



NEBRASKA STATE FAIR BOARD

Meeting Minutes

Friday October 14, 2022

A regular meeting of the Nebraska State Fair Board was held on Friday, October 14, 2022 at 1:00 pm at the Nebraska State Fair Board Room, 501 E Fonner Park Rd, Grand Island NE. Public notice of this meeting was published in the Grand Island Independent newspaper on October 7th & 8th, 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; Boyd Strope, Treasurer; Tom Schellepeper, Secretary; Kevin Jorgensen; Beth Smith; Tom Dinsdale; Jeff Kliment; Ryan Hassebrook; Lanna Hubbard; and Steve Wehrbein.

Others in attendance:

Jaime Parr, Deputy Executive Director; Tammy Baker, Business Administrator; Joe Stump, AMGL, via Zoom; Steve White, NTV; Eileen Dawes, Office Administrator; Mark Fahleson, Rembolt Ludtke; Karli Schulz, Entertainment & Events Director; Holle Evert, Sales Director; Amy Kelley, Livestock & Equine Manager; Joe Ripp, Operations Director; Ray Massie, Marketing Director; Michael Shively, News Channel Nebraska; Jeff Bahr and Brandon Summers, both of the Grand Island Independent; Steve White, NTV; and guests (3).

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.

Acknowledgement of Bill's resignation

Approval of Consent Agenda

Motion made by Tom Dinsdale for Approval of Consent Agenda which included the Board Meeting Minutes of September 5, 2022.

Second by Boyd Strope.

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

Approval of August & September Financial Reports as presented by Joe Stump, via Zoom; and Jaime Parr.

Motion made by Beth Smith to approve Financial Reports for August & September 2022.

Second by Lanna Hubbard.

Upon roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

Board Committee Reports

Events committee report by Steve Wehrbein

Year in review (2022 Fair)

61 marching bands

County Fair Day, same day as Board Reunion – both well attended

Next year will plan to engage farm families and Aksarben sooner in the year

2023 Opening ceremonies will be first Friday next year

Moving Veterans Day from Tuesday to Labor Day for 2023

Had 12 grand marshals this year. Will continue to add more.

Read a thank you note from Roy & Rosemary Anderson.

Broke down expenses at committee meeting, but Karli will address later in this meeting.

Facilities committee report by Dawn Caldwell

- Had guests at committee meeting this morning, Chris Kotulak, Fonner Park and Cindy Johnson, Chamber of Commerce because discussion on agenda items included ARPA funding.
- Discussed post Fair equipment repairs
- Opportunity to get dirt for number of areas on grounds that need to be built up, including concert area and tie-outs for only cost of freight and expense of leveling and packing. Great benefit to the Fairgrounds (Fonner Park and State Fair).
- Almost ready to turn grounds back over to Fonner Park – other events and attrition of some employees prohibited us from meeting the October 1 deadline.
- Working hard to make everything fit inside the State Revolving Fund (federal and state laws associated with the Clean Water Act). Governor's office working with us to categorize our projects so we can better align with the proposal we presented originally to the appropriations committee at the unicameral.
- Construction currently underway to change portions of the Concourse into a casino area. There will be some unique space we will try to utilize for the 2023 Fair.

Ag Committee Report by Jeff Kliment

- Finalizing profit/loss statements
- Getting premiums mailed out
- Finishing up post Fair financials
- Looking for competitive exhibit space
- Aksarben went well – working on financial closeout

Finance Committee Report by Boyd Strobe

- Joe & Jaime presented balance sheet and YTD profit/loss statements in more detail
- Discussed performing RFP for bar beverage service for 2023 Fair.
- Kelsey reported on Aksarben. Great feedback regarding show to date. Will provide more complete financials in November.
- Karli reported expense breakdown for concerts and is working on next year's lineup.
- 2023 budget presentation to board tentatively scheduled for November. Board should have a month to study and be able to present any changes needed at December meeting. Meeting this goal is ahead of previous year activity.
- GILCA – all parties involved understand there needs to be some business model changes. The Fair is meeting with GILCA frequently.
- Year-end reserve policies in place. Will review and set new reserve amounts. May start ear-tagging some projects, including ARPA.

FFA Committee Report by Ryan Hassebrook

- Thanked board members & staff for hours invested on behalf of the thousands of FFA students that participated in the 2022 Fair.
- Post Fair meetings with stakeholders, advisors, sponsors regarding what went well and what improvements are needed in consideration of increased programming and new programming for 2023.
- National FFA conventions happening now.

4-H Committee Report not given due to Kathleen Lodl's absence.

Executive Committee Report by Bob Haag

- Met with Personnel committee and discussed Executive Director position – job description will be advertised on websites: State Fair, IAFA, State Chamber of Commerce, Indeed, LinkedIn, etc.
- GILCA issues discussion – Jaime is working with GILCA Board to help improve the existing business plan.
- Success of the 2022 Fair.
- Dawn Caldwell thanked staff on behalf of the Board for 2022 Fair's success.

Staff Reports

Agriculture Report by Amy Kelley

Recognized team (Kourtney Lingeman, Competitive Exhibits and Kelsey Loseke, Aksarben Stock Show).

Thanked Board members for attending Supreme Drives.

Thanked Ag Committee.

