

Tri State Dressage Society
Saturday, January 31st, 2026
Board Meeting Agenda with Notes and Recording

In Attendance: Tim Shane, Brooke Schafe, Debra Davis, Julie Norman Shamburger, Kaitlyn Shamonski, Samantha Luttrell, Kaitlyn Shamonsky

Torey Crockett did not respond to messages asking if she would continue in the Jr. Board Position.

Proxy: None- 100% of active Board members in Attendance.

Review Mission Statement

The purpose of TSDS is to **promote a high standard of accomplishment in dressage in the Ark-La-Tx through educational activities and sports competitions.** *Dressage is a French word meaning "training" and its purpose is to develop the horse's natural athletic ability and willingness to work, making him calm, supple, and attentive to his rider. The program of TSDS shall be to hold the schooling and recognized dressage shows and to conduct educational programs/clinics. The competitions held are to measure members' achievements against regional and national standards and to prepare members for competitions at the regional and national levels.*

2026 Survey Results Discussion

Upcoming Shows & Clinics

We have the following judges lined up (contracts pending):

- January 31: 3 pm TSDS Board Meeting over Zoom
- March 14: TSDS Schooling Show [Barbara Lewis] optional Clinic Western Dressage
- March 14: TSDS GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING-(GBPC Meeting Day Before)
- March 29: Mary Mahler Clinic (Location TBA)
- April 8-12 FEI World Cup Finals 2026 in Fort Worth
- April 10-12: Texas Dressage Classic I & II at TXRHP
- April 17, 18 & 19 USEA Schooling Horse Trials
- April 24-25 Clinic Bobbie Paulk (R-USA Clinic) (Coordinated by Florence Edwards)
(Location TBA)
- April/May Maybe a Julie Madriguera Clinic?
- May 9-10 Holly Hill John Mason Dressage Clinic
- May 16: TSDS Schooling Show [Becky Brown]
- May 30-1 DDC Spring Show I & II TXRHP
- June - Possible David Macmillan and/or Sara Sasso Toolin Clinic and/or Bobbie Paulk???
(Sara Available June 13-14)
- August 1- TSDS General Membership Meeting
- August 8-9 Possible Sara Sasso Toolin Clinic

- Sept 12: TSDS Schooling Show at Holly Hill [Lauren Griffin-Kramer] ???
- September - David Macmillan available for a Clinic
- September (Possible Hunter Pace, Look into K9 Show, if we have)
- Oct 1-4 Region 9 Championship and HDS Autom CLassic - GSWEC
- October 23, 24 & 25, 2026 USEA Schooling Horse Trials
- Oct 17: TSDS Schooling Show at Holly Hill [Emily Roy]
- November- Hunter Pace (Possible Joint with GBPC)
- John Mason Holly Hill Clinic November 7-8
- Sara Sasso Toolin available November 7-8
- November Pati Pierucci Clinic (Yevette)
- December - Year End Awards???

Committee Reports

Membership - Brooke Schafer

Show/Clinics/Programs: Tim Shane (Chair) Kaitlyn and Julie -Show Organizing
Volunteer Coordinator: ??? Katie Jo

Awards: Julie has said she did not want to chair this committee this year. I understand the other members are Ansley, Carla Roy, Tracy and Aimee. This committee has proven important especially for the year end awards. It will need a new chair. (Tracy? Ansley?)

Website (Ashley and Ansley) Kaitlyn Shamonski

Hospitality: ???? (Take Judges to dinner, transportation, snacks and drinks)

Banquet: Brooke Schafer Chair with Julie Schamburger and Kaitlyn Shamonski helping

By-Laws: Marsha Murray, Suzanne Ellis, Julie W. (add Tim Shane)

By-Laws are the Bones of the organization, Flexibility should be in Policies and Procedures.

Sponsorship & Directory: Tim, Chair. This is something Tim would start as it is a way to grow membership and add value and to help us do more without raising prices. I presented this to Dallas as well.

(Brooke, Ashley Hays)

Committee Structure and Oversight:

2026 Budget-Accepted by Debra, 2nd by Julie NS

Goals and Action Items.

