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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.*

PUBLIC MINUTES

Board of Directors Monthly Meeting

Lancaster Room – Lancaster Event Center Fairgrounds

4100 N. 84th Street, Lincoln NE 68507

7:30pm - Thursday July 20, 2023

President Ronnau called the monthly meeting of the Lancaster County Agricultural Society board to order at 7:33pm.

Proof of due notice was given in the Lincoln Journal Star and the Nebraska Open Meeting Act was displayed in the room.

Lancaster Ag Society Board members attending in person were Hardesty, Ronnau, R. Dowding, Cooper, Rutt, Sump, Hagan, and Suing. Arriving later at 7:36pm was Cusick-Rawlinson. LEC staff in attendance included Bowen, Rief, Dickerson, N. Dowding, and Jones. LEC staff attending online was Harrison. Attending in person on behalf of Lancaster County Extension was Karen Wobig, Tracey Anderson, and Phil Warton.

Approval of minutes - The minutes from the June meeting were presented. Hagan moved to approve the minutes; Suing seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. R. Dowding, Sump and Rutt abstained. The June minutes were approved in a vote of 5-0.

The minutes from the July Emergency meeting were presented. Hagan moved to approve the minutes; Rutt seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. R. Dowding abstained. The July Emergency meeting minutes were approved in a vote of 7-0.

Officer Reports – R. Dowding shared information of the passing of long-time 4-H supporter and community member, Martin Dye.

7:36pm Cusick-Rawlinson arrives.

Committee Reports - No committee reports were presented.

Extension Update - Karen Wobig, Tracy Anderson, and Phil Wharton were present to represent Lancaster County Extension. Anderson talked about the success of the State 4-H Horse Show and the upcoming STEM training going on all around the county. Wobig talked about the excitement around the upcoming fair and all the last-minute work going on to make this fair a great success. Phil Warton shared information about plans for the costume contest at the fair horse show.

Communication from the public - No public comment

2023 Fair Update - Jones provided the board with the final layouts of fair events and copies of the detailed schedule flyers found out at gate ticket sponsor retail locations. N. Dowding said that Special Olympics has had to pull out due to lack of entries for their horse show as their numbers have not rebounded since pandemic. N. Dowding talked about the recent July 4th storm damage and repair efforts on LEC grounds. N. Dowding said that all broken items are ordered. N. Dowding explained that the damaged overhead doors in P3 and P1 will be removed during the fair as the replacements will not arrive in time for installation. N. Dowding also shared information about adjustments made to setup in P1 based on feedback from last year. N. Dowding said that final clean-up and decorating around the grounds was ongoing. Ronnau and others commented about the flowers and how pretty they look.

N. Dowding shared that the Magical Lights show will be decorating the entrance to the beer garden and that tents and picnic tables with 50 umbrellas will also be placed to create shade for attendees to enjoy. Jones said a 50-foot inflatable Santa Claus will also be coming with a snow machine to help promote the Magical Lights Show coming to the LEC in December. Jones also said that new free beer garden games including cornhole, Jenga, bucket pong, and Connect 4 to create entertainment for families. Jones stated that the limit for outdoor vendors has been reached and shared information about the Big Wheel Race/Pedal Tractor Pull moved to MPA and the Weiner Dog Round Up Races that will be happening the last Saturday.

Ronnau talked about how each person can work to make sure the public are aware of the fair and know that we are there for them to enjoy.

N. Dowding provided a security update; LPD agrees adding the chain link fence and clear bag only / all bags subject to search signage for the carnival area in Lot A seems to be a sufficient addition to security plans for that area. N. Dowding feels confident that a good plan is in place with only two entrances to the carnival and a clear bag policy that will be enforced. Ronnau said that she appreciates the work that went into creating this plan with police presence. Dickerson that some clear bags have been ordered in case they are needed. Harrison said that there has been additional expense created by the added security but that the cost is now being taken out of the carnival gross revenues before proceeds are split with the fair.

