



NEBRASKA STATE FAIR BOARD

Meeting Minutes Friday, May 19, 2023

The annual meeting of the Nebraska State Fair Board was held on Friday, May 19, 2023, at 1:00 pm at the Nebraska State Fair Administrative Offices in Grand Island, NE. Public notice of this meeting was published in the Grand Island Independent newspaper on May 12th & 13th, 2023; 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: Dawn Caldwell, Chair; Jeff Kliment, Vice Chair; Boyd Strope, Treasurer; Tom Schellpeper, Secretary; Bob Haag; Tom Dinsdale; Kevin Jorgensen; Kathleen Lodl; Lanna Hubbard, via Zoom; Brett Lindstrom; Ryan Hassebrook, via Zoom; and Steve Wehrbein. Absent: Beth Smith.

Others in attendance:

Jaime Parr, Executive Director; Tammy Baker, Business Administrator; Karli Schulz, Entertainment & Events Director; Ray Massie, Marketing Director; Shirley McCallum, Sponsorship & Hospitality Manager; Vaughn Sievers, Director of Agriculture; Tina Thuernagle, Operations Director; Lindsey Koepke, 1868 Foundation, via Zoom; Carla Warneke, Box Office & Volunteer.

Dawn Caldwell 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 Strope for Approval of Consent Agenda which included Regular Meeting Minutes of April 21, 2023.

Second by Tom Dinsdale.

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

Approval of April Financial Reports as presented by Jaime Parr.

Motion made by Tom Dinsdale to approve Financial Reports for April 2023.

Second by Steve Wehrbein.

Upon roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

Board Committee Reports

Ag Committee report by Jeff Kliment

- Fair planning: Entry books, judges, schedules
- Have revised rules & regs to present for 2023 Fair.
 - Has been discussed with a separate committee, livestock committee & lawyer.

Motion made by Jeff Kliment to adopt the 2023 Nebraska State Fair General Livestock Information & Regulations.

Second by Bob Haag.

Roll call vote: motion carried.

- Participated in advisory committee for Aksarben with people from IA, CO, MN, SD.

Events Committee report by Steve Wehrbein

- State Fair getting good coverage in Omaha World Herald – cited articles.
- Presented ticketed events schedule – up to date.
- Heritage & Pioneer Farm Family Awards – Events Intern, Olivia will be working on this.

- **Eight Grand Marshalls so far. Few more have applied.**
- **Haley and Kayliana working on Veterans Day program.**
 - **Speaker**
 - **Heartland Events Center**
 - **10:30 am**
- **Marching Bands – 39**
 - **Opening Ceremonies – Friday, August 25 at 10:00 am**
 - **Earl May Fair Square**
- **Updating Historical Display kiosks in Nebraska Building**
- **Muralist for Southwest wall**

Facilities Planning Committee report by Tom Schellpeper

- **Grounds looking great. Thanked Tina & crew.**
- **Capital purchases on track.**
- **ARPA update**
 - **Everything on schedule**
 - **Will be signing contracts & Memorandums of Understanding shortly.**
 - **Bid letting for dirt work around practice track area – work to start this fall.**

Motion made by Tom Schellpeper to give Jaime Parr authority to execute ARPA contracts.

Second by Kevin Jorgensen.

Roll call vote. Motion carried.

- **Tina is having a surplus auction on Auctiontime.com ending May 31.**

Finance Committee report by Boyd Strope

- **Jaime went over financials in more detail.**
- **Thanked Tom Dinsdale & Jaime Parr for working on Naming Rights**
 - **Pinnacle sign on west side of building – seeking quotes/options.**
- **GILCA Memorandum of Understanding**
 - **Three-year commitments of \$25,000 per year**
 - **Grand Island Convention & Visitors Bureau**
 - **Nebraska State Fair**
 - **Fonner Park**
 - **Grand Island Chamber of Commerce (will put money into sponsorships & promotion)**
 - **Need to update facilities scheduling system with Fonner Park.**
- **1868 Foundation**
 - **\$25,000 for Volunteers**
 - **\$150,000 for new screens**
 - **Awards increased by about \$40,000.**

4-H Committee report by Kathleen Lodi

- **Local County events happening right now.**
- **Challenge for month of June – Provide spark.**
 - **Workshops, camps, clubs – be the caring adult.**
 - **Direct questions to Kathleen regarding Fair entries.**