Bring New Interest and Energy (318BB) Get back from Covid

Non-Agenda Items

Red River Radio (Free Advertising for Non-Profit)

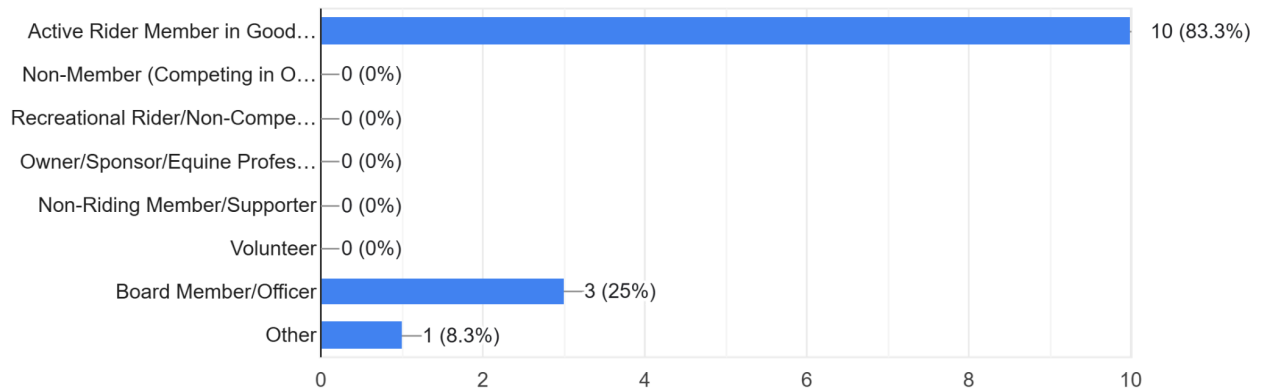
Year End Awards in Dec & January

Meeting Close

Motion to Close by Tim 2nd by Julie NS at 4:48

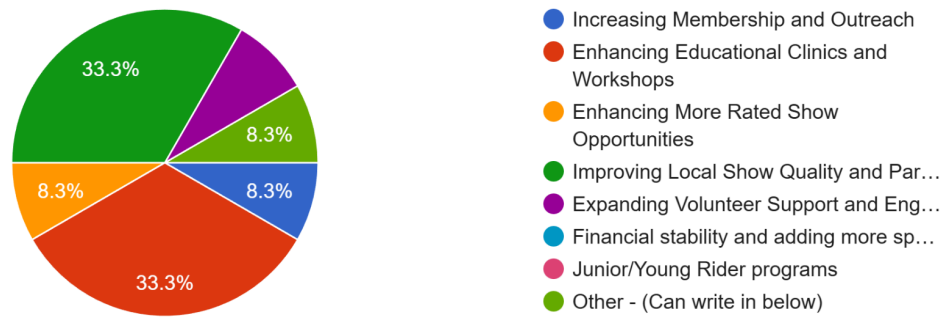
What is your current level of involvement with the Tri-State Dressage Society?

12 responses



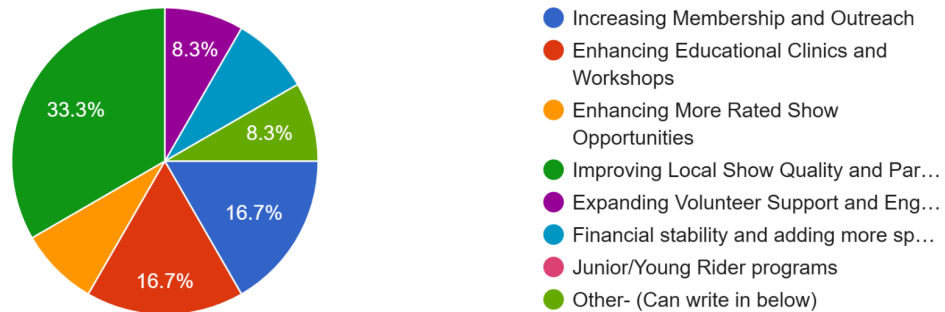
Which of the following areas should be the TOP #1 Priority for the Society in 2026? (Select one)

