



PAULDING COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

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The Regular Meeting of the Paulding County Agricultural Society was called to order by President Dan Howell on February 19th, 2025, at 6:30 pm at the Paulding County Fairgrounds Secretary's Office. The following members were present: Dan Howell, Heidi Conlon, Faith Meraz, Bruce Farquhar, Shawn Hurd, Chad Manz, Sarah McCabe, Lori Davis, Austin Conlon, Rebecca Kessler, Francis Saxton, Rhonda Bates, Randy Slattman, Miranda Leatherman,

The guests present were Colton Howell, Michael Schweinsberg, Tony Miller.

Guests:

- Zach shared an offering of 12 units of inflatables for \$25,000. He offered to look into sponsors for himself to offset costs. The board paid \$16,000 for 9 units last year. After discussion, the board decided that to avoid confusion with the donors, the board would seek out sponsors. The board expressed appreciation for the offer to seek sponsors.
- Colton Howell and Tony Miller expressed appreciation for the decision to cancel the poultry show. The avian flu is spreading in the area, and cattle, geese, and human cases have been reported. The junior fair had met and discussed the poultry show before it was brought to the senior fair's attention. The junior fairboard has ordered goat pens for this year and plans to order sheep pens for next year after determining projected costs. The junior fair lock-in is on March 28th. They will be meeting at Antwerp at 4:00 p.m. and coming back to the fairgrounds after if any senior fairboard members would like to attend and communicate with the junior fair. Monday night there was a steer barn meeting and there is a goal for the 2026 fair, but the accounts need to be prepared first. There will be

fundraising, raffles, and dinner. Funds are currently at \$275,000, with a need of \$580,000 for electrical and barns. They are awaiting the stone cost and estimating around \$650,000.

- Michael Schweinsberg shared about the outcome of January quality assurance. It went well, and parents expressed appreciation for the species breakout sessions. He thanked everyone who volunteered to lead sessions. He also shared that the fairbook is mostly put together, needing the directors' names and terms. It will be put online on the app, on the site, and available on the fairboard website. Extras will be printed to keep in the office and for board members. He would also like to put out the fair schedule later once it is finalized. For FairEntry, he will need a list of classes and awards so these can be loaded into the senior fair's section to allow time for putting dates out and registration.
- Austin Conlon moved to return to regular business. Francis Saxton seconded, and the motion carried.

Old Business:

- Austin Conlon moved to approve the secretary's report that was emailed to members before the meeting. Bruce Farquhar seconded, and the motion passed. There was a question of whether or not the dollar amount of the check to the commissioners for fairgrounds rent needed to be included in last month's minutes. It was determined that it could be but was not required.
- Heidi Conlon went over the documents emailed for the treasurer's report and asked for any questions. The bathroom grant has been placed into the money market. Heidi Conlon and Lori Davis have signed off on it. Sponsorship checks are starting to come in. A \$41,000 lighting grant check has also been deposited from the lighting grant. The board discussed that getting sponsorship letters out sooner appears to have helped money roll in faster. Bruce Farquhar moved to accept the treasurer's report, and Rhonda Bates seconded. The motion carried.

New Business:

- Randy Slattman shared that Brandon Wobler and he are working on camping. Board members need to make sure they are getting their slips filled out. Austin Howell has been guiding them into this transition to handle the camping. Adjust the whiteboard on the

wall to reflect current issues needing to be completed on the fairgrounds. Electrical, mechanical issues, red for critical and black for can wait, and put your name after it so you can be contacted to answer questions. Have a fair photographer and make expectations clear during the show, no photographers in the ring, and classification of midway against livestock. Set up a contest for kids to submit pictures. Add a section for photographers in the rulebook. No flash photography with animals. No obstruction, no endangering animals.

- Shawn Hurd shared that he has received requests for camping the night before shows. Determine where the rental amounts will go, Black Swamp Horse fund, to the fairboard. Wedding rentals are allowed to camp the night before for \$25 per camper. Request for stall rental, not for shows before the fair, but after the fair, the junior fair has no problem. Discussion of a good amount. Check around for what other places are charging. \$20-\$25.
- Frances Saxton moved to approve a lot fee of \$25 and a stall rental of \$20. Miranda Leatherman seconded, and the motion passed.
- Sarah McCabe has an update on the website. She requires items to update the site. 2025 schedule of events, links to 4-H and FFA resources and projects, FairEntry, open livestock show entry forms are on there but need additional flyers if available, applications for vendor spaces, commercial contract, stall and track rental, add chair and table information for wedding rental and contract.
- Lori Davis shared that Gus Davis applied for a race grant and received \$2000 to the harness association. She also shared that from the Capital Improvements Grants, the board received \$1322.26. Austin Conlon moved to accept the grant. Rhonda Bates seconded, and the motion passed.
- From the state, the board is receiving \$4176 for junior fair, just shy of \$5900 for harness, sending \$50,000 from, \$5660 from the Ohio Department of Agriculture. There is also an additional \$100,000 coming for track lighting.
- The board discussed that it has not received the funds yet intended for the rabbit barn.
- Austin Conlon whose contact to put on vendor contracts is preparing to get them sent out. Dan Howell's phone number and email will be placed on the flyers.

