

Fair Board MINUTES

Monday, February 9, 2026

7:00 p.m.

Fair Board Members: Kyleene Anderson, Lindsay Baneck, Tracy Brandel, Joy Brattlie, Kevin Doherty, Kerry Furlong, Robert Ganzow, Brad Gefvert, Angie Greving, Matt Hanson, Kassidy Hege, Danielle Latsch, Ryan Isaacsen, Carie Pellmann, Heather Reu, Emma Statz, Justin Thom, Dave Zimmerman

1) Call to Order: Isaacsen called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

2) Roll Call: Present: Doherty, Zimmerman, Brattlie, Baneck, Furlong, Isaacsen, Ganzow, Statz, Hanson, Brandel, Reu, Thom, Pellmann, Latsch, Hege, Anderson Online: Greving Also Present: Becky Roberts, Sammy Garvey, Ed Bielinski

3) Certification of Compliance with Open Meetings Law

The meeting was certified to be in compliance with Open Meetings Law.

4) Approval of Minutes – November 4, 2025

Motion by Doherty, second by Reu, to approve the minutes of the November 4, 2025 meeting. Motion carried.

5) Public Comment: No public comments were made.

6) Residency Parameters for Junior Exhibitors – Discussion and Possible Action

A draft Youth Organization Residency Policy was presented. The policy would require participating youth organizations to have at least 50% of members residing in Jefferson County or an adjacent county, with certain exemptions. An additional exemption for officially recognized statewide organizations was proposed and approved. Motion by Furlong, second by Brattlie, to adopt the exemption. Motion carried. Motion by Brattlie, second by Baneck, to approve the residency policy as amended. Motion carried.

7) Exhibitor Ineligibility Related to Bans or Suspensions from Other Wisconsin Fairs – Discussion and Possible Action

A policy was presented stating that exhibitors banned or suspended from any Wisconsin county or state fair may be deemed ineligible to exhibit or participate in the Jefferson County Fair and/or Animal Auction. Motion by Baneck, second by Isaacsen, to adopt the policy. Vote: 15 in favor, 2 opposed. Motion carried.

8) Organizational Reports

a) Ag Education: Baneck shared several projects have been selected for the 2026 Fair, including installing QR codes in barns linking to animal information, establishing a tractor safety booth near implement displays highlighting road safety laws, and developing year-round exhibitor engagement through social media. Community Promotions has been incorporated into the Ag Education category for shared emphasis and workload. Coloring Adventure pages have been printed and distributed and will be available at Lake Mills and Whitewater Culver's beginning March 1. The Poster Contest received two entries, with voting open through February 15.

b) Animal Auction: Pellmann shared animal hauling, buyer lunch, and processors are confirmed. Additional volunteers are needed for clerking and auction day support. Planning is underway to establish point cards and thank-you cards as mandatory auction requirements beginning in 2027. A previously discussed requirement that exhibitors contact three buyers prior to the Fair will not be reinstated at this time.

c) Concessions/Vendors: Thom shared that vendor applications are open and being reviewed. Roberts added one food trailer will be located on the west side of the park near the barns and draft horse arena to serve exhibitors, rodeo attendees, and guests. She also shared that the East building will be the site for commercial vendors again. There has been interest from small implement dealers and The Corral to display at the fair for 2026.

d) Entertainment: Roberts offered a quick update on the Main Tent stage following a similar format to 2025, with more details forthcoming. Contracts for music and other entertainment are being finalized. Garvey added that Community Stage applications are being accepted, with scheduling to begin in February.

e) Ticketing & Gates: Hanson offered some updates to the group. Food Pantry Day will again be held on Thursday, offering reduced admission with a food donation (\$10 general admission and \$5 for children and seniors). In an effort to reduce pedestrian and vehicle overlap, Gate 10 will be walk-in only, with vehicles prohibited; campers and preferred parking users will enter through Gate 1. Gate 6 will be open from 6:00–8:00 a.m. and 4:00–6:00 p.m. for exhibitors unloading animal supplies and will be locked outside those times. Volunteer gate shifts will be posted online in March.

f) Fairest of the Fair: Latsch offered a reminder of the competition that was held in early January, with Megan Doherty crowned Fairest of the Fair. Planning is underway for a new event, "Teas & Tiaras," for children ages 5–10, featuring dress-up, refreshments with the Fairest, and a stage walk with a tiara. Tickets will be \$10 per child, with registration opening in March.

g) Sponsorship: Furlong shared that Sponsorship commitments are being received, and Board members and staff are tracking contributions and benefits fulfillments. Roberts added that some sponsorship is still a little slow, but that we have seen an uptick in response. Some larger sponsorship conversations are happening.

h) Marketing: Roberts reported WSLD will continue to provide in-kind radio advertising and will be the sponsor of the Community Stage again. Yard signs have been ordered and will arrive in March, with distribution beginning in April. Digital and vinyl billboard placements are in consideration and a meeting with Honeybee (digital marketing firm) is in process.

i) Parking/Trailers: Gate 10 will include a handicap parking section on gravel near the gate. Trailer parking will remain in the same locations as 2025, using the same sign-up and assignment process.

9) General Fair Updates:

Garvey offered several updates. Youth organizations must confirm participation or apply for the 2026 Fair by March 1, and all groups have been contacted. Open and Senior Quick Reference Books have been printed and distributed to libraries, community centers, and senior centers throughout the county. Fair Fun Five Pack tickets have been printed, and volunteers are needed in March (approximately 18 total hours) to assemble ticket packets for sale at Premier Banks beginning April 1. Most judges have confirmed attendance, with remaining confirmations expected yet in February. All exhibitor ribbons have been ordered, and animal awards are in progress with completion anticipated in April. Planning is also underway for the Jefferson County Homegrown Showcase, a Wednesday evening networking event for local businesses in partnership with County Chamber of Commerce offices, to be held in the entertainment tent.

10) New Business

A new part-time staff member has been hired, Megan Patch. Megan brings experience at the Waukesha County fair and event coordination to the team. Recruitment continues for a Rabbit Superintendent for 2026 and a Cultural Arts Superintendent for 2027.

11) Next Meeting

Monday, May 11, 2026

12) Adjournment

Motion by Pellmann, second by Baneck, to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sammy Garvey

Fair Coordinator