

MDGA Board
February 24, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Call to order The MDGA Board of Directors was called to order by President Shellie Gilbertson on Saturday, February 24. The meeting was held virtually via Zoom.

Roll Call: Shellie Gilbertson, Lexy Heldt, Kelly Hovel, Wendy Lawliss, Rustianna Mechura, Cathy Prodoehl, Cynthia Rico, Maggie Stensass, and Kirsten Zoellner.

Secretary Report: Motion by Rico to approve the report. Motion seconded by Heldt. It was approved unanimously.

The last board meeting was on January 27 at the farm of Laura Keiser. Agenda topics at the meeting included the election of officers. For 2024, Shellie Gilbertson will serve as MDGA President, Cathy Prodoehl will serve as vice president, Laura Keiser was appointed to continue service as the treasurer, and Kirsten Zoellner will continue as secretary. Other agenda topics included the National Convention, WDGA sponsorship request, and annual meeting committee appointments. The following board members will serve on the committees:

Show Committee - Shellie Gilbertson

Public Relations/Marketing Committee: Kirsten Zoellner, Wendy Lawliss

Education Committee: Rustianna Mechura, Maggie Stensass

Youth Committee: Lexy Heldt (Youth Advisor), Kelly Hovel

Organizational/Finance/Operations Committee: Cynthia Rico, Cathy Prodoehl

Development Committee: Wendy Lawliss, Kirsten Zoellner, Cathy Prodoehl

Historian: Kirsten Zoellner, Lexy Heldt

During committee discussion, the board heard updates on the state show and youth show, updates to the website and MDGA promotion through social media, Outstanding Youth, publishing and suggested revisions of Bylaws, and State Fair Production Awards. Melissa Czeck joined the meeting via phone with an update on the Minnesota Livestock Breeders Association.

Treasurer's Report: Motion to pay 2023 Outstanding Youth awards by Zoellner. Motion seconded by Heldt. It was approved unanimously. A motion to approve the report by Hovel. Motion seconded by Heldt. It was approved unanimously.

Committee Reports

- Show Committee:
 - State Show: Gilbertson discussed connecting Minnesota 4-H with the youth portion of the state show as a means of helping with promotion. It also provides a way for unrecorded does to be shown by youth. To do so, the show must have a specific number of 4-H screened volunteers. Gilbertson and Heldt are screened volunteers. Zoellner noted she and Evin Zoellner, who is volunteering with show check-in, are also screened volunteers. Jodene Heldt will present to the state on March 7.

Sanctioned forms for the show were sent and the show committee applied for a Sannen specialty. The judges' contracts are signed and the Showman app is operational. Seena Glessing is handling fundraising.

The state show proposals for 2025 and 2026 are Fillmore County, in Preston on June 7-8, 2025, and Wright County Fairgrounds, in Howard Lake on June 6-7, 2026. Only two proposals were received. The facilities will drop their fees by fifty percent if the youth show is tied to 4-H. Both locations offer savings over the show site for 2023-2024.

- Public Relations & Marketing Committee:
 - Gopher Goat Gossip: Gilbertson reminded the board that members can submit ads for GGG at no cost. There is a small fee for non-members.
 - Website: Lawliss provided an update of changes to the website. She noted that the previous board paid a subscription for added website functionality, but all functionality is through the free version. Gilbertson asked whether there was a tool to help run it better, noting it doesn't pay to spend with membership numbers down from 2023, but there may be a fix costing a small amount per month to keep it running more smoothly. Lawliss stated it was several hundred dollars per year. The board tabled the topic.
 - Social Media: Zoellner has made all board members admins for the MDGA Facebook group. If anyone wants something posted, she can be contacted with the details, mock up a post draft for review, and get it posted in the group, on the public page, and share it on any related pages. While the board took down the members-only group online, the public group and public page remain as they offer different content.
- Education Committee:
 - State Conference; With the national convention so close, Gilbertson found a site for the annual educational conference for no cost that will allow animals on-site and includes access to heated indoor classrooms, cafeteria, and greenhouse. Seena Glessing is helping to coordinate the location. Buck collection is one potential topic, which may allow for bucks to be brought on-site, and a demonstration for embryo collection. Heldt noted the site works great for the youth portion and asked whether the board was open to moving the date. Gilbertson will check into alternate dates.
- Youth Committee:
 - Events: Hedlt indicated she is looking at the option of an additional youth event outside of the state conference. Another consideration is a judging clinic with Jodene Heldt in the spring, who's already done clinics partnered with 4-H. It could incorporate youth and adult portions.

