

DELAWARE COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 17, 2026

ATTENDANCE:

Present- Jennifer Brown, Adam DeMarco, Patricia Gladman, Mike Harter, David Laaksonen, Earl Lehner(6:03pm), Jon Melvin, Kevin Simpson, Colleen Smith, T. Thomson, Randy Turner, Chris Welker, Benjamin Wenner, Diane Winters, Tom Wright, Laryssa Hook, Jen McGowan

ABSENT: Jeff Armentrout, Don Howard, Chip Thomson

GUESTS: Jeff Crotty

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL:

Chris Welker called the meeting to order, Adam DeMarco led the pledge of allegiance, and Jen McGowan called the roll.

Tom Wright asked for a moment of silence for Dan Huffman. Benjamin Wenner read a poem that was written by Dan's grandfather and read at his funeral called "Let's go to the Fair"

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

MINUTES:

Adam DeMarco moved to approve the January 2026 minutes, Jennifer Brown second. Motion carried.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Chris Welker shared a presentation on a proposal to rent the buildings and not have to pay property tax. The Ohio legislative service commission says that property owned by an Agricultural Society is exempt from taxation. ORC1711.31 says that we have control of the grounds and money made can be used to repair the grounds. We would like to run building rentals on its own separate website. Benjamin Wenner moved to go ahead and rent the buildings and give Jen the ability to do that. Jon Melvin second. Motion carried.

Chris reported that Wood County has had some troubles and is being sued over a former board member. We currently get all of our employee's background checked and we would like the board to be background checked as well. He feels this would be beneficial. If the board wishes, we can get a group to come in and run background checks at the next board meeting. We should be ok with the BCI. Laryssa Hook mentioned that there are different levels of BCI and we would need to figure out which one that we would fall under. This would need to be put into our bylaws in the November election. Our constitution already defines what would be unacceptable to come back on the background check. Benjamin Wenner asked for a sub-committee be put together to work on this. Discussion was held on how often to require the BCI. Jon Melvin, Mike Harter, and Earl Lehner were selected to work on the

wording for the ballot in November. Colleen Smith motioned to do the background checks at the next meeting. Randy Turner second. Motion carried.

FAIR MANAGER'S REPORT

Jen McGowan asked for an increase in camping spaces during fair by \$50 across the board. Benjamin Wenner moved to increase the camping prices by \$50. Patti Gladman second. Motion carried.

Jen mentioned that a gentleman had asked permission to set up a tent in our parking lot on March 5 in opposition to the ODOT meeting that will be going on at that time. Discussion was held on cost at the non-profit rate and being contained to the space that is rented. Benjamin Wenner moved to approve renting the tent space. Kevin Simpson second. Motion carried. Earl Lehner abstained, Jen reported that we had a light pole that was hit in the Ag. Center parking lot. We do have video of the incident happening and a police report has been filed.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Randy Turner reported that Jody is continuing to work on Quick Books. We have things showing up double. It is getting better all the time but will take some time to sort it out. The grandstand loan currently stands at \$1.5 million. We should be under a million in March.

The current balance in the Star Ohio account is \$2,495,847.92. The John Deere tractor arrived and \$115k of that will go to that.

The current balance in the Bed Tax account is \$1,899,567.94. The operating expenses for January requested were \$25,764.35

Randy reported that we went with Payentry as our new payroll service.

Randy did take \$20k out of our line of credit due to it being thin this time of year.

The city sidewalk bill is \$138k. The city is asking for their money but we do not have an invoice yet. The only thing we have is an email from Jonathan Owen at the city asking to send us an invoice.

The audit is still in progress. We had a call last week. They were looking for something that we had already provided them last September.

Earl Lehner asked if we had to pay the sidewalk bill all at once. Randy explained that was part of the agreement when we built the new building.

Colleen asked if we had gotten the money yet from Budweiser and we did get the check in for that sponsorship.

