



**NEBRASKA STATE FAIR BOARD  
Meeting Minutes  
Friday, April 18, 2025**

The Annual meeting of the Nebraska State Fair Board was held on Friday, April 18, 2025, at 1:00 pm at Nebraska State Fair Administrative Offices in Grand Island, NE. Public notice of this meeting was published in the Grand Island Independent newspaper on April 11 & 12, 2025; 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: Boyd Strobe, Chair; Tom Schellpeper, Vice Chair; John McKeever, Secretary; Lanna Hubbard, Treasurer, via Zoom; Dawn Caldwell; Tom Dinsdale, via Zoom; Ryan Hassebrook; Kevin Havlovic; Kevin Jorgensen; Alan Kahle; Kathleen Lodl, and Beth Smith. Absent: Anna Castner Wightman.

**Others in attendance:**

Jaime Parr, Executive Director; Tammy Baker, Business Administrator; Chris Lindner, Forvis Mazars; Joe Stump, AMGL; Courtney Glock, Marketing Director; Nicki Stoltenberg, Sponsorship Director; Tina Thuernagle, Operations Director; Vaughn Sievers, Ag Director; Karli Schulz, Entertainment & Events Director; Keaton Irwin, Sales Director; Lindsey Koepke, 1868 Foundation; Carla Warneke, Box Office and Volunteer; and The Jeff and Sue Cook Family.

The March meeting of the Nebraska State Fair Board was called to order by Chairman, Boyd Strobe.

Boyd Strobe 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 Kevin Havlovic for Approval of Consent Agenda, which included Regular Meeting Minutes of March 21, 2025.

Second by Alan Kahle.

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

A donation was made to 1868 Foundation for Nebraska State Fair to restore and maintain windmills by Jeff & Sue Cook and Cook Family Farms. A check was presented by the family at the meeting.

Chris Lindner of Forvis Mazars presented a draft of audit results for the 2024 fiscal year. Final audit report will be presented for acceptance at the May 2025 Board meeting, next month.

**Financial Report by Joe Stump**

Dawn Caldwell moved to approve March Financials as presented.

Second by John McKeever.

Upon roll call vote, motion to approve passed unanimously.

**Board Committee Reports**

**Events Report by John McKeever**

- No report

#### Facilities Report by Tom Schellpeper

- No report

#### Agriculture Report by Dawn Caldwell

- No report

#### Finance Report by Boyd Strobe for Lanna Hubbard

- Reviewed audit draft in detail and will wait for final report.

#### FFA Report by Ryan Hassebrook

- No report

#### 4-H Report by Kathleen Lodl

- Jordan Carfield hired for Raising Nebraska position. Will start May 19, 2025.
  - Open house and greeting scheduled after June 2025 Board meeting.
- Hoping to update pivot for Raising Nebraska space.

#### Executive Report by Boyd Strobe

- Request made to the City (Mayor Steele and Laura McAloon, City Administrator) for 2.6 million support to the ARPA Projects. The City's support would go toward lighting, power and other IT connections (for internet and security), landscaping, seating, and shade structures. They fully supported the request and suggested they would support this request when presented to City Council on May 27.

#### Staff Department Reports

##### Operations by Tina Thuernagle

- Windmills
  - Secured services of Loren Lochman to start building the wheels and fins.
  - Collecting quotes to get towers painted.
  - All original hardware to be used.
- ARPA 2 Update
  - Drain cleaning, west ditch project
  - Street sweeper will be here first week in May.
  - All training will happen here on campus.
- Capital Purchases details
- Signage on grounds – Casino has installed some temporary signs
- City approval for two signs to be installed in south lot for trailer parking.
- Focus for April 2025 layouts
- Jumping Pillow update – complete.
- ARPA, director, weekly staff meetings
- GILCA – still on track & have completed intro walk-thus with
  - American Shorthorns in late June
  - American Dairy Goats mid-July
- Thankful for team and positive work environment.

