



NEBRASKA STATE FAIR BOARD
Meeting Minutes
Friday, December 15, 2023

The regular meeting of the Nebraska State Fair Board was held on Friday, December 15, 2023, at 8:30 am 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 December 12 & 13, 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, via Zoom; Jeff Kliment, Vice Chair; Boyd Strobe, Treasurer; Bob Haag; Kevin Jorgensen; Lanna Hubbard; Steve Wehrbein; Tom Dinsdale, via Zoom; Brett Lindstrom; Beth Smith; Ryan Hassebrook, via Zoom. Absent: Tom Schellpeper; Kathleen Lodl.

Others in attendance:

Jaime Parr, Executive Director; Tammy Baker, Business Administrator; Joe Stump, AMGL; Keaton Irwin, Sales Director; Karli Schulz, Events Director; Vaughn Sievers, Ag Director; Tina Thuernagle, Operations Director; Eileen Dawes, Office Administrator; Charlie Kolarik and Bill Bourne, Populous; Matt Gundersen, 1868 Foundation Board member; Jeff Bahr, Grand Island Independent.

Jeff Kliment 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 Beth Smith for Approval of Consent Agenda which included Regular Meeting Minutes of November 10, 2023.

Second by Bob Haag.

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

Financial Report by Joe Stump & Jaime Parr

Motion made by Boyd Strobe to approve Financial Report for November 2023.

Second by Steve Wehrbein.

Upon roll call vote, motion approved.

Board Committee Reports

Agriculture by Jeff Kliment

- Budgets
- Rule revisions
- Everything on schedule

Events by Steve Wehrbein

- No report

Facilities by Jeff Kliment for Tom Schellpeper

- Capital improvement requests.
- Master Plan

Finance by Boyd Strope

- Financials
- Budget review
- ARPA projects
 - Contracts to be in place by end of 2024.
 - Work to be complete by end of 2026.
- Jaime gave some details of 2024 budget.

Boyd Strope made a motion to adopt the 2024 Nebraska State Fair budget.

2nd by Beth Smith.

Roll call vote. Motion passed.

4-H Committee Report – Kathleen Lodi

- No report

FFA by Ryan Hassebrook

- Updates regarding added contests and offerings
- Feedback from 2023 rabbit and poultry show (first year) very positive.
- Ensuring good educational experiences in the future.

Executive Committee by Dawn Caldwell

- Jaime's annual review is completed for 2023

HR Committee – Beth Smith

- Reiterated Jaime's one-year performance evaluation is completed

Staff Department Reports

Sales by Keaton Irwin

- IAFE Convention in Salt Lake City, UT
- NICA Convention in Las Vegas, NV
- Returning Vendor Applications
- Attended two Ag Expos
- Bringing back the Nothing More Nebraskan Craft Show
- Volunteering at Nebraska Tourism booth at National Western Stock Show in January
 - And their vendor trade show

Marketing & Sponsorship by Jaime Parr

- Will be seeking Director to oversee Marketing and Sponsorship in January.
- Monica Kleinschmidt, Marketing Manager and Shirley McCallum, Sponsorship Manager helping with transition of department.

Events by Karli Schulz

- 2024 Concert lineup – goal to have all confirmed by Christmas.
- All non-concert events are confirmed. Will announce in April.
- Grounds entertainment ahead of schedule. Opening local and regional applications first of year.
- Reducing number of parades and grand marshals to six each.
- Making changes to Queen Meet & Greet Program.
- New marching band parade route
- IAFE Convention in Salt Lake City
 - Took over as Zone 5 rep for Young Professionals Steering Committee.
 - Graduated from Institute of Fair Management (IFM)

- Following week graduated with MBA.
- Will be participating in IAFE Graduate Program for Entertainment Management
- Getting ready for Zone 5.