12 responses

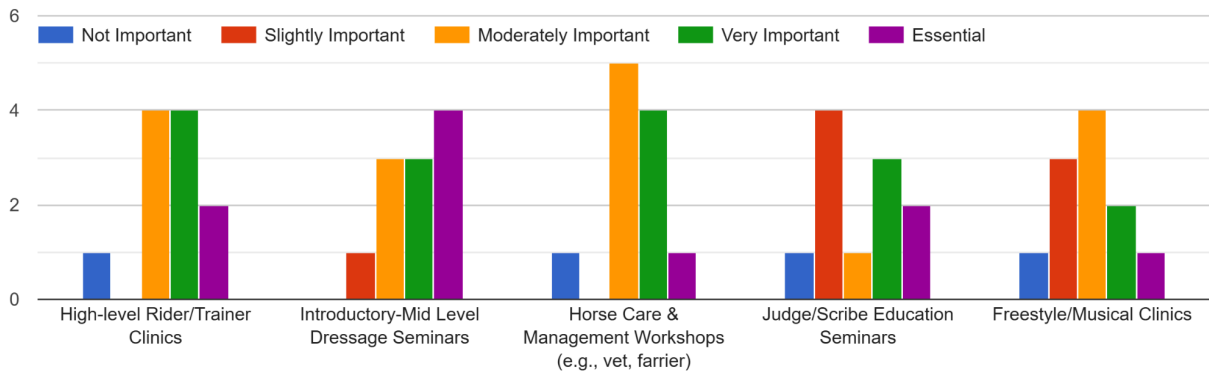


Which of the following areas should be the 2nd Priority for the Society in 2026? (Select one)

12 responses



Please rate the importance of the following types of educational events for 2026:



- **Membership Stability:** Aim to maintain 60-80 members, enhance engagement through collaboration and incentives.
- **Volunteer Coordination Challenge:** Need to recruit volunteers; Katie Jo will assist to alleviate burnout issues.
- **2026 Event Calendar:** Four schooling shows planned, including clinics to engage more riders and judges across disciplines.
- **Budget Approval:** 2026 budget aligns with past years, emphasizing conservative estimates and potential growth from sponsorships.
- **Banquet Revitalization:** Fresh ideas needed to re-energize the banquet, with emphasis on member input and sponsorship opportunities.
- **Sponsorship Strategy:** Focus on digital sponsorship models and partnerships to increase engagement and financial sustainability for events.

Notes

Membership Growth and Engagement

The board agreed that **membership stability and growth** are critical, focusing on sustaining at least **60 to 80 members** and improving engagement through collaboration and incentives (44:04).

- **Brooke Schafer agreed to chair the membership committee** and will monitor membership integration with USDF databases for accuracy and outreach (45:12).
 - Tim Shane proposed exploring joint memberships with **Dallas Dressage Club** to increase benefits like shared awards and event invitations.
 - This collaboration aims to reduce travel barriers and broaden regional participation across Texas, Arkansas, and Louisiana.
 - The plan includes offering discounts through sponsorships and creating a directory listing trusted equine service providers.
 - Brooke emphasized that combining membership benefits would enhance competitive experience and foster community.
- **Non-member show fees and volunteer incentives were discussed** as ways to encourage membership and volunteerism without creating financial barriers (57:53).
 - Katie Jo shared a model where non-members paid a small show fee encouraging them to join for benefits.
 - Marsha Murray cautioned about USDF restrictions on non-member fees, so further research is needed.
 - Volunteer burnout was noted as a concern, highlighting the need for better recruitment and management.
- **Lack of volunteer participation is a key challenge**, with Debbie stepping down as volunteer coordinator due to burnout (54:30).
 - Katie Jo volunteered to assist with volunteer coordination to ease workload distribution.
 - Tim aims to integrate volunteer signup and event registration through the website to streamline processes and reduce administrative pain points.
- **The need for increased energy and interest in the club** was noted by Deborah, who highlighted the post-COVID drop in engagement and the importance of positive leadership like Tiffany Aaron's to energize the group (42:26).
 - Tim sees sponsorships and social events as tools to inject new enthusiasm and attract members.
 - The board agreed that fun and ease of participation need to be prioritized over aggressive membership targets.

Events, Shows, and Clinics Planning

The board outlined a **comprehensive calendar of schooling shows, clinics, and special events** designed to improve participation and quality while expanding geographic reach (10:37).