FFA Committee report by Ryan Hassebrook

- **June 15 deadline**
 - **4-H & FFA livestock exhibitors nominating and making animals eligible for State Fair**
 - **Pulling DNA**
- **Chapter Officer Leadership training**
- **Showcase supervised agricultural experiences in Grand Island at end of summer.**

Executive Committee report by Dawn Caldwell

- **No report for Executive, but in Beth's absence:**
 - **Jaime's 6-month feedback review with Exec/HR committee after today's meeting.**
 - **Board review annually (October).**

Staff Reports

Agriculture Report by Vaughn Sievers

- **Competitive Exhibits, 4-H Static, FFA Static, and 4-H Dog Show**
 - **Entry books are posted on Facebook and State Fair website.**
 - **IAFE article regarding how premiums are distributed.**
 - **Schedule pre-Fair meeting with superintendents by June 1st.**
 - **Video contest for exhibitors in 4-H, FFA, Competitive Exhibits, Equine, Livestock to post on social media to bring awareness to public.**
- **Livestock & Equine**
 - **Entries books posted on website as they are ready (most already up).**
 - **2023 ShoWorks changes.**
 - **Thanked Brett Lindstrom for equine special event contacts.**
 - **Met with Nebraska Department of Agriculture – initiated engagement and extended invitation.**
 - **Ferrier demonstration in Grand District for 2023 Fair.**
 - **Will have livestock hauler for public to view inside.**
 - **Finalize Barn Buddies details by June 15.**
- **Aksarben Stock Show**
 - **Interim Manager starting June 1 – Jacque Johnson**
 - **All judges' contracts signed.**
 - **T-shirt RFP completed.**
 - **College Day planned for 2023 Aksarben Stock Show.**
 - **Planning a few events for youth during AKSS to keep them occupied and safe.**
 - **Goal to set up superintendent meetings.**
 - **Goal to get entry books and schedule out by June 15.**
- **Ag Department**
 - **Aksarben Advisory committee established – promote involvement with people outside of Nebraska.**
 - **Onboard Interim Stock Show Manager**

Events Report by Karli Schulz

- **Hired intern for summer, Olivia Koenig.**
- **Nebraska's Largest Classroom and Marching Band registrations coming in.**
- **Working closely with Operations to update/new projects for Activity Acres.**
- **Stage and grounds attractions scheduled.**
 - **WOW Water Circus**
 - **Foam Zone**
 - **Chicago Honey Bear Dancers**
 - **Big Bee Transforming Cars**
 - **Other Fair favorites**
- **Working on gatebook, website, tickets, and updating packet information.**

Marketing & Sponsorship Report by Ray Massie

- **Mobile app will be available by June 15 – soft launch.**
- **Sell tickets, sell sponsorships, make sure everybody knows about it.**
 - **Projections very favorable**
- **Interviewing interns**
- **Robust Facebook organic campaign**

- **Community Outreach**
 - HEAR Grand Island – kick off June 2
 - Grand Island Fly-In – June 3
 - County Fair Tour – begins July 11
- **Pump & Pantry sales kickoff – July 7 (QR codes)**
- **Theme for 2024 Fair – conversations start June 15**
- **One more Flash Sale planned.**

Sponsorship & Hospitality Report by Shirley McCallum

- **As of end of April received or invoiced \$685,540.**
 - \$46,300 unearned income, not included.
- **Almost all of 2022 sponsors are returning. (Less than 10% are not)**
- **\$70,500 committed for new sponsorship to date (local and national).**
- **One new In-Kind Sponsorship (potentially 2 more)**
- **15 proposals are being reviewed by businesses currently.**
- **Will reach out to several contacts in coming weeks.**
- **Open to new sponsorship leads.**
- **Confirming dual sponsors (State Fair & Aksarben)**
- **Taking requests to book hospitality events.**
- **Tweaking customer management software.**
- **Will wrap up 2023 sponsorships in next month, then change focus to asset fulfillment & hospitality events.**

Operations Report by Tina Thuernagle

- **Welcomed Billy Lewis to Operations team.**
 - Building self-serve kiosks
- **Brian has been building up tie-outs for efficiency for exhibitors.**
- **Kreigl Windmill Museum staff helping to erect Eli Windmill tower in front of Aurora Coop Pavilion.**
 - Blades and fan to be put up next Tuesday.
- **Attended Goodwill Industries banquet.**
 - Nebraska State Fair honored for efforts as community partnership.
 - A number of our volunteers and workers come from Goodwill Industries.
 - Dawn thanked Tina for her efforts on behalf of Nebraska State Fair.

