

WHA Board of Director's Meeting

Friday, January 24, 7 pm. The Lodge at Mauston

Attending: Rob Ash, Steve Merry, Rick Starck, Kelly Oleson, Liz Johnson, Shawn Prodell, BJ Jones, Caleb Ahrens, Katrina Edge, Lisa Davis

The Meeting was called to Order at 7:07 by President Rob Ash. Lisa Davis gave the Secretary's report, with the minutes of the December 2024 Board Meeting. Katrina Edge moved to approve with second by BJ Jones. Secretary's report was approved. Lisa Davis gave the Treasury/ Accounting Update report, providing the Checking, Savings, and HYFA Queen Fund balances. The completed 2024 Budget and proposed 2025 Budget were provided for discussion later in the meeting. Shawn moved to accept the Treasury/ Accounting Update report and Liz Johnson seconded. The report was approved.

Rick Starck provided the Advertising Committee report. The WHA will exhibit at the WPS Farm Show and Wisconsin Farm Technology Days. Volunteers are needed for the 2025 WPS & WFTD shows. Kevin Bennett set up and staffed the WHA booth at the Driftless Region Beef Conference (January 23-24).

For the Communications Committee there was group discussion of the Annual Meeting venue and economics of the Annual Meeting. For the 2025 Annual Meeting, the Sponsorship program helps reduce the economic impact of the meeting and provides publicity opportunity to the sponsors. Booking prices for The Lodge have increased and it is projected that the meeting room rental will be approximately \$700 higher in 2026. The Lodge is an ideal venue due to the location, layout of meeting rooms, quality, accessibility, and family atmosphere. To help moderate the meeting expenses, several ideas were discussed:

- Bringing additional sponsors into the sponsorship program, with each Board member possibly helping secure one sponsor in the future
- Royalty Program paying \$100-150 to help with meeting room rental fees
- WJHA paying for their meeting room rental fees
- Negotiating a lower rental contract fee

Kelly Oleson moved to have the Annual Meeting stay at The Lodge for 2026 & 2027, seconded by Steve Merry. Motion carried. Liz will check into the opportunity for a lower rental contract fee. Lisa will work with The Lodge on establishing the contract for 2026 & 2027, when the contract rental fee has been determined. The Board is looking forward to having the Annual Meeting at The Lodge in 2026 & 2027.

Additional discussions for Communications were on District Elections and process. It is difficult to find volunteers to serve on the Board of Directors, and the current election process needs improvement to be more clear, simple, and efficient. An Election Process Committee was formed, with Liz Johnson, Katrina Edge, Steve Merry, and Caleb Ahrens volunteering to serve on the Committee.

Discussion of the County Youth Awards Program focused on the purchase of new scotch combs for 2025 & 2026. The Board greatly appreciates the Wiechert Family's organization of the yearly program, and sending out the combs on behalf of the WHA, to the top Hereford Showmen in Showmanship Classes at the County Fairs. The Board favors continuing with the current scotch comb due to its' quality. In their Annual meeting tomorrow, the WJHA will be discussing & voting on potentially paying for 50% of the scotch combs to be purchased. BJ Jones moved to purchase 2 years of combs, pending the WJHA payment for 50% of the comb purchase price, seconded by Katrina. Motion carried. Further discussion of the program included the question of if a deadline can be set for the recipients to return postcards by a certain date (November 1?), to potentially help with efficiency of mailing out the combs.

Katrina Edge reported on the Feeder calf sales. 1300 calves sold at the Carthage sale and feeder calf prices are strong.

There was Group discussion for the Finance Committee report. The group reviewed the proposed 2025 Budget. Due to the significant impacts of The Wisconsin Review magazine on the budget, BJ Jones moved to table the Budget discussion until after The Wisconsin Review magazine was discussed. Liz Johnson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Steve Merry reported on The Wisconsin Review and The Directory. Steve had obtained quotes on the Directory, and printing prices were quoted as similar to 2023. Steve had also obtained quotes from Jane Adolph for printing options of The Wisconsin Review magazine, potentially going back to 4 issues in 2025. The printing (and mailing) would continue to be done by Livestock Direct. The current Review magazine has a heavier cardstock cover in comparison to the interior pages. Based on the quotes provided, if the weight of the cover was the same as the interior pages (self-cover), this would offer an economic savings in printing. Caleb Ahrens moved to utilize the self-cover and go back to 4 issues for 2025, and Katrina Edge seconded. Motion carried. After discussion of The Review and the decision to resume 4 issues, the 2025 proposed Budget was reviewed, discussed, updated as needed, and approved by the Board.

Kelly Oleson reported on the Royalty program. At the time of this meeting, there is not a State Queen for 2025. The Royalty group will be discussing the program on Saturday and exploring ideas to revamp the program.

Steve Merry reported on the upcoming Spring Sale on March 1, 2025 at Fennimore Livestock. There is a good selection of cattle in the sale and it is very important to make sure the DNA testing for genetic defects is completed. There was group discussion about Ringmen for the sale and Ringmen fees.

Liz Johnson reported on the upcoming Tour on August 23, 2025. At this time it will be a Central Wisconsin Tour. Hosting farms at this time are Oleson Family Farms, Steiny's Herefords, Crooked Creek Herefords, and Pierce's Hereford Haven. There may be additional interest with farms further north, including Starck Century Farm. Liz will be working with farms to develop a schedule and details for the tour.

BJ Jones reported on the WJHA activities. Four scholarship winners will be named at the WJHA Annual meeting. The WJHA thanks the Merry's MGM Polled Herefords for providing the 2025 donation heifer. The Junior National show will be held at Louisville in 2025.

At completion of the meeting, BJ Jones moved to adjourn, seconded by Kelly Oleson. The meeting adjourned at 9:54 pm.