



Kane County

KC Agriculture Committee

Meeting Minutes

Government Center
719 S. Batavia Ave., Bldg. A
Geneva, IL 60134

JUBY, Roth, Allan, Lenert, Penesis, Sanchez, Williams and ex-officio Pierog (County Chair)

Thursday, January 23, 2025

10:30 AM

County Board Room

2025 Committee Goals

Goals from the July Agriculture Committee meeting

- Revise County Code Definition of the Agriculture Committee
- Awareness & Support of Agriculture - Raise public awareness and support for agriculture in Kane County as an industry sector and community resource
- Farmland Protection - Work in concert with the Farmland Protection Commission and County Board to oversee the successful implementation of Kane County's Farmland Protection Ordinance and related conservation efforts, and pursue funding
- Continue Growing for Kane Program - Direct the implementation of programs and policies that expand the production of locally grown foods and improve community access to fresh and healthy food choices, and pursue funding
 - Continue partnerships with Kane County Farm Bureau and Northern Illinois Food Bank
 - Implement current grant funded projects
 - Continue to apply for additional outside grants
 - Implement economic development projects for Agriculture
 - ARPA Small grants for farmers
 - Other projects identified by the Economic Development Strategic Plan for Kane County

1. Call To Order

Chairman Juby called today's meeting to order at 10:30 AM.

2. Roll Call

PRESENT	Board Member Leslie Juby Board Member Bill Roth Board Member Deborah Allan Board Member Bill Lenert Board Member Ted Penesis Board Member Jarett Sanchez Board Member Rick Williams
ABSENT	Ex-Officio County Board Chair Corinne M. Pierog

Also present: Co. Bd. members Bates*, Kiouss*, Molina*; KCFB Dir. Collins; Dev. Dir. VanKerkhoff and staff Tansley, Castro, McKenna; ASA Cermak; ITD staff Peters; and members of the press and public, including Agriculture and Food Consultant Ellen Kamps, Forest Preserve Restoration Tech. Blackburn*, and former Kane County Board Member Mike Kenyon.

3. Remote Attendance Requests

There were no remote attendance requests for today's meeting.

4. Approval of Minutes: December 18, 2024

RESULT:	APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT
MOVER:	Deborah Allan

5. Public Comment

David Canton, Maple Park, spoke on the economic impact of the Ecolab industry, specifically within the agricultural economic environment. He highlighted the potential negative impact of ordinances that are biased against agriculture. He indicated that recreation is a significant contributor to the economy. He mentioned in 2023, according to the Bureau of Economic Analysis, outdoor recreation alone contributed 2.2 percent of the Illinois gross domestic product. Canton stated that more farmers are returning to Ecolab farming. Small farmers are learning that the cost of fuel, maintenance, and acquisition costs are not sustainable. He hopes the Committee will amend the ordinance to promote, save, and restore the agricultural economy within Kane County.

6. Partners

A. Kane County Farm Bureau Updates (Bill Collins, Director)

KCFB Dir. Collins announced that the Kane County Farm Bureau meeting will be held on Thursday, February 6, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. The Illinois Farm Bureau Governor Affairs Leadership Conference (GALC) will held on Tuesday, February 18, 2025 in Springfield Illinois. The Kane County Farm Bureau Shopping Spree will be held on Monday, February 24 at 10:00 a.m. at Jewel Osco in Batavia.

7. Presentations/Announcements**A. Sustainable Agriculture Projects Update (Ellen Kamps, Consultant)**

Agriculture and Food Consultant Ellen Kamps provided background about herself to the Committee. She has a Masters Degree in Public Affairs with a focus on sustainable agriculture from University of California Berkeley. She is currently pursuing her Masters in science at Arizona State University for sustainable food systems. Kamps has studied agriculture technology, economics abroad for twelve years. She provided information on the Food and Farm Resiliency Grant Program, and the Farming with Pollinators Guidebook. Kamps indicated that her sub-contractor, Janice Hill, is looking forward to providing an overview of her work with the Land Transfer Navigator at the March Agriculture Committee meeting. Kamps is producing a guidebook for farmers, ranchers, and land managers on natural resource conservation district practices and programs. These practices and programs support pollinator habitats. The objective is to provide a practical guide and decision-making tool for land managers. She indicated that while there is established research and experts featured in this developing publication. It is critical to craft a tool by interviewing Kane County farmers and their specific needs in the field. Kamps attended three field days in 2024. Two were located in Kane County, and one was on an urban farm on the south side of Chicago. This project is projected to be completed by April or May of 2025. Kamps looks forward to updating the committee with the finished publication. Lastly, Kane County awarded 19 food-growing farms and ranches \$755K in 2024. Kamps addressed questions and comments from the Committee. Much discussion ensued.

B. Growing for Kane Resolutions and Updates (Matt Tansley, Planner)

Dev. Planner Tansley provided updates on the Urban Agriculture Innovative Production Programs. The University of Illinois extension team (U of I) is providing farmer training services for this program. The first class of the Master Urban Farmer Training Program concluded in December 2024. The program was a success, and U of I is eager to conduct a second cohort of the program in the fall. Tansley stated that the USDA approved a submitted request to amend the budget to pay for local food access programs to support organizations in Fox Valley. These programs were created by the U of I extension Snap Education Team.

C. Farmland Protection Program Acreage Analysis (Catherine McKenna, Planner / GIS Specialist)

GIS Dev. Planner McKenna stated that there are approximately 7K acres of land involved in the Farmland Protection Program Easements. There are 160K acres of agriculture accessed land. She indicated that the program is a voluntary program for landowners to use as a tool to recognize the value of their land. Much discussion ensued.

8. New Business

- A.** Authorizing a One-Year Extension and Amending the Contract Limit for Ellen Kamps to Provide Continued Food and Agriculture Consulting Services

KC Executive Committee

RESULT:	MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE
TO:	KC Executive Committee
MOVER:	Bill Lenert
SECONDER:	Rick Williams
AYE:	Leslie Juby, Bill Roth, Deborah Allan, Bill Lenert, Ted Penesis, Jarett Sanchez, and Rick Williams
ABSENT:	Corinne M. Pierog

- B.** Authorizing a One-Year Contract Extension with New Venture Advisors to Provide Food and Agriculture Consulting Services

KC Executive Committee

RESULT:	MOVED FORWARD BY ROLL CALL VOTE
TO:	KC Executive Committee
MOVER:	Jarett Sanchez
SECONDER:	Bill Lenert
AYE:	Leslie Juby, Bill Roth, Deborah Allan, Bill Lenert, Ted Penesis, Jarett Sanchez, and Rick Williams
ABSENT:	Corinne M. Pierog

10. Reports Placed On File

RESULT:	APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT
MOVER:	Jarett Sanchez

11. Adjournment

RESULT:	APPROVED BY VOICE VOTE
MOVER:	Bill Roth
SECONDER:	Jarett Sanchez

This meeting was adjourned at 11:23 a.m.

Rachel Santora
Recording Secretary