TSDS Board Meeting Minutes - Saturday, August 8, 2026
Board Members Present: President Tim Shane, VP Brooke Schafer, Secretary Debra Davis, Treasurer Katie Jo Kitchings, Samanatha Luttrell, Proxy: Gwen Gives Proxy to Katie Jo, Julie gives Proxy to Brooke.

Non-Board TSDS Members Present: Marsha Murray, Rhonda Davis Chavis

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.

KEY_TAKEAWAYS

- **Event Date Changes:** October show moved to October 10th for better coordination; judges confirmed availability, but have not been selected yet, theme planned to enhance member experience. Year End Banquet Date was later decided Thursday, December 3rd at the Petroleum Club.
- **Clinics Scheduled:** Julie Madriguera contracted for Sept 12 show and Sept 13clinic at $100/ride; November Patty Perucci clinic dinner sponsorship approved up to $300.
- **Membership Status:** Current 38 members, down 5 from 43 last year; member directory added as a new benefit with business listing options at $55 membership.
- **Financial Health:** Balance steady at $12-13K; waived payment fees improved transactions; minor travel cost overruns covered by judge fee savings.
- **Complaint Handling:** Member Rhonda Davis Chavis under investigation, suspension proposed, final vote set for August 11 after further review and info sharing.
- **Scoring & Tech:** Faster scoring system launching, live online results planned; live leaderboard for 2027 to improve engagement and reduce admin work.
- **Year-End Banquet:** December venue search ongoing (Live Casino favored but more expensive/Petroleum Club available within budget but on a Thursday); Award Eligibility clarified requiring Two (2) Tri State Schooling Shows; new awards chair needed.

Notes

Event Planning and Scheduling

The board approved key show date changes and confirmed clinician involvement to optimize event coordination and member engagement.

- **Rescheduled October Show to October 10th for better coordination** with venue and judges, confirmed unanimously by the board to avoid conflicts with other major events (12:02)
    - The original October 17th date conflicted with Pony Club and Texas Rose horse trials.

    - Judges Becky Brown and Barbara Lewis are available for the new date, while Emily Roy's availability is pending.
    - The change supports better turnout and operational smoothness for the last schooling show of the year.
    - A theme was noted as a fun aspect for the October 10th event, enhancing member experience.
- **Confirmed Julie Madriguera for September 12th show and a clinic the following day**, with a signed contract and a clinic price set at **$100 per ride** requiring at least four rides to be viable (06:55)
    - Julie will stay an extra day this year, improving scheduling compared to last year.
    - Travel costs exceeded budget due to airline issues.
    - The September show will be supported by volunteer coordinators Debra and Sam.
- **Patty Perucci clinic scheduled for November with Tri State sponsorship approved for dinner up to $300**, unanimously agreed to align with mission and promote outreach (14:45)
    - The dinner sponsorship budget fits within the allocated judge budget.
    - Sponsorship enhances community ties and visibility for non-members attending the clinic.
    - Participants noted the clinic includes a dressage component, justifying the support.
- **Volunteer coordination for fall shows assigned to specific board members**, ensuring smooth event execution (17:00)
    - September show volunteers: Deborah and Samantha.
    - October show volunteers: Katie Jo and possibly Gwen.
    - The volunteer system has been streamlined via updated policies and procedures to reduce time commitment concerns.

Membership Growth and Engagement

The board is focusing on expanding membership through enhanced benefits and targeted outreach to offset current shortfalls.

- **Current membership at 38, about five members short of last year's 43**, with expectation of gains from fall show participation (11:02)
    - Fall show registrations historically boost membership numbers.
    - Membership decline is consistent with other regional reports, indicating a broader trend.
- **Introduced a member directory benefit to incentivize sign-ups**, allowing members to list themselves and related businesses, boosting community visibility and SEO (29:56)
    - Standard membership at **$55** includes at least one directory listing, potentially two.

    - Additional sponsorship options for businesses like veterinarians or farriers were proposed.
    - This strategy aims to attract non-riding community members who support the mission.
- **Membership directory and sponsorship plans received unanimous board approval**, enabling immediate rollout in the August newsletter and recruitment efforts (32:53)
    - The directory is designed to improve online visibility and community connections.
    - Cross-listing multiple businesses under one membership is allowed to increase value.

Financial Oversight and Budget Management

The treasurer report confirmed sound financial health with adjustments to travel budgets and fee structures to support member convenience.

- **Treasurer reported stable finances with a balance trending between $12,000 and $13,000, and first two shows profitable.** (33:28)
    - Some PayPal and Venmo transactions were delayed in reporting but overall income is on track.
    - Digital innovations donated by Tim Shane's company Shane-Arts.comto reduce operational costs.
- **Waived payment processing fees for members to encourage smoother transactions**, a change that improved ease of payment and likely support revenue stability (33:57)
    - Previous fee reluctance was a barrier for some members.
    - This approach supports member retention and financial predictability.
- **Travel budget slightly over due to airline price increases**, but offset by savings in judges' fees, requiring no additional budget increases (35:28)
    - Future budgets may include higher travel estimates for judges traveling outside DFW.
    - Budget adjustments maintain overall financial stability.