Jennifer Brown moved to approve the treasurer's report. T. Thomson second. Benjamin Wenner opposed. Motion carried.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Chris Welker reported that they will start meeting on the first Thursday of every month. We celebrated the wins. Jeff did a great job with snow plowing this winter. Talked about what we will be tearing down in front of the Grandstand. We are only tearing out the west end of the grandstand, VIP boxes. The rest we will repair with boards as necessary. We talked about renting out VIP areas in the area that gets torn out.

GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE:

Dave Laaksonen brought four contracts forward that were recommended by the motorsports committee. The Demo Derby for \$12.5k, Hardin Co. Truck Pullers for \$1750, On the Mark for \$3300, and

Motocross for \$6k. T. Thomson moved to approve all four contracts for motorsports. Benjamin Wenner second. Motion carried.

Dave brought Kiser sound contract back to the board. It was talked about last month but didn't get around to a vote. This is a 3 year contract for \$3k more than last year. We did confirm that we would own the equipment. Jennifer Brown motioned to approve Kiser Sound for the 3 year contract. Benjamin Wenner second. Motion carried.

Next month we will hopefully have an electric contract and Jr. Fair vet contract.

FAC COMMITTEE:

Benjamin Wenner reported that the minutes were in the board packet. They discussed the optional ORC rules. Benjamin made a motion to decline all the optional ORC rules. Jon Melvin second. Motion carried. Benjamin is needing board approval to send a letter of reprimand to a family that brought extra pigs to the fair. Benjamin Wenner motioned to approve sending the letter to the family. Colleen Smith second. Motion carried. Jen will send the letter out on fair letterhead.

ADVERTISING COMMITTEE:

T. Thomson mentioned that the minutes were in the board packet. We are waiting on Tim with Destination Delaware for the final amount for their advertising. We will be ordering yard signs again and possibly getting some picnic tables for sponsorships.

SECURITY COMMITTEE:

Mike Harter mentioned that we will be purchasing signs for the QR codes with our code of conduct for the gates. He has gotten a couple quotes for alarm systems. We are waiting on a third. As soon as we get that, we will have a meeting to discuss. We also want to talk about getting more cameras and new plate readers. We had talked about adding new cameras every year.

Benjamin asked if security is good with the tube gates out front in the Jr. Fair area. Mike mentioned that he is more concerned about a vehicle getting thru and thinks that we can use water barriers.

MOTORSPORTS COMMITTEE:

Adam DeMarco reported that they discussed scheduling and adding Motocross back in this year. We are adding Weiner dog races on Wednesday night. Hoping to do a Micro night with micro wrestling and possibly micro food.

FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE:

Adam DeMarco reported that the new tractor was on the grounds. The wire that caught on fire was repaired. That one transformer is feeding 5 barns and with the upgrades we have done to the barns it might be too much. We may have to separate out and do two transformers in the future.

Speer gave a quote of \$3500 to fix the electric heat in the upstairs of the cabin. We will wait and see what the future of the cabin is before we fix that. All the old junk trucks are leaving the fairgrounds with Jon Axhelm. He has 30 days to get them all off the property. We still have trailers parked where they shouldn't be and it is hard to plow around them and also hard for Sargent to get to the dumpsters. We as a committee will support any towing that we need to do on the grounds.

HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE:

Colleen Smith reported that they will be having a meeting before the next board meeting to discuss tent price increases.

BED TAX COMMITTEE:

Jon Melvin reported that they did not meet. Pete is supposed to have drawings to put out to bid. They will meet in the next couple weeks.

ALL HORSE PARADE COMMITTEE:

Diane Winters reported that a lot of telephone calls have been made. No meetings due to bad weather. They have some new entries this year which is good. They are ready for the 40th. The clock is ticking. All Horse Parade is Sunday, September 13 at 3pm

HALL OF FAME COMMITTEE:

No Report

OLD BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

None

Jon Melvin moved to go into executive session on a legal matter. Benjamin Wenner second. Motion carried.

Benjamin Wenner moved to return to regular session noting that no decisions were made. Randy Turner second. Motion carried.

Benjamin Wenner motioned to authorize the exec committee to handle the legal matter. Earl Lehner second. Motion carried.

Mike Harter moved to adjourn. Colleen Smith second. Motion carried.