#### Agriculture Report by Vaughn Sievers

- Attended FFA Convention – Staffed a great booth to invite FFA Members to the Fair and AKSS
- Challenge program pickup for lamb and goats
- Entry books (Livestock and CE posting May 1)
- DNA nominations opening soon for Aksarben Stock Show
- 4-H and FFA already running
- Equine – Mini and Carriage Show coming back this year

- Timing equipment for US Foods provided by 1868 Foundation.
- Rules & Regulations meeting next week.
- Meeting with state veterinarians
- Met with Advisory committee
  - AKSS requiring EID tags
  - Bedding cost and availability
- Jaime reminded of Swine Challenge on May 3
- Five sponsors there to meet with their kids at goat pickup.

#### Marketing Report by Courtney Glock

- Fairfluencers update
- Intern coming to Marketing Team in May
  - via Intern Nebraska funding
- Aksarben intern in Marketing dept – new this year
  - Increase social media presence
- Marketing Team has taken on Quiz Bowl and Public Speaking for AKSS
- Kaydee Alexander is Superintendent for Public Speaking (experienced from last year)
- 126 days until Nebraska State Fair

#### Sponsorship Report by Nichole Stoltenberg

- Partnerships
  - Teammates
  - HyVee and HyVee Corporate contacts
  - Grand Island Regional Bryan Health
  - Johnson Brothers
  - Nebraska Poultry Industry
- Possible Partners
  - Allo
  - Riddles Jewelry
  - Butler Machinery
- \$704,000 invoiced/contracts sent, \$442,000 in in-kind donations to date
- Naming Rights partnership \$133,500 per year
- Aksarben Stock Show Campaign
  - Secured \$173,500 to date

#### Events Report by Karli Schulz

- Events updates
  - Collecting registrations
  - Booking stages
- Grand Marshall applications due May 30, 2025
- County Fair Day August 23, reception 11:00 to 1:00 in 5 Points loft
- Marathon update
- Secured funding from Intern NE - \$20,000 for 4 interns

#### Sales Report by Keaton Irwin

- Began sending out vendor contracts – 53% received back already
- Sent out returning vendor agreements for AKSS
- Older Nebraskan Day applications sent (hopeful to take this indoors this year)
- Sending out Program Partners and Sustainability Partner contracts
- New vendor applications vs. space availability
- District 5 and District 7 meetings
- Central Nebraska Antique Tractor Club meeting

- Outdoor Marketplace – continuing to grow that area
- Spring Concessionaires Communications Committee meeting
- GI Public Library Bear Fair
- Set Your Sites – new campground partner received innovation award

**1868 Foundation by Lindsey Koepke**

- Cook Family donation for windmills
- \$20,000 grant confirmation for Aksarben
- Other grants – work in progress

**Executive Director's Report by Jaime Parr**

- Meetings
- Share payables with Finance committee and staff team
- ARPA 1 and 2
  - South of Heartland Events Center on track to have work completed before 2025 Fair.
  - City support as mentioned earlier in meeting.
- Monthly Stakeholders meeting
  - Grand Island Casino and Resort opened last week.
  - Campus-wide litter pickup
- NSF hosted County Fair Directors meeting
- NSF is attending all NAFM District meetings
- NSF County Fair Tour planning is underway – NSF will labor support min of 7 County Fairs again
- Signage at newly acquired property on south side of Stolley Park Rd.
  - Continuing conversations with legal regarding property.
- Staff Performance evaluations/goal setting / Call Outs
  - Tina – campus cleanup and GILCA meeting
  - Keaton – Library Bear Fair and Community Outreach
  - Courtney – Race For Grace and Skills USA
  - Jaime – Junior Achievement
  - Others and All do much in the Community
- Thanked Fair Board, Staff Team for engagement in so many areas.
- Boyd thanked Jaime and Staff for great job.
- Kevin Havlovic thanked Lindsey for involvement at District 2 meeting.

**Kevin Havlovic moved to adjourn.**

**Second by Kevin Jorgensen.**

**All in favor. Meeting adjourned.**

**Minutes of April 18, 2025**

**Nebraska State Fair Approved:**

**Date: May 16, 2025**

**By:**



**John McKeever, Board Secretary**