



NEBRASKA STATE FAIR BOARD
Meeting Minutes
Friday April 15, 2022

A regular meeting of the Nebraska State Fair Board was held on Friday April 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 April 8 & 9, 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, Secretary; Boyd Strobe, Treasurer; Ryan Hassebrook; Lanna Hubbard, via Zoom; Kevin Jorgensen; Jeff Kliment; Kathleen Lodl, via Zoom; Beth Smith; and Steve Wehrbein.

Others in attendance:

Bill Ogg, Executive Director; Jaime Parr, Deputy Executive Director; Tammy Baker, Business Administrator; Eileen Dawes, Office Administrator; Holle Evert, Director of Sales; Vaughn Sievers, Director of Agriculture; Ray Massie, Marketing Director; Sam Foglesong, Sponsorship Director; Joe Ripp; Director of Operations; Karli Schulz, Events Director; Joe Stump, AMGL- State Fair contracted accounting firm, via Zoom; Mark Fahleson, Rembolt Ludtke, via Zoom, and Steve White, NTV News.

Bob Hagg 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 March 18, 2022.

Second by Dawn Caldwell.

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

Approval of March Financial Report as presented by Joe Stump and Jaime Parr

Motion made by Dawn Caldwell to approve the Financial Report.

Second by Kevin Jorgensen.

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

Board Committee Reports

- Agriculture Committee report by Jeff Kliment
 - Competitive Exhibits moving along
 - Ag education - Avenue of Breeds moving to a new location with new superintendent
 - Equine, judges and superintendents – all being arranged
 - Made a few minor changes to Livestock exhibition rules and protest procedures
 - Approved set of rules for the 2022 State Fair along with formal protest form

Board Ratification of 2022 Livestock Rules and Regulations and the formal protest form

Motion made by Jeff Kliment

Second by Tom Schellpeper

Upon roll call vote, motion to ratify 2022 Livestock Rules and Regulations and formal protest form passed unanimously.

- **Aksarben hiring judges and finalizing schedules, Challenge program all going well**
- **GILCA shows coming up putting proposals together.**

- **Events committee reports by Steve Wehrbein**
 - **Karli, events director office very organized**
 - **Still need a few more grand marshal applications (3 leftover from last year)**
 - **Opening ceremony probably first day around 10 or 10:30 in the market place**
 - **County Fair Day on August 27th, first Saturday**
 - **Board reunion at 10:00, followed by parade**
 - **Veteran's Day Tuesday, August 30 at Heartland Events Center at 3:00**
 - **Marching bands, tractor pull (Sun), Demolition Derby (Mon)**
 - **Working on historical timeline for video board kiosk downstairs**
 - **Trying to find some more materials for Aksarben display**

- **Facilities Planning report by Dawn Caldwell.**
 - **Joe (Operations Dept) went over capital expenditures, rfp's have been put out, some already accepted, and projects are underway**
 - **Outdoor concert area is going to be graded, rock to be put down by track, better crossing area to prevent damage to track.**
 - **General repairs/maintenance, from bleachers to interiors of buildings – working with Fonner Park**
 - **some due to wear & tear**
 - **some added security (cameras in areas)**
 - **backup cameras on equipment (skid steers in particular)**
 - **Governor DID sign bill for ARPA funds. NSF named in legislation to receive \$20,000,000 for water control – will have to be a water/sewer type project.**
 - **Working to make sure everything we execute with grant funds fits inside rules and guidelines of legislation – get approved within next 88 days to secure grant.**

- **Finance Committee report by Boyd Strope.**
 - **Reviewed the monthly financial reports as presented by Joe Stump & Jaime Parr**

- **4-H report by Kathleen Lodl.**
 - **New public speaking events, one topic-based and one video-based**
 - **Poultry – working with Dept of Ag and State Veterinarian to make sure all guidelines are followed.**

