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PENNSYLVANIA STATE ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY FAIRS

MINUTES

FALL MEETING

October 12, 2023 – 11AM

SUNSET WEST RESTAURANT, PA

Martha Ebersole called the meeting to order. Kevin Bieber led the Pledge of Allegiance and Karen Dobson offered prayer. Roll Call - present were Kevin Bieber, Dan Dickey, Roger Dirlam, Karen Dobson, Martha Ebersole, Bev Gruber, Ben Haagen, Judy Kmetz, Dr. Mike Kowalewski, Craig Lash, Shirley McIntire, Jeanne Miller, Sally Nolt, Charles Nutaitis, Jim Reed, Harry Reffner, Debbie Stephenson, Jeff Walason, David Wilcox. Absent David Cowden, Tony Frazier, Joe Irons, Jana Mellott, Dr. David Reese and Sam Zaffuto. Honorary members; Sherman Allen, Byron Glessner, Bruce Koppenhaver, and George Witherite. Members at Large – Tracy Barone and Jenny Groff from the Department of Ag, Gala Higinbotham Assoc. Rep., and Kerry Lange from Milliron. Guest from PSSA Jimmy Houghton and Lloyd Serfass.

MINUTES OF SPRING MEETING – Harry Reffner

Minutes of the meeting was posted on the website. Shirley McIntire was not present. Roger Dirlam made the motion to accept the minutes from the Spring Meeting as corrected, 2nd by Bev Gruber, carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT – Harry Reffner

Treasurer's Report Fall Board Meeting

Referring to Balance Sheet

Our balance at the end of 2022 was \$296,000 compared to our current of \$298,000. There is some additional income to come in and some expenses to go out, which will both be reflected in next year's financial. To balance the budget a transfer of \$54,800 was assigned, however it was necessary to transfer only \$35,000. All Fair dues were received totaling \$46,000. Associate dues were \$11,700.

Scholarship Register

The 6 scholarships were distributed. The spouse program transfer has recovered from the COVID decline and contributed \$5,932 to the account, which covers the 6 scholarships. With donations from Zone 1 (\$1,147) and two Fairs the balance in the account is \$29,000. A question was asked from a director as to the balance, our bylaws require that the account retains 2 years of scholarship or \$12,000, which leaves a balance of \$17,000. There was discussion in the past of possibility increasing the number of scholarships or a special scholarship. This however, would be a determination by the Scholarship committee and a motion to the full board.

Savings Account

You will see withdrawals of \$40,000 earlier in the year to the general account. Our CD had matured and I transferred it to the savings account, you can see the \$34,133 deposit on the register. I also transferred \$35,000 from the Convention account to savings.

YPI Account

Through Maria's effort with donations and raffles the account has grown.

Referring to the General Account Income & Expense Budget vs Actual

Our expenses are over budget by \$1,400, however there is an outstanding income of \$5,000 coming from Penn Ag Industries for the 2023 Angel Food baking contest. An email received Tuesday indicates they will be paying both 2023 and 2024 in the next few weeks.

I have spoken with Kevin regarding the bank closures and with the associations accounts over the FDIC insured limit of \$250,000.00. Establishing bank account has become quite involved as opposed to a few years ago. As you see by the balance sheet I now have \$300,000 at the bank and with Convention that amount will increase to over \$400,000. To transfer funds to another bank I need to have in our minutes the motion to allow me to establish an account, in addition I would require the co-signers named, suggesting myself, Martha, and Craig. If there are no questions, could I have that motion? Kevin Bieber motion that a new account be established with Harry's choice of banking intuitions, Jim Reed seconded motion carried.

Thank you. I have given you highlights of our financial status, but will gladly respond to any questions you may have.

2023 Fall Association Update

Directors

John Blaney – slow progress, leaves home only for Doctor's appointment, Hazel and aide assists him

Dr. Reese – Standing problems, has been attempting to get appointment with Doctors he was successful and has 3 appointments today

David Cowden – Health issue and Doctors are attempting to find the problem

Joe Iron - Health problem

John McMullen – was in hospital with pneumonia, home now

Martha's husband Ray health issue, but has been found and will be on the road to recovery.

There may be others that I am not aware of.

We want to keep them in our prayers.

Fairs

I have mailed out the information sheet for the 2024 Fair Directory.

With the departure of Senators and House members this past year, Milliron has been assigned the task of reorganizing a legislative Fair caucus. Representative Leadbeter (R-Columbia) has agreed to be a co-chair. They are looking at Senator Culver (Bloomsburg Fair) and Senator Miller (Allentown Fair) as the co-chairs. Kerry may have some remarks concerning the Caucus. We all recall their effort with Senator Michelle Brooks who through her senate bill enabled our Fairs to obtain funding for the COVID year.

Associates

We are approaching 200 associates which have been steadily increasing. Due notices were sent out earlier this month.

Convention

Convention packets were mailed to our Associates earlier this month. I will be distributing to the Fairs at the zone meetings.

Registrations have started to come in from Associates, Queens and the Fairs.

Showcase invitations were sent out in September, Galla will be giving an update.

IRS problems continue, I have enlisted Senator Robert Casey to unravel the confusion with the department. Some fairs have contacted me they too are having 990 filing problems. Prior to COVID there was a delay in responses from them but now it has become unreasonable.

PA SHOWMEN'S ASSOCIATION – JIMMY HOUGHTON, LLOYD SERFASS

Long wet/dry season, putting away equipment. Judy thanked Jimmy for help at the Luzerne disaster, entire Houghton family. Lloyd fairs struggling to keep members on board. Help wanted everywhere in carnivals also. Not a lot of carnivals left. Team effort will help.

