



Lancaster County Agricultural Society, Inc.

A Nebraska non-profit corporation, designated as 501 (c) (3) by the IRS and separate county-level political subdivision created under Nebraska law in 1870 to promote agriculture & youth.

MINUTES

Board of Directors Monthly Meeting

Thursday, August 19, 2021 at 7:30pm

In Person – Lancaster Room

Business Center entrance N side of Pavilion 1

Lancaster Event Center Fairgrounds, 4100 N 84th Street, Lincoln, NE 68507

1. Call the meeting to order and proof of due notice of meeting and open meeting notice posted
 - *The meeting was called to order at 7:37 p.m.*
2. Roll Call
 - Present
 - Kendra Ronnau
 - Karen Rutt
 - John Cooper
 - Tom Messick
 - Jennifer Cusick-Rawlinson
 - Lynn Hagan
 - Absent
 - Ron Dowding
 - Ron Suing
 - Bryce Doeschot
3. Approval of minutes from July regular board meeting
 - *Cusick-Rawlinson moved to approve the minutes from the July 8, 2021 regular board meeting. Messick seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously on a 6-0 vote.*
4. Approval of financial report for June, Approval of checks through July– Martin
 - *Cusick-Rawlinson moved to approve June 2021 financials with an amendment for the property tax receipt portion of the financial statements to say “actual property tax receipts” instead of “estimated property tax receipts”. Rutt seconded, and the motion was passed unanimously on a 6-0 vote.*
 - *Cusick-Rawlinson moved to approve July checks in the amount of \$436,954.73. Messick seconded, and the motion was passed unanimously on a 6-0 vote.*
5. Update on audit – Martin
 - We are currently waiting to hear back from auditors regarding the financials. The deadline for finalizing the audit is in September before the annual budget is due to the State, the audit has been delayed vs. May deadline as timing coincides with auditor’s busy tax season which Martin will

address with auditor before next year.

- Bruce Gubser, LEC's financial consultant, is currently working on the annual FY22 State budget due on September 20th.

6. Officer and Committee reports

- President (Ronnau), Vice President (Dowding), Secretary (Cooper), Treasurer (Rutt)
- Active Committee Reports: Fund Development (Rawlinson), NHSFR (Cooper) – none planned
- Inactive Committees as needed: Personnel (Ronnau), Grievance (Cooper), Strategic Planning (Rawlinson)
 - **President (Ronnau)**. Nothing of significance to report, but Ronnau wanted to reiterate how proud she is of LEC staff and board members for making the rodeo and fair a success. She also stressed the need for everyone to be vigilant as COVID-19 and the Delta variant worsen.
 - **Treasurer (Rutt)**. Nothing to report.
 - **Secretary (Cooper)**. Nothing to report.

7. 2021 Fair De-briefing (All)

- High-level early debrief how fair went
 - There was one good night at the Attraction Zone during first four days, but hot weather and storms had a negative effect on overall attendance. Seemed overall attendance at the fair was also down due to other fairs happening at the same time.
 - The bands were happy to be there, played good music, and were thankful for the shade the covered stage provided. Going forward, we may want to cut down on the number of bands. Three bands in a night seemed to be excessive, so two bands in a night may be more ideal. Moreover, having live music four nights in a row also seems like a bit much; having music just on Friday and Saturday night with 2 bands per night seems much more reasonable. In terms of attracting an audience, some bands did better than others with rock and country music being particularly popular. Stage workers did a great job and were easy to work with. Jamie Bauman loved bands/music and would have loved to see the success of the show.
 - There was a good turnout for the watermelon feed, but a greater variety of food vendors would help enhance the quality of the fair. The BBQ vendors served delicious food, but were way too high priced. Food trucks are popular, but can be difficult to recruit because they can make more money elsewhere (plus the pandemic has caused a shortage in food truck staff).
 - Trade show attendance was very low, so need to figure out how to increase traffic there.
 - Motorsports attendance was strong for Demo Derby & Figure 8 Races, Dirt Drag last Saturday seemed to have competing shows going against it.
 - Horse show classes as well as the carnival seemed to go well.
 - Some spectators noted that the fairgrounds were dirtier than usual compared to last year, but that is to be expected with the rodeo cleanup happening days before the fair.
 - LEC staff seemed to have a great attitude and moved lines along very quickly.
 - 4-H/Extension did not have the volunteers they usually do this year which caused a few issues.
 - Overall, the fair went well and people had fun, but there was a lot of downtime on weekdays daytime where visitors expect to see animals/activity, so need to continue to look at the fair format.
 - A few instances occurred at the fair where teenagers caused trouble possibly motivated to get social media views. LEC will need continue to plan for such behavior in the future in partnership with carnival and LPD.
- Premium Auction – Dowding
 - *Dowding absent from meeting; nothing to report.*
- 2022 Fair Dates— August 4-13, 2022
 - approval by board to start working on trade show/food vendor, national attraction bookings research using these dates & share these as “hold the date” on web site, with 4-H
 - *Cooper moved to approve July 28 – August 6 as the 2022 Super Fair date. Hagan seconded, and the motion passed unanimously on a 6-0 vote.*

