

Benton County Agricultural Society  
PO Box 118  
Sauk Rapids MN 56379  
(320) 253-5649

January Monthly Meeting  
Tuesday, January 16<sup>th</sup> 2024 – 7:00pm  
Benton County Fairgrounds

The monthly January meeting for the Benton County Agricultural Society was held on Tuesday, January 16, 2024 at 7:00pm at the Benton County Fair Grounds Office.

Directors present were; Ted Prom; President, Ken Bemboom; Vice President, Nancy Zupan, Jody Prom, Scott Morris, Jennifer Dingmann, Adam Scapanski, Jennifer Dingmann and Vince Thiel and Karen Sakry. Mary Ostby, Treasurer arrived late.

President Prom convened the meeting at 7:00pm.

Guests present is Jimmy Zanardi.

Jody Prom made the motion to approve the January 2023 meeting agenda with Adam Scapanski seconding. Motion carried unanimously.

Scott Morris made the motion to approve the December 2023 monthly meeting minutes with Ken Bemboom seconding. Motion carried unanimously.

Nancy Zupan made the motion to approve the December 2023 Treasurers Report with Ken Bemboom seconding. Motion carried unanimously.

Committee Reports/Updates;

4-H – Need for more hog pens, ideally 20 units – will look into if there are any grants available to cover the pens

Activity Area – Schedule is getting worked on. Ideas include kids pedal pull, bmx bike jumps, pig races to name a few. Committee will continue working on the schedule. There is a kids pedal pull unit that is available for purchase from a past company that is retiring, contact info will be sent over to the committee.

Ag craft – Rhoda was able to make it to the convention, and was able to make some connections and get new ideas. The need for new quilt racks was brought up, they will pull together more information and pricing for those.

Beer Garden – Committee is recommending to go back to having select beers having two tickets vs everything all a flat one ticket, as cost of products is going up Jody Prom made a motion to have the select (hard) beers going to two tickets rather than one ticket with Jennifer Dingmann seconding. Motion carried unanimously.

Jody Prom made the motion to try new this year THC drinks within the beer garden with Jennifer Dingmann seconding. With more discussion questions arose regarding licenses and insurance. Motion was rescinded and tabled to next meeting.

Beer Garden Stage – Line up is getting locked down, just waiting on final contracts to come in. John Swatzke will be providing production for the beer garden stage from Wednesday through Saturday.

Building/Grounds – Steve has been hired, but we will still need to go through the job description with him and have him signed off on it. Electrical work needs to be done north of the lunch stand. There is a broken waterline in the midway that needs repairing before water is turned back on for the season. The water pipes need to be looked at inside the Beer Garden building. Jen will reach out to Travis with T&E to get a quote for 2024 for same services he provided in 2023.

Discovery – New ideas were found down at convention. Jody Prom made a motion to have the committee work together to book companies for this year with Scott Morris seconding the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

FFA – All good

Finance – Committee needing to get together regarding details on hiring Cheryl Scapanski. 2024 budget spreadsheets were handed out, each chair/director to review their area and let the finance committee know. Special meeting is scheduled for January 30<sup>th</sup> at 5pm to review and go over the budget.

Grants – A lot of information was learned down at convention and research has started for new grants.

Grandstand – Sled operator for the truck and tractor pull was not available on our usual nights which lead to looking at a new schedule line up for the grandstand area, after researching promoters schedules and their availability. A suggested schedule was presented to the group with having Tuesday night a demo derby, Wednesday night Monster Trucks, Thursday night demo derby, Friday having a rodeo, Saturday having tractor pull and Sunday with a Truck Pull. Jody Prom made the motion to approve the new the suggested line up with Adam Scapanski seconding the motion. Motioned carried unanimously. Elk River FFA doesn't think they can commit to the this years truck and tractor pull, in the full capacity they did in 2023, a few will help again this year, but a new crew/group will need to be looked into. Grandstand committee is getting together January 29<sup>th</sup> with the Knights of Columbus to talk about potentially relocating the grandstand. James Trantina mentioned he has extra material to look

into replacing the chainlink fence that runs along the street to have a solid fence, committee will work with him on more details on that along with looking into fixes on the bleachers and pull together final quotes for the board.

Guest/Host Relation – All good

Heritage Square – Doug Ohman is on the schedule for the Heritage building and there is currently 6 time slots open as of now, so things are filling up nicely for the spaces. Talent show is planned to come back for 2024.

Insurance – MCIT insurance has been renewed for \$11,981.00.

Livestock/Poultry – Parking passes will be given out to families who stay for open class, that went over well last year, however just need to button down the processes. Youth livestock judges have been discussed and sounds promising, committee will work on more details for that.

Marketing/Promotions – All good

Midway – All good

Military - Meat Raffle is held January 19<sup>th</sup> at Rolliers at 5pm.

Off Stage Rentals – All good

Parking – Talk of a second shuttle bus was had due to planned road construction happening again this summer. Will get a quote for services and bring back at the next meeting.

Policies and Procedure – Special meeting scheduled for February 29<sup>th</sup> at 5pm

Premium Book – All good

Sanitation – 4 of the 6 cleaning mornings have been filled at this point. Nelson Sanitation has been reserved for this year for same service rendered as last year.

Security – Follow up meeting with police departments to be scheduled

Sponsorship – All good

Sports Arena East – No new updates

Vendors – Committee is getting together to finalize contracts

Winter Storage – All good

Old Business:

Convention – Ted, Jody, Nancy, Jennifer, Jimmy, Jill, Rhoda and Larry all attended convention. Was very informational for all areas of the fair. Information and notes taken have been sorted out to the proper committees. One of the big take aways in talking to other fair boards is how the committees do a lot of the leg work prior to meetings and then bring they recommendation typically in the form of a motion to the board meetings. This has greatly sped up their meetings times, and something that we will start implementing moving forward.

Jennifer Dingmann made motion to adjourn to with Adam Scapanski at 9:40pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jennifer Dingmann Fair Board Director



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January Special Meeting  
Tuesday, January 30th 2024 – 5:00pm  
Benton County Fairgrounds

The special January meeting for the Benton County Agricultural Society was held on Tuesday, January 30, 2024 at 5:00pm at the Benton County Fair Grounds Office.

Directors present were; Ted Prom; President, Ken Bemboom; Vice President, Mary Ostby; Treasurer, Nancy Zupan, Jennifer Dingmann, Adam Scapanski, Karen Sakry, Jody Prom and Vince Thiel. Directors absent; Scott Morris and Sam Morris

President Prom convened the meeting at 5:10pm.

Committee Reports/Updates;

- Budget; the 2024 budget for income and expense was gone with line by line with all present directors

Everything was penciled in and Mary will get updated typed out copies to the directors before the February meeting.

- 4-H; all good

- Activity Area; all good

- Ag Craft; all good

- Beer Garden; all good

- Beer Garden Stage; all good

- Building/Grounds; The rental agreement for the 1402 property needs to be renewed. Mary made the motion to table the renewal agreement to the February meeting with Jody seconding the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

- Discovery; Vince connected with a gentleman that works for the State of Minnesota in regards to impaired driving stimulators. He presented a few of the options of items that are available at no charge. Information will get passed onto Sam to see how that get work into the Discovery Buildings schedule.

- Finance; Going over the budget took longer than expected, committee will get together at a later date to go over a financial plan and Cheryl's job description
- FFA; all good
- Grants; Mary is still working on pulling passed receipts to close out past years grants.
- Grandstand; With the 2024 grandstand line up, Bryan Carstensen, the demo promotor is worried about car counts and drivers showing up for a Tuesday demo so he asked the committee if we would be open to having one demo (Thursday) for the 2024 fair. Ideas are getting worked on for Tuesday night to replace that demo. Committee is getting together 1/31/2024 to go over more details.
- Guest/Host Relations; all good
- Heritage Square; South door needs to get looked at along with the shade clothes and it looks like the wind has brought some damage.
- Insurance; all good
- Livestock/Poultry; all good
- Marketing/Promotion; Between road construction planned and the new grandstand line up, the committee is started to plan their marketing schedule to gain awareness to the public.
- Midway; all good
- Military; next meat raffle is scheduled for Friday, Feb 16<sup>th</sup> at Rollies.
- Off-Season Rental; all good
- Parking; all good
- Policies & Procedure; committee meeting scheduled for 2/29/2024
- Premium Book; all good
- Sanitation; all good
- Security; all good
- Sponsorship; Committee has met, letters have been sent out to businesses for renewals more discussion to be had regarding the food passes.

- Sports Arena East; Ted received a phone call from someone on the Sauk Rapids Youth Hockey Association as they are in the beginning stages of talk of a protentional building addition, ideally 3500 square feet, that they would like to put onto the SAE building. As the conversation continued, the still standing tar bill was mentioned and the fact that BCAS still have not received any payment for the tar work completed in 2023. Jody Prom made a motion for Ted to reach out to our lawyers to have them send out a formal letter to SAE requesting a resolution with Ken Bemboom seconding. Motion carried unanimously.

- Vendors – Committee got together to update new contracts, those will be getting mailed out to vendors over the next week or so, and posted to the website.

- Winter Storage; all good

Jody made motion to adjourn to with Jen seconding at 10:15pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Dingmann  
Fair Board Director

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February Monthly Meeting  
Tuesday, February 20th 2024 – 7:00pm  
Benton County Fairgrounds

The monthly February meeting for the Benton County Agricultural Society was held on Tuesday, February 20, 2024 at 7:00pm at the Benton County Fair Grounds Office.

Directors present were; Ted Prom; President, Mary Ostby, Treasurer, Nancy Zupan, Jody Prom, Scott Morris, Jennifer Dingmann, Adam Scapanski, Sam Morris, Vince Thiel and Karen Sakry. Absent from meeting; Ken Bemboom; Vice President.

President Prom convened the meeting at 7:00pm.

Guests present;

Tim Goodner & Bob Halliday with the Pantowners Car Club, they are looking to renew the lease again for the 2024 car show. Date for this year's show is Sunday, August 18<sup>th</sup>, with renting of the grounds to begin on Friday, August 16<sup>th</sup> for set up. Scott Morris made the motion to approve the car club renting the grounds from August 16<sup>th</sup> - August 18<sup>th</sup> with Jody Prom seconding the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Greg Schultz from the U-Betcha's food booth. He updated the board about the shape of the picnic tables that are under his covered seating area, as they are in major need of repair and/or replacement. Greg reached out to Oberg to see if they would provide a quote to build them, in conversation they have offered to build them and donate to the tables to BCAS in return for advertising on the table tops, looking at 5 tables in total. Scott Morris made the motion to allow Greg to continue working to Oberg on moving forward with the tables with Nancy Zupan seconding the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Adam Scapanski made the motion to approve the February 2024 meeting agenda with Sam Morris seconding. Motion carried unanimously.

Mary Ostby made the motion to approve the January 2024 Monthly Meeting Minutes with Adam Scapanski seconding. Motion carried unanimously.

Mary Ostby made the motion to approve the January 2024 Special Meeting Minutes with Karen Sakry seconding the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Mary Ostby made the motion to approve the January 2024 Treasurers Report with Adam Scapanski seconding. Motion carried unanimously.



Committee Reports/Updates;  
4-H – All good

Activity Area – Schedule is getting worked on. Nancy has been researching bringing back the kids pedal tractor pull, ideally to be held on Saturday during kids day, however due to scheduling we may have to look at having the pull on a different day.

Ag craft – All good

Beer Garden – Minnesota state law currently states that THC products can not be sold/served alongside alcohol so at this time, THC drinks will not be offered within the Beer Gardens.

Beer Garden Stage – Bands and production schedule is finalized with all contracts signed and set out. John Sawatzke will be providing production for the beer garden stage from Wednesday through Saturday.

Building/Grounds – Rather than hiring a company to grind the stump, Scott will rent a unit and grind the stump himself. The rental of bleachers will need to be locked in again this year for both the grandstand and activity area. A teacher from Pleasant View Elementary School asked for permission to tap trees to show his students the process of making maple syrup, committee has given him permission to proceed.

Furnace and Air Conditioner unit work is complete, with invoice received and paid. Jennifer will work on getting warranty information filed for both units.

Trash removal services for the week of the fair has been locked in, the only changes to the contract is an additional pick up day for Tuesday, being Monday is such a heavy set up day the dumpsters get too full with set up and don't allow room for Tuesdays trash. Dumpster is also scheduled to get delivered for office use a few weeks before fair.

Scott will reach out to Granite City Paving to have them look at and provide us a quote for the next section of tar needed to get replaced throughout the Midway.

The center grass area in the foot court area is showing a lot of signs of people driving through that area along with a lot of trash. Scott will look into getting that area cleaned up along with roping that section off so people stay off the grass.

Discovery – Things are getting worked on yet, looking for new ideas.

FFA – They are still in the planning stages and working on getting bids for the building they are looking to put up.

Finance – The 2024 budget that was worked on at the January 30<sup>th</sup> Special Meeting was finalized and presented to the board. Scott Morris made the motion to approve the 2024 budget with Sam Morris seconding the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Ted and Jennifer had a zoom call with Amy who is performing the financial support/recommendation process for the board. There are still a few things to clean up yet that the finance committee will work with Amy, to get those things ready to present to the board. Special meeting will get scheduled for March 5<sup>th</sup> for Amy to come to the office and present her findings and recommendations. Committee needing to get together regarding details on hiring Cheryl Scapanski. We have \$29,000 in sales tax money from 2023 to use this year, money is needed to go towards improvements to the fairgrounds.

Grants – Mary is working on grants to get hog pens covered, she needs more information from the livestock committee on styles of what they are wanting, these should be covered under the Agri-grant which looks like there is \$10,175.00 available in funding. Legacy grant is showing \$3755.00 available and Mary is submitting a few of the cottonwood acts along with new quilt displays for this grant. Mary looked into the grant through the Department of Homeland Security for security cameras, they grant is pretty lengthy and requires a lot of prep work, which she will start working on to be ready for the next round. Grant applications are due Feb 29<sup>th</sup> at 4pm.

Grandstand – Vince, Jennifer and Ted met with the Elk River FFA in regards to being the promoters for the truck and tractor pull again. They can't commit to promoting both nights as a full group, but a handful of guys are willing to come back and help again this year. We will need to find someone to head up each pull and be the point of contact.

In researching the demos in regards to low car counts we have been seeing, there was several comments made from past drivers regarding the rules and current demo promotor. With hearing that feedback the committee starting making calls and researching other promotors to get their input and feedback. There is one individual who has offered to take over promoting the demos for us, if we wanted to make that shift and see if car counts and the negative feedback changes. Committee will continue to research and work towards a solution. The hunt for a Tuesday night show is still on, ideas include BMX bike racing which is \$10,000, lumberjack show with is \$10,000 plus the usage of 2,000 gallons of water or moving the morning draft horse show to the evening costing about \$1500.

Guest/Host Relation – All good

Heritage Square – Waiting for contracts to come back in

Insurance – Need to look into event/liquor insurance.

Livestock/Poultry – 1 vet has been confirmed

Marketing/Promotions – Once the grandstand line up is finalized they will start advertising. Advertising will be heavier this year than in the past due to the new grandstand line up.



Midway – All good

Military – Next meat raffle dates are March 29<sup>th</sup>, April 26<sup>th</sup> and May 24<sup>th</sup>. Ticket prices are going up to \$2 due to the cost of the meat packs.

Off Stage Rentals – Rental rates for the car show were looked. We compared pricing from what they currently are paying vs how the grounds rental pricing it. Jody Prom made the motion to adjust the 2024 rates for the car show to \$1200 grounds fee, \$800 building fee and \$500 utility fee – bringing the total rental fee to \$2500 plus a \$500 deposit Sam Morris seconded the motion. Vince Thiel and Nancy Zupan abstained from the vote. Motion passed.

Parking – Adam called Mississippi Heights to see if we could use their parking lot for a second shuttle location, he is waiting to hear back approval. Jennifer Dingmann made the motion to proceed forward with the second shuttle to Mississippi Heights Elementary School, upon approval from the school with Jody Prom seconding the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Policies and Procedure – Special meeting scheduled for February 29<sup>th</sup> at 5pm

Premium Book – A few changes needed to be made and have been gone through to open class for 2024. Committee still needs to meet with Rhoda for Ag Craft updates, along with double checking on FFA and Lamas. Talk about adding in a few additional pages to the book to showcase schedules for more advertising opportunities, Jen will look into getting more pages added.

Sanitation – 1 morning cleaning shift left to fill. Nelson Sanitation has been reserved for this year for same service rendered as last year.

Security – Follow up meeting with police departments to be scheduled. Vince will reach out to a contract he has to have them come out and look at current cameras along with added more cameras.

Sponsorship – Forms have been sent out.

Sports Arena East – We are working on coming up with a plan for payment options, right now the payment option is to receive \$5000.00 per year, for X amount of years until the total amount of \$67,000 is paid in full.

Vendors – Contracts have been sent out with a few already coming back in.

Winter Storage – April 13<sup>th</sup> removal date – there has been a few units that have already reached out to let us know that they will not make that date – just a reminder that the \$100.00 fee will need to be collected on the units that are not removed on the April 13<sup>th</sup> date.

Old Business:

1402 Rental Renewal – Annual renewal is up. A cost analysis was handed out to all directors to show current income and expenses for the property. A few changes need to be updated on the renewal; changing the payment due date to the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month, cleaning up the wording on water/utilities and changing the lease terms to end on 9/30 to it starts aligning with our fiscal year. Adam Scapanski made the motion to keep the rent the same again for the renewal with Scott Morris seconding the motion. Nancy Zupan abstained from the vote. Motion passed.

Secretary – We need to start looking for one or the current bylaws need to be adjusted, more talk to be had during the upcoming policies and procedures meeting.

New Business:

New Director – Vince Thiel made the motion to approve James Zanardi as a new board director, for a 1 year term with Sam Morris seconding the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

There is an organization that is looking to donate their building/food stand to the BCAS. Mary Ostby made the motion the accept the donation of the building to the Ag Society, with the paperwork to follow suit, Jody Prom seconding the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Mary Ostby made the motion for BCAS to pay for hotel fees and convention fees for the March IAFE Zone 4 Convention with Jody Prom seconding the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Adam Scapanski made motion to adjourn to with Sam Morris seconding at 10:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jennifer Dingmann  
Director



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February Special Monthly Meeting  
Tuesday, February 29th 2024 – 5:00pm  
Benton County Fairgrounds

The February special meeting for the Benton County Agricultural Society was held on Tuesday, February 29, 2024 at 5:00pm at the Benton County Fair Grounds Office.

Directors present were; Ted Prom; President, Ken Bemboom; Vice President, Mary Ostby, Treasurer, Nancy Zupan, Jody Prom, Scott Morris, Jennifer Dingmann, Vince Thiel, Karen Sakry, and Jimmy Zanardi. Sam Morris and Adam Scapanski Absent

President Prom convened the meeting at 5:20pm.

#### Policies, Procedures & Bylaws:

In reviewing over the bylaws and who has signing authority and not, the way the current bylaws sit not all directors that make up the Executive Committee have signing authority. Scott Morris made the motion to update the bylaws to reflect that the vice president also has check signing authority with Karen Sakry seconding the motion. Ken Bemboom abstained. Motion passed.

In reviewing over the Executive Secretary description, the board discussed how the current wording is restricting in order for the position to be filled. Mary Ostby made the motion to update and add in if/when necessary, the board may choose to hire contract services for financial support for interim signing authority with Scott Morris seconding the motion. Nancy voted no. Motion passed.

The office staff positions are needing to be filled, currently Jennifer is the acting secretary, however due to her work commitments and other duties throughout the fair she can not dedicate the full commitment of the current Executive Secretary job description. Jennifer will work on breaking down the job description and meet with the Executive Committee to review and finalize that job list. Scott Morris made the motion to hire an office manager, starting anytime with the review date and/or contract end date of our fiscal year ending on September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024 with Ken Bemboom seconding the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Jimmy Zanardi made the motion to hire Jennifer Dingmann as a contracted interim secretary until a full-time Executive Secretary is hired at the rate of \$20/hrly and to include back pay with Nancy Zupan seconding the motion. Jennifer Dingmann abstained. Motion passed.

Ken Bemboom made the motion that board members to get paid \$30 for attended monthly meeting and \$20 for any attended special meeting with any director having the option to not take payment, payments to begin March 1<sup>st</sup> and go through September 30<sup>th</sup>, as a trail period before making a long-term plan with Scott Morris seconding the motion. Motion failed unanimously.

Ted Prom volunteered to make calls to other fairs and organizations to research ideas and more information on the board receiving payments and/or reimbursements for mileage.

Committee Reports:

4-H – All good

Activity Area – Nancy is still working on details for a kids pedal.

Ag craft – All good

Beer Garden – All good

Beer Garden Stage – All good

Building/Grounds – Scott, Ted and Steve were able to meet to go over Steves job description. Going forward there will be a white board hung in the office and that will be his communication guide from the full board, otherwise Scott and Ken are his main points of contact.

Discovery – All good

FFA – All good

Finance – Special meeting schedule for March 5<sup>th</sup>

Grants – Mary got the grants processed before the deadline

Grandstand – We are using a new demo promotor for the 2024 fair, the committee has been in contact with the Andy Hanson who will be taking over for this year, same rates as past people so no price changes to the fair.

Guest/Host Relation – All good

Heritage Square – Schedule is still getting worked on. Talent Show on the Cottonwood is getting planned, and looking like it will be held on Saturday from 10am – 6pm.

Insurance – All good

Livestock/Poultry – Once grant is finalized and approved committee with move forward with new pens.

