

DELAWARE COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 17, 2026

ATTENDANCE:

Present- Jeff Armentrout, Jennifer Brown, Adam DeMarco, Patricia Gladman, Mike Harter, Don Howard, David Laaksonen, Earl Lehner, Jon Melvin, Kevin Simpson, Colleen Smith, Chris Welker, Benjamin Wenner, Diane Winters, Tom Wright, Jen McGowan

ABSENT: T. Thomson, Randy Turner, Laryssa Hook

GUESTS: Jeff Crotty, Mike Knapp, Joe St. John

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL:

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

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Tom Wright introduced Joe St. John, who is running for County Commissioner. He is the Republican nomination endorsed by Barb Lewis as well as Jeff Benton and Troy Balderson. Joe is from Sunbury, Ohio and has been the Mayor of Sunbury for the past 5 years. He is looking to make County Commissioner his full time job. Joe gave a brief history of his family and background. Chris Welker thanked him for coming to the meeting.

MINUTES:

Benjamin Wenner moved to approve the February 2026 minutes, Earl Lehner second. Motion carried.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Chris Welker reported that he and Jen had a couple things that they have been talking about and he will let her talk about those things in her report. We need to set up a scholarship committee to review the Jr. Fair Scholarship applications. Chris asked Jeff Armentrout, Don Howard, Earl Lehner, and Kevin Simpson to head that up.

FAIR MANAGER'S REPORT:

Jen McGowan mentioned that the Spring District meeting was coming up on April 12 in Washington Court House and to let her know by Friday if anyone was wanting to attend. We did find out who hit the pole in front of the Ag. Center. The prosecutor has reached out and we will be seeking restitution thru the courts. Chris and Jen had a meeting with the tent company and we are looking at having one big tent with suites for the different companies with the top of the stretch and the Jug social on the ends. Colleen Smith mentioned that she does not like the dividing walls separating the parties. We had a discussion on the different companies being open to it. Chip Thomson mentioned that he has seen

similar tents at Muirfield that seem to work really well. Colleen asked what Connie Hoffman thought about how the catering would work. Chris mentioned that we talked about moving the tent up and making a wider path behind for the catering trucks. We are working with O'Neil on solutions. Chip mentioned that we should work backwards and find out costs to determine what the cost of tickets should be. Mike Harter said to make sure everyone in the Grandstand can see over the tents. Jen mentioned that she has blocked off section J of the grandstand and would possibly like to turn that into a hospitality suite.

Jen mentioned that we had 8 Jr. Fair scholarship applications turned in.

RACE SECRETARY'S REPORT:

Tom Wright reported that February payments didn't go as well as he would have liked. Yesterday was the date for 2 year old payments. Tom reported that Skip Hoover passed away. He was on the LBJ Society board and past president of the OHHA. His services will be on Saturday.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Randy Turner was absent but submitted his report read by Chris Welker:

Finance Report - Financials reported through Quick books is now a fairly accurate picture of the overall financial status of the Delaware County Agricultural Society. Items that still need attention include accounts payable and receivable to apply payments and deposits correctly. Jody has worked extremely hard to get entries coded appropriately and has had to manage the conversion from the old desktop version while dealing with anomalies caused by the transition to online Quick books, direct account access, and reconciliation of bank statements. The sweep accounts have been particularly problematic in this process.

Grandstand Loan Status - As of this meeting our principal balance is less than \$1,000,000, approximately \$965,000.

Star Account - The Star account report has been modified to reflect our income vs expenditures. The current balance of \$2,387,965.00 reflects \$2,363,780 Capital Budget and \$24,185 in dividends.

Bed Tax Report - The Bed Tax report is for only this calendar year and has a balance with the commissioners of \$1,808,218.22 at this time. Remember that all expense of Bed Tax money must be approved by the commissioners and is budgeted in the fall of the previous year.

Report Payroll Service - The payroll service is PayEntry and is working well at this point. The bill for the first month was \$203 and a one-time start-up fee.

Credit Line - The balance on the Line of Credit is not quite \$70,000 and I plan to make payments using the dividends on the Star Account until it is paid off.

Retirement accounts update - In 2023 the board offered our employees a match up to 3% of earning to be invested as a simple IRA retirement account. While there will be additional costs associated with moving to offering our employees a 403b it has many advantages and greater options for our employees. You can expect a presentation concerning this at our April board meeting.

Tax Exempt Status - Everything has been submitted to the IRS for our tax exempt status and we are awaiting a response.

Chris Welker: Racing Sec. Salary – The present racing secretary was hired in 2007 and received a raise from \$7200/yr to \$8500/yr in 2012. \$8500/yr is the present salary and in my opinion, we should consider a raise since it has been 14 years.

