

**Eau Claire County Fair Committee
Meeting Minutes**

September 13, 2023, at 7:00 PM

Town of Lincoln Town Hall

5555 Green Meadow Rd, Fall Creek, WI 54742

The meeting was called to order by Missy Christopherson, Extension Committee Appointee, at 7:08 p.m.

Roll Call and Introductions were made by Fair Committee Members: Missy Christopherson, Jenni Haan, Tammy Schlewitz, Traci Martinson, Derrick Nelson, Devon Hadorn-Papke, Jodi Thesing-Ritter, Valerie Strauch, Rachel Hart-Brinson

Meg Mueller- Fair Coordinator

Guest via Webex: Jason Hausler, Assistant Dean, UW-Madison Division of Extension

Appointment of Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary – Discussion/Action

- a. Chair election resulted in the appointment of Traci Martinson
- b. Vice-Chair election resulted in the appointment of Derrick Nelson
- c. Secretary election resulted in the appointment of Jodi Thesing-Ritter

Newly appointed Chairperson, Traci Martinson, assumed leadership of the meeting

Approval of Committee Minutes - Discussion/Action

- a. August 16, 2023, Motion to approve as presented by Jenny Haan; Second by Derrick Nelson. The minutes were approved unanimously.
- b. July 12, 2023, Motion to approve as presented by Jenny Haan; Second by Missy Christopherson. Minutes were approved unanimously.
- c. Missy Christopherson indicated that Chair Martinson should email Kristin Peterson to indicate that the minutes have been approved and can be posted. Should minutes be amended in future meetings, changes should be sent to Kristin to be posted as amended.

Public Comment

- a. No public comment was presented. Motion made by Missy Christopherson to close public comment; Jenni Haan seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
- b. Clarification was made about how public comment can be received. Public comment made be made in person, via Webex, or by emailing Kristin Peterson or Chair Martinson.

County and Fair Relationship – Discussion Item

- a. Presentation by Jason Hausler, Assistant Dean, UW-Madison Division of Extension
Assistant Dean Hausler presented best practices for supporting fair volunteers. He explained the relationship between fairs and 4-H. Documents will be shared electronically with committee members as we were not able to get the technology to

work properly to allow the documents to be displayed publicly. Jason will continue to serve in a liaison role with the Wisconsin Fairs Association on behalf of UW-Extension to provide clarity about roles and responsibilities of all parties involved in county fairs.

b. Fair Structure – Discussion

A rough draft, presented electronically prior to the meeting, was presented to the committee. The rough draft was prepared by Tammy Schlewitz and Meg Mueller. Committee members asked questions. It was suggested that the draft be discussed again at the next meeting.

c. By-laws and conflict of interest – Discussion/Action

Missy Christopherson read the conflict-of-interest policy which indicates that anyone who is a voting member of Friends of the Fair or the Livestock Committee. Jenni Haan asked if this applies to the Adult Leaders Association. It was indicated that it does. Jodi asked for clarification – “Does this policy mean that a General Leader would need to step down to be on the Fair Committee?” Rachel Hart-Brinson indicated that the policy does not require such an action. Jodi requested that the policy and by-laws be distributed to the committee electronically. Meg Mueller noted that she will send those documents. Missy Christopherson asked again if this policy would impact any of the committee. All committee members indicated that it did not impact them.

d. Mutual respect policy- Discussion Only

Jenni Haan requested that a statement be added to the mutual respect policy that prevented committee members from speaking negatively about committee members to the public. This item will be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

2023 Fair wrap up – Discussion/Action

a. Financial, judges & exhibitor checks – (FOF items, discussion only)

Exhibitor checks have not been mailed. A question was asked for clarification on why the checks have not been sent. Meg Mueller indicated that the financial advisor has recommended that checks be held until the financial review can be completed. Request made for the Friends of Fair representative to present on this at our next meeting.

b. Processes that worked or needs improvement

Rachel Hart-Brinson indicated that there was more set up and take down help in the Expo Building and she appreciated this. Rachel also indicated that the new shelving was appreciated. Missy Christopherson indicated that more help was needed during judging.

Jodi Thesing-Ritter indicated that youth would like to be able to sign up for their judging times in advance to allow for better scheduling for older youth who may have work or other conflicts.

