

THE PRAIRIE LAND COMPANY, Inc.

In late 1968 the Prairie Shufflers learned that they would lose the building they were leasing at 4th & Union because of a road-widening project. The best solution to this problem seemed to be to build our own hall, if we could get the financing required and set up an appropriate business structure to bring it all about. That business structure is what these few paragraphs are about.

A corporation named the *THE PRAIRIE LAND COMPANY* was formed in early 1969 to construct and own the square dance building we now know as *SHUFFLERS SHANTY*. It was necessary to hold title to the building separate from the SHUFFLERS in order to preserve the tax exempt status of the club. On the other hand there was a great concern that if the club did not own the building they might some day lose the place to dance, that they were just getting ready to devote countless hours of construction labor to build. To alleviate this concern there were three safeguards built into the business structure...and they have worked fine for 35 years. These safeguards are:

Purpose of the Prairie Land Company

In filing the Articles of Incorporation for the Prairie Land Company it was stated that the sole purpose of the corporation was to finance, build, own and lease a hall for square dancing. Thus, the dancers can not be evicted from the hall to convert it into some other use, without violating the corporation charter.

Lease With the Prairie Shufflers

The Prairie Land Company entered into an exclusive lease of the building with the Shufflers club, reserving the 3rd Sunday in May for the Annual Shareholders Meeting. The original lease was for 10 years with options for renewal in ten year increments, ensuring the Shufflers a place to dance for some time to come.

Board of Directors

The club has the responsibility to nominate 3 shareholding members and the Prairie Land Co. board nominates 3 shareholders to the board of directors.

While nomination does not ensure their election, said nominees have thus far been elected by the shareholders at the Annual Meeting.

And, that is a very brief summary of how and why the Prairie Land Company was formed. How the building was constructed is another story, briefly described as follows.

BUILDING THE SHANTY

To build the hall, the Prairie Land Company sold stock and borrowed money to buy the land and pay for materials. The Shufflers donated all the labor...and there was a lot of that required. The exception being, that erection of the block was done by a contractor...can you imagine umpteen volunteers following a *level* line !

The groundbreaking ceremony was held on March 29, 1969. Five busy months and many snack breaks and potlucks later (furnished by OUR GALS), the hall was ready in August to “dance in” our new hardwood floor. Another two months were spent finishing touches on the interior; such as, doors for the restrooms & cupboards and installing the suspended ceiling.

On October 18th a full day GRAND OPENING was held and SHUFFLERS SHANTY was officially in business....fifty one (51) squares in attendance.

“A LABOR OF LOVE”

For more details of the background, planning, organizing, securing use permits, “milestones” of the project, snapshots taken during construction and the “Sharing Our Story”, refer to the HISTORY BOOK prepared for this 35th Anniversary.

Bob Bush
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