Jones stated that the tickets have been sent out to Russ's Markets and some locations have requested refills two times already. Jones said that the real estate style fair signage is in front of each gate ticket sponsor retail location: Russ's Market, Super Saver, U-Stop Shops and West Gate Bank.

Ronnau said the new Ag Olympics is being planned for Sunday just before 4-H/FFA check out time. There will be hats and some other awards from PepsiCo for this event.

Rief provided an update on the motor sports events. Rief stated that they have several drivers pre-registered for the Demo Derby with the new incentive \$100 guaranteed if pre-register and show up & pass tech to compete and are hearing from several others requesting information.

Harrison stated that Rief, with the support of Ed and Cole, have done a great job on creating a fantastic sound system out in the Grandstand self-installed by LEC to save up to \$100K.

Harrison also wanted to acknowledge Extension for a good job tracking numbers, entries, etc.

Group discussion was had about areas that could use additional support from the board.

Dickerson stated that the search for paid volunteers continues. Dickerson talked about the status of other final fair details.

Operations Report - N. Dowding reported that there were no events scheduled in July. N. Dowding shared information about the July storm damage and insurance processing and said that quotes have been obtained for repairs to damaged doors, chain-link fencing, bleachers, and other assets on the property.

Financial Report - Harrison talked about the May financials information and asked if there were any questions. No questions were asked. Suing made a motion to accept the May financials as presented; Dowding seconded. Ronnau asked if further discussion was needed. There was no additional discussion. A roll call vote was taken; the motion passed 9-0.

Harrison reviewed the June financials. Sump made a motion to accept the June financials; Hardesty seconded. Ronnau asked if there was additional discussion. No additional discussion was needed. A roll call vote was taken; the motion passed 9-0.

Harrison presented the June checks totaling \$617,138.76. Cooper asked to confirm the payee on one payment. Harrison confirmed. Cooper made a motion to approve the June checks as presented; Hagan seconded. Ronnau asked for additional discussion. There was no additional discussion. A roll call vote was taken; the motion passed 9-0.

Harrison shared information regarding the budget year to date through June. Cusick-Rawlinson asked for additional clarification on sponsorship income. Cooper asked for information on the line of credit from State ARPA funds and how it has been used. Harrison shared an update on where the line of credit monies were used. Harrison presented ARPA draw request #6 which includes down payments on fencing and door replacements from recent storm damage totaling \$77K of the pay request that will be returned when the insurance pays out on the storm. Other items included a seated sweeper machine, forklift rental for fair for safety reasons, manual pallet jack purchase, and pre-fair golf cart rental payment are driving the need for additional monies to be used from the line of credit. Harrison explained that several of these items are needed to provide proper safety of LEC workers. Harrison requested \$199,494.21, with a draw of \$131,655.96 to keep the facility running as it should. N. Dowding explained that he is continuing to look for additional purchasing options for this equipment at reasonable prices before finalizing each purchase/rental. Cooper said he wants to be sure the restrictions of the ARPA funds are being met in these requests. Dickerson explained that all of the proposed repairs and replacements are allowed through the ARPA fund rules as ARPA funds are designed for operational uses since replacing lost income from the pandemic—actually is the primary intended use. Cusick-Rawlinson made a motion to approve the \$199,494.21 from ARPA funds with a draw of \$131,655.96 to cover the items from the 6th draw request. R. Dowding seconded the motion. Ronnau asked for additional discussion. Cooper asked questions about the original plans for the ARPA funds. Dickerson said that Harrison could provide a full summary of the ARPA use to date by the next board meeting. N. Dowding stated that the funds need to be provided in order for the fair to move forward. Harrison provided more information about the draws from the ARPA funds. Ronnau asked if further discussion was needed. There was no additional discussion. A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed 7-1 with Sump abstaining. Cooper voted no.