Rachel Hart-Brinson indicated that it was nice to be able to have the small animal show in the Expo Building was appreciated by exhibitors.

Missy Christopherson indicated that for expo judging it would be nice to have the sheets printed after exhibits were submitted. Meg Mueller explained that this would be complicated. She also indicated that the Chromebooks are available for this as well.

Jodi Thesing-Ritter requested that we consider how to support and encourage young superintendents to remain involved in the fair.

c. Mutual respect incident

Missy Christopherson verbally shared the mutual respect policy process.

Jenni Haan indicated that no complaint was brought to her as chairperson.

Meg Mueller indicated that someone came forward to her and she referred them to follow the mutual respect policy.

A request was made to add a fair committee line item to the mutual respect policy with action be placed on the next meeting agenda.

Meg Mueller recommended that the Eau Claire County Fair Code of Conduct for Disciplinary Process language be considered for use in the Mutual Respect Policy to make the process as accessible possible.

Jodi Thesing-Ritter suggested that communication be made to the potential complainant to remind them of the procedure and invite them to follow the process if they believed the issue needed to be addressed.

Devon Hadorn-Papke made a motion to postpone the issue to date definite; Second by Valerie Strauch, Motion carried.

Committee assignments & Responsibilities

Meg Mueller verbally shared the committee assignment opportunities. A request was made for assignment positions and descriptions to be shared in writing with the committee. Meg Mueller will share the positions and descriptions with us electronically prior to our meeting.

Traci will add committee assignments to next month's agenda so committee members may have time to review the expectations and select their positions.

Fair Committee Coordinator- (FOF Item, Discussion only)

Goals for 2024 Fair

Suggested goals include

- a. Celebration of the 100th Anniversary Year
- b. Discussion of allowing alcohol at the Livestock Auction
- c. Fun activities for the exhibitors

Fair Representative Reports-

County Board- Missy Christopherson reported that the Board is reviewing the budget and the Fair Committee will decide about the \$10,000 allocation to the County Fair.

Livestock- Bylaws and adult committee- Derrick Nelson asked for clarification on the committee membership and Fair Vet conflict of interest. It was noted that if we can find another fair vet, then the conflict-of-interest clause would not be in effect. Until another vet can be secured, the conflict has been allowed. Derrick Nelson agreed to meet with Meg Mueller and take over communication until an adult leader is secure and will set the agenda for the first meeting.

Extension- Rachel Hart-Brinson shared about the position she is recruiting for. Andy Heron is out of the office this week on vacation. She explained that the office has been closed because staff are using their PTO days before the switch to UW-Extension employee status in January.

Friends of the Fair- Reminder about the Donkey Races on Saturday, September 23 at 4:00 p.m. Pick up the flyers and tickets from Jenni Haan. Meg also indicated that there is an upcoming meeting. A request was made for committee members to receive notification of the Friends of the Fair meeting schedule. Rachel Hart-Brinson agreed to send the meeting notice to all committee members.

Fair Coordinator Report- Meg reported on the district 2 meeting is on October 10 in Barron. Meg will send the information about the meeting to Traci. Meg shared about attendance at the Wisconsin Association of Fairs in January 7-10.

Jodi Thesing-Ritter requested a written Fair Coordinator report. Meg will send this report electronically.

Chair Martinson recapped future agenda items noted throughout the meeting:

Fair Structure

Mutual Respect Policy Committee Member Public Communication Addition

Superintendent Process

Friends of the Fair Financial Report

Mutual Respect Violation

Committee Assignments & Responsibilities

Presentation of the Updated Timeline

Standing Updates from County Board, Livestock, Extension, Friends of the Fair, Fair Coordinator

It was requested that any other agenda items for the October 11th meeting be emailed to Traci Martinson by October 4.

Future Meeting Date:

October 11, 2023, Lincoln Town Hall is reserved but Chair Martinson will need to confirm new leadership, as per outgoing Chair Jenni Haan. Chair Martinson agreed to notify the committee of the confirmed location of our next meeting.

Respectfully submitted September 14, 2023,

Jodi Thesing-Ritter

Committee Clerk