Governance, Bylaws, and Complaint Management

The board is working to clarify governance procedures, formalize grievance handling, and address a pending member complaint transparently and fairly.

- **Ongoing bylaws review with a focus on clearer grievance and complaint procedures aligned with Robert's Rules of Order 12th Edition**, with Suzanne Ellis providing pro bono legal counsel to ensure compliance (28:22)
    - Moving Tri State Bucks management from bylaws to policies and procedures for flexibility.

    - The bylaws committee currently lacks a permanent chair; Tim Shane is acting in the interim.
- **Formal complaint from member Rhonda Davis Chavis resulted in a confidential investigation per current by-laws under RONR concluding she is not in good standing**, pending final board vote after further review (36:29)
    - Rhonda's membership is proposed to be suspended for the remainder of the season, with eligibility to reapply next year.
    - The issue does not affect her participation in USDF or USEF events.
    - The board unanimously agreed to table final voting until additional information is circulated and reviewed before the next show.
- **Plan to hold an electronic vote by August 11th to finalize Rhonda's membership status**, ensuring timely resolution before the fall show season (44:10)
    - Board members requested a recap of the investigation findings via email before voting.
    - Marsha Murray, a member in attendance, suggested exploring alternative resolutions with Rhonda prior to suspension.
- **Board emphasized the importance of clear, transparent disciplinary policies to reduce misunderstandings and drama**, aiming for streamlined future processes (50:00)
    - Only two known complaints have arisen in recent years, indicating manageable conflict levels.
    - President urged minimizing miscommunications and avoiding unnecessary escalations.
    - Members were encouraged to handle communications carefully to prevent confusion in official matters.

Operations and Technology Improvements

Efforts to streamline show operations and scoring aim to enhance participant experience and reduce administrative delays.

- **Scoring system improvements planned to deliver results faster than in previous shows**, with digital test scans posted live online soon after judges submit scores (20:30)
    - Scores will be available before riders receive their physical tests.
    - The system avoids live scoring per movement but improves overall speed and transparency.
- **Tim Shane will continue handling scoring for the fall shows, with a goal to launch a live leaderboard on the website for 2027**, improving ongoing member engagement and clarity (54:13)
    - The leaderboard will track active members and their standings in real time.
    - This reduces end-of-year manual score reconciliation and surprises.

- **Show organizers and volunteer roles are better documented and streamlined via updated policies and procedures**, enabling quicker onboarding and less time commitment stress (17:40)
    - Brooke Schafer and others maintain updated show organizer documents.
    - The trailer and ring logistics are improved to speed show setup and operations.

Year-End Awards and Banquet Planning

Planning for the awards ceremony is underway with venue selection progressing and award criteria clarified to avoid past confusion.

- **Venue outreach for the December 11th year-end banquet underway, with Live Casino as the leading option pending budget approval next week** (24:57)
    - The date was chosen to avoid conflicts with common weekend holiday parties.
    - Alternative venues like Petroleum Club were also contacted.
    - Brooke Schafer leads venue and menu planning, supported by Julie and Caitlin.
- **Clarified award qualification rules emphasizing two Tri State shows required for eligibility**, addressing confusion from previous years (23:29)
    - Tri State schooling horse trials scores count as supplemental, not replacements.
    - Megan, a member outside the committee, is helping source awards but won't hold an official committee role.
    - The board supports having clear, published award rules in the next newsletter.
- **Board seeks a new awards committee chair to ensure continuity and smooth year-end processing**, with current members aligned on criteria but lacking leadership (21:43)
    - Tim Shane highlighted the need for a chair and incoming chair to maintain momentum.
    - The team includes Tracy, Amy, Julie Rusinski, Brooke, Carla, Roy, and Ainsley.

Action items

Tim Shane

- Share updated show organizer document and September show live details with the board by early next week to facilitate smooth event planning (19:12)
- Provide board members with detailed summary of Rhonda complaint findings via email for review; organize electronic vote on membership status by August 11; ensure official written notification to Rhonda after decision (42:18)

- Address confusion regarding meeting invitations and advise board members to avoid duplicate or confusing event creation; improve internal communication regarding official meetings to prevent miscommunication (46:45)
- Prepare clarifying disciplinary and grievance procedures aligned with Robert's Rules and update policies accordingly; collaborate with Suzanne Ellis as legal advisor to ensure compliance and clarity (28:22)
- Include new membership directory and sponsorship benefits in the August newsletter to boost recruitment and community engagement (31:28)
- Implement improved scoring process at fall shows with faster score posting and establish live leaderboard on website by 2027 to enhance participant experience and streamline awards tracking (54:13)

Debra

- Co-organize the September show alongside Samantha and familiarize with judge arrangements using updated policies and procedures to ensure event success (16:42)

Samantha

- Assist with September show organization and consider availability to switch with Katie Jo for October show if possible to optimize volunteer support (19:38)

Katie Jo

- Lead organization for the October 10thshow and coordinate with Gwen for volunteer support to ensure smooth event execution (19:46)

Brooke Schafer

- Continue banquet planning by securing venue and finalizing details including menu for December event; coordinate with Julie and Caitlin on logistics to ensure successful banquet (24:57)

Debra Davis