



## NEBRASKA STATE FAIR BOARD

Palm Room, Ramada Conference Center, 301 2<sup>nd</sup>. Ave., Kearney, NE

### MEETING MINUTES

January 24, 2020 – 2:00 p.m.

A regular monthly meeting of the Nebraska State Fair Board was held on Friday, January 24, 2020 at 2:00 p.m. Public notice of this meeting was published in the January 14 & 15, 2020, issues of the Grand Island Independent newspaper and posted to the Nebraska Public meeting calendar website from January 1, 2020 – January 31, 2020.

Roll call was read with the following members present: Stan Brodine; Dawn Caldwell; Bob Haag; Jeremy Jensen; Chris Kircher, President; Jeff Kliment; Kathleen Lodi; Chuck Rolf, Secretary; Kirk Shane, Vice President; Beth Smith; Steve Wehrbein and Kent Zeller. Others in attendance were: Lori Cox, Executive Director; Tish Eckstrom, Executive Assistant; Laura Hurley, Experiential Partnerships; Greg Harder, Chief Operations Officer and Aksarben Stock Show Director; Jamie Parr, Chief of Sales; Scott Yound, Director of Operations; Terry Galloway and Lindsey Koepke, 1868 Foundation; Ryan Hassebrook; Pat Wood and Tammie Ryan, The Source Management Group.

Kircher 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.

#### **Minutes of December 13, 2019**

Haag requested the discussion of the MOU between the NSF and the Aksarben Foundation be added to the Aksarben report portion of the December minutes. Haag also requested the discussion of the Brunk and Luebbe lot leases be added to the December minutes

**Motion made by Shane to approve the amended minutes of December 13, 2019.**

**Brodine seconded the motion. Upon voice vote, motion passed unanimously.**

#### **Executive Director's Report**

Cox introduced Pat Wood and Tammie Ryan of The Source Management Group who will be handling the grounds entertainment for the Fair.

On the concert front, Cox reported being on the cusp of announcing the country concert bundle with Y-102 radio station.

Nebraska State Fair was the recipient of several awards from IAFE. They are as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> place -crises communications category-Emspace
- Awards of Excellence for
  - NE State Fair Single Ticket Sales Social Campaign –Swanson Russell
  - 150<sup>th</sup> NE State Fair Video –Swanson Russell
- Award of Merit
  - NE State Fair Community Management –Swanson Russell
- 1<sup>st</sup> place- Newspaper ad- black and white

- 2<sup>nd</sup> place- Social Media campaign
- 2<sup>nd</sup> place- Promotional Event
- 1<sup>st</sup> place- New single class of competitive exhibits
- 1<sup>st</sup> place- New division of competitive exhibits
- 1<sup>st</sup> place NAMA award- 2019 Nebraska State Fair Flood Video-Swanson Russell
- Merit NAMA award- 2019 Nebraska State Fair Campaign –Swanson Russell
- Merit NAMA award- 2019 Nebraska State Fair Entryway-Swanson Russell

Cox reported on a meeting with the banking partners, Executive Board members, Jeremy Jensen, and Randy Skalka. The meeting was led by Five Points Bank and included discussion on the ambitions and position of the balance sheet of the Nebraska State Fair.

Sponsorships- Laura Hurley reported she had met with 24 sponsors, 12 of which were new and 12 existing. \$79,500 has already come in from sponsorships and 3 sponsors have booked VIP nights for the concerts.

Sales- Jaime Parr reported sales revenues coming in with deposits ahead of where we were last year at this time. The campground is filling up and already booked full over Labor Day.

#### **Aksarben Report**

No Aksarben report was presented.

Haag inquired about the finances of Aksarben and discussion followed.

#### **Financial Report**

Cox reported December 2019 year end total current operating revenues \$5,357,937; total current operating expenses \$10,670,003; change in net position, (\$1,008,185). Total lottery revenues for 2019 were \$4,484,354, nearly \$1 million less than 2018 totals. Cox provided an update to the working cash flow report with a December final cash balance of \$329,080, better than the projected \$59,361.91. The first LOC payment will be applied in February as planned, with the April payment completing what is owed to the note.

Cox reported the work of cleanup in financial matters, including pulling Sage reports directly from the program, rather than a compilation of numbers from several reports as in the past. This improves accuracy and transparency.

Jensen noted that for the record he wished to dismiss any rumors of bankruptcy. Thursday's meeting with the NSF lending partners couldn't have gone better.

Cox stated that auditors BKD are being contacted to work through discrepancies found in recent months. The audit will transition to an April timeframe versus June. She noted that the company, Fair Advantage, which has more than 40 years in state fair financial experience, has been working with the team to help understand past overages and improve future revenues.

Cox noted the published newspaper article by Senator Halloran highlighting the work NSF has done to overcome last year's challenges, along with upcoming events for the 2020 State Fair.

Caldwell asked about the expense for Fair Advantage. Cox reported a fee of \$3,000 plus travel expenses and was within the 2020 budget.

#### **Motion made by Rolf to approve the Financial Report.**

**Jensen seconded the motion. Upon voice vote, the motion passed with 8 votes in favor, 1 vote against.**

**Elections**

Kircher noted that Districts 5, 6, and 7 would be holding elections on January 25. He thanked Kent Zeller, Kirk Shane, and Stan Brodine for their service to the Board.

**Committee Reports**

No committees met.

**1868 Foundation**

Terry Galloway recognized the 1868 Foundation members present at the meeting and thanked them for their dedication.

Galloway reported had a yearly \$94,000 profit without fundraising. The year-end campaign was not as good as previous years with a 36% decrease. Galloway stated the Foundation is committed to supporting the Nebraska State Fair. They are in the process of looking for new members and currently finishing up the budget for the next Foundation board meeting.

**Other Business**

No other business.

**Adjourn**

**Motion made by Shane to adjourn.**

**Brodine seconded the motion. Upon voice vote, motion passed unanimously.**

**Time adjourned: 2:54 pm**