

Livingston County CARES Board of Directors Meeting
Monday, March 9, 2026 at 3:30 pm
Zoom Meeting

Attendance:

C. Bolesky, J. Cope, D. Emerson, H. Ferrero, H. Harvey, A. Herman, K. Kallio, E. Lee, D. Martin, T. Matthews, S. Miner, S. Olbert, N. Palumbo, M. Rees

Call to Order

- T. Matthews called the 9 March 2026 meeting to order at 3:31pm.

Approval of Minutes

- Approval of the minutes of the January 26, 2026 Board Meeting was moved by D. Emerson, seconded by H. Harvey and approved unanimously.

Officer Reports

President Matthews

- Matthews presented the President's report (see Appendix I)
- Matthews drew attention to several points in the report, including:
 - Livingston Cares will be present at the volunteer service day clean ups on 25 April in partnership with Geneseo Rotary, including work at Temple Hill Cemetery and the senior housing facility on South Street.
 - H. Harvey volunteered to reach out to United Way to connect Livingston Cares volunteers to their Day of Caring events on May 21.
 - There is an additional need for volunteers to assist with Gumbo to Go on 26 March.
 - Congratulations to those nominations to CARES Awards nominees, including board members H. Harvey and T. Wilson.

Vice President Palumbo

- Website updates are ongoing.
- Trips:
 - Trips for March are moving forward successfully. Training for all volunteers is complete.
 - Palumbo noted that the Puerto Rico and Give Kids the World trips were at capacity, but the Biloxi and North Carolina trips did not fill. There was discussion of the reasons for this and implications for future trip planning.
 - There was discussion of the need to remind volunteers to share photos

from trips with Livingston Cares.

Secretary Cope

- No report.

Treasurer Emerson

- The Treasurer reviewed the organization's financial reports. It was noted that this report was generated on 28 February and therefore does not include the cost of Give Kids the World airfare. The substantial increases in airline ticket costs for all trips will put the organization over budget this year.
- Geneseo Student Association funding was fully spent to support students on the service trips. This included a carryover of \$1,400 from last year and an additional \$8,600 contributed this year.

Committee and Team Reports

April 10, 2026 Volunteer Recognition Awards Event: L. Burns

- On behalf of L. Burns, T. Matthews reported that planning for the event is moving forward successfully. Nominations have been reviewed and invitations have been mailed out. The committee is working with the Big Tree Inn to firm up the menu and other logistics.
- E. Lee has reached out to the Livingston County News about coverage of the event.

Report on Volunteer/Agency Connections Hub Team: A. Ellis

- On behalf of A. Ellis, T. Matthews reported that the committee has rescheduled the program on the United Way volunteer portal. This was originally scheduled for January but has been moved to Thursday, 23 April from 11:30-1:00 at the Government Center. Lunch will be provided. Board members are encouraged to suggest organizations that might be invited to attend.

Report on Reducing Transportation Barriers Fund: H. Ferrero

- There was discussion of publicity, fundraising, and logistics of the program.

Report of the Marketing Team: A. Herman

- Advertisements for the Gumbo fundraiser have been posted to social media.

Report of the Fundraising (SEFA & ROC The Day) Team: E. Lee

- The committee is awaiting the list of donors who contributed through the annual SEFA campaign (16 total donors).

Report of the Disaster Response Team: K. Kallio

- No report.

Report of Events & Gumbo Team on March Gumbo: B. Donohue

- On behalf of the committee, T. Matthews reported that everything is moving ahead smoothly, but there is still a need for additional volunteers.

Future of Livingston CARES Information on Grants for Community Improvement: J. Cope

- J. Cope reviewed a proposed framework for piloting Livingston CARES Community Improvement Grants (see Appendix II). With board approval, this would be launched in April with a deadline in mid-May and decisions announced in June.
- There was discussion of several issues including and a suggestion to offer a second round in September if funds for the grant program are not fully expended.
- A motion to use \$5000 budgeted for Livingston County Disaster Relief (local area) to fund and implement the pilot of the Livingstone County CARES Community Improvement Grants and to create a new working group to review applications and administer awards was made by J. Cope, seconded by K. Kallio, and passed unanimously.

New Business:

Livingston County CARES branded tote bags.