Marketing/Promotions – Waiting on final grandstand lineup to start advertising

Midway – 2025 dates will be July 29<sup>th</sup> – August 3<sup>rd</sup>. 2026 August 4<sup>th</sup> – August 9<sup>th</sup> and 2027 August 3<sup>rd</sup> – August 8<sup>th</sup>. Gopher State is entering the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the current contract so that will be getting renewed after completion of this years fair. Ken Bemboom made the motion to separate food vendors from the rest of the vendors and to form a new committee. One committee being commercial vendors (SAE, outdoor and lean-to) and the other to be food vendors, which will include the midway food vendors with Scott Morris seconding the motion. Nancy voted no. Motion passed. Jimmy Zanardi will chair the food vendor committee

Military – Next Meat raffle is March 29th at Rolli's

Off Stage Rentals – All good

Parking – All good

Premium Book – Committee has met with super intendants to go over any changes they need for 2024. Jennifer will start working on making those changes to the book.

Sanitation – All good

Security – AVX is coming meeting with Mary, Vince and Scott to review current cameras and provide a quote to add on additional cameras.

Sponsorship – Forms sent out – already received \$2750 back in from businesses.

Sports Arena East – Ted received an email from Cory with their payment plan. They are projecting to pay 4,476.55/annually for the next 15 years, ending June 2038. After reviewing with the committee, the committee recommends sending two options of payments plans one at a lower interest rate for 5 years, and a higher interest rate for 15 years.

Mary made the motion to have each organization representation get together with our full board to talk over the details of the payment plan and moving forward with Jimmy Zanardi seconding the motion. Motion carried unanimously

Vendors – Contracts are starting to come in from vendors.

Winter Storage – April 13<sup>th</sup> removal date – there has been a few units that have already reached out to let us know that they will not make that date – just a reminder that the \$100.00 fee will need to be collected on the units that are not removed on the April 13<sup>th</sup> date.

Scott Morris made motion to adjourn to with Ken Bemboom seconding at 8:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jennifer Dingmann Fair Board Director



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March 5th Special Monthly Meeting  
Tuesday, March 5th 2024 – 6:30pm  
Benton County Fairgrounds

The March special meeting for the Benton County Agricultural Society was held on Tuesday March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 6:30pm at the Benton County Fair Grounds Office.

Directors present were; Ted Prom; President, Ken Bemboom; Vice President, Nancy Zupan, Jody Prom, Scott Morris, Jennifer Dingmann, Adam Scapanski, Sam Morris, Vince Thiel, and Jimmy Zanardi. Mary Ostby, Treasurer and Karen Sakry Absent.

President Prom convened the meeting at 6:30pm.

Guests; Steve Ellson, Amy Allen and Cheryl Scapanski

Finance Update – Amy Allen was here to present her findings from her financial support review to the board for the years of October 1 2021 – September 30 2022 and October 1 2022 – September 30 2023. She gave the board several recommendations on ways to either make future finances cleaner/organized along with recommendations on having additional set of eyes on things like counting income, signing off on things and overall just maintaining and staying consistent on all the checks and balances. She sent Jennifer forms to streamline reimbursement, which will be reviewed and implemented going forward. Suggestions of getting additional checking accounts set up and having debts cards for selected individuals will really cut down on the reimbursement needs. Talk of moving money during the off-season time to CD's or other money growing account options. Finance committee will work on implementing her suggestions.

Meeting was turned over to Ken Bemboom, as Ted had to follow up and submit payments to Amy for her services.

#### Committee Reports:

4-H – Idea came up about the thought of having 4-H groups plant flowers into stock tanks as a contest held by the fair board. Scott and Ken will bring up to Ann to see if there is any interest on groups planting as a contest.

Activity Area – Bikes are starting to get picked up for kids day. Still working on the kids pedal pull day/times.



Ag craft – All good

Beer Garden – All good

Beer Garden Stage – All good

Building/Grounds – Steve is working on updating some leaking water pipes in the beer gardens. With the wind the past days, there was some signs that flew off and are damaged, so Steve and Scott are pulling together a list of signs that are needing to get ordered/replaced. Steve looked at the bathroom next to the grandstand and is getting things repaired within that building.

Discovery – TZD ideas are getting worked on for the building. Trying to figure out staffing and want needs are for that display. Will have to look how Tuesdays schedule looks like with the demo, extraction, and TZD and how that ties into the firefighters schedules

Meeting turned back over to Ted Prom

FFA – Meeting scheduled for next week.

Grants – Everything was set out and now just waiting to hear back approval from the state

Grandstand – Vince and Jennifer met with Bryan regarding changing demo promoters for 2024, and proceeding forward for a new person for this year. In conversations, he agreed to continue with the Beater Cross race that takes place during the Monster Trucks. Jennifer and Vince are meeting with Andy Hanson, Wednesday 3/6 at 5pm at the fairgrounds to talk over details and rules. Vince reached out to the Fire Department to let them know the date changes and to inquiry on services out in the grandstand again for this year.

Guest/Host Relation – All good

Heritage Square – Nancy met with Brady Roberts who will be running the talent show this year, looking at running the show on Saturday from 2pm-6pm.

Insurance – MCIT needing to do a walk-through of buildings at 2pm on 3/11

Livestock/Poultry – All good

Marketing/Promotions – Band app will be getting updated with current schedule. Talk of the need of the new website has began again, the quote from Saffire that Jennifer received last year is still current which a one time fee of \$7500 for the website setup and design with a monthly \$300 licensing, hosting and maintenance fee. They include 25 domain emails in the set up. Vince mentioned reaching out to Caleb who helped the Lions with their website, so Jennifer will reach out to him to get a second quote.

Midway – All good

Military – All good

Off Stage Rentals – The new contract for Pantowners will be updated and sent out for them to review and sign

Parking – All good

Policies and Procedure – Finance will need to get together to form their own policies strictly for that room

Premium Book – Changes are getting made and updated to the book

Sanitation – 1 spot still open for morning clean up.

Security – Committee is getting together to review cameras on Wednesday 3/6 at 4:30.

Sponsorship – We are receiving back forms.

Sports Arena East – Nancy received a phone call from Mike to get together on details on how things are getting set up and handled during the week of the fair, so she will meet with him on those details. Working on getting a meeting scheduled for their board and our board.

Vendors – Contracts are coming in and committee is working on contracting vendors on questions. They are working on finding the official replacement vendor to go into Lowells spot, who retired in 2023. A past food vendor, Betty's Shrimp, has submitted her contract for 2024, there was past issues in 2023, so they committee has decided to not renew her agreement for 2024, her forms and payment will get mailed back to her. Jimmy is reviewing details on rules on food being cooked off site vs on site.

Winter Storage – April 13<sup>th</sup> removal date, starting at 6am. Jody and Jennifer are working on form for people to sign off as they pick up their units.

Jody made motion to adjourn to with Adam seconding at 9:07pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jennifer Dingmann Fair Board Director

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(320) 253-5649

March Monthly Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, March 19<sup>th</sup> 2024 – 6:00pm  
Benton County Fairgrounds

The monthly March meeting for the Benton County Agricultural Society was held on Tuesday, March 19, 2024 at 6:00pm at the Benton County Fair Grounds Office.

Directors present were; Ted Prom; President, Ken Bemboom; Vice President, Nancy Zupan, Jody Prom, Scott Morris, Jennifer Dingmann, Adam Scapanski, Sam Morris, Vince Thiel, Jimmy Zanardi and Karen Sakry. Mary Ostby arrived late

President Prom convened the meeting at 6:00pm.

Guests present is Jill Zanardi.

Jennifer Dingmann made the motion to approve the March 2024 meeting agenda with Jody Prom seconding. Motion carried unanimously.

Scott Morris made the motion to approve the February 2024 monthly meeting minutes with Sam Morris seconding. Motion carried unanimously.

Ken Bemboom made the motion to approve the February 29<sup>th</sup> special meeting minutes with Scott Morris seconding. Motion carried unanimously.

Nancy Zupan made the motion to approve the March 5<sup>th</sup> special meeting minutes with Ken Bemboom seconding. Motion carried unanimously.

Nancy Zupan made the motion to approve the February 2024 Treasurers Report with Adam Scapanski seconding. Motion carried unanimously.

**Secretary Update;** Jennifer Dingmann touched based on a few secretary updates and questions to the board; Email notice came through to update the Sam's club membership, she has not seen the membership card so asked if anyone had it. Sounds like Eileen had it, and it was never returned. Board wishes to continue membership with Jennifer to check in and see if we can renew/switch account holder information.

Email came through from Rice Sound for an estimate on services for 12,000. Wondering who sent out the request and what to do with it. Noone from board had requested, so Jennifer will reach out to Rice to inform them services are not needed for 2024 fair.

Being the phone lines get so bogged down during the summer months, Jennifer mentioned we should look into getting a second phone line during those months. Sam mentioned the



creamery using a text line, and will get information regarding that. In the meantime, Jennifer will look into having phone calls forwarded to her cell to stay on top of incoming calls. Jennifer asked if the board was okay with her taking the Martech/premium book computer home for her to work on updates their rather than the office, board is okay with that. During the financial support findings from Amy, Amy suggested the use of a work/service performed contract for any and all services, Jennifer created a master contract to be used for any group/individual needing one, additional copies are available in the fair office.

#### **Committee Reports/Updates;**

**4-H** – The concrete slab that goes under the weigh scale is in need of repair. Jody Prom made a motion to replace the concrete slab that goes under the scale/chute that is used for weigh ins, having Buildings and Grounds to spear head the project with Sam Morris seconding the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Adam updated the board that the grant for the new pens has been submitted, the lead time on the pens is about 3 months out, he wanted to confirm with Mary to see if he can order – Discussion tabled to later in the meeting with Mary is present. Ann Olson reached out to Ted regarding animals that come for 4-H and Open Class and how that procedure will looks, Adam will spear head that and be the main point of contract.

**Activity Area** – Little Scrappers Pedal Pulls is available to come and host a kids pedal pull on Friday, Nancy will work on confirm that day and getting a contract signed. Scott mentioned he has some people who are interested in running the pull, him and Nancy will work on that details of that.

Right now the Sauk Rapids & Rice Fire Departments can not commit to hosting the vehicle extraction due to other commitments needed from them throughout the rest of the fair, especially in the Grandstands. They are fine with us reaching out to other cities to find a department to handle that for this year.

The area north of where Lowells food stand often sit open, Jimmy asked if there was room at add in a small food vendor in that area, food vendor and activity area committees will work to see if that is something we can fit in.

Bleachers from Tim Carda have been reserved again this year for Activity Area and Grandstand, same prices are 2023.

**Ag craft** – All Good

**Beer Garden** – All Good

**Beer Garden Stage** - All Good

**Building/Grounds-** The 1402 house renters are asking about getting the exterior painted, Scott will touch base with the Patty and Ted on their thoughts and see what they are all thinking for what needs to be repainted.

The book lift reservation has been confirmed for 7/17 – 8/7 from 360 rents.

Jennifer reached out to Gresser to confirm golf carts for this year, they are a few other events overlapping on the same dates so they are working on getting things confirmed. Jimmy mentioned a few other companies he knows of to check into, so Jennifer will touch base with



them as well. Adam will work on details on getting a few side by sides. The underground electric is in need of repairs yet from damage done during the fair. Discussion of shade by the horse bleachers started, more research and discussion needed for that. There is still quite a large pile of tar millings from last summer in the grandstand pit, plan is to use those behind SAE building, trying to stay ahead of that pile now as should we proceed with more tar projects this summer, there will be even more millings to take care of.

**Discovery** – Robotics are unable to come this year, due to them having a show somewhere else. Sam is looking for replacements, ideas of wheels of agriculture and agates.

**FFA** – Heidi is working on creating a 3D model of the new building. The flower sale is coming up and asked if we wanted to piggy back on their order for flowers for the grounds.

**Finance** – Ted and Jennifer received an update from Shelley at Stangl on where they are sitting with the past tax returns, they caught up with cleaning up books for 21/22 and almost complete of 22/23. In cleaning things up, we have noticed there is a list of people still needing to get paid from open class exhibits, Jennifer will pass that list out and see if we can track down contact information for individuals.

**Food Vendors** – Jimmy brought up getting lines professional painted for the food booths so things look more professional and areas are better defined.

**Grandstand** – Jennifer and Vince are getting a lot of heat regarding the change of the line up due to scheduling conflicts after the post when live on Facebook. Nancy Zupan made the motion to approve the current lineup for the grandstand with Scott Morris seconding the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Nancy Zupan made the motion to proceeding with Andy Hanson as the new demo promotor with Adam Scapanski seconding the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Mary Ostby arrived to the meeting.

With the most recent Facebook announcement of the lineup change, in reviewing over the comments there was several times a certain demo driver made comments regarding the fair board in a negative manner. This driver in the past has had situations come up and has been talked to, with the most recent comments made online how should the board handle these behaviors? Adam Scapanski made the motion to ask Jon Schultz to not come back as a demo driver, due to the comments made over social media about the fair/fair board. He is welcome to come before the board at a meeting to justify or explain his actions, and from there they board can decide to allow him to participate again on a 'probation' type set up with Mary Ostby seconding the motion. Ted Prom abstained form the vote. Motion passed.

With the grandstand date changes, the draft horse horse is looking to running Thursday morning this year. The grandstand pit area will be shared with the FFA/4-H tractor driving contest. They are looking for \$750 donation to go to prize money. Mary Ostby made the motion to approve the \$750 for prize money with Nancy Zupan seconding the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Bryan Carstensen has updated Vince and Jennifer that he no longer will promote and run the Beater Cross event, so they will work on finding a person for that event.

**Grants** – Mary updated the board that two grants still needed to be sent in. There already has been two grants that were submitted, we are now just waiting for final approval for those. Jimmy Zanardi made the motion for the livestock committee to go ahead and order the 40 pens needed, totaling \$24,000 with Karen Sakry seconding the motion. Motioned carried unanimously

**Guest/Host Relation** – There will now be a guest sign in form, for anyone attending meetings to sign in and leave their contact information.

**Heritage Square** – All good

**Insurance** – all good

**Livestock/Poultry** – Kirsten Best is looking to rearrange the poultry barn, she will work with committee on her ideas. Possible barriers between rabbits and people may need to be looked into. There is still a need for superintendents for a few areas.

**Marketing/Promotions** – Shianne Morris is willing to help with social media and taking photos during the fair, Jennifer will work with her on details. While at the IAFE Zone 4 convention there was a ticketing vendor there and several conversation and demos of their software were had, their company (123IMP) software intergrated with existing websites, now with a second option for online ticketing Jennifer will email a list of website links to review for the two companies to the board so the board can review and see what they like and we can hire a company to replace the website. Will discuss at the April 9<sup>th</sup> special meeting.

**Midway** – Contract ends after the 2024 fair, before signing the new contract for fairs in 2025 – 2028, the board would like Randy to attend a board meeting.

**Off Stage Attractions** – All Good

**Military** – Meat raffle is scheduled for Friday, March 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Parking** – Still working on getting approval for a second shuttle location at the school

**Policies and Procedure** – All Good

**Premium Book** – Updates will be getting started on

**Sanitation** – Nancy met with Mike and Brad regarding the fair week and needs for the Sports Arena building. SAE biggest concern is the trash and the smoking that is taken place on the outside upper deck. SAE is able to clean the bathrooms during the fair, however the quote will reflect that.

There is still 1 more spot open for morning clean up.



**Security** – Mary and Scott have been working for companies for them to provide additional quotes for security cameras. Mary, Scott, Jody and Jimmy will get together on March 28<sup>th</sup> to review.

**Sponsorship** – forms still coming in, right now we have about 30% businesses from past years have turned in forms, giving us a total of \$6000.

**Sports Arena East** – Special meeting scheduled for Tuesday, April 9<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 held at the Benton County Fair Office.

**Vendors (commercial)** – Committee will get together to start looking contracts received thus far

**Winter Storage** – Removal date of April 13<sup>th</sup>

Vince Thiel left the meeting.

**Old Business:** Nothing

**New Business:** Three Ag Society memberships have been received, applications were passed around for review from board. Jennifer Dingmann made the motion to approve Andrea McAllister's membership with Adam Scapanski seconding the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Jennifer Dingmann made the motion to approve Troy Theisen's membership with Adam Scapanski seconding the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Jennifer Dingmann made the motion to approve Jill Zanardi's membership with Ken Bemboom seconding the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

IAFE – Nancy, Jimmy, Jill, Ted, Jody and Jennifer attended the IAFE Zone 4 convention. The information was very beneficial and attended directors overall wished the entire board would have been able to join, even if it was not for the sessions but the evening networking. Great topics on boards, volunteers, workers, grants. 2025 dates are March 16 – 18<sup>th</sup> held again in St. Cloud.

Jody Prom made a motion to donate \$250.00 to the Sherburne County to help offset expenses they inquired during the convention hospitality room with Jennifer Dingmann seconding the motion. Motion carried unanimously

Adam made motion to adjourn to with Sam at 9:29pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Dingmann  
Fair Board Director



Benton County Agricultural Society  
PO Box 118  
Sauk Rapids MN 56379  
(320) 253-5649

March Monthly Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, March 19<sup>th</sup> 2024 – 6:00pm  
Benton County Fairgrounds

The April Special Meeting for the Benton County Agricultural Society was held on Tuesday, April 9, 2024 at 5:30pm at the Benton County Fair Grounds Office.

Directors present were; Ted Prom; President, Ken Bemboom; Vice President, Mary Ostby; Treasurer, Nancy Zupan, Jody Prom, Jennifer Dingmann, Adam Scapanski, Vince Thiel, Jimmy Zanardi and Karen Sakry. Scott Morris and Sam Morris absent

President Prom convened the meeting at 5:40pm.

Guests present are; Jill Zanardi, John Prelvitz, Amy Jacobson, Nik Jacobson, Jody Henkemeyer, Kari Behling and Cory Portner.

Ted Prom started the meeting off with an overall overview of past communication and happenings to the group which consisted of; Mike Kemp and Ted having the start of conversations after the 2022 fair regarding potholes that were in front of the SAE building, after 1 year passing from those conversations the holes really got worse and got brought up again as it needed addressing before the 2023 fair as it was becoming such a hazard. From there the BCAS board went out and found three bids on tar and voted to proceed forward with replacing the tar hiring Granite City Paving to do the work. Through this process and during construction BCAS was in communication with Mike so he was up to date. However now with time passed it has been brought up that the SAE board didn't receive the messages, we through were getting relied back to them. A lot of discussion was had on how to overcome that communication block going forward, with a new plan set up in place that sounds promising for both parties.

Upon completion of the project, BCAS board received an offer from SAE for a portion of the tar bill payment which consists of paying 50% of the overall invoice, which would total \$67,141.55. With payments to be received over the next 15 years, starting June 2024. Each annual payment would be \$4,476.55.

The question was asked to the SAE board on their plans for future improvements, as their has been comments about them relocating. John explained where that sits and confirmed that there is no possible way they can afford to relocate and build new with their current financial situation. There however has been talk of one of the associations that rent ice from the building to either add onto the building or look at a second location to hold more ice time or an area to house off season conditioning.

Cory updated the BCAS that moving forward no off-season/dry floor events will be held in the building with the exception of the fair and the car show. It was brought up how the current contract between each other mentioned that SAE is to hold dry floor events and actively

promote the building. It also notes in the contract, things can be revisited and updated every 2 years, if needed. More discussion was had regarding getting contracts updated and both parties agreed we should come together to do that as things like the dry floor rentals, the definition of the 5 acres, the noted parties responsible for maintenance and repair as been overlooked for a while now. Everyone agreed we should get things updated and start needing at a minimum of annually to make sure we are all on the same page, continuing growing this relationship and keeping communication channels open.

SAE representatives left the meeting at 7:30

BCAS continued discussion regarding the payment details for the tar invoice.

Nancy made the motion to approve their proposed payment plan with adding 5% interest to the total. Annual payments before interest to be \$4,476.55 for 15 years starting June 2024, with no penalty for early payoff with Vince Thiel seconding the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Ted received the signed contract for the building donation from the Sauk Rapids Jaycees, they will have contents removed from the building by May 15<sup>th</sup>. Vince Theil made a motion to accept the donation with Adam Scapanski seconding the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Jennifer sent the board various links of websites for review on which company to proceed forward with. Jody Prom made the motion to proceed forward with hiring Saffire for the new website with Mary seconding the motion. Motion passed with Vince Theil voting no.

Winter storage removal date is this Saturday, April 13<sup>th</sup>. Before each person leaves with their unit(s) they will be asked to fill out a form, this will get them on the reservation list for the fall. Fall drop off dates to be; October 5<sup>th</sup> & October 19<sup>th</sup> both from 9am – Noon.

Adam Scapanski made the motion to adjourn the meeting with Mary Ostby seconding at 8:33p

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Dingmann  
Fair Board Director



**Brenton County Agriculture Society**  
**P O Box 118**  
**Sauk Rapids MN 56379**  
**(320) 253-5649**

**April Monthly Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, April 16, 2024; 7:00pm**  
**Benton County Fairgrounds**

The April meeting of the Benton County Agriculture Society was held on Tuesday, April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024, and was called to order at 7:02pm by Ted Prom, President.

**Present:** Ted Prom, President; Ken Bemboom, Vice President, Jody Prom, Scott Morris, Nancy Zupan, Jimmy Zanardi, Karen Sakry, Vince Thiel, Adam Scepanski, Jen Dingmann, Mary Ostby, Treasurer

**Absent:** Sam Morris

**Guests Present:** Jill Zanardi; Randy Forcier, Gopher State

**Approval of Agenda and Meeting Minutes:** Additions to be made to Agenda included adding 'VIP trailer' to Beer Garden Stage, 'Power' under Food Vendors; 'Budget increase request' for Activity Area; 'Ticket Booth Location' under Grandstand; 'Clean-up Day' and Water Turn-on' under Buildings and Grounds. Motion was made to approve the agenda by Ken and seconded by Karen; motion passed. The minutes from the regular March Meeting were presented for approval. No changes were identified. Motion to approve the minutes was made by Scott and was seconded by Jimmy; motion passed. The meeting minutes from April 9, 2024 were presented for approval. Nancy noted a spelling error on page 2; 'same' should be 'space'. Motion to approve the minutes from April 24, 2024 was made by Nancy and seconded by Jody; motion passed. The Treasurers report from March 2024 was presented for review and discussion. The question was raised regarding a profit from the March meet raffle. It was stated that those results are reported every three months. Scott made a motion to approve the treasurer's report, seconded by Nancy; motion approved.

