

Richland County Agricultural Society

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

January 27th 2026

President Christy Keith called the meeting to order at 7:02pm.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

Roll call was taken for members.

Staff Present: Shirley Swihart

Guests Present: Deb Boyce, Andrea Reese, Brenda Dinger, and Alecia of the 4-h Committee

Secretaries Report, Remington Blevins moved to accept the report seconded by Zac Tuttle, Motion Passed

Treasurers Report, Shirley Swihart provided and updated report from the emailed version, Kathi Mills moved to accept the report seconded with corrections, seconded by Bill McFarland, motion passed.

Andrea Reese attended from the OSU extension office in Knox county, she has been helping fill in for Richland county while they look to hire a replacement. She attended the meeting to answer any questions board member may have. Dave Dick asked if we have had any applicants yet, answer yes there were currently 5, with one bowing out, that were to be interviewed at the state level then would be interviewed at the county level. Next it was asked if there was a time line for how long it would take if someone was selected? The answer was that if it is an internal candidate that is already employed by the state it would be quicker than an external that will have to go through back round checks. At the earliest a March start time would be most realistic. Next question asked was what does the 4-H account monies go towards, this was directed to the 4-H committee, who answered that it goes towards camp, awards and honors programs etc. Next question asked was what does the 4-H fee go towards, the answer was the whole amount goes to the 4-H committee but none can be used towards Jr. Fair Awards.

The 4-H committee told the board that there are dual treasurers for the 4-H accounts, Lisa Crane and Kathy Barcys, and any money collected at the extension office will be given to the committee.

Next the Fair Board moved to talking about the rule changes. With questions raised on the working for “determinations” along with what has actually changed from last year in the proposed rule changes.

- This also has that it states the exhibitor MUST be present at the time of verification. Andrea commented that it would be more cut and dry, and also the exhibitors need to be notified when the verifications will be.
- It was noted that in the edit to rule 4 that it should be more inclusive to fair kids that are exhibiting in the State Fair, and may have to come in a day or two late during fair week.
- Dave Dick mentioned that this should go to the Livestock Committee to look over and approve first. They will be having a meeting February 12th.
- It was then spoke about hiring the goat verification judge or judges. The board will be looking at using a generic contract for this selection.

Committee Reports:

Tshirt, Budget, and Livestock – Nothing to report

Nature Park – Gene Esbenshade reported that they are currently reviewing acts.

Campground – Nothing to report

Racetrack – Dale Bemiller reported there were 18 horses that moved out of the barn, complaining of the track being too soft, and they may have had a better offer. That particular renter was not a fan of the INK contract and having to give up track days during INK week. Changes this year for races:

- Ambulance present entire race time
- Races will run 8 wide versus the 6 and 7 in past years. This will save \$1000 each night.
- There are pylons that need to be added to the inside before fair this year.
- We will be splitting the advertising for the Weiner Dog Race with the Ohio Harness Association 50/50

Fairbook – changes need to be to Pam ASAP

Golfcarts – Scott Smith Reported that we have one more year with the Willndale Contract. Carts will be same as last year price.

JFB, Bylaws, Sponsorships, Admissions, Elections, Grandstands, Parking, and Antiques – Nothing to report

Concessions – Kathy Mills reported that contracts are going out this week, there is still the possibility of outgrowing Fairhaven Hall.

Equine – Marla Reynolds reported that they will begin working on stalled in the barn by the East gate and begin getting bids for lighting in the arenas.

Raffles – Tickets are still available for the Gun Raffle

Social Media – Nothing to report

Safety – Kathy Mills reported they are still waiting on proofs to come back and will be working on a full grounds plan.

Infield – Bill McFarland reported that the committee is looking to meet in a week or two to decide on a promoter for motorcross, tractor pulls, and the demo derby. The rodeo has already been locked in.

Grandstands – nothing to report

Grounds Acts – Reported for 2026 Grounds Acts:

- Pork Chop
- Goat Island
- Solo Cups
- Don't Tell the Bishop
- Money Man

2027 Grounds Acts

- Firefighter
- SPA Fun
- Magician

Motion to Approve the above acts for the 2026 and 2027 Fair By Gene Esbenshade, and seconded by Kathi Mills, motion passed

Judges – Dave Dick reported they will be getting called tonight

Entertainment, winter storage, and Show arena – Nothing to report

Kitchen Aux – Gene Esbenshade reported, February 21 & 22 gun show help needed, the kitchen floors are done, flat top needs to be repaired and will look at the new steamer in Fairhaven, there are event coming up in March and April.