- Rebecca Kessler shared a fundraiser idea. She suggested the board do Rodes Meat's fundraiser, buying a package at a certain rate with three items with different amounts. Items include combinations of summer sausage, snack sticks, and cheese. The board discussed interest in the idea. Austin Conlon moved to approve moving forward with the fundraiser. Rhonda Bates seconded, and the motion passed.
- Rhonda Bates shared that the livestock sale committee met last night and is ready to proceed, working on training with Michael for software for the sale coordinator and any interested board members.
- Rhonda also shared plans for the grange, including a suggestion to go back to a flat \$10 entry fee with no limit rather than \$1 per entry. Best of-show awards would be \$25 with a total payout of \$375. There was a discussion of the board changing entry fees in trying to increase participation in the grange. The board discussed seeking donors for this and to consider adding the grange to the sponsorship sheet next year. Rhonda is planning to cut some classes and simplify them first and add some. One idea Rhonda pulled from the convention is classes geared toward the youth (12 and under). Austin Conlon moved to change to a \$10 flat entry fee for grange classes. Francis Saxton seconded, and the motion passed.
- In addition to this, there was a discussion of cutting entries at 5:00 p.m. on Friday but taking entries up until noon on Saturday and including judging time. Judging will occur on Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning. Will set windows for this judging time. Drop off beforehand in the past, but the board has gotten away from having an office worker the week before. Release time window 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. on Saturday and 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Sunday morning. Rhonda is hoping to grow the baked goods entries.
- Rhonda would like to add the kid's corner for only kid projects 12 years and under, macaroni art, clay art, seed art, and baked goods to encourage youth participation. Organizing a painted rock activity. Leaving a booth for each of the school's art departments. Adding jewelry, sourdough, gift wrapping, wreaths, and upcycling with different categories. Put on the app, send it to schools, and publicize it. Using FairEntry, the board can select different payment options. A card reader option can be offered.

- The board discussed painting, bouquet arranging, ceramics, and other art classes. Two separate paint classes. The more activities the better. It can be added to the Acres of Fun schedule to notify more people.
- Miranda Leatherman asked about plans for the poultry barn. It may serve as a show arena for the rabbit show and as an overflow for other species, but the board will have to wait to see where the entry numbers fall. There is a rabbit clinic on April 5th at the Family, Farm, and Home in Defiance. This could be beneficial to the youth exhibitors and is going out through 4-H.
- Rodes Meat is willing to do a carcass show on Saturday. Different fairs run this in different ways but award winners. Appoint a committee to work on this. The junior fair has to approve this and then it would come back to the senior fair. Discussion of whether there is enough time before the fair to set guidelines into place. Rhonda Bates moved to put Miranda Leatherman in charge to work with Michael Schweinsberg to arrange carcass show (Johnathon, Tony, too) for 2026. Randy Slattman seconded, and the motion passed.
- Faith Meraz shared that there is a request for a wedding rental for the ceremony and reception on June 21st with the use of the grassy area, 1 barn, and restrooms. With the cancellation of the poultry show, this is possible. Bruce Farquhar moved to approve the offering of a rental contract for the Keysor wedding for 1 barn, restrooms, and allow use of a grassy area. Rhonda Bates seconded, and the motion passed.
- Dan Howell shared that the fire hydrants and water line updates are coming with separate taps and do away with the main that is causing problems.
- The flatrock festival was taken over, and the new head of the event was going to present tonight, but was unable to attend. They have requested September 8th to 15th and have a two-day event. Start on the craft emphasis and move up. There was discussion about offering a similar contract as to the previous years.
- Paige Circus would like to come on August 29th for \$1200 – Austin Conlon moved to approve this contract, and Miranda Leatherman seconded. The motion passed. There was a discussion of adjusting prices based on increasing electric and water costs. This is a popular community event but raising it would be fiscally responsible. A suggestion for a

committee to compare costs for future events was made. Lori Davis moved to amend the motion, allowing Paige Circus on August 29th at \$1350. Austin Conlon seconded, and the motion passed.