- **FFA report by Ryan Hassebrook.**
 - **State FFA convention in Lincoln successful event**
 - **Planning schedule for FFA portion of NSF coming up**
 - **Updated FFA Premium book. Should be available online May 1 (target) depending on finalization of 2022 NSF General Livestock Rules & Regulations**
 - **FFA in State of NE is growing – fostering interest in FFA**

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

Department Staff Reports

- **Agriculture by Vaughn Sievers**
 - Working on schedule for Competitive Exhibits to post on website
 - Fine Arts department will NOW allow exhibitors to sell art during fair
 - Livestock/Equine schedules posted on website and shared on social media April 1
 - Brainstorming ideas to enhance exhibitors' experience. Networking with other shows and junior breed associations for ideas.
 - Aksarben intern application is due today (April 15).
 - Rearranging budget slightly to accommodate three interns instead of two. Have received handful of applications so far.
 - DNA envelopes – ordering process getting started/envelopes going out
 - GILCA – walk thru with Charolais group & hosting tour for Shorthorn Association this week.

- **Events report by Karli Schulz**
 - Sent rfp's few months ago – Sure Sound was successful company for national acts & fairgrounds production
 - National level free entertainment confirmed
 - Local regional acts
 - Facebook/Instagram program launched –announce new/free entertainer every Friday until end of July - One-man band, Cirque Maseo
 - Working with Nebraska Sports Council – new sporting events
 - Sports field events will be announced officially May 5 at Volunteer Banquet (tickets go on sale the following Friday)
 - Latino advisory committee meeting – want to start up again after a few years off
 - Still looking for Events Manager and a couple of interns

- **Marketing by Ray Massie**
 - Offered personal background as first Board Meeting
 - Far ahead in concert revenue 2022 over 2021 per days on sale
 - Extensive modernization of Gate Book will be done
 - New Content Management System for Statefair.org (current site has run its course)

- **Sponsorship report by Sam Foglesong**
 - Contact with 100% of sponsors
 - 10 potential new sponsors
 - Billing multi-year agreements worth \$98,000
 - Ensuring proper ROI for State Fair
 - Wants sponsors to consider Nebraska State Fair a good business decision

- **Operations report by Joe Ripp**
 - Capital expenditure list
 - Trying to get materials ordered ASAP
 - Concert area will be rocked for trucks to unload & stage placement
 - Shade structures
 - Bleacher repairs
 - In search of cleaning vehicle
 - New speakers for board room
 - Light poles for Libby lot ordered – to be done by August
 - Street & area signage on planters
 - Security & backup cameras ordered

- Sheep & goat pens – newer, lighter, cleaner
 - Landscape committee kickoff meeting (Sheila Olson coming back to help)
 - Working with local football teams (volunteer time to help set up pens)
 - Golf carts, tractors & trams (vendors booked up, piecing together a plan)
 - Show planning – ag team, sales helping out with information
 - Parade float – materials ordered
 - Inventory – tables, chairs, counted, fixed, replaced
 - Working on repair list for Fonner Park
 - Bob Haag mentioned new entryway. Joe thinks he can get it set up
- **Sales by Holle Evert**
 - Expo building nearly full
 - New layout & themed area in 4-H/FFA building
 - Outdoor marketplace layout/east end activities (new life, new name)
 - All concessionaires have committed to return
 - UNL Dairy Store to have two locations
 - IAFE Commercial & Concessionaires committee – supply shortage
 - Met with Fair vendors
 - CCC Earth Day in Kearney & GI, Chamber ribbon cuttings, attended Dist 3 & 4 meetings
 - Road cleanup – end of month