Agriculture by Vaughn Sievers

- Make and Take space to help generate interest in different project categories.
- Kourtney attended the IAFE Convention. Also was a panelist during a workshop.
- Superintendent follow-ups
- Calf Challenge pickup December 2, 2023.
- Adding Livestock quiz bowl to the 2024 Aksarben Stock Show.
- Continuing weekly Rotary meetings, 1:1's with Ag Team
- Ag & CE IAFE awards

Jaime added that Vaughn graduated from the Institute of Fair Management.

Operations by Tina Thuernagle (via Zoom)

- Focused on SAFETY this month.
 - 20 hours CERT Training
 - Active Shooter Training
 - Updated safety guidelines for Nebraska Building and NSF Shop/warehouses.
- Completed RFPs for generators, light towers and power distribution.
 - Also RFPs for fuel for these items.
- Posted full-time position for Operations.
- Budget is complete for 2024.
- Preparing for NAFM & Zone 5.
- Capital Purchase wish list.
- AGR Cattle Show

1868 Foundation – by Steve Wehrbein for Lindsey Koepke

- Signed addendum to 2021 agreement with Populous for professional services.
- Introduced Matt Gundersen, new member of 1868 Foundation Board.
 - Matt spoke briefly giving some background and detailed some works in progress.

Executive Director's Report by Jaime Parr

- Master Plan w/1868 Foundation and Populous later in meeting
- CERT Training with Hall County 911 Emergency Management
- Active Assailant virtual training with CISA/DHS
- IAFE participant – presented to YPI group.
 - Attended Zone 5 meeting. NSF hosting in Lincoln in February.
- Regular meetings
- ARPA & Master Plan Project meetings
- Budget
- Capital Project List
- NAFM Annual Convention will be in Kearney and includes:
 - State Fair Board meeting on 19th at Crowne Plaza at 2:00
 - Ag Team will present a Livestock Workshop at 4:00 Friday.
 - State Fair Board Elections for District #1, 3, and 4 at 11:30 on Saturday
 - Ops and Ag Teams will present panel about Labor Force on Saturday
 - Staff will also present the State of the State Fair and Aksarben Stock Show on Sunday and will officially invite all Nebraska County Fairs to help with Zone 5 in Lincoln, on February 23 – 25. Trade Show booth throughout – will feature sign ups for the County Fair Tour this summer, as well as sign ups and opportunities during the 2024 Nebraska State Fair.
 - State Fair & 1868 will donate an auction package to the NAFM auction on Saturday evening.

Other Business

- None

Ten-minute break. Board meeting resumed at 9:46 am to discuss Master Plan.

Room was joined by Cindy Johnson with Grand Island Chamber of Commerce, Terry Galloway, 1868 Foundation Board Chair; Fonner Park Board Members: Pat O’Neill, Matt Maser, and Dave Hansen; Fonner Park Employee Mark Landis; Vince Fiala with Grand Island Casino Resort.

Discussion was led by Charlie Kolarik of Populous. 1868 Foundation and State Fair has asked to update the Master Plan and the room of stakeholders engaged conversation about any desired adjustments for future layouts and opportunities at Fonner Park Campus. Expo 2.0 is the one facility that has been added to the Master Plan, multiple locations were discussed for multiple surface improvements and garage parking options, equine barn and arena facility options were discussed, as well as land expansions, connecting walkways, and gateways onto and within the Fonner Park Campus.

Current and future ARPA (flood water mitigation) projects were discussed and recognized that ARPA projects are progressing with mindfulness of the master plan opportunity.

Potential funding for improvements were discussed.

Motion made by Boyd Strobe to authorize the Executive Director to execute necessary agreements for Master Plan projects, and Master Plan funding as determined and approved by the facilities committee.

Beth Smith second.

Roll call vote. Motion carried.

Motion to adjourn made by Boyd Strobe @ 2:30pm.

Seconded by Steve Wehrbein.

All in favor. Motion passed.

Next meeting: Friday, January 19, 2024 at 2:00 pm at Crowne Plaza Hotel in Kearney, NE.

Minutes of December 15, 2023

Nebraska State Fair Approved:

Date: January 19, 2024

By: 
Tom Schellpeper, Board Secretary