Competitive Exhibits – new activities:

- **Plein Air brought in about \$1,400 in total sales**
- **New Pumpkin Patch very popular**
- **Front arch painted by local youth**
- **89.6% of exhibitors expressed satisfaction with 2022 Fair**

Livestock & Equine

- **Wall of Champions – cutouts of 4-H and FFA market animals**
- **Revitalization of Avenue of Breeds**
- **Ranch Rodeo widely attended**
- **Grand Island Grows – Celebrity Showmanship**
- **Among exhibitors, 87% expressed satisfaction with 2022 Fair**

Aksarben Stock Show

- **Exhibitors from 14 states**
- **Superintendent meetings**
- **Finances**
- **Brainstorming for 2023**

Events and Entertainment Report by Karli Schulz

- **Monica remains on staff. Marissa has left.**
- **Ticketed events for 2022 were well-attended, PL statements have been shared with Board**
- **Working on 2023 concerts & events**
- **Wonderful feedback from fairgoers and entertainers (grounds free entertainment) will start booking in next few months**
- **First year with Sure Sound Production Company was successful. Will renew agreement for 2023.**
- **Surveys – 189 total responses. 89.6% satisfied or very satisfied.**
- **Evaluating low attendance events to improve**
- **Reviewing 2022 budget and starting to work on 2023 budget**
- **Institute of Fair Management participation**

Marketing Report by Ray Massie

Marketing

- **Next Tuesday Sponsor Summit in Raising Nebraska area downstairs – 11:30 – 1:00**
- **New website – moving from Swanson Russell to Rockhouse**
- **Data survey overview**
 - **88% would attend 2023 Fair**
 - **90.5% felt safe at 2022 Fair**
 - **Complete presentation at Sponsor Summit next week**
 - **82.5% said they would recommend friends**
 - **1,065 people took survey**
 - **Continued value-building**

Sponsorship

- **Because of staff on-boarding, there was a shorter window to secure sponsorships this year. The team performed well within the time available.**
- **Previous contracts and fulfillment details are being compiled and reorganized.**
- **86% satisfied or very satisfied with personnel**

- Value received for sponsor dollar – 82% satisfied or very satisfied
- How satisfied were you with your sponsorship (\$895,000 total) 80% satisfied or very satisfied
- 55% of our sponsors participated

Operations Report by Joe Ripp

- Capital expenditures
 - Restarting search for cleaning vehicle
 - Backup cameras/alarms – issues with wiring (toned to call in professional help)
 - Dirt for motorsports and tie out areas
- Fair and Aksarben cleanup took a few weeks longer due to attrition of personnel
- Landscape Committee meeting schedule on October 18, 2022.
- Ongoing maintenance
- Equipment maintenance (a lot of hours over past few months)
 - Telehandler needs potentially expensive work
 - Scouts need new tires
 - UTV's in good shape (new)
 - CAT transmission problems
- Invoices and budgeting
- Future planning
- Personnel updates
- ARPA funding
- Casino & concourse plans

Sales Report by Holle Evert

- Teamwork Makes the Dream Work by John Maxwell – theme of Sales Dept.
- Presented charts
 - Experience with NSF personnel – 92.4% satisfied or very satisfied
 - 92.4% satisfied/very satisfied with NSF facilities.
 - Move-in, move-out experience – 90.2% satisfied or very satisfied
 - Pre-Fair application & payment process – 92.4%
 - Campground hosts acknowledged for their experience and personally knowing vendors
 - Concessionaires – 57 comparable food stands 36 were up an average of 40%, 2 were even or flat, 6 were down slightly, 4 down 10% or more. Nine new stands did not have a comparable number from 2021.
 - Turnover rate – Goal: 20% or less. Overall was 7%.
 - Aksarben vendors – smaller pool, comparable percentages

1868 Foundation Report by Lindsey Koepke (via Zoom)

- Strong August and September 2022
 - \$250,000 raised
 - Blue Ribbon kickoff – Great Steak Debate (nearly \$28,000)
 - Location great, could use more space for attendees.
 - Parking nearby huge plus
 - \$40,000 in sponsorship raised
 - \$27,000 from live auction
 - New donor generosity & membership upgrades
 - \$100,000 anonymous donation
- Balance sheet
 - 4.2mil compared to 847,000 last year
 - No specific project this year/ \$100,000 went toward Master Plan last year
- Look forward to great end of year campaign

Deputy Executive Director's Report by Jaime Parr

- **Weekly meetings with staff**
- **Thanked staff team & Fair Board for producing hugely successful 2022 Fair**
- **Survey results confirm event success and demonstrate efforts toward the strategic plan**
- **Completed transition of Volunteer Program – Chamber of Commerce to Nebraska State Fair. Huge thanks to Courtney Glock at the Chamber for her leadership and transitioning. Thank you to the Chamber for the many years of service to the Fair in the Volunteer Program.**
- **Aksarben Stock Show**
- **Harvest of Harmony Parade – we staffed two floats + walkers to hand out candy.**
- **Broilers (119) distributed to Salvation Army and to Hope Harbor, from 2022 AKSS Harvest**
- **Connect – Community health & wellness support connections.**
- **Grand Island Library**
- **Research & development experiences shared to the Team so far include:**
 - **Kansas State Fair**
 - **Clay County Fair (World's largest county fair in IA)**
 - **Aksarben Stock Show**
 - **Pumpkin Patch**
 - **NASCAR event in Kansas City**
- **Staff members registered for IAFE Convention – encouraged board participation**

Tom Dinsdale made motion to appoint Jaime Parr as Interim Executive Director (Bill Ogg has moved into Executive Director Emeritus status)

Boyd Strobe seconded the motion.

Roll call vote resulted in unanimous approval.

Jaime thanked Board.

Other Business – no other business

Adjournment

Motion made by Boyd Strobe to adjourn the meeting

Second by Tom Dinsdale


All in favor vote, motion passed.

Minutes of October 14, 2022

Nebraska State Fair Approved:

Date: November 18, 2022

By:


Tom Schellpeper, Board Secretary