

The Dawson County Small Animals Committee met on 11/19/17 at the Granmoe residence, with Lorie Cullinan, Kristy Cullinan, Jessica Duede, Kelsey Crawford, and Kari Granmoe present. Lorie Cullinan led the meeting. The following was discussed:

Mention was made that Estella Feiock is interested in joining. Estella, we welcome you, and your vast knowledge and experience with small animals and 4-H!

Judges for the Small Animals at the Dawson County Fair were discussed. A preference to rotate judges every two years was noted. Nancy Lane offers vast experience and high expectations and abundant feedback for the 4-Hers, and Ann McRae has judged cats and is willing to help as needed with judging. There are also several proficient Small Animal 4-Hers in surrounding counties that may have aged out of the program and would be competent. Judges are paid jointly through the Dawson County Fair Board and 4-H (with 4-H paying for the Round Robin judge). Once the Small Animals Committee decides upon asking a specific judge, Jackie at the Extension Office makes contact and schedules arrangements. This topic was tabled for future discussion.

Funding for the 4-H Small Animals program was also discussed. The Dawson County 4-H Council budgets \$300/year towards the program, with the balance accruing if not used. A \$2,000 donation was also made in recent years by the Mast family, which has not been utilized.

Also noted was a "dog competition" fund raiser in 2016 at Lloyd Square park (for an animal rescue group) by Cross Petroleum. Only two dogs participated in the event. Perhaps they would be willing to support the program? There is also a People Partner and a Caviar grant that could be pursued. Other revenue sources might include allowing 4-Hers to sell eggs at the fair (Kevin Pena will be contacted re: legalities). Monies will be needed to: Paint the Small Animals barn and make necessary repairs to the roof (local businesses may also be willing to donate supplies). Improvements are also needed for the feed/watering systems. Deciding where/how to store the obstacle course is also a priority. The course is of high quality (made by Ervin Stickel) and is currently housed at the back of the Small Animal Barn. Building a door at the rear entrance of the barn for ease of access and making hangers or moving to away from areas where the roof leaks are also priorities. Also mentioned was storing the obstacle course equipment on a trailer, so it could be assembled or torn down "on the go". The purchase of a small shed is another option. In the interim, checking on roof leaks will take place to decide the next course of action.

Dog exhibition runs were discussed, as well as moving the Small Animal judging to a different day. Kelsey will visit with the Fair Board about having an Open Class for Small Animal Showmanship at the fair, as well as clarify who is responsible to care for critters, and possibly include in the fair book that mean roosters will be sent home. A Round Robin for parents (who would show 4-H animals) was also discussed, possibly as a fund raiser or competition or simply as a means of entertainment. 4-H could also partner with the Fair Board and bring in a traveling dog show as a means of community service and 4-H promotion. 4-H promotion ideas also included looking into visiting Lincoln 3rd graders and introducing 4-H projects, playing a game, and giving a speech to the students (ideally during 4-H week).

Small Animal 4-H meetings will be held monthly starting in 2018. Lorie will visit with the Dawson County Vet Clinic, and arrange for a tour (all 4-Hers will be invited). Other monthly meeting topics include: Distributing judging scripts so 4-Hers can start memorizing them, asking Jackie to do a Small Animals Cloverbud meeting (maybe we can gain some future recruits), Sportsmanship-like conduct, Helping with project records, MC Showmanship Clinic, a special work day, and the FAIR!!!!

Small animal policies were reviewed and are in the process of being updated.

Decor at the Fair may include: buntings, a small string of lights (too many will cause an overload on a limited electrical grid), decor on the barn walls as well as individual club decor, and displays moved lower so the smallest visitors to the fair can view with greater ease.

It was noted that not everyone has enrolled; a Senior Rabbit Showman is needed for the Round Robin. All immunizations are due to the Extension Office by June 1st.