



NEBRASKA STATE FAIR BOARD
Meeting Minutes
Friday July 15, 2022

A regular meeting of the Nebraska State Fair Board was held on Friday, July 15, 2022 at 1:00 PM at the Nebraska State Fair Board Room, Grand Island NE. Public notice of this meeting was published in the Grand Island Independent newspaper on July 9th & 10th, 2022; posted to the Nebraska Public meeting calendar website; and on the Nebraska State Fair website. The public was invited to attend in person.

Roll call was read with the following Board Members present: Bob Haag, Chair; Dawn Caldwell, Vice Chair; Tom Schellpeper, Treasurer; Boyd Strobe, via Zoom; Lanna Hubbard, via Zoom; Kevin Jorgensen; Jeff Kliment; Kathleen Lodi; Beth Smith; Tom Dinsdale; and Steve Wehrbein.

Others in attendance:

Bill Ogg, Executive Director; Jaime Parr, Deputy Executive Director; Eileen Dawes, Office Administrator; Vaughn Sievers, Director of Agriculture; Ray Massie, Marketing Director; Sam Foglesong, Sponsorship Director; Joe Ripp; Director of Operations; Karli Schulz, Director of Events, via Zoom; Joe Stump, AMGL- State Fair contracted accounting firm; Brandon Summers, Grand Island Independent, Kent Zeller, FFA.

Bob Haag announced the meeting had been properly advertised as an open meeting and informed those in attendance of the posting location of the Open Meetings Act.

Approval of Consent Agenda

Motion made by Boyd Strobe for Approval of Consent Agenda which included the Board Meeting Minutes of June 17, 2022.

Second by Steve Wehrbein.

Upon roll call vote, motion to approve consent agenda passed unanimously.

Approval of June Financial Report as presented by Joe Stump (balance sheet) and Jaime Parr (Profit/Loss)

Motion made by Kevin Jorgensen to approve the Financial Report.

Second by Beth Smith.

Upon roll call vote, motion to approve the Financial Report passed unanimously.

Board Committee Reports

Events committee report by Steve Wehrbein

- Slate of Grand Marshals full
- County Fair Day and Board Reunion are on same day – working on getting Farm Families for Aksarben here same day to recognize them.
- Veteran’s Day is Tuesday, August 30th at 3:00 in Heartland Events Center - Have Grand Marshal and keynote speaker.
- Opening Ceremony is August 26th at 11:00 am. Local dignitaries committed to attend.
- Parades everyday (Saturday & Sunday @ 2:00, other days are @ 6:00 pm, and Labor Day @ 1:00 pm)
- Tractor Pull and Demo Derby, Sept 4th & 5th
- Bull Fighting in 5 Points Bank Arena
- Nebraska’s Largest Classroom – ground attractions already picked

- 2-Day Circus
- Upgrading floats with new skirts and repainting
- Car Show – Saturday, September 3
- Tina & Janna worked on Historical Timeline downstairs (Nebraska Building) – adding more photos and new shelving/cabinet with new State Fair items to kiosk

Facilities Planning report by Dawn Caldwell

- Recognized team for having level and scope of work done that they have already done
- ARPA funding – TODAY (July 15, 2022) is the day when department was to present to the Legislative Executive Committee for review and approval. Timeline may be slowed down by Covid.
- Project submitted to DOEE (Department of Environment & Energy) was well received (Waste Water and Clean Water Project MUST be dealing with WATER on everything included)
- 1868 Foundation funded Master Plan to guide committee
 - Introduced “Rooftop Bar” (gathering facility) on top of the current “Barn Bar”
 - Phone calls to Chris Kotulak (Fonner) and Terry Galloway (1868 Foundation), and Tom Dinsdale – all were supportive of the project.
- In the spirit of promoting enthusiasm for this future project:

Dawn Caldwell motioned to begin planning and progress to move forward with a rooftop facility on the “Barn Bar” and ask the 1868 Foundation for fundraising.

Beth Smith seconded.

Upon roll call vote, motion passed.

