

United Suffolk Sheep Association

July 14, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Roll call: President, Dennis Sorensen, Vice President, Jack Blattner, Executive Secretary, Amanda Everts and the following directors: Carol Heupel, John Baglien, Kathy Krafka Harkema, Michael Jensen, Bill Zwyers, Diane Russell, and Joe Emenheiser. Directors absent: Lloyd McCabe, Chris Auville, John Scott, and Isaac Swortzel. Others in attendance: Isaac Lewis (Junior Coordinator).

President Sorensen called the meeting to order at 7:32pm central.

Approval of Meeting Agenda

President Sorensen called for any additions or corrections to the agenda, there were none. Diane Russell made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented, the motion seconded by Michael Jensen. All were in favor, the motion carried.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

President Sorensen called for any additions or corrections to the April and May 2025 meeting minutes, there were none. Bill Zwyers made a motion to accept the meeting minutes as presented; the motion was seconded by Diane Russell. All were in favor, the motion carried.

Secretary's Report

Secretary Everts reported on registry work and current data stats. There was discussion surrounding the Suffolk Event, sale setup and challenges. Bill Zwyers made a motion to accept the Secretary's report; the motion was seconded by Diane Russell. All were in favor, the motion carried.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer, Carol Heupel reported the current investment account balance is \$252,000. There is \$23,000 in money market/cash. John Baglien moved to accept the Treasurer's report, and the motion was seconded by Diane Russell. All were in favor and the motion carried.

United Junior Suffolk Sheep Association Report

Diane Russell, Kathy Krafka Harkema, and Isaac Lewis reported on the All-American Junior Show awards, numbers, recognition event, attendee enthusiasm, and positive feedback on organization from the Suffolk Breed. There was discussion on breed character at association sponsored junior shows.

United Suffolk Sheep Foundation Report

Foundation President, Brenda Reau emailed a report to the board prior to the meeting.

Committee Reports

Budget/Business Development

Chair, Carol Heupel, reported that the committee will be meeting soon. She invited any directors to join the committee who were interested.

Breed Improvement/Education

Chair, Bill Zwyers, reported that he is waiting on the updated renderings from the artist. The committee

has some other ongoing discussions and would like to follow-up with the committee on outcomes from the board meeting to direct future committee work.

Junior

No report.

Event

Chair, Diane Russell, reported on the 2025 Suffolk Event, a summary was shared with the board prior to the meeting. There was discussion on the location of the 2026 Suffolk Event. The committee will investigate location options and invite the board to provide suggestions.

Marketing & Outreach

Chair, Kathy Krafka Harkema reported on social media presence.

Old Business

Face to Face Meeting – There was a lengthy discussion on a future face to face meeting. Bill Zwyers moved that the board have an in-person meeting in the future with a hybrid (virtual) option. John Baglien seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken – yes: John Baglien, Michael Jensen, Kathy Krafka Harkema, Diane Russell, Bill Zwyers, no: Jack Blattner and Joe Emenheiser, Motion passed. Amanda will send out an email to determine what is the best time for the meeting to be scheduled. Potential meeting topics will be compiled to create an agenda for the meeting.

Scotland Trip – Amanda Everts reported on the recent Scotland trip. There is discussion of a group from the UK visiting the USA, likely being a blended sheep/cattle tour.

New Business

Breed Character – Bill Zwyers shared concerns he has received from members regarding breed character issues at recent association sponsored shows. Bill Zwyers briefly discussed an email he shared with the board prior to the meeting, for time saving purposes, that includes some potential ideas as a starting point for the board to discuss that he can take back to the Breed Improvement committee. There was a lengthy discussion.

Suffolk Advantage Program – Amanda Everts shared a brochure from the Suffolk Sheep Society as in idea generator for intentional marketing of the Suffolk breed. Determining how to reach the audience it's intended for will be a challenge. Jack Blattner suggested the board review and due to time constraints, to be added to the next agenda.

Event/Type Conference – Bill Zwyers shared an idea on how to put the Suffolk Event together as conference so that breeders can have a booth and advertise what their flock focuses on, showcasing the diversity in the breed. To be discussed at a future time.

Director Elections – Amanda Everts reviewed timeline and outreach for the upcoming election, and which director seats are up for re-election (2 seats from each district).

John Baglien moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Bill Zwyers. All were in favor; the meeting was adjourned at 9:31pm central.

Minutes approved 8/11/25.