**Committee Reports:**

**4-H:** There was discussion regarding the flower pots. Jennfier had been in contact with Ann regarding the size of the pots. At this time, there are at least 6 clubs that are interested in the bigger ones. Jody will reach out to see if she can get donations for 100-gallon, galvanized troughs. The 4-H will be taking this on as a project and they will be judged. The 4-H clubs will take care of these until they need to be moved for the fair. There was discussion regarding options if Jody is unable to get donations. Jimmy made a motion for approval of \$1500 for the flower pot project for the 4-H contest if donations have not been procured. Motion was seconded by Karen; motion passed. The screens on the south side of the building need to be put up by June 1<sup>st</sup>. Scott indicated that this will just take a couple of people, and they may need a little TLC. This will be added to Steve's list to accomplish by June 1<sup>st</sup>. The summer schedule was discussed. Ted will have Jen send an email to everyone when this is complete, and post it on the calendar. The question was also raised about getting the water turned on. Ted will contact the City to get this done.

**Activity Area:** Nancy made a request to increase the budget by \$2,600. The question was raised as to the rationale for this request; Nancy indicated that prices have increased for two of the events. Jody indicated that she needs to contract listing as soon as possible for the advertising. Ken made a motion to approve the request of additional funds for the activity area by \$2,600, seconded by Karen; motion passed. Ted questioned if the bleachers had been ordered and Vince indicated it would be the same as last year.



**Ag Craft:** Nancy indicated that the High School is working on a project for quilt racks; a Grant will cover the cost.

**Beer Garden:** Jody reiterated from a previous meeting that THC drinks will not be sold at the Fair this year.

**Beer Garden Stage:** Jimmy initiated discussion regarding a VIP trailer for the bands. He had reached out to Pleasureland, and they said no. He indicated that he found a used construction trailer for sale in Duluth that was listed for \$4700, and the seller has agreed to \$4400. The trailer current has 30-amp service, A/C, heat, 6 windows and a new ceiling. It is 8 by 20 feet and is on wheels. We would need to obtain or build a set of steps. Scott made a motion to approve \$4500 (which includes \$100 for gas) for Jimmy to obtain the trailer he presented; motion was seconded by Nancy; motion passed.

**Midway:** Randy Forcier joined by meeting at this time to discuss the contract with the Midway. Ted indicated that a new contract will be due at the end of the Fair this year. Randy stated that he was drafted a new one for review and approval. The only change made was with the dates. There was discussion regarding the contract he has with food vendors and how he decides what to bring and how many for each fair. Randy indicated that he comes in with the same number of rides and food trailers. They look at the available space and try to utilize the space as best as they can. They do change things up from year to year as they can. Board members shared that they are concerned that Randy could increase the number of vendors without discussion with the fair board. Randy stated that he contracts with Miller Concessions at all of the fairs, and bring in their own stuff. The question was raised regarding whether his food stands are held to the same standards as private vendors, and he indicated that all of the trailers are licensed by the State of Minnesota and must adhere to the same standards for health and fire, etc. Jimmy explained that the fair board is concerned that standards are maintained throughout the entire 6 days of the fair. Randy considers his operation to be above average. Kenny asked if a statement could be included in the contract regarding the number of food vendors he would bring to the fair, and that any changes need to be approved by the board.

There was further discussion on the process for adding food vendors and Randy indicated that he has stayed relatively consistent. Jody indicated that in previous contracts the number of rides and food vendors had been spelled out. Randy also shared that for festivals, they usually have their own food vendors, but for fairs, he contracts with Miller. He typically asks to be exclusive with "fair type" food and there have been no issues with our fair. There was a lengthy discussion regarding the operation of Gopher State, as well as what is expected by the current Fair Board, with the changes in the Board membership and the vision of moving forward. Discussion included use of on-line ticket sales and outside sourcing of ticket operation sales. This included discussion of ticket vouchers, service charges, use of QR codes, etc. There has been nothing finalized in this area, with concerns of counterfeiting, scammers, etc. Randy will promote the use of on-line sales through Facebook, only prior to, not during the fair, including wristbands, which is already a deal. There was also discussion of ticket booths, where they will be located and if ticket booths would continue if an outside source was involved (i.e. IMP123). Randy indicated that there would continue to be manned ticket booths. The question was raised regarding refunds for unhappy customers with strictly on-line ticket sales. This can be difficult to navigate and bugs need to be worked out. There are many moving parts and more to learn – we are not here yet. Ted indicated that we have contracted with Sapphire for our web page and ticket sales, with a potential launch date of July 1<sup>st</sup>. Ted asked Randy to include verbiage as discussed earlier for the new contract that any change in food vendors for the Midway needs to be reviewed and approved by the Board. There was discussion regarding the hours of operation for the midway. It was brought up that when the Midway turns off their lights, many fairgoers think the fair is ending and leave. This can negatively affect the sales for the beer garden and food vendors. Randy indicated that for Tuesday and Wednesday, they will close at 11pm. For Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, it will be 11:30pm. He also stated that wristbands are done at 11pm, since usage slows down significantly. Members agreed that



discussion would continue on this topic. Members thanked Randy for attending the meeting. He indicated that he would be happy to return if necessary. Randy left the meeting at this point.

#### **Buildings and Grounds:**

Entrance. Jody and Jimmy had a conversation back in January regarding the look of the entrance to the fair. It looks pretty bad, the block is chipping, the fence needs repair, and there is barbed wire that needs to be removed. They met with local vendors regarding what can be done to dress it up. One vendor would agree to do the landscaping, but nothing with the fencing. He would not do anything until the fencing was fixed. Another vendor could do the fencing. Major current issues include the sign being covered by shrubbery and the colors are mis-matched. There was discussion on fixing the fence, how much of it needs to be fixed and the vines that have overtaken portions. It was agreed that Jimmy could reach out to a friend regarding a bid on the fence. Further discussion was regarding how the original fence was paid for, which was by the Pantowners Car Club, and if they may be interested in contributing. Vince thought maybe they would if we offered them to be rent-free for their event. Vince agreed to look into this for the board. There was discussion regarding the hanging baskets that need to be re-planted. Scott indicated that he will take the baskets to the Foley FFA. He will ask them to keep them as long as possible.

Clean-up day: This needs to be scheduled with Ann to get volunteers. Once a date is picked, Ann will coordinate with families. For our part, we will have a skid loader and a trailer to dump stuff. The more volunteers we get, the less for our groundskeeper to do. Members agreed that the clean-up date will be Sunday, May 5<sup>th</sup>. The event will be from 1p to 4p.

JC's Building. This building has been donated to the Fair. The question was raised as to what to do with this. Suggestions included: Use as an information booth – this could take pressure off of the office; use for open class – also takes pressure off the office; use for ticket sales for the grandstand; move to somewhere else and allow for an additional food vendor. It was agreed that everyone should think about this and bring ideas back for discussion at the May regular meeting.

Other repairs. The water leak needs to be fixed on the Midway.

Tar. Ted indicated that he spoke with Corey from SAE regarding money for the tar. This was discussed at the most recent SAE meeting. Each group will discuss with their members and then Corey will get back to Ted. Jimmy indicated that he received a bid to fix the tar. Members reviewed the bid and discussed options. There are bids for areas identified as A, B, C, D, E, F and G. Each area was reviewed, and there was discussion on what the priority is at this time. There was discussion regarding the overall look of the fairgrounds, as well as the rising costs in materials. There was also discussion regarding doing portions now and portions at a later date. Members were in agreement that areas identified as A, B, C, D, E, and F should be done, and there was further discussion regarding the need for G, which is located under the trees across from the beer garden and was bid at \$5,800. Concerns involved additional area that would need to be plowed in the winter, and the potential for someone to hit the power pole. The suggestion was made that as an alternative to the original G plan, we could have the area from the beer garden to the current tar done. Members liked this idea. It was suggested that this be paid outright instead of financing. Jimmy made a motion to approve the updated A – G plan for taring and this was seconded by Jen. Jody voted no; motion passed. Ted discussed his concerns with the millings and if we can work this into the tar job. There are current issues with grade and low spots, etc. Jimmy asked if this could be done by the board, and if we'd be any worse off. Since the tar bid was approved, Jimmy will talk with the vendor to look at dates, and he will also ask about the millings.

**Discovery Building:** Nothing to report

**FFA:** Nothing to report.

**Finance:** Nothing to report.



**Food Vendors:** Jimmy indicated that contracts are coming in. He discussed the need to look at power along the SAE and see if we can add one more 50-amp service. He has seven spots for vendors there and only 5 with 50-amp service; one will be 110. He is asking if he can proceed to get a bid; members supported Jimmy getting a bid for the additional service.

**Grants:** Mary stated that she is waiting for final approval, and she received an e-mail that they are nearly done. She has applied for a grant for the gates from MN Ag. So, it's Legacy and Ag waiting for approval.

**Grandstand:** Jen indicated that she has a meeting next week for a potential group to host the truck pull. Vince and Jen met with a promoter on rules and payouts for the demo derbies. The rules are about done. As far as payouts, the promoter's numbers are different than ours. He did a lot of research with other places and there is good information out there. They are still looking at sponsorships, and they are very positive; the entry fee is proposed to stay the same. There is a recommended increase of \$2700 in payouts, which will be \$29,000 for both nights. There was discussion regarding payouts, sponsorships and if the entry fee should be increased from the current \$60. There was also discussion regarding the current "mad dog" award, and this will be changed to a 'gave it all' award – one for each night. Scott made a motion to approve the increase of \$2700, changing the classes, and the payout numbers; Nancy seconded. Motion passed. Jen indicated that Andy will also do the beater-cross event.

Vince brought up concerns from the Knights of Columbus regarding the location of the ticket booth. They have indicated it gets very hard to hear with the booth near the band stage. There is also one in the back that is used; we could try that location. We may need to then move dumpsters and porta-potties. It was also suggested we could use the JC building where it currently sits. It was suggested that we may want to invite the Knights of Columbus to a future meeting to further discuss their concerns. This topic is tabled for now. Vince also stated that John Schultz is not returning phone calls or text messages. He will continue to reach out to him.

**Guest/Host Relations:** Nothing to report.

**Heritage Square:** Nancy asked what we can pay for the talent show person. Jody stated that it is usually \$15/hour. The question was raised if this would be just for the fair, or also leading up to it. Nancy needs to submit a proposal.

**Insurance:** Nothing to report.

**Livestock/Poultry:** Nothing to report.

**Marketing/Promotions:** Jody presented a web site update. The contract has been signed with Sapphire. They have a very well laid out plan for training. Jody and Jen will have webinars over the course of 8 weeks. Jody also indicated that she received a quote for the post cards, which was \$6700. She has declined this, and we will not do postcards this year. Jody also stated that she needs to contracts so that she can proceed with advertising. These all must be on file; this is for billboards, radio and scheduling. Jen provided an update on schedules. She is about 60% done, and she has reached out to all areas. The biggest need yet is for the cottonwood stage and the heritage building. This information is needed for parades, as well as in the office. The first parade is for Foley Fun Days, and she would like to get the schedule order in by May 15<sup>th</sup>. Nancy indicated that there will be a community worship service at 9:00am on Sunday of the fair.

**Military:** The next meat raffle is April 26<sup>th</sup> at Rolli's, and additional volunteers are needed.



**Off-Season Rentals:** There is a request for a rabbit show on June 1<sup>st</sup>; which is the same as last year. Scott made a motion to approve, which was seconded by Jody. Motion passed.

**Parking:** Adam indicated that he had reached out to Rollies as a second lot for a shuttle; no answer yet. The first one was approved. The question was raised if there will be lines painted for parking behind the SAE, and he said yes, there will be. Adam and Rod will take care of this.

**Policies and Procedures.** Nothing to report.

**Premium Book:** Jen is working on this.

**Sanitation:** Nancy indicated that the morning crews are set. She is working on the bathrooms, and has contacted the SAE regarding a price.

**Security:** Jody initiated discussion regarding lights outside of the SAE, for the walking area in front of the food vendors. This gets very dark. She is proposing to put up 5 strings of lights from the SAE to polls across the lot. These are 110 only and would be put away after the fair is over. This will enhance the security in the area and assist those food vendors with sales after dark. Nancy made a motion for approval of up to \$1500 for these lights, seconded by Scott. Motion passed. Jimmy will order the lights. Foley police will assist with coverage during the fair. Mary is still getting bids for cameras.

**Sponsorship:** Jen indicated that these are coming in.

**Sports Arena East:** Ted indicated that he emailed Corey regarding the \$67,000 for the tar. The SAE met last night. Each group will discuss with their members and then Corey will get back to Ted. Vince asked for clarification of the 5 acres, and Ted read from the contract regarding what area this is.

**Vendors:** Nancy indicated that contracts are coming in.

**Winter Storage:** Jody stated that she thought the Saturday storage removal went very well. Many persons commented they thought that it went very smoothly. We may entertain using an entrance and separate exit system next year. There are still a few items to be picked up, and arrangements have been made for this. The dates for winter storage drop off is October 5<sup>th</sup> and October 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Other:** Nancy initiated discussion regarding the kid's tractor pull. She feels that Friday evening would be too crowded and would like to cancel the event. Scott and Adam indicated that they will make sure we have the appropriate space to hold this event; it is so well received by our guests that we need to make it work. They volunteered to be on hand to make sure that the vendor would be able to get out with their trailer, etc.

Jen stated that we do not want to have a conflict with current 4-H scheduling and the tar project. There is a Dog show and a first responder's event scheduled for June 13<sup>th</sup>. Jimmy will make sure that the tar project does not interfere with this.

A request has been made from St Wendelin Church to borrow 50 tables on the Sunday prior to the fair. They have done this in the past, and they bring the tables back on Monday. Members agreed this was okay.

**Old Business:** None.

**New Business:** Bingo hours was discussed. It was stated that they should be held to same rules as other vendors. They had been told previously that they need to come before the board for any changes, and they should not be able to send an email with their demands. They were supposed to have been invited to the meeting tonight, but this did not happen. Nancy should invite them to the meeting on May 21<sup>st</sup>. If they do not show up, there is no change in the schedule. It was agreed that the Midway may close at 11:00pm.

**Adjournment:** Jen made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Adam. Meeting adjourned at 10:28pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Zanardi

Benton County Ag. Society Member



Benton County Agriculture Society  
P O Box 118  
Sauk Rapids MN 56379  
(320) 253-5649

Special Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, May 21, 2024; 6:30pm  
Benton County Fairgrounds

The May meeting of the Benton County Agriculture Society was held on Tuesday, May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024, and was called to order at 7:00pm by Ted Prom, President.

**Present:** Ted Prom, President; Ken Bemboom, Vice President, Jody Prom, Scott Morris, Sam Morris, Karen Sakry, Vince Thiel, Jen Dingmann, Adam Scapanski, Mary Ostby, Treasurer, Nancy Zupan (via telephone)

**Absent:** Jimmy Zanardi

**Guests Present:** Jill Zanardi, Erich Rothstein, Mr. Twisty; Jeff Diehl, Sportsman's Club; Steve Hovarres, Lions Club; Joe Steineman, Lions Club

**Guest:** Jeff Diehl, Sportsman's Club, was present with the application for gambling (pull tabs) at the 2024 Fair. Ted Prom, as President, and Jeff Diehl, signed the new contract. Jeff was thanked for attending.

**Guests:** Steve Hovarres and Joe Steinemen, Lions Club, were present to discuss the possibility of changing the hours for Bingo at the 2024 Fair. Steve reviewed how the bingo stand has operated for the past several years and how there has been a decline in the number of people playing bingo later in the evening. They are asking for the option to close at 10:00 if there is no one playing bingo. Joe and Steve usually arrive at around 4:00pm to clean the building and prepare for Bingo. They typically need 18 to 20 persons to run the operation. The question was raised if the building could be open for persons to sit and eat. Joe stated that there is very expensive equipment in the building that needs to be secured. It is not clear if there would be any way to lock the equipment up so that the space could be utilized. This could also cause more issues with cleaning. There was discussion regarding the slower days for bingo, which is generally Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Ted stated that he has a group that is interested in helping with Bingo. Joe and Steve stated that all volunteers must be 18 and over, so this will not work. Steve also stated that there is a bench available to be donated and questioned if we were interested. Directors agreed to accept the bench. Ted thanked Joe and Steve for attending.

**Approval of Agenda and Meeting Minutes:** Additions for the Agenda included 'Meeting times during Fair Week', 'P O Box', 'New Member Application', and 'Trees for Louis and Charlie' under New Business. Motion was made to approve the agenda by Adam, seconded by Sam; motion passed. Minutes from the regular April Meeting were presented for approval. No changes were identified. Ted indicated that the minutes were very thorough. Scott made a motion to approve the minutes, this was seconded by Adam; motion passed. The treasurer's report from April was presented. Jody questioned a charge to the beer gardens, which was for fixing the leak for the back sink. Ted stated that as of June 1<sup>st</sup>, a new checking account will be utilized as Cheryl takes over in writing checks. The old account will be closed when it has been determined that all checks have cleared. Ken asked about making any investments, and it was decided this will wait until after the Fair is over. Jen stated that not all of the Xcel bills have been paid; we still have money from a credit that had been issued. She also indicated that she is nearly finished with cleaning up the Open Class payments. Ken made a motion to approve the treasurer's report, seconded by Sam; motion passed.

**Committee Reports:**



**4-H:** Karen asked about the printed schedule, since the Foley Fun Days Parade is coming up on June 19<sup>th</sup>. Jen stated that she is nearly finished, and these will be printed in plenty of time to be handed out.

**Activity Area:** Jody asked Nancy about a message she had received regarding contacting the Benton County Sheriff's Office. Nancy stated that this is for the canine demonstration on Friday night at 7:00 pm. Jody will follow up with the Sheriff's Office. Nancy indicated that she is waiting for one contract; she has several to get to Jen.

**Ag Craft:** The quilt racks are installed. There will be an article in the Herald on Saturday about this project.

**Beer Garden:** Jody met with Bob from C&L Distributing to go over the selections for the Fair. C&L will be replacing all of the banners at no charge. The banners will include "US Farmers Farmed". Jody has completed the schedule for the employees. There was discussion regarding the increase in prices and whether the price per glass should be increased or change from a 16 oz. glass to a 14 oz. glass with no price increase. It was agreed to change to the 14 oz glass with no change in price. IPA's will require two tickets. There was also discussion regarding 'Folds of Honor' which is a newer scholarship program by C&L. They would like to announce the winner of the scholarship from Sauk Rapids at the Fair. It was agreed that this should take place on Military Day, at the Cottonwood Stage.

**Beer Garden Stage:** The Trailer to be used as the VIP lounge is at Jimmy's house. He will be making modifications and improvements, and this will be completed before the Fair.

#### **Buildings and Grounds:**

Flowers. Scott indicated that Tori did not get her contract renewed through the FFA. He will coordinate getting the hanging flower baskets after the school year ends. Jody discussed getting flowers for the flower pots. She is requesting to have a check up front to purchase the flowers, since it is costly. Scott made a motion to approve \$1000 for Jody to start getting flowers, this was seconded by Karen; motion passed. Ken was able to procure 15 pots from Runnings, who gave a discount of \$45 off each pot (for a total of \$1495.85). These have galvanized sides and will look very good. We will need to have a sign "sponsored by Runnings" made. They are still looking for more 4-H groups to participate. There had been some confusion with 4-H that the contest would not start until next year. They will continue to work on getting more groups or businesses involved. Scott will also check on the current hoses, and see if new ones need to be procured.

Equipment. Jen sent out an email regarding equipment. Golf carts have been ordered, and Arnolds will donate a side by side as well. Jen asked each area to provide a list of equipment needs so that duplicate requests are avoided. Adam has agreed to coordinate the requests.

Tar. Jody reported that Jimmy had received an updated bid from Granite City Paving. The updated version is an additional \$10,000 and includes everything that needs to be addressed. As of now, work is scheduled to begin June 3<sup>rd</sup>. Signs are being made to show where the temporary entrance will be. Jody made a motion to approve the new bid, seconded by Scott; motion passed.

JC's Building. Ted now has the key for the building which has been cleaned out, except for a sink. Ted summarized previous discussions on what to do with the building. It was agreed it could best be utilized as an information booth, and also use for Open Class registration. We will need to have someone available in the booth. Nancy will be contacting Kathy Stueve for the Open Class registration, and she will also contact Pauline to verify her availability.

Cleaning Buildings/Set Up. There was discussion regarding the fire hoses the livestock buildings. They were getting bad last year. Vince had contacted the Fire Chief of Foley to see if we could replace the current damaged hoses. He is waiting to hear back from him. There is a list from Laura of what needs to be done, and Steve can help with some of this. Scott asked about painting or re-staining the ATM shacks as well as



painting the door to the office. Vince will assist Scott in getting this done. The screen doors will be fixed on Tuesday morning. There was also discussion regarding the vines growing on much of the fencing. It was agreed to leave them be for now. There was discussion regarding the grandstands and what needs to be done in that area. The trailer in the back is loaded with basically garbage. Jen initiated discussion regarding moving all of the cleaning supplies out of the office and into the heated portion of the garage. Shelves need to be procured as well. Jen made a motion to order shelving for up to \$600, seconded by Jody; motion passed. Ted received a bid from Rapid Electric to change all of the outside lights to LED. The bid was reviewed and discussed. A second bid will be needed. Ted will get this initiated. Nancy asked where the trees will be planted for Louis and Charlie. These will be planted where the old cottonwood tree was, and will not interfere with where vendors load and unload products. An email was shared from Mike Kemp regarding what the SAE charged for services during the fair. They have increased the hourly rate from \$20 to \$30. He also listed out the hours per day. Directors agreed this is ridiculous and warrants further discussion.