Agriculture Committee report by Jeff Kliment

- Storage around the hog barns has been eliminated. Cleanup appears to be ahead of schedule.
- Discussed move-in schedule, have help lined up to make transition smoother this year.
- Show schedule finalized. Judges lined up. Working on hotel rooms.
- Aksarben – finalizing details.
- GILCA – finalizing summer shows and working on bids for next year.

Finance Committee report by Beth Smith for Boyd Strobe. (Boyd is on Zoom)

- Joe and Jaime led through financial reports. We’re in great shape this year.
- Bill has finalized the naming rights renewal with 5 Points Bank. Grateful for continued partnership.
- Commitment was made to follow rules when we receive them for ARPA funding.
- During Covid we took advantage of an SBA loan with very low interest rate. We will start making payments this November.

FFA report by Kent Zeller for Ryan Hassebrook.

- Spoke with Ag teachers in early June. Trying to get younger teachers on board with registrations.

4-H report by Kathleen Lodi

- Prime time to be in 4-H if you’re a Fair lover.
- Two County fairs wrapped up last week. Twelve going on right now.
- 4-H shows are back to what they were pre-Covid.
- Goats seem to be quite popular this year.
- Poultry/rabbit exhibits also up this year.
- No major changes this year. Full packed agenda on static & livestock side (presentations, contests)

Executive Committee report by Bob Haag - did not meet this month

Department Staff Reports

Events report Karli Schulz

- Welcomed Marissa Porter from Dallas, TX – helping plan Entertainment, helping facilitate concerts
- Also, Latino Advisory Committee resurrected from 2019 – Event Sunday, September 4 at Party Pit Stage (entertainment, music, dancers, car showcase & other activities)
- Largest Classroom – 1800 youth & adults coming on Friday, August 26, and Tuesday & Wednesday – still seeing people registering for that event. New activities for youth as well.
- Activity Acres – revamping area, adding activities for young children so they can have somewhere to play.
- Finalizing details for State Fair Marathon and Bill Marshall Volleyball Classic.
- Finalizing plans for local and regional talent, especially on Party Pit stage. Schedule will be put out to public in next couple of weeks.

Sales Report by Jaime Parr for Holle Evert

- Communications with vendors – securing second half payments, signed contracts, and certificates of insurance. Over 87% of their payments are collected to date.
- Communications with outside partners – Artic Ice, Pepsi, decorators, tent setups.
- Meeting with building superintendents, campground hosts, and shipping coordinators.
- Vendor meetings that they would like to have board present at:
 - Thursday, August 25th at 4:30
 - Tuesday, August 30th at 8:30
 - Reminders will be sent
- Hand outs – Request for Board Members 2022 Schedule
 - Overview, first draft
 - Will also be sent to board members who are absent today
 - Opportunities for participation for each day of State Fair
- Aksarben contracts and payments coming in (everyone returning plus some new vendors)
- Aksarben Tradeshow and Campgrounds have been added to Junk Jaunt Shopper's Guide

Agriculture by Vaughn Sievers

Competitive Exhibits / 4-H Static / FFA Static / 4-H Dog Show

- Getting a kiosk ready for People's Choice Overall Sweepstakes Winner
- Online Entries for CE opened July 1st and 4-H/FFA Opened July 9th
- Taped off the new areas in the concourse and have met with several superintendents to check out their new areas
- Monthly goal: Have premium changes done in ShoWorks by August 15th

Agriculture (Education)

- Avenue of Breeds – Still looking for volunteers to help during the day
- Birthing Pavilion – Looking for dairy cows that will calve during State Fair.

Livestock/Equine

- Judges – Communicate with judges about hotel rooms, flights, etc.
- Entries – Both livestock and equine are open.
- Social Media – Pushing entries along with fair rules.
- Monthly Goal: To share weekly on both area's social media to promote entries during the month of July and into August.