The board would need to assist in getting goats to an event for the youth. Stensass questioned whether it could be tied into the state show with a clinic on Friday. However, Heldt noted the state youth show schedule is packed full and

many come for just one day. Gilbertson noted the lack of pens this year, but there may be space in the next two years. Heldt will work on ideas and pick a few potential dates. She's willing to look into organizing a clinic at the state show.

- Organizational/Finance/Operational Committee:
 - Bylaws: Rico referenced a valid, membership-approved set of bylaws from 2019, which were never published to the membership.

Zoellner did a grammatical clean-up of the constitution and bylaws that did not include substantive changes. Larger changes proposed are related to the GGG and Outstanding Youth. Any proposed changes must be published and voted on at the general membership meeting at the state show.
- Futurity Committee: See agenda discussion
- Development Committee: See agenda discussion
- Historian:
 - Digitizing documents: Zoellner attempted to contact the current holder of MDGA MDGA historical documents, but was unsuccessful. She preliminarily looked into the cost and process of getting a large cache of items professionally digitized. It will be more cost-effective for the board to gather, sort, and prep the items before taking them to be digitized if the board proceeds with it. Gilbertson and Heldt will discuss plans with the current document holders.

Old Business

- National Convention Donation: Motion by Rico to support the WDGA request discussed at the previous meeting. Motion seconded by Zoellner. It was approved unanimously.

New Business

- Outstanding Youth selection: Three applications were received: Lindsey Penegor, William Carlson, and Noah Coudron. Motion to award William Carlson Outstanding Youth 2024 and Noah Coudron as runner-up by Zoellner. Motion seconded by Lawliss. It was approved unanimously.
- National Show basket donation: Gilbertson was nominated as the point person for the Minnesota basket for the national show raffle. Motion to send a basket valued at up to \$200 by Rico. Motion seconded by Mechura. It was approved unanimously.
- FFA dairy market sponsorship: It was believed the MDGA contributed a sponsorship of \$250 in 2023. Motion to provide another sponsorship in the same amount as in 2023, contingent on confirmation by the treasurer of the previous year's amount, by Zoellner. Motion seconded by Heldt. It was approved unanimously.
- 4-H dairy market sponsorship: MDGA contributed \$350 in 2023. Motion to provide another year of sponsorship in the same amount by Rico. Motion seconded by Hovel. It was approved unanimously.

- 4-H donation for dairy goat classes/MLBA match: In this new incentive, champion and reserve champion dairy goats would receive monetary awards. The MLBA will donate \$1,000 matching. The specifics are not fully worked out yet. The board wanted more information. The award would incentivize youth to work to learn more about dairy goats. Heldt suggested the board push for more information so it's not open-ended and more consistent for recipients. The board took no action.
- Production Award Updates: Lawliss discussed a summary of changes to the awards, mainly clarifying the cutoff date and giving a distinct timeline (July 1) for when records need to be submitted. The changes also removed in-progress records, so the committee wouldn't have to manually calculate to the end of the month after the last milk test. The most fair way is to allow up to a 305-day lactation. She stressed that does do not have to be shown at the state fair to be eligible. Zoellner has created a new online JotForm for entries. Motion by Lawliss to accept the new production award protocol. Motion seconded by Rico. It was approved unanimously.
- Futurity update: Gilbertson stated Futurity Chair Emily Thompson had reached out about it, wanting to make changes. Gilbertson said the futurity program is dying out and people don't know what it is. She provided a background on how it works - owners nominate a doe born for a monetary amount and when they become a 3-year-old and show at the state fair, the 'jackpot' money is doled out to the top 3. Thompson has suggested the board generate ideas to make it more beneficial and educate the membership about the program. It was also recommended that the board do more publicity regarding winners including photos and highlighting it on the website.

Gilbertson reached out to different farms about why they aren't participating. She reminded the board that anyone can participate, but must show the doe at the state fair and suggested that the state fair location was an issue. Rico noted the program's importance and questioned whether a traveling futurity had been considered. She had concerns about it being tied to the state show in case it ceases for a time like it did previously. Rico also noted the state fair is stationary, while the state show is not, and that the moving geographical location of the show may be a hindrance for some.

Mechura stated education about the program is the biggest piece and suggested it be covered at the fall conference. She also suggested education about navigating how to exhibit at the State Fair is needed.

Gilbertson will get data from Kieser on numbers at the state fair versus the state show. Zoellner is working on a new online JotForm futurity application. Thompson will remain the Futurity Chair but is looking for the board to handle promotion. The issue was tabled for discussion at the state show.

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Heldt. Motion seconded by Rico. It was approved unanimously. The next meeting is scheduled for April 27, at 1 p.m. via Zoom.