



Extension Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
1525 Blue Spruce Drive
Fort Collins, Colorado 80524
(970) 498-6000
www.larimer.org/ext

January 7, 2026
8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

Advisory Board members attending: Xochil Arellano, Kelly Pollard, JoAnn Herkenhoff, K-Lynn Cameron, Kara Rudnick, Margaret Long

Commissioners' Office: Commissioner John Kefalas

Extension staff attending: Cary Weiner, Andy Weakland, Lisa Auer, Roxanne Bashor, Jenna Brager, Analecia Vasquez, Alison O'Connor, Rachel Wildman, Maggie Switzer, Lexie Casper, Bailey Schilling, Jessica Callen

Guest: Sharel Cameron

CALL TO ORDER: at 8:04 a.m.

AGENDA REVIEW: Agenda approved with amendments. Moving Presentation to after Commissioner Report.

APPROVAL OF LAST MEETING MINUTES: November 5, 2025 meeting minutes were approved.

COMMITTEE FEEDBACK: None.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER LIAISON REPORT/COMMENTS:

- Commissioner Kefalas is the new Commissioner Liaison to the Extension Advisory Committee.
- Commissioner Shaddock-McNally is the new Commissioner Chair.
- The MOU between Larimer County and Colorado State University was approved by the commissioners at their last session.
- Happy New Year to everyone. There are lots of issues that the commissioners will be working on for Larimer County in the new year. Issues that will be addressed are food insecurity in Larimer County and adapting to new federal laws and regulations that will impact us.

- As a reminder, Referendum 1B (childcare) was successful, but Referendum 1A (transportation) failed during the last election cycle.
- Commissioner joke of the day: Where do gnomes buy their tools? Gnome Depot!

INFORMATION ITEMS: (10 minutes, highlights)

4-H: (Bailey, Britney, Rachel, Roxanne)

- We hosted our first 4-H Discovery Day on December 23, 2025, with a total of 26 youth in attendance, ages five to ten. 5-10. With the help of senior 4-H members and 4-H volunteers, the youth were able to explore 6 different project areas throughout the day, which included entomology, visual arts, home design and decor, dairy, scrapbooking, and global citizenship.
- The record books for the livestock programs have been revamped.
- Current enrollment numbers as of today are: 307 members, 120 volunteers and 20 cloverbuds as of this morning. Enrollment is open until February 15, 2026.
- Bailey will be assisting with the upcoming annual Stock Growers banquet.
- Beef Tag-in is scheduled for February 17, 2026
- Rachel shared that we have two teams headed to FCS Nationals (Skillathon and Consumer Decision Making).
- Question from Commissioner Kefalas: Where are we in terms of membership and
- Volunteers? Answer: Last year we were number two in the state in terms of membership and number one in terms of volunteers.

Ag & Natural Resources: (Jess)

- Jess is hosting the Grant, Loan, and Grow class at The Ranch on January 15, 2026, from 8:30am-2:30pm. There will be a great lineup of speakers from NRCS, CDA, Mad Ag, FSA, etc.
- Jess is working with CSU OEE Online to create a Grant and Grow CSU Online Class that producers can take throughout the year. The course will be \$35 and will hopefully open up Fall 2026.
- Working with Agrisolar Consulting to host the Agrivoltaic Workshop for CSU Extension and Agriculture Experiment Station Researchers on January 11, 2026 at the CSU Research station in Grand Junction. This workshop is a part of a larger CDA grant proposal to educate Extension and research staff on agrivoltaics to support producers across the state.
- Farm2LocalBiz is scheduled for February 5, 2026 at Block One Events in Fort Collins. Jess is supporting Maggie with preparation for this large event. We have 18 producers with a booth at the event and we are hoping to have more than 100 businesses attend.
- Jess is on the conference planning committee for the Colorado Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association Conference. The conference is scheduled for February 24 and 25, 2026 in Westminster. There will be sessions on mental health, agritourism, and producer stories of overcoming challenges.