- The **2026 schedule includes four schooling shows at Holly Hill**, with judges assigned but contracts pending (10:45).
 - Barbara Lewis and Becky Brown, both certified Western dressage judges, may offer optional Western dressage clinics to tap into a growing market segment.
 - March 29 is tentatively set for a clinic with Mary Mahler, leveraging her availability and travel plans to minimize costs.
 - May 9-10 features the John Mason clinic, which has shown positive rider impact.
 - Later shows in September and October will involve emerging judges like Lauren Griffin and Emily Roy to nurture judging careers and expand into western and eventing communities.
 - David McMillan's June clinic was discussed but noted to require a minimum of **12 riders** due to his higher costs and tight scheduling (23:57).
- **Hunter Pace events are planned for the fall**, with a tentative date at the end of September to maximize attendance while avoiding summer heat and winter cold (38:10).
 - Brooke Schafer and Katie Jo described past collaboration challenges with Gator Bayou Pony Club due to poor communication and timing.
 - The board favors a joint venture to boost participation, but cautions about event overcrowding and financial strain on members choosing between multiple events in one month.
 - Weather and scheduling conflicts with other clinics like John Mason's were noted as risks.
- **The FEI World Cup Finals in Fort Worth in spring** present a social opportunity, with ticket prices around **\$500 for all three performances** (14:51).
 - Tim and Deborah plan to promote group attendance via the February newsletter and monitor last-minute ticket deals to encourage participation.
- **Facility logistics for rated shows were discussed**, emphasizing stable grouping for camaraderie and potential use of RV rentals at Texas Rose Horse Park for convenience (16:00).
 - Ensuring show participants can stable together and arrange rides is a priority to enhance the experience.
- **Summer months will focus on social events rather than clinics or shows** due to heat and indoor facility limitations (22:08).
 - A second general membership meeting is planned for August 1 to maintain engagement without overloading the calendar.

Committee Structure and Operational Improvements

The board recognized the need to **streamline committee roles and balance workloads** to reduce burnout and increase sustainability (40:59).

- Tim emphasized the importance of having **backup personnel for key roles** like show management, banquet, and sponsorships to avoid over-reliance on individuals (41:03).
 - The board acknowledged that a small core group currently handles most tasks, which is not scalable.

- **Volunteer coordination responsibilities will be integrated into show management**, with Katie Jo offering to assist (57:53).
 - Tim is exploring website features to consolidate registrations, volunteer signups, and communication to reduce manual effort.
- **Awards Committee leadership is currently vacant**, with Julie Rusinski stepping down due to time constraints (01:01:55).
 - Several experienced members remain willing to assist, but no one has stepped up to lead.
 - Tim proposed introducing a **leaderboard system** to track points and eligibility throughout the year to reduce surprises and improve transparency.
- **The hospitality committee's role has diminished**, with no current chair and unclear responsibilities (01:09:43).
 - Historically, hospitality managed judges' meals, transportation, and event snacks, which enhanced the club's professional image.
 - The board is considering folding hospitality duties into other committees but recognizes its importance for networking and judge relations.
- **The website committee, chaired by Tim Shane, will expand its role** to improve digital presence, social media content, and cybersecurity (01:06:30).
 - Tim proposed recruiting members like Ashley Hayes and Ainsley Lofton to curate event photos and social media posts for better engagement.
 - Maintaining control over social media credentials is a priority to avoid security risks.

Bylaws Update and Strategic Governance

The bylaws committee, led by Marsha Murray with Julie Rusinski and Suzanne Ellis, is **nearing completion of a comprehensive update** to balance legal rigor with organizational flexibility (01:20:41).

- The update includes a new **horse welfare statement aligned with USDF's social contract**, ensuring ethical standards without overburdening members (01:21:45).
 - Suzanne Ellis, an attorney, is reviewing legal language for clarity and compliance.
 - Tim Shane advocated for separating fixed bylaws from flexible policies, allowing the board to adapt procedures without repeated membership votes.
 - The committee plans to share drafts with the board and then the membership for feedback before final approval.
- The board discussed maintaining a clear club identity distinct from USDF, especially regarding **controversial welfare policies and mission statement wording** (01:23:04).
 - Tim emphasized focusing on growth and inclusivity rather than strict alignment with national bodies.
 - Marsha highlighted the importance of strong governance to prevent negative publicity and uphold horse welfare.

Budget Review and Financial Planning

The board approved a **2026 budget closely aligned with prior years**, maintaining conservative estimates with room for growth via sponsorships (01:36:44).

