

STATE OF NEVADA



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
NEVADA JUNIOR LIVESTOCK SHOW BOARD

PRESIDENT: Matt McKinney VICE PRESIDENT: Tom Cates

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Approved Minutes

September 2, 2025, 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Nevada Department of Agriculture, Large Conference Room

- 1. Call to order, a roll call of members, and establish a quorum – Meeting was called to order at 2:00 pm by President Matt McKinney. Board Members present:** Matt McKinney, President, Tom Cates, Vice President, Sarah Chvilicek, Secretary, Dennis Hellwinkel, Treasurer, Cara Goss, Travis Coombs, and Sydney Botts. **Guests present:** Deputy AG, Richard Yien, Director of NDA, J.J. Goicoechea, Deputy Director, Doug Farris, NDA Executive Assistant, Julieanna Hendrix. **Other guests present:** Kelsey Ryan, Sarah Shuster, Erin Montalvo, Tara Sallee, Keriann Ortiz, Mariah Spry, Taylor Laack, John Derme, Heather Neild, John Black, Bridget Black, Deena Paulick, Arianna Walker, Ainsley Blacherby, Ben Mattley, Chelsey Simerson, Carolyn Chamlee, Luetta Mann, Zack Bunyon, Susan Rogers, Clint Thiesse, Martin Bunyard, and Rebecca Woolsley.
- 2. Public Comment:** NONE
- 3. Review and Approval of Agenda –** Moved by Tom Cates and seconded by Dennis Hellwinkel – MOTION CARRIED
- 4. Review and approve August 5, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes –** Moved by Tom Cates and seconded by Travis Coombs to approve the minutes as corrected – MOTION CARRIED
- 5. Financial Report**

Dennis Hellwinkel distributed the current balance sheet and noted that not much had changed since the last meeting. Dennis reported that the NJLS Board received a refund from RSCVA for the 2025 Show contract. Dennis also reported that the Nevada Department of Agriculture provided a \$10,000 payment to the NJLS Board for the 2025 Show. This payment offset the financial loss from the 2025 show, which was now a \$6000 loss. Dennis also reported that there are four outstanding checks to exhibitors. These checks have reached 90 days and may need to be reissued if a bank refuses to accept a stale check. It was moved by Travis Coombs and seconded to receive and file the financial report as presented – MOTION CARRIED.
- 6. Request to reconsider the 2026 Show Dates –** Matt McKinney opened this agenda item to respond to Ben Mately's request for the NJLS Board to reconsider its decision to approve the 2026 NJLS Show and Sale dates for June 10-14, 2026. These dates were chosen to coincide with the Nevada State Agriculture Month and bring back the Nevada State Fair. There was an effort through GoFundMe to gather input to change the dates. Matt McKinney requested comments from the Board before opening public comment. Sydney

Botts acknowledged that she had not confirmed the High School Graduation dates for Lyon County and that students may miss their graduations. If the issue is within the control of the NJLS Board, she suggested that the Board might adjust or reconsider the 2026 dates. Matt McKinney noted that he had reached out to the Lyon County School District for the graduation dates but hadn't heard back. He asked Sydney Botts if she had those dates. Various Lyon County High School graduation dates were reviewed. Matt McKinney noted that the NJLS Board was not suggesting that the show schedule from past shows would be used and could adjust for the 2026 Show and Sale. Matt McKinney opened the public comment. Ben Mateley introduced himself and noted that he has coached the livestock carcass evaluation teams. He acknowledged that the NJLS Board was under some pressure from the Nevada Department of Agriculture to have the Show during the Nevada State Fair in June. Mr. Matley reported that he had researched to determine if there was any provision in the Nevada Statutes that granted the Nevada Department of Agriculture this level of authority. He could not find anything. Mr. Matley acknowledged that he started the GoFundMe petition and received over 200 signatures to support the date change. Mr. Matley noted that he trusted the NJLS Board to do the right thing because he believes the NJLS Board has the best interests of the youth at heart.

Further public comment was received that acknowledged that numerous county graduations conflicted with the 2026 NJLS Show and Sale dates. Many suggestions were received that the date change could be postponed until 2027. Deputy NDA Director Doug Farris stated that NDA does not dictate to the NJLS Board.

