

Minutes of the United Suffolk Sheep Association Monthly Directors Meeting
February 12, 2024

Roll Call: Greg Ahart (President), Carol Heupel (Treasurer), Amanda Everts (Executive Secretary), Jack Blattner, Diane Russell, Bill Zwyers, Bill Fulton, John Scott, Michael Jensen, and Brenda Reau. Guests present Nancy Burton (Junior Coordinator). Directors Absent: Joe Emenheiser, Lloyd McCabe, Dennis Sorensen and Chris Auville

The meeting was called to order at 7:34 pm by President Ahart.

Agenda Approval

President Ahart asked for any additions or corrections to the agenda. Amanda Everts asked to have NAILE added under new business. Bill Zwyers made a motion to accept the agenda as modified. Brenda Reau seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the motion carried.

Secretary's Report

Amanda Everts reported that ongoing projects include: The Suffolk Source, Suffolk Event planning, and membership renewals. Membership response for the account preference updates has been limited. Registry work has slowed, normal for this time of the year. Brenda Reau moved to accept the Secretary's report. The motion was seconded by Diane Russell. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Treasurer's Report

Carol Heupel reported on the investment account. The current balance is \$249,180, up compared to one year ago. There have been no recent withdrawals. Diane Russell made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report. The motion was seconded by Bill Zwyers. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Junior Report

Nancy Burton, Junior Coordinator, reported that the All-American Junior Show reached out that the other Suffolk organization will not be covering the cost of the premiums, and will be the UJSSA's responsibility to cover all the premiums. There was a lengthy discussion. The AAJS will allow sheep registered through the other Suffolk organization to exhibit at the AAJS. The UJSSA will begin fundraising, making plans for the Suffolk Event, and will be soliciting semen donations for the AAJS fundraiser auction.

Foundation Report

Brenda Reau reported that the Foundation board met in January and approved a new program – young producers travel grant for the Suffolk Event which will award up to 4- \$750 grants. The Ewe Grant Program deadline is March 1 – offers up to 5 youth, purchasing a registered Suffolk for the first time, up to \$1000 toward the purchase of a ewe. The applicant is responsible for the first \$250 toward the purchase price. The Foundation's annual semen auction is scheduled for May 1.

Committee Reports

Budget/Business Development – Carol Heupel reported the committee met at the end of January and had an in-depth discussion on the USSA providing registry services for other breeds. Greg and Amanda will work together to draft a letter to interested parties asking about the level of interest and a bid request.

Breed Improvement – No report.

Junior- Diane Russell reported that the UJSSA seems excited about the possibilities at the Suffolk Event. The committee will meet again next week.

Education – Amanda Everts reported on Dennis Sorensen’s behalf that the committee has finished work on the new Suffolk Source documents. The committee will pause and meet in a month or so to start discussions on new projects.

Event - Brenda Reau reported that the committee met and discussed speakers, outreach, facilities, sale, and sponsorship. Updates were shared on this year’s sponsorship options, expanding to include a lower \$100 tier. The board was asked to help with sponsor outreach. The educational program will be expanded to begin Friday late morning – the program should be finalized next week.

Marketing & Outreach – Greg Ahart reported the committee met and shared ideas on projects for the upcoming year.

Bylaws - John Scott reported that the committee met last week. The committee does not recommend any amendments to the bylaws for the proposed cloning policy or to the current registry language. John asked that each board member share the top three topics to be addressed by the committee with him by email.

Hall of Fame – Amanda Everts reported on Dennis Sorensen’s behalf that all of the 2024 Suffolk Hall of Fame inductees have been notified.

Old Business

Registration of Cloned Animals – Amanda Everts discussed the cloned animal policy. The board will review and discuss at the March meeting.

Flock 54/Digital Suffolk – Amanda Everts discussed the file that was shared with the board noting each data point in Digital Suffolk and if was currently private or public. The data points from Flock 54 were discussed, Greg Ahart will send the board a definitions document to understand all the data that is evaluated through Flock 54. Amanda asked the board to review the shared list of data points and notate in the document, for each data point, if they feel it should be public or private. Amanda will share the results before the next meeting.

New Business

Suffolk Source- Amanda Everts shared a paid breeders spotlight idea. There was a brief discussion, the board agreed it should be considered for 2025 and the possibility of auctioning it along with the directory ads. The board was updated on Suffolk Source ad commitments.

GAP Designation after 94% – Brenda Reau discussed the GAP program and consideration for removal of the (GAP) designation once animals registered reach 94%. Any animals less than 94% would keep a GAP designation within the 5-generation pedigree. There was a brief discussion. Brenda Reau made a motion to send this to the Breed Improvement Committee for review. The motion was seconded by Diane Russell. All were in favor and the motion carried.

NAILE – Amanda Everts asked the board if the same procedure should be followed for open show judge selection for the 2024 NAILE. There was a brief discussion. Brenda Reau discussed previous budget conversations and the NAILE premiums. It was reported a member suggested the addition of December classes be added to the junior and open show. Greg Ahart suggested this move to a committee and asked for volunteers. Diane Russell and Bill Zwyers will work with Amanda to review these items. Jeremy Geske will be asked to help.

Denver No Slaughter – Jack Blattner discussed Denver’s no slaughter measure up for a vote fall of 2024. A major lamb processing facility will be impacted if this measure passes. There was discussion on whether the USSA should financially support educational outreach against the proposed measure. There was a brief discussion. Detailed information about the proposed measure will be discussed with the board and discussed at the March meeting.

Bill Zwyers moved to adjourn at 9:23 pm. The motion was seconded by Brenda Reau. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned.

Minutes approved 5.19.24.