ASSOCIATES REPRESENTATIVE – GALLA HIGINBOTHAM

What to do to high light the trade show. Trade show sizzle on website, there was not a lot to show new prospects. Associates invitation were postal mailed in the past this year both postal and email were sent out. Working with Maria on a poster to join PSACF. Applicants for the showcase will be reviewed with John McMullin and Ben Haagen.

REPORT FROM LEGISLATIVE CONSULTANT – Kerry Lange see separate report

At the Spring meeting Kevin Bieber had made a motion to invite the Harness people to Thursday banquet and present them a plaque, Jana Mellott 2nd, motion carried. Discussions through the year it was thought that with a number of new people on the commission it may not be advantageous to invite them this early. Kevin then rescinded the motion.

PA DEPT. OF AG. – Tracy Barone

Committee Reports

Budget – Kevin Bieber

Harry presented a revised contract with Milliron and Goodman increasing their monthly rate effective July 1st from \$35,199.96 annually to \$39,000.00. Discussion with Martha, Craig and myself we chose to pay the increase until this board meeting. The budget being presented reflects the increase. Discussion followed with conscientious that they are doing a fine job for us and to find another with their history of Fairs will be trying. Roger Dirlam motioned to continues with Milliron and 2nd by Ben Haagen motion carried.

Kevin then presented the 2023 – 2024 budget, Roger Dirlam motioned to approve the budget, 2nd by Ben Haagen motion carried.

By Laws – Roger Dirlam

Reviewing possible presentation at April meeting.

Auditing – Kevin Bieber

Thursday at Convention

Animal Health – See Tracy's report

Baking Report – Karen Dobson - See separate report

Fair Person – Bruce Koppenhaver

Web has been updated. Included in Convention packet, will remind at the Zone Meetings.

Junior Fair Person – Ben Haagen

Zoom meeting very helpful.

Zone Meeting Review – Martha Ebersole

On top of, please let us know we are a team.

Spouse – Jeanne Miller

With a healthy balance in the Scholarship fund, this year's profit will go to the general fund.

Communications – Martha Ebersole

On web and being distributed in the convention packet.

Rooms – Sally Nolt

Book as soon as possible, book by end of the month.

Seminars/Table Topics – Kevin Bieber

This weekend will be working on table topics and the moderators. Working on seminars. Many suggestions for table topics/seminars struggle to select. Bruce need 5 or 6 foot screens. Bring up at zone meeting.

Showcase – Galla Higinbotham

Several have come in, deadline is October 25th.

Msgr Scholarship – Sally Nolt

16 applicants. 6 have been selected. There was a 7th that was .02 percent away from the 6th. Due to the balance of the Scholarship fund, Sally motioned that we award a 7th this year, 2nd by Bev, motion carried.

Fair Reimbursements – Debbie Stephenson

Discussion as to purpose of this committee, Karen Dobson motioned to remove the committee, 2nd by Roger Dirlam, motioned carried.

Queen – Karen Dobson

See separate report.

Sponsorship – Debbie Stephenson

Added new sponsor West Group. Researching more.

Tourism – Bev Gruber

This group meets for times a year, twice in person and twice by zoom, I attended the meeting in Harrisburg in the Spring and was on the zoom in July. I feel that it is very important that we keep the firs as part of the tourism scene. We know how important we are but we need to keep everyone else informed. Did anyone read the article in last week's Lancaster Farming that Russel Redding wrote? One of the best articles I have seen recently. He talks about the Friends of the Fir, talks about 3 specific winners and then the importance of firs to tourism in PA. The next meeting is the last week of Oct. I cannot attend but Sally may possibility be able to go.

Council of Farm Orgs – Bev Gruber

I attended the meeting held at Ag Progress. They had a very interesting program on workplace conditions and the hiring of workers. The next meeting is Dec. 4 in Harrisburg at the PA Dept of Ag. The orange book with the names of all the Ag organizations will be on line by November 15th. The new executive secretary is Lizzie Bailey. She is doing a good job, and is doing a monthly newsletter. She pointed out our newsletter has the incorrect date for Cornucopia.

PA Farm Show – Kevin Bieber

4 ½ hours phone conference.

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New Business

Future meetings Zoom or in person.

Social aspect to meet in person more than \$. Have attendees pay for their meals. Zoom goes by the way side. Kevin – Financially we are in good shape. But I am seeing a slow decline in our balance sheet. Trying to look to the future where can we cut for future generations. Betterment of organization here or zoom I will attend. Roger made the motion to stay in person 2 times a year, Shirley 2nd the motion, carried. State board meeting 1 week earlier, Harry explained was running into last week of month and Halloween. Bev motion to let the executive committee to set the meeting dates. Discussion as to have 2 weeks between board and zone meetings. Sally motioned to let dates stay as they are, 2nd by Roger, carried.

Queens will be doing a scrap book at Convention. They will be judged as people's choice, will have a gift for 1st and 2nd places. Money collected will go to the Queen Program.

2024 Convention Theme

Pennsylvania Fairs: Flourishing with Opportunity Rooted in Agriculture

Kevin asked if Pennsylvania would be interested in hosting the IAFE zone meeting 2027- 2028, directors were in favor. Karen motioned to check for dates on hold and future IAFE zone meetings, Jim Reed 2nd, carried.

Good of the Association

Shirley stated that the PA Fair Funding meeting had a full house and was the best meeting that she had attended.

Roger motioned for adjournment, 2nd by David Wilcox, adjournment at 2:06.

Respectfully submitted



Harry Reffner
Exec Secretary/Treasurer