardener Steering Committee Guidelines** – Typically these are distributed and reviewed/approved in January of each year, but Diane opted to share earlier since these were available. Further review is needed to finalize. Motion to table the approval of the Master Gardener Steering Committee Guidelines for the time being was made by Sam Basile and seconded by Kathryn Franco. Motion approved by all attendees via voice roll call:
 - i. Jack McGowan
 - ii. Sara Root
 - iii. Kathryn Franco
 - iv. Sam Basile
 - v. Matt Agle
 - vi. Conor O’Gorman
 - vii. Amelia Kermis
- b. **January Reorganizational Meeting: Election of Board Officers, Board Orientation** – January and February meetings will include board member selections for committees and board officer positions. Diane to provide board constitution and summary of committees/officer positions in advance of the January meeting, for consideration. If any board members are interested in an officer position, they should contact Diane to discuss further. Board orientation will be offered in February either on the weekend or before the board meeting. Diane intends to also schedule Diversity/Inclusion training for board members with Sara Jablonski.
 - i. With upcoming programming reviews/consideration, Diane would like to explore options for environmental/climate change opportunities.
- c. **Thank You to Conor O’Gorman** – A big thank you to our outgoing board member, Conor O’Gorman. In his past two terms, he has been a valued and important participant on our board. We hope that he remains involved as a community support.

Motion was made by Conor O’Gorman and seconded by Sam Basile to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Sara Root

DATES AHEAD:

Board of Directors Reorganizational Meeting

Jan 26 (Tues) via Zoom, 7 PM