**Discovery Building:** Sam reported that box cars and wheels of agriculture have been scheduled; he needs the contracts returned, and he is looking for one more thing. The website will need to be updated.

**FFA:** Nothing to report.

**Finance:** Cheryl starts as of June 1<sup>st</sup>. Ted has a meeting set up with her; he reviewed changes in accounts.

**Food Vendors:** Jody stated that the map has been updated to include 6 new food vendors. There was discussion regarding moving 'Pimpin Wear' as well as vendors who sell more than one item. Contracts for vendors inside the SAE are slow coming in and it looks like it will not be filled. Jody made a motion to close the SAE for the fair. There was discussion regarding what to do with the vendors who have submitted their contract and how to contact them and coordinate a move. Mary shared the history of what was in each building and how fees were charged. The repercussions of closing the building was discussed, as well as giving the contracted vendors the opportunity to get their money back or move to a different location. Jody amended the motion to table this discussion for a special meeting. No vote at this time.

**Grants:** Nothing to report.

**Grandstand:** Vince indicated progress is being made with the truck and tractor pull with the promoters. A walk-through of the grandstands was completed, and there are some minor maintenance items to be taken care of. Jen indicated the monster trucks are not quite dialed in, and she reviewed two options. One option is to remain the same as last year, and option 2 would be to rent a truck and run it. Ken made a motion to stay with option 1, this was seconded by Scott; motion passed. Jen discussed a media representative from High Octane. He would come here at no cost and provide us with video and marketing. He would only ask for mileage. We would be able to use footage for promoting next years' fair. Scott made a motion, which was seconded by Ken, to retain the video services of High Octane, with a \$500 stipend and mileage, not to exceed \$1000 in total; motion passed. There was a brief discussion regarding the fire fighters and all of the work they do for the grandstand; we may want to make a donation of some kind.

**Guest/Host Relations:** Nothing to report.

**Heritage Square:** Jen stated that we will bring back the Century Farm Award to the Cottonwood stage. This was not done last year. The church worship is from 9a to 10a, and the Century Award can be done at 10:15a. Brady is working on the talent show.

**Insurance:** Vince inquired if Dean is covered by our insurance for the Tractor Pull. Mary will look into this.



**Livestock/Poultry:** The hog pens are in. Ken stated that the 4-H will build racks to store the pens properly. It was stated that Kristen does not want the rabbits to be petted and is requesting that something be put in front of the pens. Sam will take over as supervisor for open class. There was discussion regarding parking passes for contestants. They need to buy their own, and if they stay through open class, the fee can be reimbursed.

**Marketing/Promotions:** Jody initiated ads on the radio; Directors have heard them. She did get a second shuttle location, which will be at Rolli's (the back parking lot). She is waiting for the permits for signs to come back from Sauk Rapids. Jody and Jen continue to work on the website, and they will have a technician on site to dial everything in, which will most likely be Monday and Tuesday.

**Midway:** Jody or Ted will talk to Randy about moving his food vendor near the Beer Gardens. The Knights of Columbus are requesting to move the ticket booths to the south side of the beer gardens, due to the noise. Dave has recused himself from setting up ticket sellers for grandstand events. Jody and Jen have taken care of this. As stated earlier, Pimpin' Wear will need to move, and this will be addressed with him.

**Military:** The next meat raffle at Rolli's is May 24<sup>th</sup>. Volunteers are still needed; Ted, Jody and Sam will be there; Adam may also get there.

**Off-Season Rentals:** Nancy shared a reminder that the Rabbit show will be held on June 1<sup>st</sup>, and they will be there the day before to set up. They will need 10 tables, maybe 12. Scott has agreed to be available to open and close the buildings. Jen has not received a contract; she will contact her on a time. On June 13<sup>th</sup>, the First Responders will hold their event on the North end of the grounds. Jody will have a Fair table set up, anyone who can join her is welcome.

**Parking:** Ted received a call from another group who is interested in helping with parking. He will get the information to Adam.

**Policies and Procedures.** Nothing to report.

**Premium Book:** Jen is nearly finished with the book. She needs Supervisor names from Sam.

**Sanitation:** Nancy stated that she is getting the contract for the morning cleaning crew.

**Security:** Jody has been in contact with Kyle and is waiting on contracts with a couple of departments.

**Sponsorship:** T-Shirts have been ordered. The website has the 2023 information and needs to be updated.

**Sports Arena East:** This will be addressed at the special meeting.

**Vendors:** Jen has received an email regarding bird flu. No further discussion.

**Winter Storage:** Nothing to report.

**Other:** None.



**Old Business:** From the discussion earlier regarding the request to change the Bingo hours, Ted asked for any further discussion or a motion. Ken made a motion to keep the hours for Bingo the same as last year, seconded by Scott. The motion passed; Vince abstained.

**New Business:** Ted stated that he would like to offer the Secretary position to Jill Zanardi. Directors present endorsed the recommendation, and Jill has accepted. Ted also discussed the ad that was placed for summer help, and they had one applicant. He and Jill will review and interview the applicant. The question was raised as to what to pay Brady for the talent show. It was agreed that he will be paid \$15/hour. People can sign up on-line to participate. Meeting hours during the fair is tabled to the June meeting. Jody questioned the need for a PO Box as well as our mailbox on site. Jen stated that we need the PO Box so that if packages are delivered, they do not sit outside the fair office or by the mailbox. An application to join the Benton County Agricultural Society was received from Erich Rothstein. Erich is the owner and operator for Mry. Twisty. Vince made a motion to approve the application, seconded by Mary; motion passed.

The need to hold a special meeting regarding SAE was discussed. Directors agreed to meet on Thursday, June 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm in the office. Nancy requested that she may call in for the meeting; directors agreed.

**Adjournment:** Scott made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Adam. Meeting adjourned at 11:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Zanardi  
Benton County Ag. Society Member

Attachment: 1

### **Virtual Fairgrounds Walkaround**

Due to the rainy weather, those present prior to the Regular meeting starting reviewed some of the things that need attention prior to the fair this year.

Garage/Shed: On the heated side, we need to get shelving for products. The plan is to move all of the cleaning supplies out of the money room and the bathroom.

JC's Building: Ted has the key; a hand sink was left behind. We officially own the building and need to decide what to do with it.

Midway: The 3-phase needs to be fixed. Kevin is coming up with a plan to move power for the stage – no bid yet. The campers used by Midway staff draw a lot of power, and the pole is overloaded. A fan has been used to try and cool the 100-amp breaker.

The outside lights need to be changed to LED. This will be discussed during the meeting.

Ticket Booths: David wants the ticket booths moved to the south side of the beer gardens because of the noise by the bands. This will continue to be discussed.

Flower Pots – Not sure of the prize



Benton County Agriculture Society  
P O Box 118  
Sauk Rapids MN 56379  
(320) 253-5649

Special Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, June 6, 2024; 6:30pm  
Benton County Fairgrounds

The Special meeting of the Benton County Agriculture Society was held on Thursday, June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024, and was called to order at 6:34pm by Ted Prom, President.

**Present:** Ted Prom, President; Ken Bemboom, Vice President, Jody Prom, Jimmy Zanardi, Scott Morris, Sam Morris, Karen Sakry, Vince Thiel, Jen Dingmann, Jill Zanardi, Adam Scapanski, Mary Ostby, Treasurer, Nancy Zupan (via telephone)

**Absent:** None.

**Guests Present:** None.

**Committee Reports:**

**SAE:** This Special meeting of the Benton County Agriculture Society was called to discuss use of Sports Arena East (SAE) during the 2024 Benton County Fair. Nancy indicated that more contracts have come in and she is waiting for more from those she has spoken with. It has been noted that many do wait until after the first of July. There are 110 total booths, of which 38 are confirmed on the map and she has at least 8 more in the works. It was also noted that this year, the Stearns County Fair is the same week as ours, so many may be going there instead. There was discussion regarding expenses versus revenue. Mary volunteered to make a spreadsheet with all of the data. Nancy discussed where she was at in the process and Ted indicated that many board directors are willing to help fill the SAE and make contact with local merchants regarding their interest in coming. The question was raised if we could block off part of the arena and the feasibility of other options. There was a lengthy discussion regarding the quote received from the SAE manager and their proposed hourly rate of \$30/hour, which is up from \$20/hour last year. Jody made a motion to not approve the increase to \$30/hour and to cross out the part of the proposal indicating that Benton County Ag would clean the bathrooms prior to the fair. This was seconded by Sam; motion passed. The motion from the last meeting was amended to table the discussion to tonight. No further voting is required. Directors will begin to make inquiries with local businesses and will communicate contacts with the Board so there is no duplication in efforts. There was discussion on what to do if the SAE does not accept the \$20/hour rate. If the Board needs to staff the building, we will need to know how the building operates. Ted indicated that the SAE did accept the terms of the contract for the fair. It will be paid at 5% interest over 15 years.

**Security Cameras:** Mary shared the bid that was received from Hagstrom Tech Services. She has not yet received a bid from Tech Check. The original bid from Tech Check was broader and included wireless capabilities. There was a lengthy discussion regarding both companies and what will best meet our needs long term. Jen made a motion to give the security camera committee the power to proceed with the cameras as they see fit, as long as they stayed with budget. This was seconded by Adam. Mary indicated that she would keep the board informed and get all of our questions answered. The question was raised if the SKID gets interference. We have a new SKID system and there should be no interference. Vince also asked if there would be any monthly or maintenance fees. Mary will follow-up. Motion passed.



**4-H:** Nothing to report.

**Activity Area:** Nothing to report.

**Ag Craft:** Nothing to report.

**Beer Garden:** Nothing to report.

**Beer Garden Stage:** Nothing to report.

**Buildings and Grounds:** Scott will get paint for the grandstand ramps; he will add grit to help avoid slipping risks. Ken and Scott found a tree and received a response back on behalf of Charlie. The tree will be planted where the tire is; the Starks are donating a bench to be placed nearby. For the curbs near the SAE, Ken will take lead on placement. Scott asked for volunteers to help paint, and the bathrooms by the grandstand need to be fixed. Ted received a second bid, from ESI, for the outdoor lights. He reviewed the rebate that is currently available from Xcel; he is waiting to hear back from them. It was also recommended that all inside lights be switched over to LED. Ken made a motion to accept the bid from Rapid Electric, seconded by Scott; motion passed.

Flowers. Jody will get the check that had been previously approved to start getting the flowers. She has talked to Patty about watering. If anyone wants a pot to plant, please let Jody know.

Equipment. Steve has requested a new lawnmower. He replaced a belt that blew, and there are problems with over-heating. Ted looked at replacements, which would be over \$20,000. In discussions with vendors, the same issues are reported. With all of the dandelion fuzz, the radiator gets clogged. It was agreed that we will continue to use the unit we have, and keep an eye on the oil leak.

We have received the new chairs, and the old ones are in the garage. Ted discussed the previously approved shelving that Jen was to procure for \$600. Jody and Ted found shelving that Crafts Direct was liquidating. They were able to get 7 sections of shelving for \$350, and it is in the garage ready to assemble. Jen will return the shelving unit she has obtained. There was discussion regarding budgets and how expenditures are approved through the board. This does not seem to be consistent. It was clarified that the approved budgets are a guide, and specific expenditures are still brought to the board.

Tar. The tar project has been pushed back until the 24<sup>th</sup> of June, due to all of the rainy weather. Jimmy will see if we can start with one layer down, with the final layer to be done after the fair. We are waiting for signs to re-direct traffic during the project.

JC's Building. Ken stated that the JC's building should not be moved; it may fall apart. It was agreed that this will be used as an information booth, to take pressure off of the office. Scott will start working on the building, to include an A/C unit. Jimmy will get bids on windows to replace the current doors.

Ticket booths. There was discussion regarding the previously discussed request by the Knights of Columbus to move the ticket booths. The area that has been under consideration gets flooded during heavy rains. The board of directors took a walk outside to look at any other possible locations. The board looked at the current placement and discussed possible alternatives. The space on the east side of the Lions Building was discussed. Scott made a motion to move the grandstand ticket booths to the east side of the Lions building, seconded by Ken. Ted, Jody, Jimmy and Jen voted no and Vince abstained; motion passed.

**Discovery Building:** Nothing to report.

**FFA:** Nothing to report.



**Finance:** Ted reviewed the proposed resolution for the changes in the bank accounts. Ted also indicated that Jill Zanardi has accepted the Executive Secretary position, with a proposed starting salary of \$1200/monthly. Ken made a motion to approve the resolution and the salary for Jill Zanardi, seconded by Scott; motion passed. Jimmy and Adam abstained. The resolution will be signed and brought to the bank so the changes can be made. Involved persons will go to the bank to sign documents.

**Food Vendors:** With the change the location of the grandstand booths, the Midway food vendor and Pimpin' Wear will not have to be relocated. Jimmy indicated that he needs 3 contracts. He is working on making sure that all vendors pay for the correct expenses.

**Grants:** Nothing to report.

**Grandstand:** Vince indicated that he has worked out many issues with the tractor pull; a few more details need to be ironed out. Contracts have not yet been returned.

**Guest/Host Relations:** Nothing to report.

**Heritage Square:** Nothing to report.

**Insurance:** Waiting on quote for liquor insurance.

**Livestock/Poultry:** With the current bird flu issues, milking cows may be problematic but nothing is known at this time.

**Marketing/Promotions:** The new website is nearly done. Jody is working with the City of Sauk Rapids regarding the black signs. They have waived the fee. There was discussion regarding the sign to be placed at Rollies. Adam will follow-up with township on placement rules.

**Midway:** Nothing to report.

**Military:** No other group wants to take the slot at Rollies on the 21<sup>st</sup>. Karen indicated we are also scheduled for July 5<sup>th</sup> and August 2<sup>nd</sup>. More to come.

**Off-Season Rentals:** Sam indicated that he has request for use of the Fairgrounds on June 18<sup>th</sup> by Soil and Water. He reviewed the equipment that will be brought in. This can be easily facilitated on the north end. This includes Soil and Water from Benton, Morrison, and Stearns Counties. Jimmy made a motion to allow the group to hold their event without charge on June 18<sup>th</sup>, seconded by Karen; motion passed. They will need to take care of their garbage and sanitation needs.

**Parking:** Adam is looking for two more groups.

**Policies and Procedures.** Nothing to report.

**Premium Book:** Jen is nearly finished with the book. She needs Supervisor names from Sam.

**Sanitation:** TJ is helping with weekly cleanup. Contracts are not yet in.

**Security:** Jimmy stated that when he was approved for the lights near the SAE, his quote did not include lightbulbs, which he had thought were included with the light strings. Mary made a motion to approve up to \$1300 to purchase the necessary lights, seconded by Karen; motion passed. Jody is working on getting canines; she will reach out to Sartell and St Cloud.

**Sponsorship:** Jen passed out thank you cards for board directors to sign. We have received \$17,000 at this time, and more are slowly coming in.

**Vendors:** Nothing to report.

**Winter Storage:** One truck remains in the beer gardens.

**Other:** Ken indicated that we have 3 new hoses which were donated. Scott stated that the Foley FFA asked to borrow a couple of chairs and canopies for a petting zoo; board approved. Vince initiated discussion regarding fencing. He received a bid that outlines 3 areas and pricing. He has not yet received a bid from Squirrel. There was discussion regarding several trees that will need to be removed. Discussion will continue when the bid is received...

**Old Business:** None.

**New Business:** None.

**Adjournment:** Adam made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Sam. Meeting adjourned at 9:28pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Zanardi  
Benton County Ag. Society Member

Attachment: 1 – Resolution for Bank Changes



Resolution 2024-001

Whereas, the Benton County Agricultural Society has recognized the need for support services and accountability with more efficient operating structure for the organization of record; and

Whereas the Board of Directors for the Benton County Agricultural Society has voted and recognized the need to rewrite and define support service definitions for Executive Secretary office structure and outside contracted financial services; and

Whereas, the Benton County Agricultural Society has reformatted job descriptions, and contracts the organization has hired Cheryl Scapanski for contracted financial services and Jill Zanardi, Executive Secretary to fulfill those organizational changes per the bylaws of the said organization.

Now, therefore be it resolved by Benton County Agricultural Society Board of Directors of:

Section 1: The Board of Directors of the organization listed above has voted in a majority to contract Cheryl Scapanski, as outside contracted financial support services at the Board Meeting of December 19, 2023 and for the Executive and Finance committees to work out the contract for services. The Benton County Agricultural Society By-Laws authorize her to be a signer on all the financial accounts at Farmers Merchant State Bank, Sauk Rapids Bank to provide services and is approved with the passing of the resolution by the Board of Directors on the date of June 6, 2024

Section 2: The Board of Directors of the organization listed above has voted in a majority to hire an Executive Secretary per Board motion of February 29, 2024, and finalized the selection of Jill Zanardi at the May 21, 2024 Board Meeting. The Benton County Agricultural Society Bylaws authorize her to be signer and access on the financial accounts at Farmers Merchant State Bank, Sauk Rapids for the checking account ending in 3607 and the Debit card account ending in 4386.

Section 3: The Benton County Agricultural Society Board of Directors therefore authorizes the President to sign the resolution, and the Executive Board, Farmers Merchant State Bank, Sauk Rapids to implement the procedures necessary to execute the fulfillment of Resolution 2024-001.

Motion to approve the resolution and the action requested to additional signors made by Ken. Motion to approve as presented with a second to the motion by Scott. The Board of Directors vote in favor of adoption of the resolution and actions passed June 6, 2024, 6:00pm Special Board Meeting.

Adopted by the Benton County Agricultural Society Board of Directors to take effect immediately upon its adoption on this date of June 6, 2024

\_\_\_\_\_  
President

Ted Prom

Benton County Agriculture Society  
P O Box 118  
Sauk Rapids MN 56379  
(320) 253-5649

Regular Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, June 18, 2024; 7:00pm  
Benton County Fairgrounds

The June meeting of the Benton County Agriculture Society was held on Tuesday, June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024, and was called to order at 7:00pm by Ted Prom, President.

**Present:** Ted Prom, President; Ken Bemboom, Vice President, Jill Zanardi, Executive Secretary, Jimmy Zanardi, Scott Morris, Sam Morris, Vince Thiel, Jen Dingmann, Adam Scapanski, Nancy Zupan, Steve Ellingson

**Absent:** Jody Prom, Mary Ostby, Treasurer, Karen Sakry

**Guests Present:** Erich Rothstein, Mr. Twisty; Tim Henniger, Star Publications; Barry Kirchoff, Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Minnesota

**Guests:** Vince introduced Barry Kirchoff with SBDC. He is a professional business consultant who Vince has worked with previously. He can help solve the gap issues we are having as an outside set of eyes. We can put him into play after the 2024 fair. Barry stated that he selectively assists non-profit groups. There is no charge for this service. He is very excited to work with the board and help to sustain our mission and continue to be successful. Barry was thanked for attending tonight and he left the meeting. Tim Henniger stated that he was present to listen, particularly on what the plan is for handling the current Bird flu at this years' fair.

**Approval of Agenda and Meeting Minutes:** There were no recommended changes to the agenda. Scott made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Ken. Motion passed. Nancy made a motion to accept the minutes from the May 21, 2024 Regular Meeting, seconded by Ken. Motion passed. Ken made a motion to accept the minutes from the June 6, 2024 Special meeting, seconded by Scott. Nancy asked for those who have contacted businesses to be in the SAE to let her know. No changes to the minutes; motion passed.

**Treasurer's Report:** Ted reviewed the account information and discussed the closing of the old account. The third account, for the ATMs, has now been balanced. The profit from the ATMs has been left there to build up the balance, and this is the true total in that account. Cheryl will be attending future meetings to review the new checking account reports. Scott made a motion to accept the treasurer's report, seconded by Nancy. Motion passed.

**Secretary's Report:** Ted asked for this report to be added to the standing agenda for Jill to review the monthly lists of what should be getting done each month, as well as any other items that need to be addressed. Jill reviewed the list that had been put together by Laura previously. There are some minor changes to be made to the list, and the responsible Director will be added. At this point, all listed items are either completed, or are in the works. Jill also asked for the dates of the 2025 fair, since she has been receiving questions. The dates of the fair for 2025 will be July 29 to August 3.



**Groundskeeper Report:** Ted stated that this is a new monthly report so that Steve can address issues and concerns with the board. Steve shared that he has replaced the hot and cold lines in the show arena. He has replaced nearly all of the toilets and most lines are in. He will need to winterize these in the fall to reduce continued issues with the breakage of lines. The shelving is all installed in the garage on the heated side. The concrete planters will be leveled. The grandstand bathroom needs to be opened and functional. The showers are not needed, but the lines coming are broken. Steve will address this. He has been working on getting all of the leaves blown out of the buildings. He was asked to make sure he has two new toilets on hand during the fair, since there are usually issues. He also stated he will be getting rid of all of the brush.

#### **Committee Reports:**

**4-H:** Nothing to report.

**Activity Area:** The canine unit will be from Sauk Rapids this year. Vince will let St Cloud know that they are not needed. Collins or All Care will be needed for the extraction, Scott will take care of this, as well as get a tarp for the demonstration.

**Ag Craft:** Nancy stated that it is going well. The risers need to be pulled for the plants and they can stay down. The floor will be cleaned if necessary.

**Beer Garden:** Nothing to report.

**Beer Garden Stage:** Nothing to report.

#### **Buildings and Grounds:**

ATM. Scott indicated that the ATM by the bingo hall now has perennials by it.

Office Door. Scott installed a new key pad on the office door. He was unable to program any codes in it, so he had 12 keys made. Jill will manage the assignment of these keys. Ted will look at the keypad to see if he is able to program the codes.

Signs. We will need a new sign for the JC's building - now the information building, and the office needs a new sign. Jen will take care of this. Ted showed the board the new sandwich boards that were procured and were first used for the first responder event on the fairgrounds. We can change the sign on them, and we can get more if needed. They will be used when the front gate is closed for the fair project.

