



# 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)

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**Thursday, February 20, 2025**

**10:30 AM**

**County Board Room**

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#### 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

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#### 1. Call To Order

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

#### 2. Roll Call

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

Also present: Co. Bd. member Molina\*; KCFB Mgr. Arnold and staff Collins; Dev. Dir. VanKerkhoff and staff Tansley, Castro and McKenna; Sustainability Coordinator Powell; ITD staff Peters; and members of the press and public including former Board Member Mike Kenyon.

**3. Remote Attendance Requests**

Chairman Roth announced the remote attendance requests for today's meeting. She asked the Committee if there were any objections to Committee Member Juby attending remotely. There were no objections.

**4. Approval of Minutes: January 23, 2025**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Rick Williams

**5. Public Comment**

None.

**6. Partners****A. Kane County Farm Bureau Updates (Steve Arnold, Manager)**

KCFB Mgr. Arnold stated that the 24th Annual Shopping Spree for local food pantries will be on Monday, February 24, 2025 at 10:30 a.m. at the Batavia Jewel-Osco. The contestants will be Kane County Board Member Leslie Juby and St. Charles Mayor Lora Vitek. Commissioner Juby will represent the Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry of Aurora. Arnold referenced the Local Information, News and KnowHow for the Illinois Farm Bureau, and stated that this issue is dedicated exclusively to the Farm Bureau's Local Government priorities for 2025. One of the priorities Arnold highlighted was a renewal on proclaiming Kane County's support for Agriculture. Arnold provided a copy of the 2023 resolution pertaining to county and public policies regarding agriculture farms and food. He indicated that the Kane County Board passed this resolution in 2023. At this time, the County Boards in Will, Cook, and Dekalb have all passed the resolution. The KCFB would like to request the Agriculture Committee to have a similar resolution on the agenda for the March meeting. Lastly, there are currently 57 college scholarship applications for the KCFB to review. There will be twenty-five selected scholarship awardees who will receive \$45K in scholarships. The Touch-a-Tractor Open House event will be held on Saturday, April 12, 2025 from 10:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m., followed by a Meet-and-Greet for local public officials and legislators. Much discussion ensued.

**7. Presentations/Announcements****A. Everything Local Conference Recap (Matt Tansley, Planner)**

Dev. Planner Tansley provided a recap on the 2025 Everything Local Conference that was held in Springfield. The conference is a statewide gathering of food growers, market operators, supply chain partners, universities, non-profits, and other agencies. The conference sessions covered fruit, vegetable, and flower production, urban agriculture, market management, community food systems development, and business development. The first initiative Tansley highlighted was the Grow Lake County Organization, which is a community-based effort to cultivate a thriving and sustainable local food system in Lake County. For more information, residents can access the website at [growlakecounty.org](http://growlakecounty.org). He provided an overview of the Experimental Station, which is a six-month task force engaging stakeholders across the local food sectors and supply chains. The organization provides gathered information for developing a potential state-wide food system plan. There are eighteen states nation-wide that have created their own food system plan. Tansley highlighted the members of HEAL Food System Partners who organized a session at the conference focusing on ways to utilize local food production as a way to address food security needs. Lastly, Tansley provided an update on the Urban Agriculture Innovative Production Grant Program. The request to extend the program was submitted to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for a one year no-cost extension. With this extension, it will allow time for a second class of Kane County prospective growers to complete the Master Urban Farmer Training Program, led by U of I Extension. He noted that his team will be working with the extension program staff to make preparations for the Local Food Access projects. If approved, the grant program would be extended through September 2026. Tansley addressed questions and comments from the Committee. Much discussion ensued.

**B. Riding in Kane: Identifying Equine Facilities (Catherine McKenna, Planner / GIS Specialist)**

Dev. GIS Planner McKenna provided an update on Riding in Kane: Identifying Equine Facilities. She reported that Kane County ranks ninth for the number of ponies and horses out of the 102 counties in Illinois. McKenna shared a preliminary map showing businesses related to equine activities. There are a total of 83 private equine businesses and facilities in Kane County.

**8. New Business**

Chairman Juby addressed Senate Bill 1397 requested by Sustainability Coordinator, Powell, to amend the Solid Waste Management Act to create a grant program that would incentivise the use of finished compost, liquid and solid digestate on private and public lands used for commercial farm and specialty farm operations. Juby recommended to review the Bill further with Farm Bureau partners before a decision is made. Much discussion ensued.

**A. Proclamation Declaring Kane County's Support for National Agriculture Day**

KC Executive Committee

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

**9. Reports Placed On File**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED BY VOICE VOTE</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Deborah Allan

**10. Executive Session (if needed)**

None.

**11. Adjournment**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED BY VOICE VOTE</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Rick Williams
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Bill Lenert

This meeting was adjourned at 11:17 a.m.

Rachel Santora  
Recording Secretary