**Stephenson County Fair Association Board Meeting Minutes**

**January 23, 2025**

**Stephenson County Farm Bureau**

The Stephenson County Fair Association meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by President Gary Mielke.

**Board Members Present:** Wendell DeVries, Brittani DeVries, Ann DeZell, Susie Dvorak, Kyle Fleischer, Phil Heck Carla Meyer, Abby Mielke, Gary Mielke, Becky Thomas, and Ethan Trampel.

**Board Members Absent:** Bill Clow, Victoria Hansen, Denise Hayunga, Jodi Miller, and Kris Shore,

**Executive Manager/Staff:** **Present**: Kate Boyer.

**Public Present**: Conor DeZell and Andy Dvorak.

**Items added to the agenda:** None.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Secretary’s Minutes:** The December meeting minutes were approved on a motion made by Ethan Trampel and seconded by Abby Mielke. Motion carried.

The December Closed Session minutes were approved on a motion made by Susie Dvorak and seconded by Ethan Trampel. Motion carried.

**Treasurer’s Report:** The November and December financial reports were approved on a motion by Susie Dvorak and seconded by Ethan Trampel. Motion carried.

**Committee Reports:**

**Finance:** Kyle Fleischer and Gary Mielke presented information on acquiring an updated security system of cameras on the fairgrounds. Due to some vandalism at the fairgrounds during the fair it was determined more cameras were needed. It was also noted that groups renting the fairgrounds are in areas not included in their rental agreement.

The current proposal is 19 cameras with an option to include more if needed. All the buildings and campgrounds would have coverage. The cost of this project is $5,169.65. There is funding available for this project. A motion was made by Ann DeZell and seconded by Ethan Trampel that we proceed with installing the cameras. Motion carried.

**Building and Grounds:** Gary Mielke reported he will be meeting with Wayne Fischer on completing the water project on February 10. Other improvements include new siding and replacement of rotted lumber on the west side of the beef barn, upgraded lighting is in the swine and goat barns, add mesh wiring to turkey pens so they can not put their heads through, fans needed in poultry, swine, and sheep barns, and wall fan in Home Ec Building needs the belt replaced. Cement work is needed on C1 north door, C2 west door and on the west grandstand entrance, gravel is needed around the track and pit area due to change of the pulling track. The dairy area restroom needs repaired or replaced.

**Gates/Security Committee:** No report.

**Commercial:** Wendell DeVries stated this committee did not meet. It was noted that a Lobster Truck would like to come to our fair, but would only be available for couple of days.

**Entertainment:** Wendell DeVries reported the Tractor Pull committee continues to make plans for the 2025 fair. The Demo Derby contract will be sent for signature and insurance information. On grounds entertainment was discussed. The Parakeet Show has signed a contract. Other events include the Mobile Dairy Classroom, Foam Party, Bull Riding, and possibly racing pigs. Due to budget constraints if we wish to have the racing pigs, some money from the grandstand entertainment will need to be used to cover the $10,000 cost. Based on current estimates of excess funds from the Friday concerts is transferred to on grounds line item, we can cover the cost of the racing pigs. The Friday concert schedule will begin at 2:00 pm with 50’s and 60’s music; 4:00 pm Johnny Cash Tribute band; 6:00 pm ZZ Top Tribute band; and 8:00 pm Styx Tribute band.

Serving alcohol at the fair was discussed. Looking for a new supplier.

Possible dart competition in Heritage Hall.

The Stephenson County Queen, Scarlett Sager, competed at the Fair Convention along with 72 other queens. The Henry County Queen was selected as the State Queen.

**Youth Night:** Abby Mielke reported on planning for 2025.

**Livestock**: Britani DeVries stated the committee did not meet.

**Non-Livestock:** Susie Dvorak reported the committee has not met.

**Policy and Procedures:** Victoria Hansen had her report for policy changes forwarded to all board members for review and to be voted on at the February meeting.

**Executive Manager Updates:** Kate Boyer provided board members with a written report. She also noted that reserving camping spaces will be available online soon. The new electronic sign is currently in Effingham and awaiting better weather to get it installed. She noted the Goals for 2025 that she forwarded with the monthly reports for members to review and make additional suggestions.

**Old Business:** Gary Mielke reported the State Fair Convention was held last weekend. The board members attending were Gary Mieke, Wendell DeVries, and Susie Dvorak. Kate Boyer also attended. Susie Dvorak received a State Friend of the Fair award. Congratulations to Susie. Susie, Wendell, and Gary, all stated it was a good convention with many interesting roundtables to attend. There were 1500 in attendance at the Queen Pageant Dinner. The trade show increased considerably.

Gary Mielke has been in contact with Steve Cox concerning the status of our 501c3 application. The application has been forwarded to the state for approval.

The carnival was discussed. It was noted that the daughter of the previous owner is now operating the carnival. She is disappointed that Freeport has a carnival at Tutty Baker Days just 2 weeks before our fair. Normally we would sign a 3-year contract, but this year the new owner would only sign a 1-year contract. It was noted that we should consider looking for a different carnival. Many carnivals are going out of business.

Ag Day with state legislators is scheduled in March.

**New Business:** Kyle Fleischer submitted his resignation as Treasurer due to his new employment. Susie Dvorak made a motion to accept Kyle’s resignation and his removal as signatory on all financial documents, and Wendell DeVries seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Conor DeZell has offered to fill the Treasurer vacancy. Becky Thomas made a motion to fill the vacancy with Conor DeZell and was seconded by Britanni DeVries. Motion carried. Welcome to the board Conor.

**Any Other Business**: Kate Boyer presented the sponsorship flyer she has prepared so sponsors only need to be contacted one time to cover all sponsorships as opposed to contacting them multiple times. Board members were asked to review this document.

The next meeting will be held on February 27, 2025, at the Farm Bureau at 7:00 pm.

President Gary Mielke adjourned the meeting at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carla Meyer

Secretary