Grounds – Dave Grauer reported, a big thank you to all the help on moving snow, there are three buildings rented for this weekends toy show, Remington will have someone do a run for salt while he is out of town the next couple days. There is a skid loader in Burbank that may be a possibility for purchased, Southeastern also has one that they will be looking at. Will need to be doing building checks after rentals, there are some buildings with heat being turned down, something to look in to is wifi ran thermostats so that they can be controlled remotely. The Youth Hall bathroom furnace is not working, will be looking in to fixing.

Motion was made by Dave Dick to allocate \$20,000 to repair out of the rental funds. Seconded by Dale Belmiller, motion passed.

Landscaping – nothing to report.

Old Business

- Jr Fair Coordinator position has an updated copy available.
- Questions were raised regarding this position, When do we plan to post? What do we want to pay? Will we restrict them from being on any other committee? If they are on a committee will we make them quit? How long will we keep the job posted? Kathi Mills commented that she feels \$10,000 is to high and we should lower it to be able to allow for a stipend.
- There was a motion to pay \$10,000 by Dave Dick and Seconded by Dave Grauer, vote was taken with 21 for and 1 against.
- Motion was made if we will allow the candidate to be on other committees by Zac Tuttle, seconded by Dave Dick. Motion passed.
- Andrew Noted that their position on these other committees should be ex-officio

Remington Blevins left the meeting at 8:15pm

- The motion was amended by Gene Esbenshade Seconded by Kathi Mills to make this so, Discussion was made that there is no set hours on the job qualifications, this if for the hours to be at the employees discretion due to some weeks and months requiring more time needed than others. Vote was taken and passed with a Yes at 22 – 0
- This will be posted ASAP and will close Feb. 16th
- Radio Ads – Motion was made by Dale Hulit to approve up to \$6000 to spend on radio ads to help with rentals and such, seconded by Dave Grauer, Motion Passed
- INK Changes, contract will end in 2035, if they pan a second event they must give 10 months notice, the fair will not put up the bleachers in the infield to restrict camping. Also all utility meters will be read when they move in and when they move out. Question was asked if fair week and the week before will be blacked out for the second event if any. Motion was made to approve contract by Kathi Mills, seconded by Any Messersmith Motion passed.

New Business

-Sheep show time change, currently it is at 8:30am Thursday of fair week, looking to move up earlier in the week to relieve the stress of setting up for the sale Thursday afternoon.

- Option 1 – Move Kelsten outside under the awning, and use old show arena for the barnyard Olympics
- Option 2 – Move open pig show to Sunday night, then move lambs to Monday night at 5:30/6, move the barnyard Olympics to the morning and move lamb weigh in to Saturday Afternoon.

Motion made by Mark Cook to move the show to Monday, seconded by Bill MvFarland, motion passed.

Motion made by Mark Cook to move lamb weigh in to Saturday in the steer barn at 6pm, Seconded by Zac Tuttle, Motion passed.

Motion made to move the Barnyard Olympics to 10am on Thursday by Dale Hulit, seconded by Bill McFarland, motion passed.

- 4-h Committee came to propose a name change to the Jr. Fair office. Motion to approve made by Dave Dick, seconded by Bill McFarland.
- A donation request was made by the Crestview School for their dance, Motion was made to donate 4 family passes by Kathi Mills, seconded by Gene Esbenshade. Motion passed.
- Motion was made to approve putting up the donated TVs in the new show arena by Dale Hulit, seconded by Matt Janish

- Cameras – a decision was made that we do own the pole that has been in discussion for previous meetings. Will have to wait to get the new pole in place and have Ohio Edison move the meter and lines.
- Weeklong Pass Extension – Sale of the family passes will be extended to Sunday at 8 pm, motion made by Dave Dick and seconded by Curt Fife. Motion Passed
- Motion was made to give a stipend of \$599 to Pam, Lee, Shirley, and Lisa for their exceptional hard work.
- Dave Gruaer mentioned that we will need new forks for the Skid Loader when we find one. Motion made by Dave Dick to approve up to \$750 seconded by Matt Janish, motion passed.
- Motion made to purchase a hitch plate for winter storage use and camper moving and to spend up to \$235 by Bill McFarland, Seconded by Dustin Moysi

Motion to adjourn meeting at 8:57pm by Bill McFarland, seconded by Gene Esbenshade.

Submitted by Sadie Hoyt