Flowers. Ted stated that Jody indicated the flowers and the tree needs to be planted. Additional black dirt is needed as well as drainage material. Ken stated that he placed a small pallet under the two planters that he brought in, and this works well for moving them with a skid steer. Ted will ask Kevin to retrofit the empty plants in a similar fashion.

Fencing. Ted indicated that he received a bid for the fencing. He shared the specifics of the bid for the various areas in need of replacement. The total bid comes to \$102,000. The bid that Vince has previously shared was for \$25,000. These are not 'like' bids and each includes different portions of the fence as well as landscaping and tree removal needs. There was also discussion regarding whether all of the poles need to be cemented in. Vince added that Brian from SBDC has ideas on how to make this a community project to help with some of the costs. It was agreed that this project will be tackled after the fair this year.

JC's Building. Jimmy discussed the need to replace the windows in the building to transform to an information booth. Windows and an A/C unit could be around \$1700. Jen made a motion to approve up to \$2000 for Jimmy to complete this project, seconded by Nancy. There was discussion regarding whether the building needs to be insulated, as well as who will be working in the building. Jimmy rescinded his motion. We will leave the building the way it is for now, and Jimmy will look at what must be done to make it functional.



**Tar.** Jimmy stated that the tar project will begin tomorrow or Thursday. He asked what should be done with the tar that is ground up. Adam indicated that it should be stacked for now, and we can have them graded later.

**Lightbulbs.** We will need a total of 239 LED lights for the inside of the buildings. The current bulbs are 100 watts. Ted shared that he has a meeting with an energy audit assistant coming up. He does not know yet what the energy rebate will be. It was suggested that we hold a special meeting regarding a light proposal, as well as the JC's building. The meeting will be held on Monday, July 8, at 5:00pm.

**Discovery Building:** Nothing to report. Ted asked what was scheduled in the building. At this point, there is the Wheels of Agriculture. This will be held from 10 to 9, and we need to advertise.

**FFA:** Nothing to report.

**Finance:** Ted indicated that he told David we are moving the ticket booths. There will be three people at the entry points, and two at the exits.

**Food Vendors:** All vendors are paid up. Jimmy is looking for one more vendor.

**Grants:** Nothing to report.

**Grandstand:** The contract was returned from the dirt guy. They are working on the rules, and getting things ordered. Vince indicated that the bleachers need a bit of work. Some are not anchored and he is working with a guy who has a break. Jen is working on the Monster Truck contract. She indicated she has a difficult time getting ahold of James Tarantina. Ted will assist with this. The contract is not yet back from All CRE Towing, and Vince will follow-up with this.

**Guest/Host Relations:** Nothing to report.

**Heritage Square:** Nothing to report.

**Insurance:** Nothing to report.

**Livestock/Poultry:** Sam indicated that as of now, only lactating dairy cattle needs to be tested. Adam is keeping track of what needs to be done and what the State is putting out for information. Ken has talked to the Vet regarding milking procedures and what to do with the milk. It was clarified that the pasteurizing process takes care of any contamination issues. Having the milking cows here for only one day is a possibility and have them milk in the parlor only. Adam stated that the heifers don't show symptoms, but they can be carriers. We are only talking about a handful of farms at this point. This will be further addressed at the next meeting with any updated information received from the State. The worst-case scenario will be to have the dairy pulled for one year.

**Marketing/Promotions:** Jen indicated that the website will be launched this Thursday. We will be working out the kinks and will go live next Monday or Tuesday. She is working on the kickstart to sales for grandstand events, hoping to avoid service fees. Jody indicated that radio ads are started and newspaper ads will begin July 4<sup>th</sup>. Neon signs are in the works. The fair schedule will be updated and re-printed soon.

**Midway:** Randy is working on the armbands and will get them to Ted when they are ready to sell. The price for the Midway food stands is increasing to \$700. The ending time for Thursday will be 11:30pm. Jimmy indicated that he will reach out to other fairs to see what they receive from Midway for food stands.

**Military:** Nancy stated that there is a meat raffle this Friday and help is needed. There are two bands outside at Rollies. The next meat raffle is July 5<sup>th</sup>.

**Off-Season Rentals:** Nothing to report.

**Parking:** Everything is set. Rod will help with posts and painting the lines will be done.

**Policies and Procedures.** Nothing to report.

**Premium Book:** Books are printed and distributed.

**Sanitation:** The contracts will be sent out. Jen asked what was needed for soaps, etc. Nancy said to go with what we had last year.

**Security:** Jimmy shared the Tech Check proposal. These numbers include everything that we asked for. The proposal can be adjusted, and we can drop any areas, or the work can be done in phases. There was discussion regarding on how to proceed. Jimmy will talk to Mary to get additional information, since this is a lot to process. The Security committee will report back to the board.

**Sponsorship:** No new sponsorships. Jen indicated that there are 5 different tiers for sponsorships. A total of \$17,000 has been received and more may come in.

**Sports Arena East:** Nancy indicated that she spoke with Mike. They will clean the bathrooms prior to the fair. She is not sure how to respond if Mike declines the \$20 hourly rate. She will talk to Mary and proceed. She is working on the lean-to vendors and continuing to go through all of the contracts.

**Vendors:** There was discussion regarding the vendors with two different items, such as Maid Rite with food and videos. There was a long discussion regarding the licensing requirements and different scenarios. Also discussed was whether two fees need to be paid. It was suggested that we may be able to research what other fairs do in these situations. Nothing will change this year. There will be senior bingo on Wednesday at 3:00pm.

**Winter Storage:** One truck remains in the beer garden.

**Other:** None.

**Old Business:** None.

**New Business:** Vince asked if there were any thoughts on what to do with the information provided by Barry. Members asked for clarification on what this actually means. It was agreed that his services could be very helpful in many aspects of the operation. In order to proceed, someone from the board needs to sign up as a client, and Vince has agreed to do so. Ken made a motion for Vince to become a client of SBDC and to sign a contract with the Benton County Agriculture Society at no cost to the society for consulting services,



and Jimmy seconded. Motion passed. Discussion was initiated regarding the rental house and the garage which is in very bad shape. Scott questioned if it should be torn down, or what the options are. Ken and Scott agreed to take a look at the garage and discuss options with Ted and Patty. A report will be expected at the regular July meeting.

**Adjournment:** Sam made a motion to adjourn seconded by Jimmy. The meeting adjourned at 9:51pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Zanardi

Benton County Ag. Society Member

Benton County Agriculture Society  
P O Box 118  
Sauk Rapids MN 56379  
(320) 253-5649

Regular Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, July 16, 2024; 7:00pm  
Benton County Fairgrounds

The July meeting of the Benton County Agriculture Society was held on Tuesday, July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024, and was called to order at 7:00pm by Ted Prom, President.

**Present:** Ted Prom, President; Ken Bemboom, Vice President, Jill Zanardi, Executive Secretary, Jimmy Zanardi, Jody Prom, Mary Ostby, Treasurer, Karen Sakry, Scott Morris, Sam Morris, Vince Thiel, Jen Dingmann, Adam Scapanski, Nancy Zupan, Cheryl Scapanski

**Absent:** None.

**Guests Present:** Erich Rothstein, Mr. Twisty; Denni Borgheiinck, Office Assistant; Tim Henniger, Star Publications; Jody Otremba and Brian Weappa, Sauk Rapids Youth Hockey

**Guest:** Tim Henniger, from Star Publications, was present to see if there is an update on how the Bird Flu will be handled at the fair this year. Adam stated that there has been no official update from the State of Minnesota. All cows must be tested before they arrive, milking will be done in the parlor only. The public will not be allowed into the parlor. There will be a box of milking gloves available, even though the disease cannot be transmitted to humans. Each owner will milk their own cows, and Adam and Sam will be supervising. If any updates are received from the State of Minnesota, we will notify Tim.

**Guests:** Jody and Brian from Sauk Rapids Youth Hockey were present to discuss the hours of operation and payment for electricity with the board. An email message that had been received from Ashley Winter, the SRYH Summer Events Coordinator, was shared with the group (Attachment 1). They had requested that they be allowed to close their food stand at 10:00pm, since there is not much happening after that point. At this point, they are requesting to close by 10:30pm if it is slow. A previous discussion was held that included the feasibility of selling food only on the inside of the Arena, and then they could close when the building closes. This was not an acceptable solution for Ashley. Having vendors close early gives the impression to fair goers that the fair is closing. They discussed issues with getting volunteers to work with busy schedules, etc. These issues are not unique to this group. Jimmy discussed the efforts by the board to be fair and equitable to all vendors and we will do our due diligence in all areas. This year, we have shortened the hours, and Brian stated they will do their best to stay open as directed. Regarding electrical costs, Brian agreed that the SRYH will pay the \$125 as required. Brian and Jody were thanked for attending, and they left the meeting.

**Approval of Agenda and Meeting Minutes:** There were no recommended changes to the agenda. Scott made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Adam. Motion passed. Mary made a motion to accept the minutes from the June 18, 2024 Regular Meeting, seconded by Scott. Motion passed. Mary made a motion to accept the minutes from the July 8, 2024 Special meeting, seconded by Vince. Vince pointed out that the bleachers are not quite finished; they are acceptable, and he will be completing the work. No changes to the minutes; motion passed.

**Treasurer's Report:** Cheryl was present to review the June Treasurer's Report. This is reflective of the new accounts, and all have been reconciled. Jill, Cheryl, and Mary will get together to make sure appropriate processes are in place. Adam made a motion to approve the treasurer's report, seconded by Jody; motion



passed. Nancy initiated discussion regarding a vendor who had paid for a booth for this year at the end of 2023. We have the receipt that he paid, but there is no contract found. At this point, we have no open spots for outside vendors. He does not want to be in the SAE. A motion was made by Mary, seconded by Jody to refund what he had paid (\$250). Motion passed.

**Secretary's Report:** Jill reviewed the July list of things that should be getting done. There were no issues noted; all items are in the process of being completed or are done.

**Groundskeeper Report:** Steve is out of town at this time. Scott has been working on many projects. Jody stated that Joe is available to assist; Scott will direct him as appropriate. The pits are cleaned up. Shavings will arrive next week. There was discussion on what to do with the millings. Vince stated these could be easily bladed and he has a guy that can do a great job.

#### **Committee Reports:**

**4-H:** Ted indicated that when 4-H showed up for the benches, the doors were not locked. This is not the first time it has happened. Everyone is reminded to be diligent in making sure that all buildings are locked after use. Thursday, Rick will be bringing the new sign; Ken will have a skid-loader on site to move it. Thursday is pie day and starts at 9; they go until they are done.

**Activity Area:** Everything is fairly ready. For the kids tractor pull, Nancy asked Scott to find help to staff the event. The Dairy Princess will be here on Tuesday of the fair. There was discussion regarding what to have her do.

**Ag Craft:** They have started getting the risers down. Lightbulbs will be changed to LED.

**Beer Garden:** C&L is coming this weekend to set up; the ticket booths need to be removed. Adam will get a skid loader here to move everything. Jimmy will bring the steps and the VIP trailer later this week.

**Beer Garden Stage:** The stage needs to be cleaned,

#### **Buildings and Grounds:**

Set-up: Jody indicated that Joe has reached out to the Foley Football team, and they will be here on Thursday, July 25, to set out tables, benches, bleachers, garbage cans, etc. Scott and Jimmy will have small trailers on site to assist with moving items.

Tar. Clean-up is needed after the tar installation. The areas need to be leveled prior to the fair, and the gates need to be put back in.

Lightbulbs. Kevin has started changing all of the lightbulbs over to LEDs. We should be able to get about 75% of the work done. As previously stated, we need to be sure to keep all receipts, labor costs, equipment rental, etc. that we can use as part of the rebate with Xcel.

Donations. There was discussion regarding the parameters for donations to groups that assist with various projects. Discussion included an hourly rate per person, vs. a flat rate for a project. Scott made a motion to approve \$750 for the Foley Football Team for set up, seconded by Adam. Jody abstained; motion passed.

Ag Craft Building Cleaning. Nancy asked to have members of the cleaning crew assist with cleaning of the Ag Craft Building prior to the fair. There was discussion regarding what all needed to be cleaned. Jimmy made a motion to approve \$400 for cleaning the building, seconded by Scott. Adults are needed for this job, and Nancy will make some calls. Motion passed.

Rental House. Mary asked about the status of the garage at the rental property. Scott said this will be addressed after the fair.

Fire Extinguishers. Ted indicated that Summit will be on site on Friday to inspect the fire extinguishers as well as complete an inspection of the hood system in the 4-H lunch stand.

JCs Building. The building is on skids, and Ted and Adam will attempt to move it next week.

**Discovery Building:** It was stated that Sauk Rapids Fire Engine #2 will be on display this year. They will be told to bring along chains and stands to keep people off of it,

**FFA:** Nothing to report.

**Finance:** Ted stated that Wendy will not be able to assist this year. He will be in the money room, along with Bill and Donna.

**Food Vendors:** Jimmy stated that he is getting metal stencils donated from Midway Iron so that he can paint numbers and divider lines for the food vendors. U Betcha's will be removing the green pillars by the seating area. They would like to replace them with high top type tables. They are not asking for any money. Mary made a motion, seconded by Karen, to approve their plan to replace the pillars with high top standing tables. Motion passed. It was stated that new tables are being built by Oberg and should be here before the fair.

**Grants:** Nothing to report.

**Grandstand:** Vince and Jen are working on everything; it is going well. There are a few concerns with the tractor pull, but it should come together. James started working on the arena; a couple of areas will be addressed. Ramps need a couple weeks to cure after painting, so this will be done after the fair. They are looking for a few more helpers that are needed. The water meter has arrived from St Cloud. The lift has arrived, so the sound guy can get started. Jen stated that St Cloud still needs to put up No Parking signs on the south end. They are still looking for an announcer, but Jen does have a lead. The ticket sales are live; as of now, there are 29 tickets sold. These are non-refundable.

**Guest/Host Relations:** Nothing to report.

**Heritage Square:** Nothing to report.

**Insurance:** We are just waiting for the policy to be binded. Jill will follow-up on this.

**Livestock/Poultry:** Sam is looking for judges. Set up will be the next two Thursdays.

**Marketing/Promotions:** Jody stated that there are radio interviews scheduled for next week. Ted has agreed to help with these. Jody has already done an interview for the St Cloud Times. There is a billboard on division for the Wheels of Agriculture. The website is up. Let Jen know if there are any changes needed. We will be ordering subs on Tuesday and Friday the week of the fair; Jen has passed around ordering forms.

**Midway:** Nothing to report.

**Military:** There will be cookies and coffee after the parade. The next meat raffle is in September.



**Off-Season Rentals:** Jody is looking into having a chalk art festival, as well as having the Mega Lego Builders on site. Nothing has been finalized as of yet. We have not yet received the contract from the Pantowners contract.

**Parking:** Adam stated that Rod has agreed to lead the parking areas. He has started getting a schedule set up. Adam made a motion, seconded by Jody to pay Rod Bemboom \$18/hour as the parking supervisor. Motion passed. Adam indicated that some of the parking people want their hours donated. This will be done based on a rate of \$15/hour.

**Policies and Procedures.** Jody indicated that we need to keep timecards for Jill and Denni, and any other office staff. This is needed for the new law that went into effect as of July 1 for Sick and Safe time

**Premium Book:** Open class forms are coming in; Jen has updated the Martech program. Kathy will start entering the forms next week.

**Sanitation:** Everything is in order. Jen stated that Republic will be here next week to start delivering the bins. Jody has the map of where they need to go,

**Security:** Jody indicated that everything is set. The mounted patrol has been working with Jen and Vince. Work on the security camera system has started. They have located the lines, and ESI will be on site next week to start work; they will work with TechCheck. Jody stated there has been vandalism on the grounds recently; power lines have been cut. Everyone is asked to keep their eyes open if they are in the area.

**Sponsorship:** The packets are set up and ready to go. Jody is working on a 'thank you' board so we don't forget to send out notes. Vince stated that Andy Hansen, our derby promotor, was able to secure 5 sponsors with over \$5,000 donated. A huge thank you to all of our generous sponsors.

**Sports Arena East:** Nancy stated that she has received more contracts for the SAE. She will be contacting those who have been here before to see if they are interested in coming back. There was discussion regarding the \$30/hour that was requested by Mike, and what to do if he rejects the \$20/hour counter-offer. There was discussion continued from a previous meeting that the SAE is in breach of contract and Vince reminded the board that Barry could help us with this. It was agreed that this will need to wait until after the fair. There will be a meeting set up after the fair to look at the bill and the current contract.

**Vendors:** Outside and Lean-To are full. Nancy shared the difference between a food license and a cottage license from St Cloud, and there was discussion regarding an outside vendor selling prepared food along with non-food items. Jimmy made a motion and it was seconded by Mary to allow the outside vendor to sell both prepared items and non-food items. Motion passed.

**Winter Storage:** Nothing to report.

**Other:** None.

**Old Business:** Jimmy initiated discussion regarding the food vendor (Maid Rite) that has also sold video games in the past. There was a lengthy discussion that he holds a license to sell food, not non-food items. No other vendor is allowed to do this. It was stated that he should pay for another spot, not in the food area, to sell his video games. It was recommended that this be the last year he is allowed to do this. Jimmy made a motion that he needs to pay for another vendor spot if he wants to sell merchandise, and that he be given

a letter before the fair that this will be the last year he is allowed to sell both. Ken seconded the motion. Ted asked Jill to draft a letter that he will sign. Motion passed; Vince voted no.

At this point, Ted needed to leave the meeting. Ken Bemboom took over as Chair.

Jody asked what time the group would like to meet daily during the fair; it was agreed to meet at 12:30. As a reminder, there will be subs on Tuesday and Friday. Jimmy will prepare food for Wednesday. Jill will stock up on snacks and beverages. Jody asked if anyone had a preference for soda, please let her know. Jody asked for a check for \$800 to procure soda and water. Mary made a motion to approve a check to Jody for \$800 for water and soda; seconded by Karen. Motion passed.

Vince stated that the Small Business Development Center asked for 3 people to be on board to assess the situation that had been discussed with Barry. Mary, Jimmy, and Vince will do this.

Vince stated that Brian Cameron asked if we had made a decision about the fence. Barry had discussed previously that this be done as a community project after the fair. This is food for thought at this point.

Jen indicated that Scott provided several samples of paint color for the ATM shacks. Painting will be easier than re-staining. Members were asked to look at the samples and indicate which one is preferred. The one with the most votes will be used.

**New Business:** None.

**Other:** None

**Next Meeting:** The next regular meeting of the Benton County Ag Society Board of Directors will be held on Tuesday, August 20, 2024.

**Adjournment:** Sam made a motion to adjourn seconded by Nancy. The meeting adjourned at 10:01pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Zanardi  
Executive Secretary

Attachments: 1



Sauk Rapids Youth Hockey Association

From:

[Ashley Winter <ampartch@gmail.com>](mailto:Ashley Winter <ampartch@gmail.com>)

Sent:

Tue, Jul 16, 2024 at 4:05 pm

To:

[info@bentonfairmn.com](mailto:info@bentonfairmn.com)

Cc:

[weeps76@gmail.com](mailto:weeps76@gmail.com)

Dear fair board,

Over the last few years I was given permission to close my food stand (Sauk Rapids Youth Hockey) down early. We had been given the verbal permission because of the time the building closes and that we were very slow and not much for sales into the later hours of the evening. With the arena building closing early we do not get the foot traffic you would think we would get being in the location we are we get a lot of traffic inside the building. We do get traffic outside but once the building closes we had heard that people would think we are closed. We do not want to only sell from inside the building because we still have traffic from the outside. I have done a lot to try and promote from the outside more over the years and getting the feedback I have gotten since taking over. I can get all the stats of what has been sold during the night hours as it is on our computer system down there if you would like to see that. We also had been requested by the vendors in that building to open up early because they like to get their morning coffee and other beverages before the building actually opened cause once it does they don't leave their booths. We had been opening usually when the building it self opens so earlier than the 11 that we have to be open by. We are also are ran by parent volunteers. These parents have kids at home and most of them work a normal job during the day and come after and work the later shifts. Or take a vacation day/day off and work while their kids are at daycare. We have closed in the past at 10 and 1030. About an hour earlier than the required time. It was also up to a few parents if the crowd was big and their was a hit band they could stay open if they all agreed on it and okayed it with me. I am usually down there to open and close up the stand (if needed) so being there before 9 am and not getting home till about midnight if we would have to stay open till 1130. These parents are also parking a ways away and walking in because 1 there isn't much parking left when they come and 2 aren't going to pay the \$10 to park close. I am asking that you please allow us to close that 1 hour early.

Thanks,

Ashley Winter

Sauk Rapids Youth Hockey

Summer Events Coordinator

Benton County Agriculture Society  
P O Box 118  
Sauk Rapids MN 56379  
(320) 253-5649

Regular Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, August 20, 2024; 7:00pm  
Benton County Fairgrounds

The August meeting of the Benton County Agriculture Society was held on Tuesday, August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, and was called to order at 7:05pm by Ted Prom, President.

**Present:** Ted Prom, President; Ken Bemboom, Vice President, Jill Zanardi, Executive Secretary, Jimmy Zanardi, Jody Prom, Mary Ostby, Treasurer, Karen Sakry, Scott Morris, Sam Morris, Vince Thiel, Jen Dingmann, Adam Scapanski, Nancy Zupan, Cheryl Scapanski, Rod Bemboom

**Absent:** None.

**Guests Present:** Erich Rothstein, Mr. Twisty; Denni Borgheiinck, Office Assistant; Ann Olson, 4-H

**Approval of Agenda and Meeting Minutes:** There were no recommended changes to the agenda. Jimmy made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Ken. Motion passed. From the 7/16/2024 meeting minutes, Jen stated that it should state 'Nelson' not 'Republic' under sanitation. Jody made a motion to approve the minutes of the July Regular meeting, seconded by Nancy. Motion passed.

