

Meeting of Council of Associations
January 14, 2005
Albany, NY
Minutes

Attending: L. Dallis, G. Ogden, P. Donnelly, D. Dudgeon, B. Walker, M. Keith, J. Blumer, G. Hecht, M. Ledux, D. Briggs, T. Cimochoowski, P. Westfall, A. Fagan, R. Howe, M. Carley, L. Green

Absent: B. Aldrich, L. Benson, D. Buck, C. Czelustia, P. Furfari, H. Hallock, F. Kordziel, R. Peterson, K. Roush, J. Schmeer, J. Schultz, E. Seus, M. Collie Smith, H. Staib, R. Stank, R. Stone, E. Walldroff, P. Forestiere, D. Halpin

Guests: Charlie Kruzansky and Lee Telega

9:15AM: Meeting was convened prior to President Judy Blumer's arrival. Charlie Kruzansky, Cornell's representative in Albany, introduced Lee Telega who works out of the Albany office with dairy farmers throughout the state on pro-dairy and environmental issues.

Kruzansky gave a necessarily brief preview of the governor's 2006 budget which would not be submitted until Jan. 18. There was speculation that cuts could amount to 20%. (All but 5% of 224 funding was restored for 2005). The big unknown would be the SUNY appropriation through which Cornell and CCE derives their state money. Some funds could be repackaged to stress "economic development" which would be more appealing to the legislature. For political reasons, the Republican majority in the Senate may want to emphasize economic development, job training and social issues which are addressed by CCE. Finally, he speculated that the legislators may not get their member items this year as the governor attempts to cut costs and bargain with the legislature.

9:50AM: Meeting formally called to order by President Judy Blumer.

Motion to approve minutes of CoA meeting of Oct. 15, 2004. Seconded.
Approved unanimously.

It was suggested that an up-to-date list of Board Presidents was needed so CoA representatives can contact and meet with their regional associations. It was further suggested by Rod Howe that the Feb. 7 meeting, via teleconference, of Board Presidents, EDs and Director Helene Dillard would be a good opportunity to hold regional meetings and communicate the CoA agenda and get regional input.

10:00AM: Ron Brach, Executive Director of the Legislative Commission on

Rural Resources (LCRR) was introduced. LCRR and CCE have worked together for several years to promote a legislative agenda for rural New York. He explained that some of these major areas of cooperation include:

1. Develop model contracts for rural municipalities to share contracts.
2. Solve land development and land use conflicts.
3. Sewer systems.
4. Health care.
5. Rural access to advanced telecommunications.

He further pointed out that \$25 of the fee from the “I Love NY Agriculture” state vanity license plates is dedicated to Cornell’s “Ag in the Class” program. Finally, it was suggested that perhaps there was a need for both organizations to sponsor a statewide conference to discuss the needs of rural NY.

11:00AM: Glenn Appleby gave a power point presentation that essentially chronicled CCE’s diminishing federal, state and local funding and the constant need to adjust “priority focus areas receiving resources.” Of particular concern is the growth of “earmarked” funds for specific projects and the subsequent loss of flexibility.

The Q and A following brought out that at the local level, cooperation between CCE and county governments is vital. CCE can often complete projects in a more timely fashion and at a lower cost than the county. Local CCE needs to identify and pursue funding for such projects.

11:30AM: Director Helene Dillard presented her power point “Grand Vision for CCE” via teleconference. Dr. Dillard explained that CCE is the “primary extension and outreach arm for Cornell University in its entirety.” No other component of the University has the “local face” to connect local needs with land-grant resources. She feels that this gives CCE powerful leverage with the University, faculty as well as the public at large. She is looking for high quality, relevant and sustained programming which is made more difficult because of a growing reliance on grant funding. Federal funding remains precarious because the USDA budget is entirely discretionary. Statewide, she emphasized her belief that a local, rather than a regional outlook, is a better way to convince legislators that they profit from our 224 funding.

12:15PM: Short break for lunch.

12:45PM: Jeff Osinski, Project Director for NYSAC was introduced. He described the mission and reasons for funding of NYSAC’s Pelletier Institute and CCE’s collaboration in this effort. He went on to list NYSAC’s priorities for 2005.

1. Medicaid relief this funding requirement is a major drag on county budgets statewide and could mean a 30% increase in local property taxes by 2010. CCE can provide an educational component with programs stressing prevention vs. treatment and better management of money spent on health care services.
2. SPUR support of the governor's program targeting state budget funds to economic development upstate. (Previously discussed with Charlie Kruzansky.)
3. Relief from state-mandates to counties.

CCE can be instrumental in furthering this agenda and identifying other local issues. NYSAC can put together forums of local politicians, business people and educators to bring publicity to bear on all of these issues.

2:00PM: Bruce Walker (Putnam County CoA representative) reported on his committee's charge to identify issues affecting counties and the legislators who could help. Today's speakers were a result of identifying some of those issues which include economic development; child obesity and agriculture issues. Our focus today was on the LCRR and NYSAC. CCE needs to be a key resource for legislators on these and other issues.

2:15PM: George Hecht reported that since it was very early in the legislative session, it was not possible to arrange contact visits with key legislators.

It was suggested that the opportunities for local CCE associations to work with NYSAC on local forums should be a subject included in the CoA President's next letter to local Board Presidents.

3:00PM: Adjournment. Date and location of spring meeting to be determined.

Respectfully submitted,
Lydia L. Dallis, Secretary