8. Extension Update (Karen Wobig)
 - *Wobig absent from meeting; nothing to report.*
9. Communication from the public (5-minute limit per person)
 - *No members from the public present.*
10. Business Development Update (Kraeger)
 - NHSFR Trade Show
 - There was \$357,000 in booth space rentals, which is fairly close to the projected \$400,000 in booth space rentals.
 - Living Quarters Trailer vendors were moved inside, which they greatly enjoyed and said they would even be willing to pay extra for next time.
 - Vendors had really great sales overall, and the rodeo personnel also thought the show went well. Seemed to be a lot of local shoppers in addition to the actual rodeo perf attendees.
 - 2021 Sponsorships – Rodeo, Fair
 - The Super Fair sponsorship goal was met and is up 10% from 2019.
 - Kawasaki is considering continuing a partnership with us in the future. The Mules were very helpful to drive around the fair, but some suffered damage. Barricades need to be not so tight next time to make it easier to navigate between them and prevent damage.
 - Sponsorship campaign to follow-up on Rodeo momentum
 - Kraeger is working on a letter of intent to send to businesses to have more leverage as LEC prepares for the 2026 and 2027 NHSRF rodeo.
 - Work is being done to identify and recruit potential sponsors, especially bigger ones (i.e. Lincoln Industries, Speedway Motors, etc.), for the next rodeo.
 - The need to fundraise super early on for larger events is critical to ensure LEC has proper funding for future events.
 - When pursuing potential sponsorships, staff must be fully prepared with clear, customizable options to increase the chance of successful conversion.
 - Demo Derby proposed Fall 2021 – for board approval if LEC-hosted
 - Kraeger gave a brief description of the event, but staff has already decided too late to do this fall; will bring LEC-hosted events to board for approval e.g. in the new Grandstand may have more possibilities going forward
11. NHSFR Preliminary Results (Dickerson/Rook)
 - Tickets high level results
 - Ticket sales exceeded expectations. LEC doubled wristband sales compared to the Rock Springs, Wyoming rodeo. Individual ticket sales were also very high for most of the evening shows and sellout on last night.
 - Community/Spectators/Rodeo Contestant Preliminary Feedback
 - Weeknights had very high perf attendance compared to past NHSFR locations
 - Spectators thought kids were very good at the sport, and they also appreciated that there were two arenas so they could watch constant action.
 - Lots of comments from local citizens, businesses seeing rodeo guests all over town including downtown
 - Next steps includes Impact Study by UNL, Rodeo Association financial reconciliation, Construction Grant pay request
12. Operations Director Update (Rook)
 - LEC operations / Guest Services team focuses
 - LEC operations and guest services will continue cleanup efforts from the fair and rodeo.
 - Staffing is another priority. Managers need to figure out which team members are staying and which ones are leaving as well as how many more staff members to hire. It will be difficult to recruit new staff members since the work is not always pleasant and the hours are not

- regular.
- High-level managers would ideally be involved in budget formation efforts.
- There is currently a new Ops and Guest Services teams' evaluation system/document in place to guide training and earned pay increases that was initiated just before rodeo.
- FMCA late August 2022 preview – facility requirements
 - We will need to worry about flies after the fair/horse shows, but LEC is currently working with several companies to address this issue.
 - P4 will need to be carpeted.
 - Food and beverages will be served at the event & source of revenue
 - LEC will need to make sure trash cans are empty, but FMCA is ultimately responsible for everything else (i.e. lighting, sound, check in, parking etc.) for running the event.

13. Managing Director Update (Dickerson)

- Farm Show RFP timeline, COVID operating update/outlook, non-operating team focuses
 - Ag Expo will not be asking for RFP presentations until after the farm show (in December).
 - The LEC team has reverted back to wearing masks indoors in confined spaces (including office personnel) due to the rapid spread of COVID-19 in Lancaster County.
 - Signs will be changed throughout the facility to recommend that patrons wear masks regardless of their vaccination status.
 - The break room is now closed, and the office expansion into Lincoln Room is opening up again to allow for more social distancing among office staff.
 - No COVID fees will be implemented at this time for events.
 - Funding will be a major focus for the fair going forward. The goal is to work with community leaders (i.e. state senators, lobbyists, governor, city council, etc.) to assist with recouping ongoing COVID damages and long term funding support for the fairgrounds.

14. EXECUTIVE SESSION – NHSFR Contract Payment Negotiations

- *Hagan moved to go into the executive session. Cusick-Rawlinson seconded, and the motion was passed unanimously on a 6-0 vote. The executive session began at 10:14 p.m.*
- *Messick moved to leave the executive session. Hagan seconded, and the motion was passed unanimously on a 6-0 vote. The executive session ended at 10:55 p.m.*

15. Adjournment

- *Hagan moved to adjourn the meeting. Messick seconded, and the motion was passed unanimously on a 6-0 vote. The meeting was adjourned at 10:58 p.m.*

Next meetings: September 17, 2020 at Lancaster Event Center, Lancaster Room

6:30 pm Fairgrounds JPA Annual Budget Hearing followed by 6:45 pm JPA quarterly meeting followed by

7 pm Ag Society Annual Budget Hearing followed by 7:30 pm Ag Society monthly board meeting

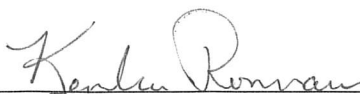
**need 75% super majority in person for both JPA and Ag Society budget hearings

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED as set forth herein on this 16th day of September, 2021.

Submitted by the

LANCASTER COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

IN THE STATE OF NEBRASKA



President Kendra Ronnau



Secretary John Cooper