

NYCAMH Advisory Board Minutes
Meeting: 9/11/2025 11:00am – 2:30pm
The Otesaga, Cooperstown, NY

Attendees:

In-Person Steve Clark, Pauline Boyer, Rich Stup, Erika Scott, Christine LaLonde-Mead, Andy Carlson, Dick Peterson, Sue Ackerman, Bill Zittel, Richard Engelbrecht, Liane Hirabayashi, Keith Clark, Allison Flanagan, Renee St. Jacques, Alicia Fletcher, Kitty Gelberg, Liz Callahan, Lisa Ford, Tito Chavez, Brenna Quinn, Kim Gertz, Mandy Roome

Virtual Becky Wiseman, Jim Bittner, Jessica Garcia, Heather Chauncey, James Shuford, Victor Jones, Allison Appleton

Welcome and Introductions

Warm welcome to new NYCAMH staff members Tito Chavez, bilingual ag educator and Brenna Quinn, research assistant. Thank you to Kim Gertz for being our tech support for this meeting. Happy Birthday to Julie Sorensen who sends her regards, but is out of the office today.

Director Report Summary

Please refer to your summary handouts for full details

Federal Funding Update by Erika Scott

NYCAMH's Current Financial Situation:

- Received notice for year 4 from CDC-NIOSH award - \$1,092,702.00
- September 1, 2025 to August 31, 2026
- Subject to 2 CRF 200 as of October 1, 2025

Just in Time Requests:

- NIH National Library of Medicine Grant (clinician's handbook update)
 - 3 year funding totaling \$591,521.00
- CDC NIOSH Conference Grant (IFISH Innovation Exchange)
 - 2 year funding totaling 119,060.00

Additional non-grant funding:

- Dr. Sorensen working on getting ROPS funding thru the US Farm Bill
 - Co-sponsors of the bill are Josh Riley (D-NY-19) and Randy Feenstra (R-IA-4)
 - \$725,000 annually
 - \$500K rebates
 - \$125K promotion/website
 - \$100K hotline administration
 - Bridge funding discussed with CHS, CoBank, and Land O'Lakes
 - Pledge for \$50K from CoBank on August 26th!

New Prospects:

- Discussions with Chobani to expand NYCAMH services, with assistance from FOB
- Dr. Milkovich submitting a K01 Proposal to NIH in October
 - 3 year proposed project, \$460,527.00
- Dr. Hammersley applying for USDA NIFA Rural Economic Development Seed Grant
 - 2 year proposed project, \$300,000

Additional News:

- We have more funding, projects and programs than at the beginning of the year. Currently hired/looking to fill;
 - (2) Research assistants
 - Executive Assistant
 - Administrative Assistant
 - (2) Bilingual Ag safety educator
- Purchased a new mobile clinic van

Board Member Updates by Bill Zittel

After review of the by-laws and timelines created, it is noted that the following board members are due to step down in December 2025. Dick P., Richard E., Andy C. (who has already stepped down) Heartfelt thanks to these gentlemen, who have been with us since the start of the board. We are actively looking for suggestions on ways to keep them involved, if they wish to do so. Richard stated that his feeling, and he believes the others would agree, if we can be useful-please reach out we would be happy to help.

At December's meeting we will go over member requirements and begin taking nominees. Asking that you begin thinking of new nominees to replace their vacancies, and what industries would best serve our board? It was asked that a list of all current members-including the industry be sent to all members to help determine which new industries should be considered.

* Sue Ackerman will send list out with minutes.

Also noted, your presence at these quarterly meetings are essential to the success of the mission. Participation is valued and required. Be proud of making an impact by attending these meeting. If needed, please review our member requirement policy.

New CAWD/NYCAMH Onboarding Curriculum by Rich Stup

Cornell Ag Workforce Development and NYCAMH are partnering on this project and have secured funding to pilot this exciting on-boarding project. Team is Rich Stup, Jay Canzonier, Rachel McCarthy, Bess Lewis from Cornell, as well as Christina Day, Pauline Boyer and Safety Advisors Jim Carabba and Anna Meyerhoff from NYCAMH.