**Treasurer's Report:** Cheryl was present to review the July Treasurer's Report. The checkbook has been reconciled as of July 31<sup>st</sup>. There was discussion regarding the Grandstand Ticket sales. Scott made a motion to approve the treasurer's report, seconded by Ken. Jen and Mary discussed the on-line ticket sales and how they are posted to the account. Jody questioned the expense for fixtures in the beer garden; Cheryl will pull the receipt. Ted indicated the old checking account will stay open for another month or two. Once the grants from 2022 and 2023 are posted, Cheryl will turn it over to the 2024 grants to go to the new checking account. The old account will then be closed. Motion passed.

**Secretary's Report:** Jill reviewed the August list. There are no outstanding items. There was discussion regarding things that came up in the office during the fair. Denni stated that there were requests for feminine products as well as wheelchair rentals. We will look into the ADA recommendations for access to wheelchairs, and Jill will procure feminine products to be maintained in the office.

**Groundskeeper Report:** No report at this time.

**Committee Reports:**

**4-H:** Ann Olson, Benton County 4-H Educator, was present to review the numbers for 4-H this year. \$14,014 was issued for premiums and \$6,500 was paid to judges. We will get partial reimbursement from the State. Ann indicated there is an interest for open class swine; this could be a possibility for next year. The idea to auction off payment for the t-shirts was well received. Many local businesses are getting more involved and making donations. The 4-H food stand needs a vendor spot number; Jimmy will take care of this.

**Activity Area:** Nancy reported that \$7,300 was spent; \$3,500 was received from grants. She has no numbers for kids' day, but turnout was great. The bubbles were a huge success and will be brought back next year. We should have more bikes for next year. Home Depot was a big hit with the kids as well. Princess Kay was great, and they will also have the canine unit back again.



**Ag Craft:** Everything went pretty well. There were many issues with registration; the printer was not cooperating and created delays in getting tags done. Rhoda has a list of repairs; she will get the list to Scott, and Kevin will assist. The new quilt racks worked out great.

**Beer Garden:** Jody provided the numbers for wages, scheduled vs. actual hours worked and stated she saved \$2,066 from what was budgeted. The director tickets worked well and accounted for two kegs.

**Beer Garden Stage:** The VIP trailer was a huge hit, and was greatly appreciated by the bands. Jody asked if she could get her budget early so that she can get started booking bands. GenX was a great hit and she wants to book again, and she has contacted three other bands. The budget for 2024 was \$25,000 and \$6,500 for production. The actual expenses were \$18,500 for bands and \$6,400 for production; with \$1,500 in sponsorship. There was discussion regarding what would be needed for next year. Nancy made a motion to approve up to \$25,000 and \$7,000 for production for 2025, seconded by Jimmy. Motion passed. Jody is going to add to the contract that each band is not allowed to play within a 30-mile radius within 30 days of the Fair.

#### **Buildings and Grounds:**

Xcel. We received a notice that Xcel wants to put in smart meters. There was discussion regarding whether this must be done. No decision was made.

Water blowout. The question was raised when we want to have the water lines blown out. This will be kept on the radar; no date confirmed as of yet.

Pens. The new pens have been placed in the shed; these will need to be moved prior to winter storage.

Bathrooms. Nancy stated that access to the bathrooms with a walker is not possible. Can a ramp be placed? Scott will look into this.

Tar. Jimmy indicated that Carl will be here next Monday or Tuesday to place the second layer of tar.

LED Lights. The CFLs need to be replaced; 400 bulbs with starters. Once this has been accomplished, the rebate can be initiated.

Flowers. The flowers will stay where they are for now; Patty will continue to water.

Curbs. The curbs need to be pinned down; Ken will take care of this.

SAE. The SAE needs to be informed of the Winter Storage Dates, October 5<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup>. Jill will take care of this.

**Discovery Building:** There was discussion regarding the set up in the building for Wheels of Agriculture. With the door closed on the end, many thought the building was closed. If we bring them back next year, the trailer should be put in the middle of the building. Sam is trying to get the farm fest simulators for next year. The vintage Fire Truck was good.

**FFA:** Scott initiated discussion regarding getting the new building done. Jody stated that it would be ideal to have it serve as a storm shelter. There was discussion regarding getting a proposal and whether the Fair board will help with costs. Perhaps there is a grant possible to assist. Mary will look into this. Scott, Ken, Adam, and Heidi and Nathan from the FFA will move forward with this project.

**Finance:** Ted shared the numbers for deposits made during the fair. The overall total of deposits was \$554,581, compared to \$686,583 last year. The money earned from the ATMs has not yet been looked at. Ted stated that when developing contracts for next year, we need to look closely at wants versus needs. Some of the 'freebies' that are given out may not be necessary and wind up costing us money, ie. Rooms, tickets for events, beer, parking, etc. Jen suggested that these costs could be built into requested budgets. Mary is asked to look for grants and those that are local to qualify for any grants. It was agreed that anything we pay for as part of a contract should be included in requested budgets.



**Food Vendors:** Jimmy indicated that everyone liked the new lights. The lights came in under budget by over \$3,000. He was able to increase income from Vendors by \$3,820 which included electricity and other fees. We need to look at vendors that close early. The dance line closed early every night. The contract does state that those not in compliance will not be invited back. There was discussion regarding how to move forward – charge a deposit, enforce the contract or re-write it. The lions were busy with bingo each night, but closed by 9:45 after saying it was last call. Youth hockey did not close early. It was noted that the door on the south side of the lions building has many dents in it – like hockey pucks were possibly shot at it. The cameras could be checked. There was also discussion closing the front gates at 10:00am. This is necessary due to the number of people already moving through the area.

**Grants:** Mary stated that two grants were confirmed from 2023, \$3,365 and \$9,338. These will be going into the old checking account. Anything from 2024 will be deposited into the new account.

**Grandstand:** Vince initiated discussion regarding sponsors wanting to park their vehicles within arena for the event that they sponsor. There was discussion regarding liability issues, amount of sponsorship, and what would be fair and equitable. We may want to take a more conservative approach as we move forward. Vince said thank you to James and the Prom boys for all of their work during the week of the fair. They all worked very hard, even with the changes in weather. Jen reviewed the numbers for revenue generated for each event. Comparisons are difficult, since there were changes for nights of events. The rodeo was a huge success, and they want to come back. The announcer was amazing and she wants to come back. There was discussion regarding the arena and prep work and how the weather affected it. Next year, Stearns County Fair will not be the same week, so we will not compete with us for demolition derby's.

**Guest/Host Relations:** Nothing to report.

**Heritage Square:** Everything was brilliant. Nancy reviewed the expenses and attendance for events. Weather played a part on Wednesday and Saturday. Senior day was the storm day – the day Stearns County Fair closed. Sauk Rapids had posted the fair was closed, which caused confusion and affected attendance.

**Insurance:** Nothing to report.

**Livestock/Poultry:** We may want to look at shade tarp for bleachers at horse arena. Vince discussed the arena, and if we increased the size, we could host other events. This will warrant further discussion. Sheep and goat numbers were down, we may want to do an open class for a hog show. The auction went well.

**Marketing/Promotions:** Jen indicated the new site has been up for 30 days; 34,000 have interacted with the website. She will begin deleting items from 2024 to get ready for 2025. Winter storage has been added. Jody stated that it was a wash with the radio stations. There was a trade with wristbands to get advertising. We may not need the bus from Rollies - it was not utilized as we had hoped. We are not sure if we get a percentage from the advance ticket sales. Ted stated that we should get a good cut. There was discussion regarding staffing the office for ticket sales if we do not receive any compensation. Cheyenne was a huge asset with taking pictures during the fair.

**Midway:** The information from Gopher State was shared. The numbers were balanced three times during the fair. Randy pays taxes and insurance, and our cut was \$81,996.87. This is down from last year. The food stands on the midway paid the \$750 for each stand. The new contract was signed and new rates for food stands are in the contract through 2027. The dates of the fairs for the future are: July 29 – August 3, 2025; August 4 to August 9, 2026, and August 3 to August 8, 2027.



**Military:** We have received a check for \$690, which was from April, May and June meet raffles at Rolli's. The next meat raffle is Friday, August 30<sup>th</sup>. Please let Karen know if you can assist. After that, the next meat raffle at Rolli's is September 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Off-Season Rentals:** James Trantina indicated that he wants to hold a beater cross event in October. We do not have a speaker system in place, nor insurance for an event. There was discussion regarding the possibility of getting our own speaker system. Vince indicated the car show went well. Nancy indicated that attendance was down from previous years. Also discussed was the electricity used and when to shut off the power. The car club did a good job with picking up the grounds.

**Parking:** Rod shared the numbers for persons working during the fair. They were extremely busy and he was operating with about half the usual crew. 11 people would be ideal. He recommended the rocket shooting should be moved to a different evening or place, due to the trailers for the horses. Ann is willing to work with anything he suggests. There was discussion regarding vendor parking – make them pay \$80 and give them two passes. It was noted that at Steele County Fair, each vendor pays \$5/day each day. Parking on Sunday creates problems with the number of horse and cattle trailers. Something to think about. There was also discussion regarding the daily passes – many use them to come and go as they please and do not want to turn them in. Rod indicated that he is donating his time/hours worked. Thank you, Rod!!

**Policies and Procedures.** Nothing to report.

**Premium Book:** Nothing to report.

**Sanitation:** There was discussion regarding what was ordered and what we received from Nelson. There was also discussion regarding the golf carts and waiting to book for 2025 until after January 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Security:** Jody indicated that there were four calls for security. These have all been addressed. There was discussion regarding the weather and that we were extremely lucky in that the weather did not progress to anything more severe. We will want to take a look at our Weather Policy and review with all board members.

**Sponsorship:** 25 businesses contributed for a total of \$17,250. The numbers for what was awarded was reviewed.

**Sports Arena East:** Nancy indicated that there were still open spots available. She reviewed the amounts received and expenses. There were some vendors that requested longer hours on Friday and Saturday. She also indicated that there were 100 garbage liners that were missing from Tuesday night. We may be charged for \$30/hour from Mike.

**Vendors:** There was discussion regarding electric use by vendors after the fair. Jimmy asked if we should have a separate contract for any vendors or have a shut-off date established. We could establish a fee for vendors who would want power to stay on after a specified date.

**Winter Storage:** Jody reminded everyone that drop-off dates are October 5 and October 19. Other members agreed that they would assist with contacting previous clients. Jody has done research to see what other fairgrounds charge for storage, and we are much lower than most. All inquiries should be sent to [bfstorage@yahoo.com](mailto:bfstorage@yahoo.com). Scott made a motion to approve the contract for \$11.00/foot, seconded by Karen. All agreed that we do not need to be the highest price for storage. Motion passed.

**Other:** None.

**Old Business:** None.

**New Business:** Nancy indicated that the tarps for the lean-to areas were very appreciated. There was discussion regarding compensation for Bill, Donna, and Kevin. Jen made a motion to approve checks for \$599 each for Bill, Donna, and Kevin. For their services; seconded by Scott. Motion passed.

**Other:** None

**Next Meeting:** The next regular meeting of the Benton County Ag Society Board of Directors will be held on Tuesday, September 17, 2024.

**Adjournment:** Adam made a motion to adjourn seconded by Sam. The meeting adjourned at 11:06pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Zanardi  
Executive Secretary



Benton County Agriculture Society  
P O Box 118  
Sauk Rapids MN 56379  
(320) 253-5649

Regular Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, September 17, 2024; 7:00pm  
Benton County Fairgrounds

The September meeting of the Benton County Agriculture Society was held on Tuesday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024, and was called to order at 7:03pm by Ted Prom, President.

**Present:** Ted Prom, President; Ken Bemboom, Vice President, Jill Zanardi, Executive Secretary, Jimmy Zanardi, Jody Prom, Mary Ostby, Treasurer, Karen Sakry, Scott Morris, Sam Morris, Vince Thiel, Nancy Zupan, Cheryl Scapanski

**Absent:** Jen Dingmann, Adam Scapanski,

**Guests Present:** Erich Rothstein, Mr. Twisty; Bob Skuza; Rod Bemboom

**Guest:** Bob Skuza is present since he is interested in getting involved with the Ag Society and perhaps be a member of the Fair board.

**Guest:** Rod Bemboom was present request to use 20 tables the weekend of October 5<sup>th</sup>. Scott made a motion to approve the use of the tables by Rod Bemboom, seconded by Jody. Motion passed.

**Approval of Agenda and Meeting Minutes:** The following additions were requested for the agenda: Jody asked to have '\$6,000 payment to 4-H for the building', 'vendors that closed early', under Marketing/Promotions, to add 'Website Fees' and 'separating marketing and advertising'; under Midway, to add 'payment to the Knights of Columbus', under New Business, to add 'Employee Reviews and Contracts', 'new agreement for rental house', and 'soda'. Ken made a motion to approve the agenda with these additions, seconded by Scott. Motion passed. The minutes of the Regular August Meeting, 8/20/2024, were reviewed. Nancy indicated that under buildings and grounds, she asked that the area be looked at; she did not ask for a ramp. Jody added the asked for the amounts for the SAE, which were \$16,550 in vendor fees, \$1,060 in electricity, \$1,000 in parking, and \$290 for tables and chairs. Jody also questioned the 'cut from midway for early armband sales'. Ted will look into this. Nancy made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Ken. Motion passed.

**Treasurer's Report:** Cheryl was present to review the August Treasurer's Report. The cover page is a synopsis of all of the accounts. All accounts have been reconciled as of now. There were three deposits in the old account of grants for 2022 and 2023. Also included is a listing of all checks written out of the new account. The ATM account has grown by a few thousand, and there is \$2,940 in the debit account. There was discussion regarding the bill from Republic Services, which was extraordinarily high. Jody will review this further and contact Angie at Republic. There was also discussion regarding the work comp payment as well as the taxes for 2021 and 2022. No taxes were paid for these two years – only penalties. Cheryl was thanked for her excellent work. Mary made a motion, seconded by Nancy to approve the treasurer's report. Motion passed. Cheryl has agreed to renew her contract for another year.

**Secretary's Report:** Jill shared the September list, which is only one item. This is for the sales tax payment, and will be moved to the August listing. Jill has agreed to renew her contract for another year.

**Groundskeeper Report:** No report at this time; he has agreed to renew his contract for another year.



## Committee Reports:

**4-H:** The Executive Committee met last night. The annual payment of \$6,000 will be due soon. Cheryl is aware.

**Activity Area:** Nancy has been looking into Pig Races. We would most likely want two days. Nancy will get pricing information. The kids pedal tractor pull should be brought back; Friday is a good day to do that. There was discussion regarding pony rides. The only spot would be by the horse barn. Jill will obtain contact information for the group that is at the Food Fest. It is noted that the ponies will need to have documentation of required testing.

**Ag Craft:** The building needs to be ready for winter storage.

**Beer Garden:** Jody indicated that we have not yet paid the ticket sellers. They have typically been given \$4,500. 13 shifts had not been covered and Jody asked the Board for input on what to pay. Jody and another staff member had to sell tickets, and Vince's wife cancelled a scheduled vacation to help out. It has become more inconsistent in working with them lately, and there was discussion if we should look for another group. Jody has not yet talked to Jordan, but there had been email discussions back in January regarding the need to have all full shifts covered. Vince did state that there was a death that affected many of the persons working, which could have contributed to issues. Jody will have a discussion with Jordan and bring back any further issues to the Board.

**Beer Garden Stage:** Jody has started to book bands for next year. Pandemic and GenX have been confirmed for Wednesday and Thursday. We have previously contracted with Swatzke Sound for production. Shorty has worked for Swatzke for many years, and he now has started his own business. He has agreed to accept what we had previously paid for production (\$6,400), but this will increase next year. Jody will get the contract out to be signed. Jody asked that the barricades be put up around the stage before it snows,

## **Buildings and Grounds:**

Water. Scott indicated that 4-H will not need water after Thursday. Scott will coordinate a date with Steve and Jill to have the lines blown out.

Lights. The lights are done. Ted is getting the paperwork together for Xcel to get the rebate done. There was discussion regarding which lights should remain on at night. Ted has shut off about three quarters of the lights and stated it was very dark. He turned 20 lights back on for SAE. Jimmy asked if there was anything in the contract to maintain lights – or if we should be making them pay for lights. Vince stated that there is a meeting with Barry on Thursday to start discussion on the SAE contract and other things. Mary suggested that we send an e-mail to SAE and let their board decide if they want the lights on and then we can figure out charges.

Curbs. Ken will get the curbs pinned down.

Hay and flowers. The hay can be removed; Ken will take care of it. Steve will take out all of the flowers from the bins. The dirt, etc. will remain inside each. When a skid loader is available, the bins will be moved into a lean-to for winter.

**Discovery Building:** Nothing to report. The building is ready for storage.

**FFA:** Scott indicated that he has talked to Heidi, and she is hoping to have plans to review by the October meeting. Mary had looked into grants to see if anything is available. She stated that it wasn't clear, and she will continue to watch for this.



**Finance:** The Executive Committee met last night and with Cheryl being new, a budget is not ready yet. We are hoping to be ready for the October meeting, to include what was actually spent for 2024 to prepare for the 2025 budget. There was discussion regarding closing the old checking account. We need to do a little work before it can be closed. There was discussion regarding the ATM account and looking at putting some of the money into a 6 or 7-month CD, etc. Mary stated that she did talk to Jen about charges, and Jen is going to track the charges and get back to the board. It was agreed that the old savings account can be closed. Mary now has access to QuickBooks. The website account will be looked at as soon as the charges are tracked and verified.

**Food Vendors:** Jimmy initiated discussion regarding the Dance Team and that they closed early every night. He did speak to them twice, and they continued to close early. According to the contract, they should not be welcome back. There was discussion regarding the contract with the Lions, and use of their space by the Dance team. The food acts separately from the Lions. The Lions did a "last call" each night at 9:45 pm and closed by 10:00 pm, so the Dance Team closed as well. Mary made a motion to notify the Dance Team that they are not welcome back, seconded by Scott. She then amended her motion to send them notice that they can attend the October meeting and provide a viable version of why they closed early and request to be invited back for 2025. Motion passed; Nany opposed. Jill will draft a letter.

**Grants:** Mary indicated that she will be finishing the 2024 grants.

**Grandstand:** Vince indicated there is not a lot to report at this time. They have been discussing the schedule for 2025. They will be meeting with Andy Hansen regarding the derby. Jen has confirmed that the skid is available all days for 2025. The question was raised regarding the bathrooms, removing the showers, and placement of the ticket booths. Nothing has been decided yet. There was a complaint regarding the white privacy fence; this person is never happy.

**Guest/Host Relations:** Nothing to report.

**Heritage Square:** Nancy stated she has been getting emails regarding bands, and she is waiting on prices. Brady will be working on the schedule for the talent show. Jimmy asked if the banner could be put back up in the Heritage Building; Mary has been unable to locate it.

**Insurance:** Nothing to report.

**Livestock/Poultry:** We need to figure out what to do with the new pens; they need to be moved for winter storage. It is possible to have them tarped and left outside; this is not ideal. After some discussion, Scott and Ken will figure out where to put them inside.

**Marketing/Promotions:** Jody questioned when we would be making committee assignments. This is usually done in November or December. Ted said this was open for discussion. Jody asked if it would be possible to take Marketing and Promotions and divide it into 'Website and Social Media' and 'Advertising'. Each committee could then have two persons each. This is food for thought.

**Midway:** We have not yet paid the Knights of Columbus. We need to get the completed paperwork. The question was raised if all of their persons showed up to cover all shifts. Ted indicated that everything was covered. There was discussion regarding tickets and use of scanners. Ted will touch base with Jennifer. There were no issues on the Midway side.

**Military:** Nancy stated that the next meat raffle will be on Friday, September 27<sup>th</sup> at Rollies. Anyone who is able to help should let her know. Karen is unable to assist. The next one after that is October 25<sup>th</sup>.



**Off-Season Rentals:** Nothing to report.

**Parking:** Nothing to report.

**Policies and Procedures.** Nothing to report.

**Premium Book:** Nothing to report.

**Sanitation:** Nancy indicated that she is stepping down from sanitation.

**Security:** Nothing to report.

**Sponsorship:** Nancy indicated she is starting to work on next year.

**Sports Arena East:** The expense report from Mike was reviewed and discussed. Ted discussed the charges for electricity. Nancy has not yet talked to Mike. The specific charges in each area were reviewed. This will be tabled until the group meets. Scott initiated discussion regarding speeding by SAE persons. Steve indicated that he has plastic speed bumps that could be installed. These could then be removed before it snows. There was also discussion regarding adding a Speed Limit sign. Scott will get together with Steve to work out a plan.

**Vendors:** There was discussion regarding Bingo closing early and since we are dealing with the Dance Team in their space, should the same repercussions apply to them? There was no decision made at this time.

**Winter Storage:** Drop off dates are October 5 and 19, from 9a to 12noon. There was discussion regarding traffic flow as well as SAE having events on both dates. They have requested to use the North gate, and the intent with winter storage drop offs was to have persons exit that direction. It was suggested that the Pit (South) entrance could be used exclusively by SAE persons. Jody shared the email that had been sent to persons for winter storage. Last year, there were 223 items; she is at 174 at this time. Some persons have not yet responded, so we could potentially have several open slots. There was discussion regarding adding another later date as well as directors getting a break on cost for storage. Patty has also typically stored a camper, and her fee is waived since she assists in watering the flowers on the grounds. Jody also discussed a Spring pick up date. In line with last year, April 12<sup>th</sup> would be the appropriate day. This is dependent on the weather. Jill will contact Denni to see if she would be willing to donate hours to assist.

**Other:** None.

**Old Business:** Vince reminded everyone that we had a bid on getting the fence fixed. This will be put on hold at this time. Jill stated that Patty had asked about what was going to be done about the garage on the rental property. There was a bid for \$5,000 earlier this year. Mary made a motion to work with them on what needs to be done, up to \$5,000, seconded by Scott. Motion passed. Nancy abstained.