Aksarben

- The broiler order has been submitted to Welp Hatchery.
- As of Tuesday, July 12th at noon, there have been 3,303 DNA envelopes entered!
- The Grand Drive Reception and Event will take place Saturday, September 24th. The reception will begin at 5:30 pm and Grand Drive will begin at 7:30 pm
- Goal: Finalize Showmanship Judges

- Working on closeouts for Summer 2022 GILCA shows
- Waiting on fall show contracts

Operations report by Joe Ripp

- Capital Expenditures List
 - Outdoor concert area has been awarded to Island Land Handlers
 - Starting July 21, estimated end time August 5
 - Shade structures – ordered 11. Approximate delivery date of July 25
 - Bleacher repair done
 - Believe we've found suitable cleaning vehicle in Holdrege
 - 5 Points Bank arena video cameras on west side, planning finish week of August 1
 - Sheep & goat pens have arrived
 - Backup cameras have arrived
- Last month's activities
 - Landscape committee – plants are growing well, invaded by Japanese beetles again
 - Hand-spraying with soap and water
 - Also treating plants with chemical for prevention
 - Windmills – Restoration and preservation of Fairbury motor not going well
 - Parts very difficult to find
 - We don't care if it pumps water, want it to spin
 - Fan blades and tail are in decent shape – salvageable
 - New windmill planned for south side of ACP entrance; contractor backed out. Not sure if we'll be getting that windmill. Possibly use motor and blade from new to repair old.
 - Show planning & Setup
 - Have been able to get in early and get things done (not set up yet, but getting materials to buildings now will save much time later.)
 - Vaughn has helped move Competitive Exhibit shelving
 - Able to get into Big Red Barn – Hall County won't be using this year.
- F150 hail damage – will be repaired in mid-August.
- Met with NMC & Middleton Electric for generator and power distribution during Fair
 - Edgar Mendoza (Middleton Electric), Matt Middleton, Jaime, Holle
- Everly Plumbing meeting planned for July 21 – water for vendors
- Holly Darl bleachers – all wind damage fixed and working properly
- Maintenance, mowing & upkeep – underground sprinklers were repaired in spring, has helped a lot
- Float repair – Volunteer Day July 13th – improvements prompted more work, ongoing
- Sand room being cleared (40 yds of sand) to make way for Veterans exhibit
- Oil & fuel filter repairs, tires checked on UTV's, telehandler, skid steer
- ARPA updates – deferred to Dawn Caldwell
- Probably no facilities meeting in August

Marketing by Ray Massie

- 29,771 tickets have been sold so far to everything we have at the Fair, 10,700 of which are to EVENTS
- 83% of talent costs are covered right now
- Pump & Pantry, Hometown Pass (Home Federal) – great partnerships
- New Gatebook is compelling and will help sell tickets
 - Holograms inside 12 books – someone could win \$1,000
 - 11 VIP packages inside Gatebooks – everyone can scan and be eligible to win
 - Great effort by Idea Bank Marketing and our team
 - Will be distributed earlier this year – placed in papers by 13th of August
- In middle of website provider selection – needs to be done by end of Fair (will choose within next week)
- 70% of marketing spend will occur over next 42 days

- Billboards, newspapers, television, OTT Marketing, social media
- News Channel Nebraska and Flood Communications – statewide promotion (announced at 1:00 today)
- Company has contributed \$50,000 to us in production and space across their 17 radio stations, their network, and their television stations – News Channel Nebraska Day at Nebraska State Fair – Tuesday, August 30th during Veterans Day.
 - Bill Ogg cut seven 90 second showcases about the Fair – will make them available soon.

Sponsorship report by Sam Foglesong

- June best month we've had in 2022 with sponsorship sales of nearly 250,000
- Some sponsors contributing: Mattress Hub, AMGL, Grand Island Casino Resort
- Should go over \$800,000.00 in total sponsorship by the end of June.
- Welcomed Whitney Witt to Hospitality Team.
- NSF will be hosting Grand Island Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours on August 4.