Safety training is essential for new farm employees as soon as they start work. This project is about creating a convenient and fast, basic safety training tool for farms to use when onboarding new employees. This training is a supplement to more advanced, in-person training that farms periodically provide to employees. It will help address the gap for employees that start after/in-between the farms scheduled safety trainings.

The goal is to create four short on-line safety modules, in English and Spanish. The topics chosen are 1) General personal safety-hazard awareness. 2) Intro to equipment safety, and 3) Dairy/animal handling safety. 4) Heat Illness. These topics were chosen using direct producers input, NYCAMH research data and Ed Core educators input, and Cornell's extensive experience.

These will most likely be free, and the delivery method is still being worked on, for example: what platforms are available to use? If you have any suggestions or have experience in a particular platform, please reach out to Pauline Boyer. Also developing ways to get producer feedback and evaluation of the trainings.

Storyboards have been developed. The next step is capturing on-farm video footage. Plans are to have one module complete by January 2026.

Board input:

- Feel this is needed in NY State, there is a lot of material from out west currently.
- Suggest to keep the material general enough that it can be used across industries.
- Evaluation is always tough
- Do keep short
- These would give NYCAMH's ed core support and enable them start training at a more advanced level vs repeating "the basics" over and over.

Farm Partners Update by Heather Chauncey

- Nip, from Pharm Dog USA, is the first one in NYS! He assists in keeping his farmer safe by keeping the herd back during feeding and at gates. He is adjust very well and getting spoiled.
- New rack card for the Farm Partners program has been completed. (Thank you Allison!)
- Farm Family resource one-pager has been updated and is available
- Naloxone training/kit handouts – one year anniversary. NYCAMH has eleven staff trained to administer naloxone use trainings, which include; overdose prevention, naloxone administration, emergency response, and harm reduction.
- Out of Darkness walk happening this weekend - will be distributing naloxone kits again this year.
- Farmers Tribute Fund: 5 cases
- Farmers Emergency Fund: 5 farms
- Continued work with Access VR. Currently working to get a farmer an action track mobile chair.

Afternoon Interactive session

Exploring how USDA changes-both enacted and proposed- are impacting small farms: 4 key areas:

1) \$1 billion in funding for schools and food banks

- Group has no concept of scope of USDA
- Can decrease purchase of local foods
- Less options for consumers of these programs, including retail markets
- Negative impact on:
 - School breakfast and lunch programs
 - Backpack program could be eliminated; leaving some kids with no food on weekends
 - Food pantries and food banks
 - Creates food insecurity
 - Stress on communities
 - CSA's
 - Farmer's Markets
 - Local grocery store chains may go out of business
- SNAP may affect small farms more than big farms
- Chobani supports many food insecure organizations/schools

2) Research facility and forest research stations nationwide

- How do you get the attention of a consolidated group of people?
- Slower response time and too many hurdles - people give up
- Staff left are already overworked
- Issues get centralized, causing uneven distribution of resources
- Far removed from local issues
- Disconnection between need and expertise
- Already hard to get data from regions-this will impact data quality and volume
- How are decisions of locations being made?

3) Proposed cuts to NRCS-Conservation services

- Losing a resource that supports other organizations, and research
- Loss of regionalism, networks, local knowledge
- Local jobs-employees know the people; easier to connect
- Loss of resource for changing climate
- Is DEC or EQIP alternatives?
- State has some incentive programs and will try to pick up slack

4) Proposed \$372 million reduction in FSA funding

- Impacts long -term sustainability of small and beginning farmers, as services most vital to their expansion will not be available
- Disaster assistance has biggest effect
- More disasters and fewer staff to provide support to those impacted

Due to lunch taking longer than anticipated, the last agenda item of the day, Discussion on June's meeting feedback and how to better serve farmers and loggers has been postponed until the next meeting. It is requested that we have time on December's agenda to take care of board business such as voting.

The next meeting is Thursday, December 11. The meeting was adjourned by Bill Zittel at 2:30pm.