

Shelburne Fall Fair cancelled for second year in a row

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The Shelburne Fall Fair has been called off for the second year in a row with uncertainty still surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic.

The decision to cancel the annual event was announced last week in a letter on social media from the Shelburne District Agricultural Society. In the letter, Shelburne District Agricultural Society said the board of directors made the decision for the safety and well-being of the fair's volunteers, guests, and exhibitors.

"Right now we're not able to predetermine if we are able to have that many people on the fairgrounds at one time," said Sue Peterson, secretary for the Shelburne Fall Fair. "The health unit can't give us a concrete answer or direction, so as we did last year we've made the unfortunate decision."

The Shelburne Fall Fair was scheduled to be held from Sept. 18 to Sept. 20.

Peterson, in an interview with the Free Press, added the shortening time frame to organize the event has also played a part in the board's decision.

"We meet as a board monthly throughout the whole year planning the upcoming fall fair, it does take some time, and it does take pre-bookings," said Peterson. "Some of the kid's activities like inflatables you have to pre-book, you have to pre-book judges, you have to get sponsorship money and unfortunately in the times that we have had over the last year, it's made it really difficult to pull those items together."

"We can't put a full fair together in a couple of months."

The Shelburne Fall Fair has been a long standing annual event in the community for over a century and a half. According to the Shelburne District Agricultural Society the fair was first held in October of 1868 as a one day event at the roadside in Masonville. The last time the fair was cancelled prior to the pandemic was in 1917 during the First World War.

Despite the cancellation of the 2021 fall fair, the board optimistically notes that if circumstances surrounding the pandemic change there could be the possibility of hosting a few of the events.

"If there's a change that we can put something together in relation to livestock shows, then that's something we would look at," said Peterson. "But, right now unfortunately with the way COVID has dictated, we're not able to run a fair this year."