Community Development: (Lisa)

- The Spanish Aging Mastery class ended in November. There were ten participants who graduated. We hosted a holiday party in December and will continue to host monthly alumni groups this year.
- Lisa is receiving \$10,000 in 2026 from the state FLTI team for facilitating the statewide Civic Learning Lab on family and school partnerships. Additionally, the funds will support FLTI programming, including Civic Learning Labs or the full 20-week FLTI session.
- Lisa will host the statewide School Family Partnership Civic Learning Lab in the spring. This is a ten week program and there will be a dedicated focus on recruiting Thompson School District families.
- We have purchased Pocket Talk devices to aid with event, class and meeting interpretation.
- Lisa continues to support the Nueva Vida mobile home park with monthly community meetings. The park has undergone major infrastructure updates and will work with the community on new rules and regulations.
- Question from Commissioner Kefalas: Will there be a FLTI 20 week class?
Answer: We will be doing the first ten sessions in the fall of 2026 and the second ten sessions in the spring of 2027.

Farmers' Market and Food Systems: (Maggie)

- See Presentation for updates.

Food Safety: (Analecia)

- Retail Food Safety - Year end totals:
 - CFPM: 226 total participants with an 83% passing rate. Full class and review total participation with 85% pass rate. All other participation (i.e self study and exam only) 48 total participants with a 77% pass rate. These numbers show that our full class training is still the best choice for participants to learn and retain the knowledge.
 - FSW: 104 total participants via in person and virtual training. The program has had four requested classes in Spanish held at the business locations throughout Larimer County. Two repeat clients have requested private classes again.
 - To accommodate the industry, we also offered private classes. This appeals to location, full staff training or availability. There were 11 CFPM private full class trainings, five of those were held in Spanish, with five of the 11 held at the location of the business. This met the needs for the business for availability and accessibility. The businesses were The Forks Mercantile, El Diablo, Hays Market, Cheley Camps. Several of these businesses have done recurring training with this model. For FSW, we held seven requested classes, three of which were in Spanish. Five were held at the location of the business, also meeting their needs for availability and accessibility.

- Funding opportunities for the industry -
 - LIGHTR Grant - Local, Industry, Grant, Hire, Train, Retain
 - In partnership with City of Fort Collins Economic Health Office and Larimer County Economic and Workforce Development
 - \$10k to help food industry put owners, managers, shift leaders through the CFPM program to build their business
 - Health Department Vouchers -
 - In partnership with the LCHDE, we take some of the money from civil penalties that retail food businesses have to pay if they are late on renewing their licensing. A portion of the money goes back into the industry to help with education and training, as well as assisting with compliance with the new 2022 Food Code.
 - \$5,000.00 to help the food industry put owners, managers, and shift leaders through the CFPM program to build their businesses.
 - Both forms of funding ideally to be spent by March 2026.
- Consumer Food Safety -
 - Conducted our first consumer training class for the Aspen Club in Fort Collins. The class topic was handling food safely and was attended by seven people. We discussed the basics of food safety along with hosting gatherings. This time of year is especially important as everyone is getting together for the holidays to celebrate and eat! We want to make sure we keep our family and friends safe as well as our community.
 - Analecia is registered for Master Food Safety training beginning January 15, 2026.
 - Cottage Food Safety train the trainer will be conducted in the first quarter of 2026. Analecia is finishing up her training and will be certified to teach in person training for Cottage Food.

Health and Well-Being: (Christa)

- As of January 1, 2026, the Senior Access Points website is no longer active. The site will redirect to a web page with information about the change and a link to the Larimer County Office on Aging website and resource guide.
- Lexie and Christa are working with Partnership for Age Friendly Communities and Office on Aging to develop a campaign for older adults and caregivers to share information about local resources and encourage preparing for changes as we age. The social media campaign is set to run in April 2026.
- Christa worked with partners in Red Feather Lakes to host a resource fair during the Thanksgiving Food Pantry at Chapel in the Pines Church on November 24, 2025. Twelve organizations offered services and resources at the event. CSU Extension provided craft activities, food/drinks, and information about 4-H programming. Walgreen Pharmacy provided 38 vaccines (mostly COVID and Flu); UCHealth provided free blood pressure checks and information about Aspen Club; LCDHE provided well water testing supplies and general LCDHE resources; LC Office on Aging provided Answers on Aging resources; LC Behavioral Health and Health District of Northern Larimer County gave out information about mental health resources.

- Radon Action Month is January and we will be providing 569 radon test kits through an [online ordering form](#) and social media campaign. We will also have a joint press release with Larimer County Health and Environment. We have also set aside 75 test kits for Spanish speaking residents and Christa will work with Lisa on outreach to this population.
- Christa and Maggie developed a new presentation, Winter Harvest Wonders: Cooking with Colorado Produce in the Cold-Season, for the Loveland Museum's V is for Veggie exhibit. They presented to eight community members on December 12, 2025 and received great feedback about the presentation and recipe demo. Loveland Museum staff are interested in our offerings and will let us use their space for education.