1868 Foundation update by Terry Galloway

- Welcomed Tom Middleton onto Board yesterday
- Accepted resignation of Don Dunn, will be looking for replacement
- Continuing to look for various funding mechanisms
- When Fair does well financially, it makes the Foundation's job easier
- A lot of interest in new Life Sponsors, people and organizations are eager to be part of Foundation & Fair
- Master Plan – not going to be put on shelf. Going to jump right into first project.
- 1868 Foundation's event this year:
 - The Great Steak Debate at VIP tent on east side of grounds on Friday night
 - VIP event on Sunday afternoon at 5 Points Bank Arena
 - Corn Dogs and Cocktails on Wednesday night
- Three events (above) to show appreciation for our supporters

Deputy Executive Director Report – Jamie Parr

- Meeting regularly with staff team. Weekly we go through payables and deposits (Flash Report) includes balance sheet, general ledger balance, and bank account balances.
- Recognized team for their attention to and respect for the budget.
- Meeting one-on-one with directors and seasonal managers
- Box Office open and operating Monday, Wednesday, Friday from 10am – 3pm
- Beverage department
 - Completed research on POS systems
 - Working on layouts for new concert venue & setups
 - Walk-around license – City Council approved. Looking forward to hearing from State Liquor Control Commission soon.
- Vendor Exchange Office up and ready to go
 - Making arrangements for handling and for reports, beverage POS systems speak to our Vendor Exchange Office so Bill can provide numbers to Board during State Fair
- Gates department engaging with 2021 employees
- Human Resources helping with new timekeeping system as well as payroll tax forms details
- HR also conducted a DiSC Personality Activity with staff. Will expand on training in October.
- Had a full extended staff Fair planning meeting in June – CPR and basic first aid Stop the Bleed training
- Later this month we'll have another extended staff meeting: active intruder training & more planning
- Aksarben Stock Show planning – better plans for Grand Drive, vendors, livestock
- Partner agreements:
 - EMS – provided by the City of Grand Island Fire & Safety
 - Cornhusker State Games opening ceremony tonight
 - Volunteers – Haley Roush incoming volunteer coordinator, Courtney Glock still here this year

- Haley and Jaime presented to a local community group, The Newcomers, yesterday.
- Currently have over 400 signed up, but still have positions available in afternoon/evening, particularly on Labor Day weekend.
- Still hiring for some seasonal positions. Working with Department of Labor: Walk-In Wednesdays
- Nonprofit groups can earn stipend for helping at State Fair

Executive Director Report – Bill Ogg

- Represented State Fair and Aksarben at the North American Livestock Show and Rodeo Managers Association’s Annual Meeting this week.
- Encouraging to have our County Fairs doing well. They are the feeder system leading up to State Fair.
- State Fairs lead to National events – all are doing well this year. People are looking to get back to interaction and socialization.
- 3800 Fairs and Livestock Shows annually across the nation. 90% occur in July & August – It IS Fair Season!
- History shows that when economy takes a hit, public takes advantage of entertainment bargain of Fair.
- NALS RAMA was held in conjunction with Calgary Stampede.
- Financials – several Board members are taking vested interest and asking questions. Thanked them for their engagement and involvement.
- Fair setup – No national shows this month. Turnaround is much easier.
- Recognized Joe Ripp for his attention to Fair partnerships and equipment maintenance.
- Our first Business After Hours, August 4. Encouraged staff participation in nurturing community relations.
- Request of Board Members... please reach out to your local Rotary Clubs, Kiwanis, Lions, Chambers of Commerce, try to participate in their programs on behalf of the Fair. Extend to all Nebraskans a sincere invitation to come to the State Fair.
- People look to the State Fair as a business opportunity and a social opportunity. This needs to be THE premiere agricultural exhibition for all species, all breeds, etc. That is not meant to cannibalize any of other good shows, it’s meant to complement. We’ll gain much more by being synergistic than we ever will by being competitive.

Other business

Bob Haag opened discussion of date for next board meeting. At the Board Committee meetings, it was recommended to have three set meetings during the Nebraska State Fair: August 26, Wednesday, August 31, and Monday, September 5. All will be held in the Board Room in Nebraska Building.

Adjournment

Motion made by Steve Wehrbein to adjourn the meeting

Second by Tom Schellpeper

All in favor vote, motion passed.

Minutes of July 15, 2022

Nebraska State Fair Approved:

Date: August 26, 2022

By: _____

Tom Schellpeper, Board Secretary