Jennifer Brown moved to raise the Race Secretary's salary to \$12k per year. Benjamin Wenner second. Tom Wright abstained. Motion carried. Chip Thomson asked Benjamin what it would take for him to vote to approve the Treasurer's report. Benjamin stated that he will continue to vote no for several reasons. We don't have to approve the Treasurer's report as a board. He needs to have a greater confidence in the numbers and Randy knows that. He will continue to vote no until he is more comfortable.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Chris Welker mentioned that the minutes were in the board packet. Jeff and crew got all the platforms taken out of the grandstand and cleaned up and is halfway thru getting the old chairs out. The track is the best it has ever been. Discussion was also had on the best way to honor Dan Huffman.

GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE:

Dave Laaksonen reported that the committee met and approved three contracts. First was the OSU Vet contract recommended by the FAC committee. Benjamin Wenner moved to approve the OSU Vet contract for 2026. Jennifer Brown second. Motion carried.

The second contract was Morco Electric, which was a recommendation from the maintenance committee. Jeff Armentrout moved to approve a 3 year contract with Morco Electric. Colleen Smith second. Diane Winters abstained. Motion carried.

The third contract up for discussion was American Teletimer. Patti Gladman moved to approve the contract with American Teletimer. Jennifer Brown second. Motion carried.

FAC COMMITTEE:

Benjamin Wenner reported that the discussion was had about the baked goods auction.

ADVERTISING COMMITTEE:

Chip Thomson discussed pursuing a project with the 23 sign. We are missing a lot of cars every day and it never works right. We need to keep pursuing this and replacing it with a high quality sign.

SECURITY COMMITTEE:

No Report

MOTORSPORTS COMMITTEE:

Jeff Armentrout reported that the committee talked about sponsorships and approved their track official T-Shirts with Absolute Impressions bid.

FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE:

Adam DeMarco mentioned that they had an Ag. Pro representative here and did training on the new tractor that we recorded for future training. Adam was really impressed with how much work the grounds crew have accomplished in the grandstand in only 4 or 5 days.

HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE:

Colleen Smith reported that they did meet and they want to increase ticket prices in the tents to bring in additional revenue. They would like to raise the Wednesday Top of the Stretch and Backstretch tickets from \$60 to \$85. The Thursday Top of the Stretch and Backstretch from \$100 to \$125. The Wednesday Pavilion tickets from \$180 to \$195. The Thursday Pavilion tickets from \$265 to \$300, and the Wednesday/Thursday Pavilion sets from \$375 to \$450. Patti Gladman moved to approve the increases for 2026. Jeff Armentrout second. Motion carried. Colleen mentioned that the race sponsorship package is currently at \$150 each for Pavilion tickets. She will get a cost breakdown to come up with pricing for sponsors.

We are going to carry on using All Occasions for 2026. Colleen spoke with Kevin and they are going to set up a taste test sometime soon to see what we can change food wise.

Colleen mentioned that the chairs they have are 20 years old and she had to throw out about 350 of them and they are at capacity on Thursday. We are going to look at renting the chairs.

BED TAX COMMITTEE:

Jon Melvin mentioned that the minutes were in the board packet. The grandstand ramps are advertised out to bid. The bid is due April 3rd at noon. Bed Tax will meet April 7 to go over the bids.

Pete with Meyers presented \$149k in additional services due to increase in designs and engineering growth.

Chris and Jen talked with Jon Huffman about paving work. We should official paving pricing in May. We are looking at paving from the betting booth down to the front of the grandstand where we tore out the platforms and also the road that has the games on it next to the midway.

Mike Harter asked about the \$149k in additional expenses and where we stand with the city. We sat in the meeting and they said they were getting push back from the city. Chip suggested that Chris send a letter to the city manager to set up a meeting with them and maybe an attorney so that we can get this put to bed. Jon mentioned that we need the city to say no and that is why we need to keep this moving forward.

Don Howard asked about a variance to get occupancy for the upstairs Hall of Fame, or getting a quote to get it completed. Benjamin mentioned that was on Meyer's list.

Benjamin Wenner moved to approve the additional \$149k for Meyers to continue to work on the 4H barns. Chip Thomson second. Motion carried.

Jon did mention to Pete that we need in writing and bid specs to bid out repairs for the log cabin. We can also add the roof projects to that.

Chip gave an update on the grandstand HVAC. 2K has stepped up and identified the wiring problems. The temps are drawn on outside air. Speer gave us an estimate of \$9k for thermostats. Cap City was brought in by 2K and they will not charge us a dime to bring us up to specs. We would pay Cap City \$5846 for the thermostats. Chip Thomson motioned to get the grandstand to specs and add thermostats for the \$5846. Benjamin Wenner second. Motion carried.

ALL HORSE PARADE COMMITTEE:

Diane Winters reported that things are moving forward and they are working on T-Shirts. The parade is September 13th at 3pm

HALL OF FAME COMMITTEE:
No Report

OLD BUSINESS:
None

NEW BUSINESS:
None

Jennifer Brown moved to adjourn. Jon Melvin second. Motion carried.