- The Real Waste quote has come in at \$1855. Discussion of starting dumpster fresh at the start of fair week. Randy Slattman moved to accept Real's bid at \$1855. Austin Conlon seconded, and the motion passed.
- Austin Conlon moved to schedule disinfectant and fire hydrant date. Rhonda Bates seconded, and the motion passed. Take mowers in for yearly service, and the sooner is better. Randy Slattman moved to send the mowers in for services. Rhonda Bates seconded, and the motion passed.
- The tractor also needs to be serviced. Francis Saxton moved to send in the mower for service. Randy Slattman seconded, and the motion passed. The report will be sent back before work is completed.
- Michael Schweinsberg requested the use of pavilions and block building for the 5th grade event last Friday in August. September 25th for soil and water, rain date of September 26th. Lori Davis moved to approve these dates. Austin Conlon seconded, and motion passed.
- The Soil and Water has requested access through the fairgrounds and has agreed to repair anything they break. The project seeks to get rid of debris in Flatrock Creek, and the commissioners have signed off. Randy Slattman moved to approve their request. Francis Saxton seconded, and the motion passed.
- There is a request for rental for the Rager wedding on September 6th with the use of two barns and a restroom. Austin Conlon moved to approve offering a rental contract. Bruce Farquhar seconded, and the motion passed.
- Michigan Pulling Association offered miniature horse pulling at the fair. \$1000 to have both classes. They will furnish the sled. Offered Thursday opening. Ticket sales in the grandstand will be the board, and they will handle everything else. Austin Conlon moved to bring in the Michigan Pulling Association for \$1000. Randy Slattman seconded, and the motion passed.

- Antique tractor pull cannot do the last Saturday of the fair. They offered the first Saturday of the fair, and the board can make it work. They can start at 9:00 a.m. and be out at 3:00 p.m. Last year, the board covered the cost of the sled (\$1400). There was discussion of having ample time to get ready for the derby. The board does not charge for this event, but this is a good event, and they are raising money to build a pavilion. Miranda Leatherman moved to approve having the antique tractor pull. Francis Saxton seconded, and the motion passed.
- Eric Noggle will do the community clean up on May 8th and the rain date on May 9th. There was a discussion of whether the board would like to get involved and have projects for them on April 1st. People need to be here to supervise. Miranda Leatherman moved to approve the board's participation in the community clean-up, Austin Conlon seconded, and the motion carried.
- There is a request for a wedding rental for May 17th, 2026, with the use of one barn. Francis Saxton moved to approve of offering a rental contract. Lori Davis seconded, and the motion passed.
- There was a discussion of the board holding a sponsorship dinner again this year. A committee was appointed to arrange the dinner: Bruce Farquhar, Miranda Leatherman, Rebecca Kessler, and Dan Howell. Austin Conlon moved to approve the committee to arrange a sponsorship dinner. Francis Saxton seconded, and the motion passed.
- Francis Saxton moved to approve the board continuing to do meal tickets for the fire and EMS. Randy Slattman seconded, and the motion passed.
- Dan Howell has been subpoenaed to court regarding the vandalism case. Both are being charged with felonies due to the amount of damage done, over \$1000 of damage. The board will be making an insurance claim. Alumni are going to fund the repair of the sausage stand. The insurance company is looking to reimburse the painting of the building. There was a discussion of seeking replacement of lost wages as well as having the individuals complete community service at the fairgrounds.
- There was a discussion on the guest presentation of inflatables. \$25,000 for 12 inflatables offering for this year. This is a local individual. Lori Davis moved to approve having 12 inflatable units at \$25,000. Bruce Farquhar seconded, and the motion passed.

- There was a recommendation from the junior fairboard is to not have the poultry show at the 2025 fair. An outbreak would jeopardize local farms and 70 days closing the barn. This would create a foul odor, and the board discussed that there are too many risks not just to the youth exhibitors but to the community. This disease is endangering the livelihoods and mental health of workers. Randy Slattman moved to uphold the decision made by the junior fairboard to cancel the 2025 junior fair poultry show, including all species of poultry exhibited, including ducks, geese, chickens, and turkey, and no exhibition or market projects. Rhonda Bates seconded, and the motion passed.
- The board discussed arranging for and making a commitment for 12 golf carts and allowing the shuttle at the fair this year. Austin Conlon moved to use the same plan as last year. Randy Slattman seconded, and the motion passed.

Adjournment:

- Austin Conlon moved to adjourn the meeting, and Randy Slattman seconded. The motion carried.

President: _____ Secretary: _____