1868 Foundation update by Lindsey Koepke

- Not in attendance this month

Deputy Executive Director Report – Jamie Parr

- Weekly staff meetings, sharing payables with Exec & Finance Committees & review with staff weekly
- Tammy Baker, Business Administrator working on a few specialty projects/research
- Volunteer Coordinator hired – Haley Roush/shadowing Kourtney Glock
- Reviewing rfp's – still open, shuttle buses (remote parking to fairgrounds) Monday, April 18 deadline to receive proposals.
- HR Consultant, Kate Statz – employee evaluations, company vehicle & time compensation policies
- Abbreviated evals to start, full plan in October – goal setting & check in with each staff member on 6-month basis, and some meetings in between
- Box Office up and running, Beverage, Gates, and VEO also on board
- Challenges with staffing (especially seasonal)
- IAFE Management Conference – networking; also, Maricopa County Fair
- Leadership Tomorrow – beneficial program. One day at State Capital met with senators and Governor Ricketts.
- Manufacturing – CNH, Hornady, GI Economic Development (Chief Industries – development in our community)
- Insurance renewals
- Stock show – distributed lambs
- Liquor license submitted – waiting to hear back on walk-around license
- Emergency Action Plan – will bring back to Department Head meeting (cheat sheet)
- Organizational outreach – Library's Bear Fair, District meetings, entertainment apps, booth space apps... plenty of opportunity to be involved
- Grand Island High School Career Fair – seasonal job postings on March 31.
- Today's Day at the Races. NSF sponsored blanket race.

Executive Director Report – Bill Ogg

- **Recognized newness of staff. Praised them for commitment and accomplishments.**
- **Follow up on Aksarben**
 - **Challenge steers went out several months ago, lambs a few weeks ago, hogs first weekend in May.**
 - **Recognized Tejlor (Challenge Program) and Kelsi (Aksarben Stock Show manager).**
 - **Will continue transition away from auction to guaranteed purchase premium, will finalize amounts soon (will not be less, based more on what we collected last year)**
- **Biggest challenge is preserving, but freshening traditional events we just have to have**
- **Bringing in new activities and attractions**
- **Local Latino Organization praised the fair. Appear to accept a sincere invitation to participate.**
- **Sponsorships, 100% of past sponsors visited... reaching out to statewide, Midwest and national sponsorships, invigorated interest – budge appears to be behind, but Bill predicts we will be ahead of projections in two months.**
- **Welcomed Steve White from NTV.**
- **Facilities getting work done through appropriate processes... seeking bids and pricing.**
- **Perennial supporter of the fair, soft drink providers – asked for proposals – exclusive or shared. Prefers shared. Better serves our fair goers & attendance. Healthy competition.**
- **Holle Evert – taking on much broader support than her own area**
- **Judged speech contests at state FFA Convention last week**
- **Overall fair planning, big ideas in place, but still tremendous amount of details that need worked out. Efforts will lead to improved, more attractive environment for our guests.**
- **Reconfiguration of parade route will cause other issues... a lot of internal negotiations.**
- **Concerts - generally do around 1/3 of ticket sales at on sale, another 1/3 from announcement to about 2 – 3 weeks prior to event, heavy advertising in the last period will bring the other 1/3. Last year 50% of ticket sales in the last 10 days prior to fair. Too scary to wait for that. Earlier commitment yields stronger fair.**
- **Invested double in talent this year. (\$800,000 worth of talent with Fair investment of \$575,000)**
- **\$40,000 worth of advertising invested, now fairly quiet until right before fair. Great job with social media, being strategic. Idea Bank Marketing has been very helpful.**
- **Overall, half-way to recovering talent costs.**

Other business

**Future Nebraska State Fair Board Meeting Dates and Locations
Friday, May 20th, 2022, in Grand Island, NE**

Thursday, May 19th – 1868 Foundation Annual Event – Bill encouraged Board members to come in early for that.

There may be committee meetings scheduled prior to the 1868 meeting in preparation for some decisions that need to be made during the board meeting on the 20th.

**May 5th – Volunteer Banquet at Pinnacle Expo Center
Bob Haag plugged Volunteer Banquet also**

Adjournment

**Motion made by Jeff Kliment to adjourn the meeting
Second by Steve Wehrbein
Upon vote, motion passed unanimously.**

Minutes of April 15, 2022
Nebraska State Fair Approved:
Date: May 20, 2022

By: 
Tom Schellpeper, Board Secretary