Sales Report by Jaime Parr

- **Operations & rental spreadsheet**
- **Disposable table covering orders.**
- **Working on outdoor layout. Indoor layout filled.**
- **State Fair CARES**
 - Will select 3 of 10 applications received.
 - Karli also receiving applications to take Fair to winner.
- **Aksarben applications coming in for trade show.**
- **Working with committee to come up with new ideas for exhibitor experience.**
- **Bi-annual roadside clean-up completed by Staff Team on Tuesday.**

1868 Foundation Report by Lindsey Koepke

- **1.3 mil in assets compared to 1.1 mil at this time last year.**
- **\$150,000 granted to replace screens in Livestock barns and 5 Points Bank arena.**
- **\$38,200 granted for 4-H & FFA Grand Reserve & Grand Champion winners in beef, swine, sheep & goat division. Increases premiums being given out.**
- **\$25,000 granted for Volunteer coordination.**
- **Funding chainsaw carver, Papa Bear. Proceeds auctioned off on 2nd Sunday at 2023 Fair.**

- **Current total support from 1868 to Fair in 2023, \$230,000.**
- **Getting ready to launch targeted state-wide campaign to emphasize need for statewide involvement.**
- **Also working with Idea Bank on local targeted audience campaign.**
- **Blue Ribbon rollout – Tom Dinsdale Automotive to be presenting sponsor.**
 - **Holle acquired bigger tent for event.**
 - **Fair secured turf grass from City of Grand Island.**
 - **Parking next door to event tent and clearly identifiable entrance.**
 - **Need better screens, audio, auctioneer.**
- **NEW in 2023, 1868 hosts a Raffle – 2023 Silverado 1500 Crew Cab RXT Diesel vehicle**
 - **In partnership with Tom Dinsdale Automotive**
 - **Online**
 - **Great potential for revenue**
 - **Proceeds to go toward infrastructure and renovation process at NESF.**
- **Working on grants for Aksarben.**
- **Annual Meeting of Trustees**
 - **June 22 at Riverside Golf Club**
 - **Invitations have been mailed.**
- **Board member recruitment**
- **Terry & Jaime met with Mayor Steele**
 - **Will present to City Council for potential funding for infrastructure.**
- **Onboarding new employee**

Executive Director's Report by Jaime Parr

- **Meeting 1:1 with State Fair Directors**
- **Group meeting with department heads twice per month**
- **Weekly staff meetings with full team & some extended staff**
 - **Cover financials, payables – transparency commitment**
- **Volunteer Banquet**
- **Volunteers working on Pre-Fair projects**
 - **Updating parade floats**
 - **Read 'n Win packets.**
 - **Putting together new furniture (for loft)**
 - **Landscape committee**
 - **Haybale committee (resurrected program)**
- **Grand District**
 - **Layout, attractions, exhibits**
 - **Begins at Big Red Barn and goes to east side of property.**
- **Met with Department of Ag**
 - **Updates**
 - **Invitation to participate.**
- **Focused on differing abilities of attendees.**
 - **Barn Buddies program**
 - **Low sensory room all 11 days of Fair**
 - **Also, low sensory date & time**
- **Aksarben Stock Show**
 - **Moving forward with commitments for scholarships & sponsorships & Challenge Program support.**
 - **Regular meetings two or three times a week**
 - **Advisory Committee**
- **Staff Trainings**
 - **Full & expanded team**
 - **Suspicious Behaviors**
 - **CPR & First Aid**

- Table talk exercises for potential weather incidents.
- Liquor services
- Billy Lewis onboarded – Operations team.
- Thanked Lindsey for support from 1868 Foundation.
- ARPA presentation – City Council June 6.
- Networking & community connections
 - Grand Island HELP (Helping Engage Life-changing Programs)
 - CVB Railside Partnership Celebration
 - Hunting for Hope Fundraiser
 - Go Big Give
 - Goodwill Awards Dinner
 - Safety webinar – de-escalation
 - Rotary meetings
 - Grand Island Library
 - Kiwanis
 - Roadside Litter Cleanup
 - 42.5 hours donated by team for month of April 2023.

Other Business – None

Motion to adjourn made by Boyd Strobe.

Seconded by Tom Dinsdale.

All in favor. Motion passed.

Minutes of May 19, 2023

Nebraska State Fair Approved:

Date: June 16, 2023

By:



Tom Schellpeper, Board Secretary