- D. Emerson reported that at the awards event planning committee meetings, there was a suggestion to purchase branded tote bags as a giveaway intended to raise awareness of Livingston County CARES. If ordered soon, these totes would be available to distribute to attendees of the April 10 awards event.
- A motion to approve the expenditure of no more than \$475 to purchase 250 reusable fabric bags with the Livingston CARES logo imprinted on them from

4-Imprint was made by D. Emerson, seconded by E. Lee, and passed unanimously.

Adjournment

- A motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:40pm was made by H. Harvey, seconded by D. Emerson, and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by J. Cope, Secretary

Appendix I: President's Report

Livingston County CARES President's Report 3-9-26

Greetings from Geneseo and Livingston CARES. Looking forward to seeing you on zoom on Monday afternoon at 3:30 pm.

Congratulations CARES Awards Finalists: Most of you know that Holly Harvey and Tom Wilson have been volunteers for Livingston CARES for many years and have led numerous service trips. What you may not know is that both of them are also volunteers in many other community organizations that are making a difference in Livingston County. The other finalists include Cultures Learning Together, Stephen Rapp from Nunda, Ron Niedermaier from Groveland and Steve Weiner from Geneseo. Lisa Burns and the Awards Team selected the recipients and have just mailed invitations to the April 10 Awards Reception to the six award finalists, the 24 nominees and their nominators, the Board of Supervisors, community leaders, and our Board of Directors. Please respond to the invitation at <https://livingstoncountycares.org/rsvp> **asap** so we will have a good count for the Big Tree. Lisa will provide an update on the Awards Event on Monday.

March 2026 Service Trips: Our four teams of volunteers will be traveling on Sunday, March 15 and returning to New York on Saturday, March 21 (except our Puerto Rico team that will be returning on Friday night, March 20 due to the excessive airfares on Saturday and Sunday). Thank you to our team leaders and volunteers: Andrew Herman to Puerto Rico with six students, Joe Cope to Biloxi with Craig Bolesky and four students, Shea Donohue to Kissimmee, Florida with spouse Katherine Donohue and twelve students, and Holly Harvey to Montreat, NC with alum Domenick Pony Polzella and community leader David Klingman and one student volunteer. We did not fill all the possible slots for Montreat and Biloxi. After the volunteers return, we will do a review of the service trips and locations and costs before making commitments for next year.

Volunteer/Agency Connections Team: In January, Angela Ellis and the members of this team scheduled a workshop with United Way to help other non-profits get connected to their free software designed to help agencies and volunteers connect for service opportunities. The workshop was cancelled due to the snow storm and the low response rate. Angella is working with United Way to reschedule the event and possibly offer it as a lunchtime workshop later in April.

Community Service Days: Last year, Livingston CARES board members participated in two service days—one with the county in April and a second in May with the United Way Day of Caring. This year, we will partner with the Geneseo Rotary for either April 18 or 25 (date to be determined) to work at Temple Hill Cemetery and return to the Upper South Street Senior Housing at 600 Country Lane in Geneseo in May (date to be

determined) on a weekday. We are looking for a board member(s) to take charge of these two events. Any volunteers?

Gumbo to Go: Brenda and George and the events committee are ready for the spring 2025 Gumbo on Thursday, March 26. We need your help to sell tickets. Please share the attached flier with your family and friends and put it out on your social media. Encourage people to use venmo to order their dinners.

[Volunteer Sign-up Form](#)

E-Newsletter: Debby Emerson is planning to send out the next newsletter right after our board meeting with short messages about Gumbo and the photo archives project,

State Employees Federated Appeal (SEFA) Campaign: Although we are still waiting for the report on the donors (so we can write them a thank you note), the 2025 calendar year donations to Livingston CARES doubled over the previous year to over \$5,000.00 from 16 state employees. Thank you to the college employees who did an outstanding job promoting SEFA this year. Livingston CARES is one of the top charities selected by employees.

Purchase of Livingston CARES Bags: This motion from Debby Emerson, Angela Ellis, Michele Rees and Lisa Burns to approve the expenditure of no more than \$475 to purchase 250 reusable fabric bags with the Livingston CARES logo imprinted on them from 4-Imprint. Bags will be blue, logo will be white. Bags are the same size as reusable Wegmans shopping bags.