**New Business:** Ted stated that the contracts for Jill, Cheryl, and Steve are up at the end of September. These contracts will be renewed, with a 6-month review at the current wages. Mary made a motion to approve, seconded by Sam. Motion Passed.

Ted indicated that the rental house contract needs to be renewed at this time. Patty and TJ have been good renters. The contract would be for another year at the current rental rate. Mary made a motion to renew the contract, seconded by Scott. Motion Passed. Nancy abstained.



There was discussion regarding Director terms that are due to expire. Ted looked up in previous minutes, and discovered the following: From 2022, the following Director will have terms that expire in 2025: Karen, Vince, Adam, Ken, Mary, Ted, Rod, and Jen. Last year, terms were renewed until 2026 for Sam, Jody, and Nancy. Director terms that expire this year are Scott and Jimmy. There was also discussion regarding the Annual Meeting, which is held in November. Scott made a motion to hold the Annual Meeting at the Sauk Rapids VFW, with an alternative site as the East Side VFW, seconded by Ken. Motion passed. Jill will make arrangements for the Annual Meeting on Tuesday, November 19<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00pm.

There is an application for membership received from Bob Skuza to join the Benton County Ag Society. Vince made a motion to approve the membership, seconded by Nancy. Motion passed.

Jody stated that there are several cases of soda that are left over from the fair. These will expire and Directors were told they could take some home.

**Other:** None

**Next Meeting:** The next regular meeting of the Benton County Ag Society Board of Directors will be held on Tuesday, October 15, 2024.

**Adjournment:** Sam made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Jimmy. The meeting adjourned at 10:07pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Zanardi  
Executive Secretary

**Benton County Agriculture Society  
P O Box 118  
Sauk Rapids MN 56379  
(320) 253-5649**

**Regular Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, October 15, 2024; 7:00pm  
Benton County Fairgrounds**

The October meeting of the Benton County Agricultural Society was held on Tuesday, October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, and was called to order at 7:00pm by Ted Prom, President.

**Present:** Ted Prom, President; Ken Bemboom, Vice President, Jill Zanardi, Executive Secretary, Mary Ostby, Treasurer, Jimmy Zanardi, Jody Prom, Jen Dingmann, Karen Sakry, Scott Morris, Sam Morris, Vince Thiel, Nancy Zupan, Adam Scapanski, Cheryl Scapanski

**Guests Present:** Erich Rothstein, Mr. Twisty; Rod Bemboom; Heidi Anderson, FFA; Michelle Peterson, Derek Peterson, Jennie Weber, Dorian Sjogren, Jessie Ramirez, Monique Neussendorfer, Sarah Newell, Kelly Thans, members of the Sauk Rapids Rice Dance Booster Club; Matthew Selander, Boy Scouts of America

**Guests:** On behalf of the Sauk Rapids Rice Dance Booster Club, Michelle Peterson made a presentation regarding the history of their participation in the Fair, hourly sales, and the information that was given to her when she took over as the coordinator for their group. Her predecessor had instructed her that they could follow the hours of the Bingo Hall. She apologized profusely regarding the misunderstanding, and although she read the contract, she felt the hours listed did not pertain to them, since they were instructed differently. Jimmy stated that he had spoken to three adults on Wednesday morning, and was told by each of them that they would stay open. He stated that he has added lighting in the area for improved visibility. He also stated that they started to tear down the food stand well before 5:00pm, and Michelle indicated that they had started to run out of certain food items. Ted asked if they would be able to have staff to follow the terms of the contract. Michelle stated that they very much want to continue to be part of the Fair, as this is a major fundraising event for them. The dancers and their parents enjoy working at the fair and have agreed they can continue to volunteer, with the hours listed in the contract. Jimmy suggested improved signage and lighting for them, and they asked if they needed approval for additional lighting, etc. These things can be worked out between the food vendor and the food vendor committee. Michelle and others were thanked for their attendance when they left at this point in the meeting.

**Guest:** Matthew Selander, Boy Scouts of America, was present to initiate discussion regarding the food stand near the pits for the grandstand. There have been issues with electricity, as well as the overall structure of the stand. There was discussion regarding how much sales are done in this stand and if it should be renovated. Matthew indicated that it brings in roughly about 10% of their sales, and that he is okay with it being demolished if the Fair board agreed. Matthew was thanked for attending.

**Guest:** Heidi Anderson, FFA, was present to discuss the update on the plans for the new FFA Building. Plans are currently at Ameribuild in Waite Park. The plan is for a three-season building. There is not a lot of new information at this time. They are not looking to ask the Fair board with financial assistance. They are continuing with fundraising and grant requests. It has not yet been determined if the building will be suitable for winter storage. 2025 grant information is not out yet. There was also discussion regarding using the building as a designated storm shelter; this has not yet been determined either. Heid will return to a future meeting once building plans have been finalized. There was also discussion if this building would belong to FFA or Benton County Ag, and also about expanding the Office building.



**Approval of Agenda and Meeting Minutes:** The following additions were requested for the agenda: Jody asked to add 'theft on October 3<sup>rd</sup>', under Security and 'Bingo agreement' under Vendors. Ted asked to move 'venue for Annual Meeting' and 'slate of candidates' to Old Business. Jimmy asked to add 'SCTC Survey Team' to New Business, and Vince asked to add 'Small Business Development Center' to Other. Scott made a motion to approve the amended agenda, seconded by Adam; motion passed. The minutes of the Regular September Meeting, 9/17/2024, were reviewed. Under the treasurer's report, it should be worker's unemployment, not worker's compensation. Under the groundskeeper's report, it should list Steve's name, not 'he'. And under Marketing/Promotion it should state 'should then' have at least two persons each. Jody made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Ken. Motion passed.

**Treasurer's Report:** Jody stated that she has worked with Republic Services on the bill that had been sent. With errors corrected, the bill will be around \$8,000. Vince indicated he received the water bill from St Cloud. The bill is \$228.70. He will get this to Jill and Cheryl to be paid. The bill from Xcel for the Midway shows that we saved \$1,970.94 with the LED lights. Mary questioned the account for the Web sales. We have not yet received clarification from Saffire on the service charges. Jen has messaged Saffire with no response yet. She will follow-up. The question was raised if we could put some of the money in a 6-month CD to make money for us since it does not need to be there. Jody made a motion to approve the treasurer's report, seconded by Jimmy. Jen asked that 'POS recurring' be changed to 'office software'. Motion passed. The \$6,000 payment to 4-H should be made now. The Knights of Columbus and Lions have not yet been paid. Cheryl has not yet been paid for her hours. Mary will take care of this.

There was discussion regarding payment to the Lions and the schedule. Jody stated they will not be paid for shifts not covered, so the adjusted amount would be \$3,963.36. There was also discussion regarding payment as employees vs. a donation. Scott made a motion to pay the adjusted amount of \$4,000 to the Lions, seconded by Adam. Motion passed; Mary and Nancy opposed and Vince abstained.

Ted initiated discussion regarding payment to the Knights of Columbus. They worked all of their shifts for the Grandstand. Nancy made a motion to made a donation in the amount approved at a previous meeting, seconded by Mary. This was \$8,000. Motion passed.

**Secretary's Report:** Jill shared the October list. One item has been removed, as it is no longer necessary.

**Groundskeeper Report:** Two water lines broke on the grounds. These were fixed, and one more leak was found. They will get the lines blown out next week. Ted questioned why the shower doors were open; this will be looked at.

#### Committee Reports:

**4-H:** Nothing to report.

**Activity Area:** Nothing to report.

**Ag Craft:** Nothing to report.

**Beer Garden:** Jody indicated that she had spoken with Jordan; the shifts will be filled for next year. She also brought up the idea of another group for next year, and Jordan will speak to his group.

**Beer Garden Stage:** Nothing to report.

#### **Buildings and Grounds:**

Flowers. Scott will take care of the flowers.



**Barriers:** There was discussion regarding adding cement barriers so that no one drives off the midway. Jody also asked for barricades around the stage; this will be taken care of. We need to keep the fire lane open. Ken has acquired new pins for the curbs and he will get them pinned.

**Discovery Building:** Nothing to report.

**FFA:** Scott shared that Skylar is selling fruit as a fundraiser. He has the forms with him.

**Finance:** The Knights of Columbus payment was approved. \$80,000 from the ATM account has been placed in a 6-month CD.

**Food Vendors:** Jimmy asked for thoughts on the presentation from the SRR Dance Booster Team. Jimmy suggested that he put them on a one-year probation to make sure they follow contracted hours. Directors agreed that they were given bad information from previous members, and their apology did seem sincere. Scott made a motion that Jimmy contact them and advise them they are on a one-year probation to follow contracted hours, seconded by Ken. Motion passed. Scott discussed the pit-stand boy scout food booth. It is no longer suitable to serve food, and the electrical set-up is not safe. Nancy made a motion to go from two food stand booths to one food stand booth for the Boy Scouts of American, seconded by Jody. Motion passed. There was a brief discussion regarding the space to be vacated; no decision made at this time.

**Grants:** Mary shared that the 2024 grants are due by May; she will finalize by end of the year. Those for 2025 will not be out until November.

**Grandstand:** Jen re-capped where she and Vince are at with planning for next year. They would like to go back to the schedule from 2023. There was discussion regarding going down to having only one demolition derby, which really isn't an option. The sled that they thought was confirmed is no longer available Thursday, so they are looking at alternatives. Monster Trucks will not be back. They are looking for any suggestions to fill a night. Rod has information on a 'Barns' rodeo; he will get the information to Jen.

**Guest/Host Relations:** Nothing to report.

**Heritage Square:** Nothing to report.

**Insurance:** Nothing to report.

**Livestock/Poultry:** Ken initiated discussion regarding open class and who decides entry dates for chicken and rabbits. This is up to the board. We are also in charge of the release dates for the animals, and there will be no change at this time. He also asked about the age for 'novice' entries and whether a woman with a baby should be allowed to enter. It was agreed that 'novice' will be ages 3 and 4. There was discussion regarding the wash area for horses and concerns with bringing horses to where cattle are washed. It was agreed that the Livestock Committee handle these issues. For the arena, the question was raised to have grandstand seating. There is a legitimate size for rodeos with enough seating. Discussion included space for camping, restrooms, etc. The answer is no.

**Marketing/Promotions:** Nothing to report for Advertising nor social media.

**Midway:** Nothing to report.

**Military:** The next meat raffles are October 25<sup>th</sup> and November 22<sup>nd</sup>.



**Off-Season Rentals:** Nothing to report.

**Parking:** Jimmy initiated discussion regarding parking in the area of Rapid Performance. Joel Henkemeyer had inquired about the Fair board taking over use of this area for a specific fee. Rod voiced concerns with parking trailers and potential problems. There was discussion regarding the number of spots this would be, as well as the amount of traffic on Tuesday morning of the Fair and whether an additional gate would be needed. Jimmy will speak with Joel to define the exact space he is talking about as well as how much he would like to take over this space during the Fair.

**Policies and Procedures.** Nothing to report.

**Premium Book:** Nothing to report.

**Sanitation:** Nothing to report.

**Security:** TechCheck was paid half of the bill up front, and they now want to be paid. We also want to look at what we want done for next year. There was discussion regarding what has not yet been completed and where our concerns are. There was also discussion regarding the current four Spectrum accounts, three of which should be able to be cancelled. Jimmy and Mary will contact Chad to meet and go over what needs to be done and finalize payment. Jody stated that there was a theft on October 3<sup>rd</sup> of an A-frame sign. The cameras were able to show the car and persons, however, the license plate was not able to be read. It had been the understanding that the new cameras would have this functionality. TechCheck is now recommending different cameras that would be able to do this.

**Sponsorship:** Nothing to report

**Sports Arena East:** Vince stated that they met with Barry from the Small Business Development Center. They discussed questions and frustrations with the contract and SAE. We could push to revoke the 99-year contract, but we do not have the structure to run the SAE as a Board. We have been spinning our wheels and need to do something. Barry has offered to be a facilitator between us and SAE. Ted has reached out to Jason Ellering from SAE who is the current president. He will bring it up to their board at the next meeting. They are meeting next week, and he will get back to us. We need to have a group start a discussion with the SAE. Ted suggested that the SAE committee serve as our representatives to meet with SAE and Barry as the facilitator. There was discussion regarding parking on the Midway. SAE has requested to park there again this winter. This area is not designed for parking and at this point, it is not level. Plow trucks will tear of this area and ruin the new tar that has been placed. The back of the SAE is suitable for parking, the Midway area will not be made available. Jimmy stated that we have been contacted by St Cloud Technical College to use our space for students to complete practice surveys. This could aid us in identifying the exact acreage of different areas of the grounds. Directors agreed this was a great idea. Ted discussed lighting around the SAE. There are some lights, that are not adequate, and the SAE did charge us for electricity by the SAE. He was informed by Jason that the SAE would like to do a fund-raising raffle and auction off front row parking. They would paint the lines. This could be a talking point with them as we negotiate through our concerns.

**Vendors:** Jody initiated discussion regarding the agreement with the Lions and Bingo. The specific times for Bingo is not written out in the agreement, and since it is not, they don't need to follow ours. The agreement stands unless we meet and update the agreement. Jen also asked about the hours for the Sportsman's building. Ted would like Bingo to be open before 5:00pm. Vince agreed, and we need to have a discussion with Joe and Steve regarding our expectations.



**Winter Storage:** From the first day of Winter Storage on October 5<sup>th</sup>, there were a total of 82 items stored, bringing in \$19,329.00. Jody asked who would be available to help this Saturday with storage. There was discussion regarding the number of spots available and hours that staff will be available on site.

**Other:** None

**Old Business:**

Committee Assignments: Ted asked if everyone was ready to discuss assignments. It was agreed this would be tabled until the November meeting.

District 6 Meeting: Nancy stated that the MFCF convention will be January 16 to 19, and will be held in Bloomington. A block of rooms will be available some time after November 18<sup>th</sup>. The next District 6 meeting will be held in Aitken next year in September. Benton County will host this meeting in 2026.

Annual Meeting: Jill has reserved the back room at Jimmy's Pour House for November 19<sup>th</sup>. Those Directors seeking re-election will be Scott Morris and Jimmy Zanardi. The Ag members seeking to be elected include Erich Rothstein, Rod Bemboom, James Trantina, and Brian Pozorski. We need to get the paperwork for James and Brian. Ted asked for individual motions for each candidate. Nancy made a motion to approve Scott Morris for re-election, seconded by Vince. Motion passed. Vince made a motion to approve Jimmy Zanardi for re-election, seconded by Ken. Motion passed. Ken made a motion to approve Erich Rothstein for election, seconded by Scott. Motion passed. Adam made a motion to approve Rod Bemboom for election, seconded by Karen. Motion passed. Scott made a motion to approve Brian Pozorski for election, seconded by Ken, with paperwork to be submitted by 10/21/24. Motion passed. Jen made a motion to approve James Trantina for election, seconded by Mary. There was discussion regarding his attendance at meetings. Motion passed. These individuals will be on the ballot or the Annual Meeting on November 19<sup>th</sup>. Jill indicated that she has the Annual Meeting Notice nearly complete. She is looking for additional information on items to highlight from this past year. The following were suggested: Launched a new website, 6 new food vendors, new lighting in the food court, new tar, and a new camera system.

**New Business:**

January Conference: The conference will be held January 16 – 19 in Bloomington. Rooms should be available November 18<sup>th</sup>. Ted asked who would be interested in attending. As of today, Nancy, Ted, Jody, Jen, Rhoda, and perhaps Jimmy and Jill would be interested in attending. Erich is thinking about it. An email should be coming soon with the details. Jill will watch for this and will share any updates.

**Other:** Adam indicated that he may be late to monthly meetings, due to a job. Jen stated that we need to schedule a budget meeting, and Jody asked if we could start the monthly meetings at 6:00pm. No changes were made at this time.

**Next Meeting:** The next regular meeting of the Benton County Ag Society Board of Directors will be held on Tuesday, November 19, 2024, at Jimmy's Pour House, Sauk Rapids, after the Annual Meeting.

**Adjournment:** Sam made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Adam. The meeting adjourned at 10:25pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Zanardi  
Executive Secretary



**Benton County Agriculture Society  
P O Box 118  
Sauk Rapids MN 56379  
(320) 253-5649**

**Regular Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, November 19, 2024; 7:00pm  
Benton County Fairgrounds**

The November meeting of the Benton County Agricultural Society was held on Tuesday, November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, and was called to order at 7:32pm by Ted Prom, President.

**Present:** Ted Prom, President; Ken Bemboom, Vice President, Jill Zanardi, Executive Secretary, Mary Ostby, Treasurer, Jimmy Zanardi, Jody Prom, Jen Dingmann, Karen Sakry, Scott Morris, Sam Morris, Vince Thiel, Nancy Zupan, Adam Scapanski, Cheryl Scapanski, Erich Rothstein, Rod Bemboom

**Guests Present:** Barb Neske, Keith Bauman, Beth Kipka, Kevin Kipka, Brian Pozorski, Ashley Willenbring, Bob Skuza, Justin Hackett, Randy Marchand, Paul Schmidtbauer, and Cindy Vannurden

**Guests:** Randy Marchand and Paul Schmidtbauer from the Pantowner's Car Club were present to request use of the Fairgrounds for their car show for the next two years. The dates would be August 15 – 17, 2025 and August 14 – 16, 2026. If the dates are acceptable to us, the contracts could be drawn up later. They were thanked for attending and were told we would get back to them.

**Guest:** Justin Hackett from the Benton County 4-H Livestock Committee. He initiated discussion regarding what the official time is for closing the barns during the fair. He stated the barns are fairly empty by 9:00pm, and the families would like to be able to leave for the night so they would like to close the barns by that time. There was discussion that it used to be 10:00pm, and then changed to the current 9:30pm. There was a long discussion regarding Tuesday and Wednesday being very busy days, load-out times and not wanting a half-empty barn. There was also discussion regarding the number of cows and calves and how to arrange the barns to alleviate traffic. It was agreed that these issues should be worked out with the 4-H people and the livestock committee.

**Approval of Agenda and Meeting Minutes:** Ted asked for any additional items for the agenda. Nancy asked for the 'Zone 4 Conference' to be added to New Business; Jen asked for 'new members' to be also added to New Business. Jody asked that '2 signs' be added to Policies and Procedures, 'Budget meeting date' be added to Old Business, and 'Benefit for Czech' added to New Business. Ted stated that we will also add 'Election of New Officers' to New Business. Mary made a motion to approve the updated agenda, with a second by Jody. Motion passed. The minutes of the Regular October meeting were reviewed. Ted asked for any changes or updates. Scott made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Jimmy. Motion passed.

**Treasurer's Report:** Cheryl Scapanski shared the October, 2024 Treasurer's Report. The old checking account has not yet been closed; tax payments continue to come out of this account. She has balanced the new account with the register. There has been no activity with the ATM account. Expenses to the debit card and website account are shown as well. The old savings account will be combined with the new one, and the old checking account will be closed, once the tax payments get directed to the new checking account. Jody made a motion to approve the treasurer's report, seconded by Ken. Erich questioned the term on the CD's. For the ATM CD, it is 122 days, and the other CD (\$7,210) continues to be renewed. Motion passed.

**Secretary's Report:** Jill shared the November list. The reminder for the Annual Meeting will be moved to the October list, as well as making the New Director packets. The other item is the MFCF Conference in January.



**Groundskeeper Report:** Nothing to report.

**Committee Reports:** Ted asked that as we go through each committee report, we review and update the membership on each. All directors agreed.

**4-H:** Current members are: Scott Morris and Ken Bemboom as co-chairs, and Sam Morris, Adam Scapanski, Ann Olson, Sue Janorschke, Jeanne Boyle and Nathan Oliver. Sue Janorschke will be removed. Nothing to report.

**Activity Area:** Current members are: Nancy Zupan and Karen Sakry as co-chairs, and Sam Morris and Ken Bemboom. No changes to membership. Nancy stated that she is looking into the pig races, this would cost \$1,400/day, and he wants the whole week. She is asking if we could just have them for two days, with no response yet. We would just have to find the space. It was agreed that we would not get rid off the extraction demonstrations, nor the police dog demonstration. These activities are well-attended and are good public relations.

**Ag Craft Exhibits:** Current members are: Nancy Zupan as Chairperson, with Scott Morris, Karen Sakry, Rhoda Fagerland and Mary Ostby. Scott asked to be taken off, but will assist with set-up. Nothing to report.

**Beer Garden:** Current members are: Jody Prom as Chairperson, with Nancy Zupan, Jennifer Dingmann, Ted Prom, and Karen Sakry. Nancy, Jennifer, and Karen Sakry asked to be taken off, and Jimmy Zanardi, Erich Rothstein, and Troy Theisen will be added. Nothing to report.

**Beer Garden Stage:** Current members are: Jody Prom as chairperson, with Jennifer Dingmann. Jen asked to be taken off, and Jimmy Zanardi and Erich Rothstein will be added. Nothing to report.

**Buildings and Grounds:** Current members are: Ken Bemboom and Scott Morris as co-chairs, with all Directors as members. Steve Ellson will be added. Scott indicated that the soffit on the beer garden stage has been fixed, and Ken stated the curbs are pegged down. A water leak had been found and fixed, and then another leak was found and fixed. The holes should be filled in with reclaimed scrap.

**Discovery Building.** Current members are Sam Morris as chairperson, with Jody Prom and Scott Morris. Jody asked to be removed. Nothing to report.

