

TENTATIVE MINUTES (PENDING BOARD APPROVAL)

LOUISIANA EQUINE PROMOTION AND RESEARCH ADVISORY BOARD

SEPTEMBER 2, 2025, 10:00 A.M.

**LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY
VETERANS' MEMORIAL AUDITORIUM
5825 FLORIDA BOULEVARD, 1ST FLOOR
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70806**

NOTE: THIS IS TENTATIVE MINUTES FROM THE SEPTEMBER 2, 2025, MEETING OF THE LOUISIANA EQUINE PROMOTION AND RESEARCH BOARD. A FINAL VERSION OF THESE MINUTES WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE AFTER APPROVAL OF THE BOARD AT ITS NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING.

CALL TO ORDER

The Louisiana Equine Promotion and Research Advisory Board meeting was held in-person and was called to order by Dr. Neely Heidorn at 10:03 a.m.

ROLL CALL & DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Roll call was conducted by Dr. Neely Heidorn.

Members present: William Bloom, Dr. Neely Heidorn, Jim Gauthier, Sky Wright, Marc Browning, Raegan Comeaux, John Boudreaux, Anita Hefler, Dr. Bill Davis, Jerome Bellard, and Edwin Fenasci. Bernard Chatters arrived at 10:11 a.m.

Members absent: Dr. Frank Andrews, Whitney Boyce, Anita Hefler, and Roger Heitzmann.

A quorum was present.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments were made at this time.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Dr. Bill Davis moved to approve the minutes from the March 25, 2025, meeting. Sky Wright seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Board Financial Status

Becky Dupree with LDAF Office of Management and Finance discussed the Equine Board's financial status. Beginning on August 18, 2025, funds are now being deposited directly into the Equine Board fund. The current balance in that account is \$130,682.76. The total \$500,000 allocated by the legislature should be in the fund within the next two months.

Becky Dupree will provide monthly updates on the account balance to Dr. Heidorn.

2025 Grant Application Recommendations

The board received 34 grant applications, which collectively sought over \$1.8 million dollars.

The board considered the applications received for the 2025 grants, which had already been reviewed and considered by the Equine Board Grant Applications Review Subcommittee at its August 2025 meeting. Dr. Heidorn presented the subcommittee's recommendations to the Board.

The Board discussed the subcommittee's recommendations and voted to recommend the following applications to the Commissioner for approval:

1. The board recommends an award in the amount of \$40,000.00 to Acadian Cutting Horse Association.
2. The board recommends an award in the amount of \$10,000.00 to Acadiana Junior High & High School Rodeo Club.
3. The board recommends an award in the amount of \$6,000.00 to Allen Parish Fair Association.
4. The board recommends an award in the amount of \$7,500.00 to Allen Parish High School Rodeo Club.
5. The board recommends an award in the amount of \$35,000.00 to Beauregard Parish Police Jury.
6. The board recommends an award in the amount of \$70,000.00 to Cajun Rodeo Association.
7. The board recommends an award in the amount of \$21,000.00 to City of West Monroe – Ike Hamilton Center.
8. The board recommends an award in the amount of \$6,000.00 to Deep South Stock Horse Show Association.
9. The board recommends an award in the amount of \$10,000.00 to Feliciana Youth Rodeo Association.
10. The board recommends an award in the amount of \$40,000.00 to Girls Scouts of Louisiana East.
11. The board recommends an award in the amount of \$10,000.00 to Haughton Riding Club.
12. The board recommends an award in the amount of \$10,000.00 to Jefferson Davis Parish Police Jury.
13. The board recommends an award in the amount of \$20,000.00 to Just Believe Training.
14. The board recommends an award in the amount of \$10,000 to Livingston Horse Show Association.
15. The board recommends an award in the amount of \$10,000.00 to Livingston Parish Fair Association.

16. The board recommends an award in the amount of \$10,000.00 to Louisiana High School Rodeo Association.
17. The board recommends an award in the amount of \$10,000.00 to Louisiana Quarter Horse Association.
18. The board recommends an award in the amount of \$10,000.00 to Louisiana State University Agricultural Center.
19. The board recommends an award in the amount of \$35,500 to National Cutting Horse Association.
20. The board recommends an award in the amount of \$19,000.00 to Point Coupee Parish Government.
21. The board recommends an award in the amount of \$10,000.00 to Reins of Hope at LeBocage.
22. The board recommends an award in the amount of \$80,000.00 to Southern Reined Cow Horse Alliance.
23. The board recommends an award in the amount of \$10,000.00 to Southern University System Foundation.
24. The board recommends an award in the amount of \$10,000.00 to TXC Memorial Scholarship Foundation.

MOTION: Sky Wright moved to approve the grant applications listed above in accordance with the recommendations of the Grant Application Review Subcommittee; Bernard Chatters seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board then considered the 2025 Equine Grant applications that the subcommittee considered but did not recommend for approval. The Board discussed the subcommittee's recommendations and voted to decline the following applications:

1. Bell City High School Rodeo Boosters, Inc.
2. Business & Workforce Recovery Solutions Inc.
3. Just Kuntry Ranch, Inc.
4. Lacey's Legacy Western Riding and Horsemanship, Inc.
5. Louisiana Equine Council
6. Northwestern State University of Louisiana
7. Pointe Coupee High School Rodeo
8. Sulphur Rodeo Club
9. Tangipahoa Pro Rodeo & Music Fest
10. U R Herd, Inc.

MOTION: Edwin Fenasci moved to deny the applications listed above in accordance with the recommendations of the Grant Application Review Subcommittee; the motion was seconded by Sky Wright. The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Marc Browning made a motion to authorize LDAF staff to prioritize disbursement of funds to grant recipients based on the dates of their respective events, in the event that all

funding is not immediately available. The motion was seconded by Sky Wright and passed unanimously.

Plans for Next Legislative Session

The board discussed goals and plans for the next legislative session, including possibly requesting that the Legislature to remove the \$500,000 cap on funding, in light of the increasing number of grant applications received and the amount of money requested by grant applicants.

OLD BUSINESS

License Plate Update

Dr. Neely Heidorn provided an update on the Equine Board license plate project. Dr. Heidorn advised that the governor signed a state of emergency regarding Department of Motor Vehicles' computer system. That system is outdated and fails whenever a new plate is put into testing. The Equine Board cannot move forward with the plate until a new computer system is installed at OMV, which will be at least a year from now.

Dr. Neely Heidorn reminded the board members to complete their mandatory Sexual Harassment and Ethics Training.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments were made at this time.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The board's next meeting will be on Monday, March 2, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

MOTION: A motion was made by Marc Browning to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Dr. Bill Davis. This motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 11:07 a.m.

Chairman