Horticulture: (Alison)

- The CMG Annual Banquet was held on December 13, 2025 and we had a great turnout! Nearly 100 people attended (about 75 Master Gardeners), including Kara and Xochil from the Advisory Board. We also had all three Commissioners attend and say words. It was a really heartwarming event. In 2025, the 127 Larimer County CMGs, accomplished:
 - 5,763 volunteer hours - valued at \$223,000 in services to Larimer County
 - 2,087 continuing education hours
 - 8,042 direct contacts
- Other CMG accomplishments:
 - Donations via the Grow & Give program topped 11,380 pounds!
 - Evergreen Elders hosted 15 classes and over 150 participants - these all had a therapeutic horticulture focus and worked primarily with older adults facing cognitive issues
 - The final results of the Winter Squash Trial has been published and is available on the [Larimer County Extension](#) website; next year, the CMGs will be researching cherry tomatoes and zucchini. We'll be partnering with Douglas County to have replicate sites.
- Asian Jumping Worm was confirmed in Denver. This is a non-native worm species that can destroy soil structure and tilth; a webinar will be held on January 29, 2026 for volunteers, the Green Industry, and the general public to learn more about the biology and potential effects of this species.
- Alison will be teaching at the Professional Development Institute at CSU in January, as well as classes at the Gardens on Spring Creek and Fort Collins Nursery. She is also doing four classes at ProGreen in Denver in February and supporting Green School.

Natural Resources: (Jenna)

- Native Plant Master Program
 - Introductory meetings with instructors to plan for upcoming classes and understand program goals and audiences.
 - Additional new classes this season: 1) Daylong - Introduction to plant identification and keying, in person at High Plains Environmental Center, 2) 3-session course on alpine flowers at Rocky Mountain National Park.
 - Moving Red Mountain Open Space course to Eagle's Nest Open Space, at the instructor's request.

- Onboarding three new instructors/co-instructors.
- Water
 - Introductory meetings with water professionals at Larimer County and Colorado Water Center.
 - Attended Buy & Dry Seminar in Fort Morgan, 12/17.
 - Planning to attend South Platte Basin Roundtable meetings.
- Small Acreage Management
 - Attended Healthy Horses Healthy Lands Workshop, Management of Invasive and Noxious Weeds Class.
 - Planning to take CSU online classes on topics including soil, water, forage plants, and native plants to prepare for site visits beginning in spring.

General/Other: (Cary)

- Cary will be serving on an interim basis on the Poudre River Fund steering committee.
- 2025 reporting will be out soon. There will be some marketing material available as well that Lexie will be working on.
- Advisory Committee members Xochi, Kara, K-Lynn's terms are all up and will need to re-apply coming up in February.

PRESENTATION: (Farmers' Market and Food Systems - Maggie Switzer)

- Please refer to the PowerPoint presentation for further information.

DISCUSSION:

- Marketing and Communications Plan Feedback.
- Question from Commissioner Kefalas: Any considerations in changing some of the "buzz" words like "equity and inclusion" that the federal government has stipulated that we should not use? Answer from Lexie: As a county initiative we have gone through our website and removed those words. We will make sure to go through the final version of this document so as to not trigger any push back about the language used.
- Appreciation of the tone and the breath of the document by multiple committee members.

OFFICER ELECTIONS:

- JoAnn Herkenhoff was nominated, seconded and accepted as Chair.
- Kelly Pollard was nominated, seconded and accepted as Vice Chair.

UPCOMING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

- Monthly posting of physical flyers. This is a request from a brand awareness perspective. Locations will be limited to a strategic process and monthly flyers can be emailed and/or printed once a month. We are also looking for sign ups for locations that need to be distributed.
- 4-H has a lot of physical records that date back to the 1920's and 1930's. We are looking for volunteers to scan these so we can keep them on record.

- Two or more volunteers are needed for the Grant, Loan and Grow event as well as the Farm 2 Local Biz event. Please reach out to Jess if you can help with either or both of these events.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS: None

MEETING ADJOURNED: 10:00 a.m.

NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED: March 4, 2026 at 8:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Andy Weakland
January 6, 2026