- The budget assumes **60 unit memberships and 8 family memberships**, reflecting current membership goals (01:36:44).
 - Show budgets remain steady at about **\$4,000 per show**, acknowledging past challenges breaking even.
 - Judge fees are budgeted at **\$400 per judge**, with multiple judges per show factored in.
 - Awards expenses are maintained to ensure quality prizes that motivate participation.
 - Equipment and lodging budgets remain unchanged.
 - The board agreed to **discontinue the PO Box**, shifting mail handling to Tim's home address for better reliability.
- The board unanimously voted to accept the budget as presented (01:40:49).
 - Tim emphasized the need to build a formal sponsorship program to increase revenue for clinics, judges, and banquet enhancements.
 - Dallas Dressage Club's loss of sponsors presents an opportunity to develop a digital, value-driven sponsorship model leveraging Tim's expertise.

Banquet and Sponsorship Strategy

The banquet remains a **key club event needing fresh ideas and broader support** to regain its former energy and appeal (01:14:41).

- Brooke Schafer has managed the banquet for four years and is open to help and new ideas to improve the experience (01:14:41).
 - Venue challenges include availability and cost, with past events at the Shreveport Club and consideration of Palmetto Country Club requiring external catering.
 - Tim suggested a survey to gather member input on banquet preferences.
 - Brooke noted the banquet's decline in excitement since 2021 and desires to revitalize it with more awards variety and social elements.
- Tim sees **social events and sponsorships as key drivers** for financial sustainability and member engagement (01:19:05).
 - Ideas include wine tastings and partnering with local cultural institutions like the symphony.
 - A sponsorship directory listing trusted equine and local businesses will offer discounts and increase member value.
 - Brooke confirmed local businesses, including feed and tack stores, are interested sponsors.
 - Young members like Ashley Hayes could promote sponsorship benefits via social media codes.
- The timing of the banquet was debated, with preference for a **December event to optimize fundraising opportunities and avoid holiday stress** (01:47:23).
 - Conflicts with Dallas Dressage's January banquet were noted, but their event has faced delays.

- The board considered splitting year-end awards and a January kickoff event to spread out activities and maintain momentum.
- Marsha highlighted the value of hospitality and networking at events to build judging and sponsorship relationships critical to the club's success (01:13:53).

Leadership Vision and Next Steps

Tim Shane's leadership focuses on **streamlining operations, improving member experience, and building a sustainable, growing organization** that he can eventually hand off (01:34:20).

- His goal is to reduce administrative burdens so members spend more time riding and enjoying horses (01:41:18).
- The board acknowledged the need for clear documentation, committee oversight, and balanced workloads to prevent burnout.
- Tim encourages open communication and idea sharing, stressing the importance of gratitude for volunteers to maintain morale (01:35:21).
- The sponsorship and directory initiative is a central pillar to increase revenue, improve member benefits, and create social event opportunities (01:30:07).
- The board agreed to continue refining bylaws, expanding digital presence, and enhancing event quality to attract and retain members across the tri-state region.

Action items

Tim Shane

- Share newsletter to solicit group interest for FEI World Cup Finals attendance (14:51)
- Facilitate web integration for show registrations and volunteering to streamline event management (55:30)
- Lead development of sponsorship and local business directory, engage board and membership for supporting roles (01:30:00)
- Participate actively in bylaws committee meetings and oversee progress sharing for board approval (01:45:40)
- Review and finalize budget, propose eliminating PO Box and communicate changes (01:39:00)
- Create survey to gather banquet preferences and suggestions from membership (01:17:30)
- Compile media contact lists (Red River Radio, local business networks) for enhanced event publicity (01:45:50)
- Circulate revised bylaws draft among board and membership for review and feedback (01:22:00)

Brooke Schafer

- Chair Membership Committee, monitor membership status through USDF platform and communicate updates (45:20)
- Share banquet organizing responsibilities and seek additional volunteer support (01:16:30)

Julie Shamburger

- Co-lead first show organization with Caitlin Shamonsky; confirm show weekend availability (53:00)
- Assist Brooke on banquet preparations and volunteer recruitment (01:16:40)

Kaitlyn Shamonsky

- Help coordinate hospitality duties including judge and competitor care (01:09:40)

Katie Jo

- Support volunteer coordination for shows; assist with recruiting and scheduling (57:30)

Debra Elliott

- Step down from volunteer coordinator role; support transition and mentor new volunteer coordinator (55:30)

Recording Link:

<https://hello.chorus.ai/listen?guid=9a979a91f0364e7d95ca387b7cf2663a>