<https://www.4imprint.com/product/106836-1513/Value-Grocery-Tote-15-x-13>

Bags would be available at Gumbo to Go, the Volunteer Recognition Event, and other LCC events. We would have them available to people for a donation (in other words, whatever they want to give). The bags will cost us \$1.85 each so it will certainly be a fundraising opportunity.

CARES Community Improvement Grants: Our Futures Team under the leadership of Joe Cope has put together an exciting proposal to offer small grants to individuals and organizations to help with community improvement projects. Last year, the board approved an allocation in our budget of \$5,000.00 for disaster recovery efforts and another \$5,000.00 for local projects in Livingston County. Since there were no local disasters this past year (the previous year we donated funds to the Canisteo Flood Fund), many of you suggested that we should find another way to give back to the County. The Executive Committee and the Futures Team agreed that we should develop a grants program to support community projects. We sent the proposed project with the January minutes last week to give everyone a chance to review the plan. The document is included in the board packet for our meeting on Monday.

Appendix II: Livingston County CARES Community Improvement Grants

Livingston County CARES Community Improvement Grants

Since 2005, Livingston County Cares has assisted communities and individuals locally, regionally, nationwide, and globally in humanitarian projects. In an effort to advance work that specifically benefits the residents of Livingston County, New York, the organization is pleased to launch CARES Community Improvement Grants. This program is intended to provide financial assistance to individuals or groups working to support humanitarian causes in Livingston County.

[Link to application](https://forms.gle/kNuxnagJ5EWBhGgM9) [link is: <https://forms.gle/kNuxnagJ5EWBhGgM9>]

Grant Information:

Basic Information

Livingston County Cares plans to grant a total of up to ten projects that benefit communities in Livingston County. These grants are funded out of a \$5,000 earmark in the Livingston County Cares annual budget.

Applications may be submitted by an individual or group for the purpose of:

- Delivering a community event, program, or service
- Addressing basic community needs such as housing, food security, other critical services
- Purchasing equipment, supplies, and/or labor to advance a project or installation
- Publicizing an existing community-facing project or event

The main audience for LCCares-supported projects should be communities in Livingston County

Livingston County Cares funding may be combined with funding from other sources (e.g., other nonprofits, grants, municipalities, etc.).

These grants are intended to provide assistance to locally-based efforts that provide collective benefits to the inhabitants of communities in Livingston County through a specific project or initiative. At this time, Livingston County Cares will *not* support grants that are intended to:

- Assist individuals (or individual families)
- Provide general charitable contributions that are not connected to a specific project

- Support political lobbying or campaign activities
- Advocate for a particular faith tradition
- Advance ideologies or projects that discriminate against, disrespect, or otherwise harm the dignity of community members
- Support administrative and/or overhead costs such as salary, ongoing maintenance, or other operational costs

Applications will be accepted through 22 May 2026, with decisions announced by 19 June 2026. Recipients are expected to complete their proposed project by 1 April 2027.

Examples of preferred projects include, but are not limited to:

- An ongoing or one-time community workshop or program (e.g., technology literacy, tax preparation, etc.)
- An installation, display, or other facility (e.g., a micro library or food pantry, a community garden, an interpretive display, etc.)
- Revitalization projects (e.g., renovation of a community resource or recovery work).
- Publicity for an ongoing public service (e.g., enhanced marketing or website development for an existing public service project or initiative)

Other Information

Livingston County Cares provides funding support only. In providing grant funding, the organization takes on no costs or liabilities associated with budget overages, ongoing upkeep, insurance, or other risks associated with the project. Proposers should keep this in mind when developing their application.

Applications will be reviewed by a subcommittee of the Livingston County Cares board. This subcommittee reserves the right to partially fund projects or request additional information before proceeding with a grant. Rejected applications may be resubmitted in future years.

By 1 April 2027, awardees should submit a final report and expense breakdown. This should document the project or event so that information can be shared at the annual Livingston County Cares Award Volunteer Recognition Event. Unexpended funds should also be returned at this time.

Awardees should ensure that Livingston County Cares funding is acknowledged as part of the project and in any media or social media coverage. Awardees are encouraged to

share photographs, media clippings, or other information with Livingston County Cares. Livingston County Cares reserves the right to use any of these materials in its own marketing and communications.