Rutt made a motion to move the next agenda item about NHSFR Event Manager down to just before Other Business. Hagan seconded the motion. A vote was taken, motion passed without objection.

Managing Director Report - Dickerson provided an update on fundraising efforts. Dickerson said a \$5 million dollar State Shovel Ready grant application was submitted July 1; official approval of the application is pending. Dickerson said she continues to work toward more funding from city and county sources.

Dickerson reports that there has not been any contact from the Car Swap Meet group. Dickerson stated that the group has not provided any information regarding event managers, etc. as was requested by the Event Center.

Dickerson introduced Eric Smallwood, President of APEX Marketing and Lyn Wineman, President of KidGlov Marketing. Each firm representative talked about their roles and experience in a naming rights process.

Ronnau shared that a business has shown interest in entering into a 15-year naming rights agreement. Dickerson talked about the support that has been provided already by LEC Legal Counsel Gene Summerlin as well as Smallwood and Wineman while working toward building parameters on a naming rights agreement. Wineman spoke about the opportunity that branding changes would provide and shared information about a branding and marketing budget that would need to be considered with a rebranding. Smallwood spoke about naming rights agreements and how they relate to the facility and the events that are held there. Smallwood talked about the cost of rebranding and who will pay for these costs. Smallwood explained that costs to the LEC Fairgrounds would be capped with the interested company paying all costs over the cap amount. Smallwood said that no signage, names, logos, etc. would be finalized or installed without board approval. Ronnau asked about electrical usage increases with new signage. Dickerson said that this has been researched and the increase would be minimal. Discussion was had around possible digital signage around the facility. Ronnau asked about information that might be provided through a naming rights contract to make sure the LEC was protected from risk. Hardesty moved to create a Naming Rights board working committee consisting of Ronnau, Hardesty, Cusick-Rawlinson, and Dowding, to explore naming rights and to authorize engagement of Apex Marketing to work with the subcommittee; with any naming rights agreement to be approved by the full board at a future public meeting. Hagan seconded the motion. Ronnau asked for additional discussion. There was no additional discussion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed 9-0.

NHSFR Lincoln Event Manager Working Committee Report - Ronnau stated that this board working committee met with John Kaiser regarding the position of NHSFR Event Manager in person since the last board meeting on a visit to LEC. Dickerson reported discussion and review of Kaiser's past experiences. Ronnau stated that Kaiser had valuable ideas regarding the NHSFR event even on his first visit. Dickerson stated that contractor quotes continue to be pursued for updates to the LEC fairgrounds facility requested by NHSFR. Ronnau stated that Kaiser signed the NHSFR Lincoln Event Manager agreement after meeting with staff to be reassured his presence was welcome by the team and that several board members were able to meet with Kaiser and get to know him more during his time visiting. Suing stated that he was impressed by Kaiser and felt that the agreement was money well spent. Hagan said that he felt that Kaiser fit in well with the LEC staff and Ag Society as a whole. Suing made a motion to hire John Kaiser to be the NHSFR Lincoln Event Manager through the 2026 NHSFR at \$45,000 annually as a contractual employee, with an immediate start date. Hagan seconded the motion.

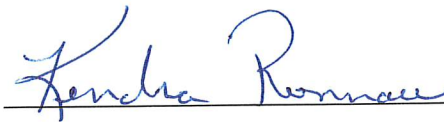
Ronnau asked for further discussion. There was no additional discussion. A roll call vote was taken; the motion passed 9-0.

Other Business - Ronnau suggested the board consider a possible car show in July 2024 possibly working with the car clubs from the Car Swap Meet group.

Adjournment - Hagan made a motion to adjourn, Cusick-Rawlinson seconded the motion. Motion passed without objection. The meeting was adjourned at 10:31pm.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED as set forth herein on this 24 day of August, 2023 Submitted by the LANCASTER COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY IN THE STATE OF NEBRASKA

President Kendra Ronnau



Secretary John Cooper

