



Home of the



A nonprofit 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to growing community like yours, and proud home of the Super Fair

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 Public Monthly Meeting

7:00pm - Thursday, December 14, 2023

Sandhills Global Event Center – Lancaster's County Fairgrounds

4100 N 84th Street | Lincoln, NE 68507

Lancaster Room

(enter Meeting Center on N side of Currency Pavilion)

President Ronnau called the monthly meeting of the Lancaster Country Agricultural Society meeting to order at 7:05pm.

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 Ronnau, Cusick-Rawlinson, Cooper, Hagan, R. Dowding, Hardesty, Rutt, Suing, and Sump. SGEC staff attending in person were Bowen, Rief, Skillett and Dickerson. SGEC staff attending via online were Harrison and N. Dowding. Attending on behalf of Lancaster County Extension was Bob Huttes, Extension Board member in addition to other members of the public.

Approval of minutes - The minutes from the November meeting were presented. Sump moved to approve the minutes and Hagan seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. The November minutes were approved in a vote of 9-0.

Officer Reports - Ronnau shared that the annual fairgrounds VIP banquet called the "Blue Jean Gala" went well. Ronnau said the menu was fantastic and everyone seemed to have a good time. Ronnau said it was a great way to end the year and kick off the next one.

Committee Reports - Hagan shared a NHSFR report. Hagan said that NHSFR Lincoln Event Manager Kaiser was in Las Vegas at the recent NFR and made good contacts on SGEC's behalf. Hagan said that Kaiser continues to work to build connections in order to prepare for the return of the NHSFR in 2026 & 2027 at SGEC.

Extension Update - Bob Huttes spoke on behalf of Lancaster County Extension. Bob introduced himself as an Extension Board Member. Bob shared that John Nelson is the new cropping systems Extension staff member and encouraged anyone in need of these services to reach out to John.

Communication from the public - There was no communication from the public.

Super Fair Report – Controller Harrison stated she would like to defer the results for the 2023 fair until a later date after staff had time to review. Super Fair Director N. Dowding said that the deadlines for the fair book have been pushed back to the end of February, so there would be a little more planning time than in past to be able to get things in for print deadlines.

N. Dowding talked about the 2024 plans for fair staff roles. N. Dowding and Dickerson talked about the open fair coordinator position and stated that it will be filled with existing staff. N. Dowding suggested three board subcommittees to give staff input on fair plans including how to best continue filling the second week of the fair after 4-H/FFA youth exhibit on the first four days. N. Dowding will contact board members on these subcommittees starting in early January.

Rutt said that the 4-H Extension staff are suggesting to raise the pay for static event judges to start working to book judges now as surrounding fairs have raised their rates. Discussion occurred around raising this amount. Cusick-Rawlinson moved to increase the pay for 4-H static judges from \$10 per hour to \$15 per hour. Dickerson estimated this would be a \$500-1000 added expense. Hardesty seconded this motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed 9-0.

Ag Society General Counsel Gene Summerlin of Husch Blackwell entered the room with two security guards carrying election materials and other staff and members of public involved in conducting and observing the Annual Ag Society Board election counting process in adjacent Nebraska Room. LEC staff member Morrison joined as well.

Cooper made a motion to move Other Business up in the agenda to announce the election results which had become available. Hagan seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed 9-0.

Other Business - Ronnau read the results of the 2023 Ag Society Election given to her by Summerlin which had been held 5:30-6:30 pm today in the Nebraska Room. The preliminary election counts were as follows:

Jennifer Cusick-Rawlinson - 144
Lynn Hagan - 144
Mitch Sump - 141
Dick Peters - 120

Joel Armstrong - 119
Dave Russell - 119
Susan Bulling - 1

Ronnau stated that observers and legal counsel were all present when the ballots were counted. Ronnau said that three 3-year board positions were to be filled in this election, so based on the above numbers, the three positions would be filled by Cusick-Rawlinson, Hagan, and Sump who all happen to be incumbents but Sump's first election as he was appointed to fill last year of Tom Messick's term when he moved out of state. Ronnau thanked the election staff for coming to help on such short notice after the Lancaster County Election Commissioner notified the Ag Society on Wednesday December 13th that it had been determined it wasn't appropriate for the Election Commissioner's office to oversee this type of election under State law.