Awardees will be invited to and acknowledged at the annual CARES Award Volunteer Recognition Event.

How to Apply

[Applications](https://forms.gle/kNuxnagJ5EWBhGgM9) [link is <https://forms.gle/kNuxnagJ5EWBhGgM9>] are submitted online and should include:

A narrative of the intended project, including a description of outcomes, the intended audience, and the intended impact (no more than 500 words).

Information on the applicant(s) and examples of their previous public service, volunteerism, or other work that benefits communities (no more than 500 words).

A line item budget. This should:

- Indicate how Livingston County Cares funds will be expended.
- Include a budget for the full project if Livingston County Cares funding is supplemented by other funds. This should include the full costs associated with the project, information on other sources of funding, and a clear indication of what component(s) the CARES Community Improvement Grant will support.

Information on ways that your project could move forward if LCC can only partially fund your proposal.

Letter(s) of support from partners. If a project relies on approval or other resources from a third party or external agency (e.g., local parks department, library, town or village board, school district, etc.), documentation of support from all affected partners is required.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Who can apply?

Grant applications may be submitted by any individual or organization living or operating in Livingston County, NY.

What types of projects are supported?

The CARES Community Improvement Grants may be used to support a range of projects that serve the inhabitants of Livingston County, NY. These may be new initiatives or expanded support for existing programs. Examples might include (but are not limited to) a service project organized by a local group or organization, an Eagle Scout or Girl Scout Gold Award project, creation of a shared resource such as a community garden or little library, renovation of an existing resource or facility such as an upgrade to a public space, or enhanced publicity for an ongoing service such as a medical loan closet or literacy project.

What types of projects are not supported?

The CARES Community Improvement Grants are not intended to provide relief or assistance to single individuals or families. The grants are also not appropriate for activities such as political lobbying (for both causes and specific candidates), general charitable contributions that are not connected to a specific project, membership recruitment, or advocacy for a specific religious faith tradition. Grants are not intended to provide support for administrative or overhead costs such as staffing, ongoing costs, or maintenance. Grants cannot support work that seeks to advance ideologies that discriminate against, disrespect, or otherwise harm the dignity of community members.

Can funds be used to support projects outside Livingston County?

The aim of these funds is to support community efforts in Livingston County, NY and the main audience must be residents of the county.

Can funds be used to improve a public facility, such as something in a local park, library, or playground?

CARES Community Improvement Grants can be used for this purpose, but all permissions and logistics should be secured in advance. Applications must include a letter of support from the collaborating office(s) or agency.

What is the timeline for the project?

Funding will be distributed in early June 2026, and projects should be complete by 1 April 2027, but extensions are possible.

Can a project be extended?

Awardees should strive to complete projects by 1 April 2027, but if an extension is needed, Livingston County CARES will work with awardees to extend the timeline.

How much funding can an applicant apply for?

There is no maximum amount, but applicants should be mindful that Livingston County CARES has earmarked a total of \$5000 for these grants and hopes to award several projects.

What specific items can be funded by the grant?

Grants funds can be used for equipment and supplies, one-time contracting of specialist labor, publicity, and hospitality.

Can these funds be pooled with other funding sources?

Yes! For particularly costly projects, we encourage applicants to pursue other funding sources. CARES Community Improvement Grants can be used to support a part of a larger project.

How will awardees receive funds?

Livingston County CARES will distribute the full amount of the grant shortly after announcement of the awarded grants in early June 2026.

What happens if an awardee does not expend all funds?

A report on the project is due by 1 April 2027. Funds that are not expended should be returned at that point, but we will work with awardees if the funding can be used to advance other related work.

What happens if a project goes over budget?

Livingston County CARES provides a one time grant award and cannot top off funds in case of overages. Project managers should take this into account when planning and administering the project.

Will future grants be offered?

This is a pilot program organized by Livingston County CARES. We plan to assess the grant program and will likely offer similar funding opportunities on an annual basis going forward.

If there are future grants, can a previous awardee reapply?

We welcome applications in future cycles. However, applicants should be mindful of the fact that these grants are one-time awards and are not intended to provide ongoing maintenance or support for projects.