Matt McKinney closed the public comment and brought the item back to the Board. Dennis Hellwinkel noted that very few complaints were made when the Show and sale were held on Mother's Day. He also stated that the new dates do not conflict with the Regional and State athletic competitions, and no conflicts with the High School Rodeo Finals. He also questioned exactly how many graduating seniors would be impacted. Sydney Botts acknowledged that considerable deliberation was spent considering the 2026 dates and stated that there is a strong option to postpone the date change. Matt McKinney said that he understood why people were requesting a postponement, but noted that he was in favor of "ripping the band-aid off" and that doing premier events is a positive outcome. He said that the Reno Rodeo and NJLS have not finalized their schedules and that there were more benefits to moving the NJLS Show and Sale to June versus hosting a stand-alone event in May. Matt said that he has noted many times that the final 2026 schedule has not been finalized, and the Board will do its best to accommodate conflicts, as it has always done. Travis Coombs stated he was empathetic to the community but favored the action of surveying and gathering data on the impact of the date change. Tom Cates noted that when the original date change was proposed, there were few comments about conflicts. Cara Goff pointed out that any date change creates conflict. Matt McKinney asked for a possible motion from the Board to reconsider the 2026 date change. No motion was put forward. The 2026 NJLS Show and Sale dates remain the same.

7. **Correspondence** – The Board received correspondence to consider a Poultry Show for adults.
8. **Nevada Department of Agriculture Report** – Deputy Director Doug Farris provided an update regarding AB 333, one of the requirements of which was to survey the total property to determine the property lines for the Nevada State Fairgrounds and Washoe County. Once the survey is completed, NDA can move forward with a new agreement with RSCVA to schedule events at the Nevada State Fairgrounds. Meetings are being held between NDA and RSCVA to ensure transparency of information and collaboration among all parties. The bill language requires a cooperative agreement to manage the grounds. The water and sewer infrastructure rebuilding plan is moving forward, with a working group meeting regularly to discuss the project. The Deputy Director also reported that a working group, which includes Extension, NDA, Reno

Rodeo, and RSCVA, has been formed to discuss the structure of the Nevada State Fair and is seeking statewide input as the Fair moves forward. The Deputy Director was asked if a media release was being prepared to announce all the changes codified in AB333 and the status of current RSLEC staff. He replied that, as the agreements are finalized, a media release will be issued as the dates approach. Additional questions were asked about the statewide cyberattack and its impact on the Nevada Department of Agriculture website.

9. Nevada Western Heritage Center Alliance Report – Clint Thiesse reported that there was a successful bid release on August 15, 2025. There were eight interested contractors and five that submitted bids. The bid was awarded to Reno Tahoe Construction and is currently awaiting the submission of bonds and insurance certificates from them. The pre-construction meeting is scheduled for September 15, 2025, and the 340-day contract starts. Regular updates, to include possible impacts on scheduled events, will be provided.

10. Reno Sparks Livestock Events Center Report – No report

11. 2026 Show Report – Matt McKinney reported that the formation of committees was underway, and Board Members should determine which committees they would like to chair and form their respective membership. Matt also noted that NJLS needs superintendents for the Beef and Poultry Shows.

- Rules – Sarah Chvilicek is chairing. A meeting is scheduled for September 18, 2025, to finalize recommendations for rule changes for Board consideration.
- Show Logistics – Matt McKinney is chairing. A meeting is scheduled for September 23, 2025.
- Sale – Matt McKinney is asking the Washoe County Buyers Group to facilitate this committee. There is a proposal to consider a Nevada Governor’s Sale of Champions, which would occur before the NJLS sale and would include the Grand and Reserve Champions, and the top three of each market species.
- Donors and Awards – Sydney Botts and Dennis Helwinkel will co-chair. Sydney reported that sponsorships will be revised and donations will continue to be sought.
- Media and Communications – no identified chair, but the need to work with NDA is critical.
- Scholarships – There is a current committee, but additional membership is being sought.
- Youth Advisory Council – no identified chair

Travis Coombs asked about developing talking points for each committee to outline its function and duties.

12. Public Comment: Carolyn Chamlee asked if the board would consider allowing parents to help with fitting animals and to relax the current rule. Dennis Hellwinkel confirmed that the majority of the work for the 2026 Show will be done at the committee level and approved by the Board. Chelsey Simerson inquired about the security plan for the 2026 NJLS Show and expressed concerns regarding exhibitor safety. She also asked about space allocation for the NJLS Show. Linda Miller would like the NJLS Board to revert to a terminal sale, whereby all sale animals are harvested and processed. Kerriann Ortiz asked if the NJLS Board would consider a later start time for Board Meetings. John Black asked if the 2025 Photos were available. He also requested a map for camping on the grounds, consideration for a later start time for the Board Meeting, and an update on the status of past Board minutes. Public Comment was closed.

13. Next Meeting, October 7, 2025, 2:00 p.m.
NDA Conference Room

14. Board Member Comment, Discussion of Future Agenda Items

NOTE: No deliberation may take place under this item.

Request to change Board Meeting time to 3:00 p.m.
Request to consider the ShoWorks coordinator contract

15. Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 3:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Sarah Chvilicek, Board Secretary.