**FFA:** Current members are Scott Morris as chairperson, with Karen Sakry, Heidi Anderson, Sam Morris, Al Stemper, Tori Kieser, and Nathan Goldade. Tori Kieser will be removed, and Matt Frechik and Brian Pozorski will be added. Scott had spoken with Heidi, and progress is slow but they continue to move forward with the building plans making certain that all codes are followed. There was discussion regarding the Ag Trailer and if we had filed for grants through the fair board. Mary will look into doing this again. Scott indicated that the Royalton FFA Alumni would like to do the kids' pedal pull next year. We would just need to cover trophies. Scott made a motion, seconded by Adam to pay expenses for the Royalton FFA alumni to hold a kids' tractor pedal pull, with a donation to be determined. Mary asked that we get a signed contract, and Nancy will need to get Scott a list of the trophies needed. Nancy stated that the group from last year that will be contacted to do another pedal pull on a different day. Motion passed.

**Finance:** Current members are: Ted Prom as chairperson, with William and Donna Landwehr, Nancy Zupan, Jennifer Dingmann, and Mary Ostby. Jennifer asked to be removed, and Cheryl Scapanski will be added. A motion was made by Scott to keep Bill and Donna in the finance room, seconded by Rod. Vince questioned why they needed to be listed, since they are only here during the fair to count money. They also help with policies and procedures related to finance. Motion passed.



**Food Vendors:** Current members are: Jimmy Zanardi as chairperson with Jody Prom. Erich Rothstein asked to be added. Jimmy stated that he has new vendor requests coming in. He noted that Energy Bowls has their truck for sale, so they will not be back next year. Jimmy also stated that he is planning to get the food contract on the website, as well as other necessary documents. Jen indicated that she is planning on starting with the food vendors and then adding other vendor areas as well to the website. She will be able to set it up so that Jill will receive an email notification of a vendor request to be a vendor. Jill will then be able to forward to the Director for approval. We can then work out payment options later, perhaps with a QuickBooks invoice.

**Grants:** Current members are: Mary Ostby as chairperson with Nancy Zupan. No changes to membership. Mary indicated that she is processing last years' grants, which totals \$10,800. The 2025 grants should be out soon, and the question was raised if she could look into a legacy grant through MN Arts for the gas blowers. This had been a hit in the past. Scott asked about FFA barn grants, and Mary is still looking.

**Grandstand:** Current members are: Jennifer Dingmann and Vince Thiel as co-chairs, with Bryan Carstensen, James Trantina and Matt Prom. Bryan Carstensen will be removed; and Rod Bemboom will be added. Jen stated that the sled guy is not available on Thursday and Friday. Vince found another one for those days. There was discussion regarding the schedule for grandstand events. Jen and Vince are looking at having the draft horses to Tuesday, and then bring the demolition derby back to Wednesday, the truck and tractor pulls on Thursday and Friday, demolition derby back to Saturday, and looking at auto cross or a rodeo on Sunday. Vince discussed the sled guy and his commitment to another event before our fair. The cost for each sled is about the same. There will be no monster trucks this year. Brian asked about the direction for the truck and tractor pulls. We need to keep it this way for safety reasons. Nancy made a motion to approve the schedule discussed, seconded by Ken. Motion passed; Rod opposed. Vince also discussed the speaker system and how to move forward. Jen received a quote on this, and they will get feedback from Bill. Using ladders to take down speakers is a safety risk. A new system could stay in place and be used year-round.

**Guest/Host Relations:** Current members are Nancy Zupan as chairperson, with Karen Sakry, Jody Prom, and Sam Morris. Jody Prom asked to be removed from the committee. Nothing to report.

**Heritage Square:** Current members are: Nancy Zupan as chairperson, with Karen Sakry, and Mary Ostby. Bob Skuza asked to be added. Nothing to report.

**Insurance:** Current members are: Mary Ostby as chairperson, with Jennifer Dingmann and Ted Prom. Jennifer Dingmann asked to be removed; Jill Zanardi will be added as the new chairperson, Mary Ostby remaining on the committee. Nothing to report.

**Livestock/Poultry:** Current members are: Sam Morris and Adam Scapanski as co-chairs, with Ken Bemboom, Marilyn Kaschmitter and Scott Morris. Rod Bemboom and Cheryl Scapanski asked to be added. Discussion continued from above regarding hours/operation of the barns as presented by Justin Hackett. It was stated that the families choose to stay with the animals until close, but they are not required to. Ted indicated that the committee should meet with them for continued discussion.

**Marketing/Advertising:** Current members are: Jody Prom as the chairperson, with Jennifer Dingmann and Mary Ostby. Eric Rothstein asked to be added. Nothing to report for Advertising nor social media.

**Social media/Website:** Current members are: Jennifer Dingmann as chairperson with Jody Prom. Jody will be removed from the group; Erich Rothstein and Mary Ostby to be added. As stated previously, Jen is working on getting the Food Vendor contract on the website. Jen indicated that if we pay Sapphire on an annual basis, we will save \$180. They should be sending an invoice after December 1<sup>st</sup>. Jimmy made a motion to pay Sapphire annually, seconded by Jennifer. Motion passed.



**Midway:** Current members are: Ted Prom as chairperson, with Jody Prom, Jennifer Dingmann and Mary Ostby. Jennifer asked to be removed, and Jimmy will join. Ted will meet with Randy regarding the 2025 Fair.

**Military:** Current members are: Karen Sakry as chairperson, with Sam Morris, Nancy Zupan, Tom Tauber and Scott Morris. No changes to membership at this time. Karen stated that we received a check for the third quarter meat raffles for \$555.00. There is a meat raffle on Friday; help is needed.

**Off-Season Rentals:** Since this is a rather small committee with limited occurrence, Jody recommended that this committee be disbanded and that it become a subcommittee of Buildings and Grounds. All Directors agreed. There was discussion regarding the request by the Pantowner's Car Club to return for the next two years. There was discussion regarding use of the office space and the possibility of using the VIP shack. Ted also indicated that we have talked about expanding the office space as well. Those decisions do not need to be made tonight; we just need to approve the dates and write up the contracts later. Scott made a motion to approve the dates for 2025 and 2026, seconded by Ken. Motion passed. Nancy abstained; Jody opposed. The fees/contract are tabled until the December meeting.

**Parking:** Current members are: Adam Scapanski and Sam Morris as co-chairs, with Rod Bemboom and Nancy Zupan. Rod will be the new chairperson, with members staying the same. Nothing to report.

**Policies and Procedures.** Current members are: Jody Prom as Chairperson, with all directors as members. Jill Zanardi will be added as co-chair with Jody. Nothing to report.

**Premium Book:** Current members are: Karen Sakry and Nancy Zupan as co-chairs, with Rhoda Fagerland, Jennifer Dingmann, Sam Morris, and Adam Scapanski. Jennifer asked to be removed, and Jill Zanardi will be added. Nothing to report.

**Sanitation:** Current members are: Nancy Zupan as chairperson, with all directors as members. Nancy asked to be removed; Jimmy will chair the committee now. Jody stated that the bill from Republic Services has been resolved. Rod stated for Nelson Sanitation, the bill will be \$5472, the same as last year.

**Security:** Current members are: Jody Prom as chairperson, with Ted Prom, Perry Beise, Troy Heck, Scott Morris and Vince Thiel. Jimmy asked to be added to this committee. Jody stated that there have been security issues lately with a homeless person who created a make-shift spot to stay, syringes found on site, and him plugging an item into Steve's vehicle without permission. The police were notified and will continue to monitor the grounds. Jody stated that the Sauk Rapids Police used the fairgrounds for training purposes recently. We were not contacted for this, and there was discussion regarding potential liability issues. It was agreed that we should be contacted prior to holding any activities on grounds. Jody will follow-up with them. Jimmy stated that he had met with Chad regarding cameras in that they do not read license plates, which we had been under the impression they would. It was agreed that there should be a camera that can read a license plate near the front entrance. Jody made a motion to obtain a license plate reading camera for the front gate, seconded by Ken. Motion passed. Jimmy will follow-up with Chad. Jimmy also stated that Jill returned unnecessary routers and modems to Charter Spectrum. The account in the Beer Gardens has been placed on hold. There is equipment in the Discovery Building that needs to be returned as well.

**Sponsorship:** Current members are: Nancy Zupan with Jennifer Dingmann. No changes to membership. Nothing to report

**Sports Arena East:** Current members are: Ted Prom as chairperson, with Mary Ostby, Ken Bemboom, Vince Thiel and Nancy Zupan. Vince will take over as chairperson, and Bob Skuza will be added. Vince stated that a meeting was held with representatives from SAE. He felt it was a good meeting. SAE runs basically with no



funds; the Lumberjacks and Youth Hockey pay to support costs. They discussed dry events as well as clarification of the '5 acres' that is part of their contract. Parking continues to be a big concern. They still want to park on the midway; this is not an option at this time because of the way they plow in the winter and the new tar. They also voice safety concerns with walking behind the SAE with minimal lighting, as well as where they would plow the snow to. Ken stated that we could have the necessary lights on for them, and they stated they would pay for this; we could bill them monthly. There was also discussion regarding the bill we had received from the SAE from fair week. Members from the Lumberjacks had not seen this bill, and there was discussion regarding the \$30/hour charge and the 'monthly demand' charges. They will go over this bill and get back to us. Jimmy indicated that the students from the Vo-Tech have finished their survey of the grounds and are in the process of completing their report. Adam asked about how much space they need for parking, especially for large tournaments. Jimmy made a motion to have SAE park in the pit area and make a second walkway through the fence, seconded by Ken. Jody asked about any damages to the grounds. Jimmy amended his motion to include that they are responsible to fix any damages to the fence or landscaping. Motion passed. Vince will contact them to ask that they pick up any garbage after their events.

**Vendors:** Current members are: Nancy Zupan as chairperson, with Mary Ostby, Jody Prom and Jimmy Zanardi. Erich Rothstein will be added to the group. Nothing to report.

**Winter Storage:** Current members are: Jody Prom as chairperson, with Ted Prom, Ken Bemboom, Scott Morris and Jimmy Zanardi. Jill Zanardi will be added as a co-chair, and Bob Skuza will also be added. There was discussion regarding winter storage by Directors. It was agreed that each director can store one item for free.

**Other:** None

#### **Old Business:**

January Conference: The conference will be held January 16 – 19 in Bloomington. Jill asked for confirmation of who will be attending. The following are planning on going: Jody and Ted, Jimmy and Jill, Jen, Nancy, Erich and Rhoda and Larry. Jill will make the room reservations, with one extra room that can be cancelled if it is not needed. She will also get the registrations done.

Budget meeting. We need to set a budget meeting. It will be held on December 3<sup>rd</sup> at 5:00pm in the office.

#### **New Business:**

1402 Inspection. Ted stated that the house failed the initial inspection, but passed on the follow-up inspection. There was discussion regarding the increased clutter and we should check next year to see that there is continued improvement. Scott indicated that the construction looks good; they had been approved for up to \$5,000 and the bill came to \$4900.

Martech/Computer. We received word that Martech is going away; we hope to see something new at convention. The old computer will not hook up to Wi-Fi and is very slow. With black Friday coming, we could get a good deal on one. Jen made a motion to buy a new computer, up to \$500, seconded by Scott. Motion passed.

Zone 4 Conference. Nancy stated that the Zone 4 IAFE conference will be held February 23 – 25, 2025 at the St Cloud Holiday Inn.

New Members. Jen shared an application for BCAS from Ashley Willenbring. Jen made a motion to approve her application, seconded by Jimmy. Motion passed.

Benefit for Czech. Jody stated that there is a benefit for the wife of one of her beer tenders coming up. They are looking for baked goods and silent auction items. Jen made a motion to approved up to \$200 for Jody to put together a basket for the silent auction, seconded by Scott. Motion passed.

Election of Officers. Ted asked for any discussion on the election of officers. Scott made a motion, seconded by Jimmy, to keep the same officers for another year. Ted indicated that he would continue to serve as President, as long as complaints, concerns, and issues be brought to the Executive Committee, and

not him alone. Mary accepted the nomination to continue as Treasurer, and Ken accepted the nomination as Vice-President. Motion passed; Jody opposed.

**Other:** Jimmy asked about scheduling the Annual Meeting and if it had to be on a Tuesday. Jill will start looking for options. Ted stated that Larry Mohs passed away; he had been involved in the fair for years, and his son, David, continues to manage ticket sales for the Midway. Kenny Beehler's dad also passed away, and his funeral is tomorrow. Jody will take care of getting a memorial for him.

**Next Meeting:** The next regular meeting of the Benton County Ag Society Board of Directors will be held on Tuesday, December 17, 2024, at 6:00pm the Fair board Office.

**Adjournment:** Adam made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Sam. The meeting adjourned at 10:35pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Zanardi  
Executive Secretary



Benton County Agriculture Society  
P O Box 118  
Sauk Rapids MN 56379  
(320) 253-5649

Regular Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, December 17, 2024; 7:00pm  
Benton County Fairgrounds

The December meeting of the Benton County Agricultural Society was held on Tuesday, December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024, and was called to order at 7:03pm by Ted Prom, President.

**Present:** Ted Prom, President; Ken Bemboom, Vice President; Jill Zanardi, Executive Secretary; Mary Ostby, Treasurer; Erich Rothstein, Scott Morris, Vince Thiel, Nancy Zupan, Cheryl Scapanski and Jimmy Zanardi (via phone), Jody Prom and Sam Morris

**Absent:** Jen Dingmann, Rod Bemboom, James Trantina, Karen Sakry and Adam Scapanski

**Guest:** Bob Skuza

**Committee Reports:** With no quorum initially present, President, Ted Prom, started the meeting with Committee Update Reports.

**4-H:** Ken initially stated the budget for ribbons should be \$2,141. Scott added that Ann wanted to increase this budget since there has been an increase in the number of kids joining 4-H. Nancy stated that Hodges is offering a discount if orders are placed by February. Ann hopes that the budget can be increased by \$400 or \$500. There was discussion regarding the bill from Summit for the Hood in the 4-H building. It looks like we paid for it. Ted has a call into Summit. When confirmed, we will have 4-H pay back to BCAS.

**Activity Area:** Nancy indicated that she has started putting things together. She discussed pony rides; there is no room to store ponies for the whole week. Joah's Ark will be there with ponies on Thursday. For Friday, she is looking at a puppet show and a magician. Bubbles will return on Saturday, since it was such a huge hit in 2024. Nothing is firm yet for Sunday. Ted asked the question if we could add a whiteboard in the boardroom to identify the schedules for the Activity Area. Nancy responded that she did not want to do this. She has the information printed out and provides it to all directors, and she feels this is sufficient. Ted attempted to explain why this would help with communication; however, Nancy became very upset, started yelling at him and would not let him finish a sentence. At this point, Ken was asked to assume the role as Chairperson for the remainder of the meeting.

Jody Prom arrived at this point and quorum was obtained; the agenda was followed.

**Approval of Agenda and Meeting Minutes:** Ken asked for any additions to the agenda for the meeting. Jody asked for 'Security incident at Front Gate'. Mary asked for 'Car Show' be added to old business. Scott made a motion to approve the amended agenda, seconded by Mary. Motion passed. Ken asked for any additions or changes to the minutes from the November meeting. Mary made a motion to approve the minutes from the November 19<sup>th</sup> meeting, seconded by Scott. Motion passed.

**Treasurer's Report:** Cheryl reviewed the November, 2024, Treasurer's Report. All of the accounts were reviewed, as well as expenses paid. Mary added that the Website account still has a balance of over \$40,000, and that it had been previously discussed to bring that balance back down to a \$2,500 starting point for 2025. It was also stated that they are cancelling subscription to QuickBooks and moving to Quicken, and then the old checking account will be eliminated. Mary made a motion to transfer all the

money in the Website account, except for \$3,500. This amount will allow for quarterly payments. Motion was seconded by Nancy. Motion passed. Mary made a motion to approve the November 2024, Treasurer's Report, seconded by Nancy. Motion passed.

**Secretary's Report:** Jill reviewed the listing for December reminders. All items have been completed or are in process of being finalized. Jill initiated discussion regarding the MFCF Convention in January. We need to confirm attendees. There was discussion regarding building superintendents being allowed to participate. It was agreed that those who do attend should be encouraged to report back to the Board on what they learned and what could be implemented at the Benton County Fair. There was discussion regarding who has attended in the past. Scott made a motion that whoever attends a convention should come back to the board and report on what they learned, seconded by Jody. Motion passed. Nancy opposed. Mary questioned if this was just for directors, or does this include superintendents, and do we need to define this. This is considered a justifiable expense, so anyone with an interest should be able to come to the board to state their interest and expectations.

**Groundskeeper Report:** Nothing to report.

**Remaining Committee Reports:**

**Ag Craft Exhibits:** Nothing to report.

**Beer Garden:** Nothing to report.

**Beer Garden Stage:** Nothing to report.

**Buildings and Grounds** (includes Off-Season Rentals): Ted indicated that a donated bench has arrived; it needs to be put together. Ken stated that we need new heavy straps for the tent. He will look into getting them.

**Discovery Building.** Nothing to report.

**FFA:** Nothing to report.

**Finance:** Nothing to report.

**Food Vendors:** Nothing to report.

**Grants:** Nothing to report.

**Grandstand:** Vince stated that the skid is locked in for the truck pull on Thursday and the tractor pull on Friday. The demolition derby's will be held on Wednesday and Saturday. He and Jen are still considering draft horses for Tuesday and a possible rodeo for Sunday. He is looking forward to the convention to see what else may be available for Tuesday and Sunday.

**Guest/Host Relations:** Nothing to report.

**Heritage Square:** Nancy stated that the Cottonwood stage is full for the whole week. She will be getting the contracts sent out. Brady will be coordinating the talent show again this year.



**Insurance:** Nothing to report.

**Livestock/Poultry:** The Livestock/poultry committee will be meeting with 4-H regarding hours.

**Marketing/Advertising:** Nothing to report.

**Social Media/Website:** Nothing to report.

**Midway:** Nothing to report.

**Military:**

Meat Raffle, 12/20/2024. Nancy stated there is a meat raffle on Friday, December 20<sup>th</sup> at Rollies. She asked for help with anyone who could attend.

**Parking:** Nothing to report.

**Policies and Procedures.** Nothing to report.

**Premium Book:** Nothing to report.

**Sanitation:** Nothing to report.

**Security:**

Incident at Front Gate. Jody discussed the incident where a Lumberjack hockey player ran into the pole at the front gate and bent it. She has talked with him and his parents. We need to get a couple of quotes to them as they would prefer to pay, rather than utilize insurance. Jody will follow-up on this.

**Sponsorship:** Nothing to report

**Sports Arena East:** Vince shared that he believes they are making progress, although they did not like that they cannot park on the Midway. There was confusion that they understood from us that they must use a loader, which was incorrect. Jason was going to attend the meeting tonight to plead for use of the Midway. They are now asking for additional space that is blocked off in front of the Midway for larger events. Vince stated that Barry said that we should get a look at their financials, and Jason agreed that we should review the contract and get things tightened up. There was a lengthy discussion regarding parking, utilization of Barry's time and skills, as well as who would police the area to make sure they stay within boundaries. Vince believes we are heading in the right direction. At this time, the Board would like parking to stay as it is now. Vince will let them know.

**Vendors:** Nothing to report.

**Winter Storage:** Jill provided the updated numbers, that included items dropped off in November and December. There are a total of 202 items stored, with \$42,563 brought in.

**Other:** None

**Old Business:**

Budget, 2025. Mary shared the updated spreadsheets for project expenses and income for 2025. There are several areas that are indicated in yellow that need to be addressed and updated. When the projected numbers were reviewed and discussed by the Executive Committee, some numbers were changed and Mary explained how the budget should work. The bills that were paid after 9/30/2024 should not be included in projected budget numbers for 2025. Ken indicated that the Executive Committee spent four hours working on this, and any additional input at this time. Jody clarified that the requested \$2,000 for improvements to the beer garden are to update the seals on coolers. We are still waiting for the reimbursement from the State for premiums paid out. The grant amounts were missing, and Mary updated and explained these. The rebate from Xcel for the bulb replacement project will be \$13,384.29, which is lower than anticipated due to use of high wattage bulbs. There was discussion on sales tax, which we don't pay, and how it is credited to us. There was discussion on parking for the Pantowner's Car Show at the rental property. We are liable for that property, and there should be no parking without our consent. Jill was asked to draft a letter to the renters regarding this. Nancy made a motion to increase the budget for the 4-H ribbons for up to \$2,500 and \$10,000 for water/sewer, seconded by Scott. Motion passed.

Car Show. This was tabled from the November meeting. The Pantowners want to lock in dates for 2025 and 2026. For 2026, this will land one week after the fair ends. There are concerns with the grounds being ready, as well as use of the office space, since we will still be finalizing things. Scott made a motion to approve the dates for 2025 which is August 15 to 17, and for 2026, which is August 14 to 16 for the Car Show, with specific details on space to be used to be worked out. This was seconded by Mary. Motion passed. Nancy abstained.

#### **New Business:**

Membership Application. Jill shared that we have received an application to join the BCAS by Beverly Mendel. She is Cheryl's sister. Nancy made a motion to approve the membership, seconded by Vince. Motion passed.

IAFE Convention. Nancy shared that there was a Zoom meeting regarding the upcoming convention. Each County will do a "Rocketship" themed centerpiece. There will be more information coming. Jill shared that she had neglected to forward the information about this. Another Zoom meeting will be held in January; Jill will forward the email to all Directors.

#### **Other:**

Committee Assignments. There were a few minor changes made to the committee listing. Jill will update the list and forward to all Directors.

SBDC. Ken likes the idea of getting assistance from Barry with the SBDC. There was discussion regarding what he could possibly look at. Jimmy asked that he be asked to draw something up for us to look at for the areas that he would like to focus on. Vince will let Barry know.

Board. Ted stated that something needs to change with the board. He apologized for his behavior and harsh words. There was a brief discussion with no specific resolution.

**Next Meeting:** The next regular meeting of the Benton County Ag Society Board of Directors will be held on Tuesday, January 21, 2025, at 7:00pm the Fair board Office.

**Adjournment:** Vince made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Scott. The meeting adjourned at 9:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Zanardi  
Executive Secretary