NAFM conference -Sump asked questions regarding the conference. Sump will attend on Saturday of the conference. Rutt moved to make Sump the Representative to vote as Lancaster County Ag Society's District 1 delegate at NAFM. Hagan seconded the motion. Motion passed without objection.

Operations Manager Report -Sr. Operations Manager N. Dowding talked about the NE Ag Expo and said it was the busiest Tuesday they have ever had at the show. He reported that all operations went smoothly at the Ag Expo.

Senior Operations Manager Chas Skillett talked about the upcoming Arena Cross, Women's Expo, and other trade shows and horse shows coming up in early 2024.

N. Dowding gave an update on the infrastructure modernization projects. N. Dowding stated that the restroom remodel will be held off until the end of spring due to shipping delays on parts and finding weeks in the event calendar to conduct this remodel of the fairgrounds' most used restrooms. N. Dowding reports that the updated lighting in P4 and the wallpaper in the front hall have now been installed and that the other projects will continue moving forward with some updates already complete.

N. Dowding said that the naming project installs are coming along nicely with all interior signage that has been produced installed by SGEN staff or contractors. Exterior lit sign installations and indoor metal sign additions continue.

Financial Report – Controller Harrison discussed the information presented in the financials with preliminary Accounts Payable and Receivable presented for information as the last fiscal month of November 2023 is not finalized yet. The P&L and Balance Sheet for November are not available yet as November is close of the fiscal year and due to early date of the December meeting. Harrison mentioned the year would be closed soon as the auditor wanted to start the audit early this year to try to meet the May 6 months after end of fiscal year state deadline around their busy tax season.

Harrison presented the November checks totaling \$476,066.87 for approval. Ronnau asked if there was any discussion. There was no discussion. Dowding moved to approve the checks as listed, Suing seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion was approved in a vote of 9-0.

Harrison also presented information on the State ARPA fund tracker with funds available as needed for State Shovel Ready match and talked about next steps to initiate the State Shovel Ready \$5 million grant in January by certifying all matching funds.

Managing Director Report - Dickerson talked about the marketing-related naming projects. Dickerson said that the website relaunch had occurred on December 1st naming effective date and was going smoothly considering the site was entirely rebuilt using the industry-standard Word Press platform. Dickerson explained that efforts have been made to make sure information is easy to find on the website. Dickerson said that they will continue to look at making changes to improve the user experience on the website. Dickerson encouraged users to let staff know if bugs are found, so that they can be fixed. Dickerson talked about the social media account updates and the large response to regular naming launch-related updated that have been going out from the updated accounts such as the Governor and other VIPs helping with the launch press event/ribbon cutting on December 1st.

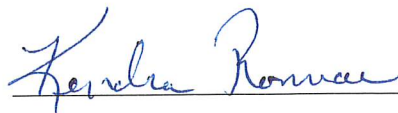
Dickerson provided an update on the upcoming legislative session. Dickerson said this is a short session, so there won't be any moves toward big changes. Dickerson stated that the team will meanwhile continue working with local officials to create an ongoing funding support stream as most facilities locally and around the country have to come out of SGEC's economic impact that would allow SGEC to keep up with visitors' wear and tear on the 22+ year fairgrounds.

Adjournment - Sump made a motion to adjourn, Suing seconded the motion. Motion passed without objection. The meeting was adjourned at 7:53pm.

Next meeting scheduled for: January 18, 2024 at 7:00pm
See SandhillsGlobalEventCenter.org (click on News, Public Notices)

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

President Kendra Ronnau



Secretary John Cooper

