



NEBRASKA STATE FAIR BOARD
Meeting Minutes
Friday, January 24, 2025

The regular meeting of the Nebraska State Fair Board was held on Friday, January 24, 2025, at 2:00 pm at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Kearney, NE. Public notice of this meeting was published in the Grand Island Independent newspaper on January 17 & 18, 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: Jeff Kliment, Chair; Boyd Strobe, Vice Chair; Lanna Hubbard, Treasurer; Tom Schellpeper, Secretary; Dawn Caldwell; Tom Dinsdale, via Zoom; Ryan Hassebrook; Kevin Jorgensen; Alan Kahle; Kathleen Lodl; and John McKeever. Absent: Brett Lindstrom and Beth Smith.

Others in attendance:

Jaime Parr, Executive Director; Tammy Baker, Business Administrator; Eileen Dawes, Office Administrator; Joe Stump, AMGL; Courtney Glock, Marketing Director; Nicki Stoltenberg, Sponsorship Director; Keaton Irwin, Sales Director; Karli Schulz, Events & Entertainment Director; Tina Thuernagle, Operations Director; Vaughn Sievers, Ag Director; Terry Galloway, Lindsey Koepke (via Zoom), 1868 Foundation; Monica Kleinschmidt, Marketing Manager; Jacque Johnson, Assistant Livestock Manager; Olivia Koenig, Events Manager; several County Fair guests, and past Nebraska State Fair Board members.

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 Boyd Strobe for Approval of Consent Agenda, which included Regular Meeting Minutes of December 20, 2024.

Second by Dawn Caldwell.

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

Financial Report by Joe Stump and Jaime Parr

Lanna Hubbard moved to approve November Financials as presented.

Second by Boyd Strobe.

Upon roll call vote, motion to approve passed unanimously.

Board Committee Reports

Events Report by John McKeever

- Discussed programs and places. More details to be given by Karli later in meeting.
- Cruising cars
- Puzzle Contest – Concourse Fonner Park
- Tea Party
- Dirt & Motorsports
- Marathon – changing – Karli will have more details.
- Talent Buyer on hold as they take over HEC.

Facilities Report by Tom Schellpeper

- Tina & Jaime gave ARPA updates.
- Cindy Johnson reviewed Good Life District & GILCA.
- Vet Clinic – Brunk’s property
- Tina went over inventory & maintenance items (sharing with Fonner Park).
- Nebraska building needs new doors.

Agriculture Report by Dawn Caldwell

- Staff commended for great job – judges hired, recruitment for interns, interviews soon.
- Memorial award application process formalized.
- Grant memorial for next 5 years in horticulture for Dinnerplate Dahlia (Shirley Wagner)
- Disqualified champions and reserve champions
- Ribbons for Livestock & FFA
- Danish Award System vs. American Award System
- Entry fees lowered for sheep, goats, and pigs
- Not providing bagged wood chips this year.
- New Equine event – Forever Branded – adoption and showing wild horses

Finance Report by Lanna Hubbard

- Jaime and Joe gave budget update.
- Capital improvement projects – Tina updated committee
- Jaime gave ARPA update.
- Budget – line item by line item

Lanna Hubbard moved to accept 2025 budget as discussed.

Second by Tom Dinsdale.

Roll call vote. Motion passed.

Lanna Hubbard moved to approve capital expenditures up to \$400,000.

Dawn Caldwell seconded.

Roll call vote. Motion passed.

- Brett Lindstrom put together an Investment Policy statement to be filed and discussed at the February meeting.

FFA Report by Ryan Hassebrook

- Premium book updates
- Scheduling changes and show structure

4-H Report by Kathleen Lodi

- State Fair books
- Clubs off and running
- Celebrate 4-H month – Tuesday, February 4, 2025 @ 1:00
- Presentation tomorrow: Fairs & 4-H, Creating a Purple Ribbon Experience

Executive Report by Jeff Kliment

- Executive Board will meet later to discuss property plans.

Staff Department Reports

Agriculture Report by Vaughn Sievers

- Education books have been distributed on website and emailed to schools
- Statehood Day Friday, 2/25/2025 1:00 pm

- Rotunda full of parents and exhibitors
 - Representation by Nebraskaland Foundation & other speakers
- Livestock Manager position – over 20 applications received
- Forever Branded – Bureau of Land Management
 - Breaking horses and competing, adoption
 - Pick up horses in April
- NWSS (National Western Stock Show)
 - Networking
 - Recruitment
- Recognized Jeff Kliment for support to the Ag Department for last 9 years.

Events Report by Karli Schulz

- 2025 Fair – Gwen Adams – Galaxy of Stars
- Nebraska Bush Pullers
- Thanked John McKeever for giving report today.
- Necessary paperwork for contracts and agreements
- 7 to 8 Concerts in lineup for 2025 – different genres
- 5 different dirt events
- Grounds entertainment
- Bands for free grounds entertainment
- YMCA Partnership has ended
 - Meeting with National level race companies & others locally
- Queen's Tea Party
- Puzzle Contest
- Car Show – Fiesta Latina
- Grounds' changing layout
- Working with two CAD maps right now for every possible layout.

Marketing Report by Courtney Glock

- Countdown to 2025 State Fair
- Announced theme – Showcase Your Fair Face
- Distributed props
- 110 days rolling out billboards, etc.
- County Fair Tour
- Pass of Jaime's Fair Face cupcakes (Jaime's birthday)

Sponsorship Report by Nichole Stoltenberg

- Sponsorship department gets help from all departments.
 - Provide history and details
 - Janet Enck working with sponsorship now (few hours a week) as well as front desk
 - Once account is sold, Janet takes care of it from there.
 - Omaha – meet with Sandra & her team/Aksarben Foundation
 - Prospecting for new partnerships
 - Carrie McFarland connection – Nebraska Poultry Association
 - Hard-boiled eggs at Iowa State Fair – Bird Flu
 - Aksarben Advisory Committee & new joint committee with Aksarben Foundation
 - IAFE networking
 - Valuation of sponsorships formula for NSF
 - ROI Packages

Operations by Tina Thuernagle

- 2025 Planning

- Wrapped and modified 150 blue trash receptacles
- Marketing Team placement of signage – useful & efficient
- Competitive Exhibits storage boxes
- Bee exhibits – displays on wheels
- Efficiencies and safety – focus for January
- Brent, Brian and Tina – online portion of equipment training done
 - First week in February – hands on training
- Meeting participation (Ops Director/ARPA, bi-weekly directors, Ops staff, and weekly staff meetings)
- Cleaning team to add and/or combine to make more efficient with time tracking process.
- GILCA – 2 Shows during summer
 - Shorthorns in June
 - Dairy Goats in July
- Thanked Board for continued support and suggestions.

Sales Report by Keaton Irwin

- Returning vendor agreements
- Wrapping up Read & Win Program
 - Marketing Team updating pamphlets
 - 3,000 kids redeemed in 2024
 - Top prize – tablet
- Antique Tractor registrations
- Community Service impact
 - 2024 - 715 hours
 - 183 more than 2023
 - 35% increase
- Program Partners
- Sustainability Agreements
- Maps & Grounds layouts (working with Marketing – 3 maps)
- Launching Bobby's Bargain Book registrations – first year (2024) successful.
- Campground registrations open February 17, 2025.
- Thanked Jeff Kliment for his contributions over last 9 years.

Jeff thanked Board and Staff.

1868 Foundation by Terry Galloway

- Update on the state of the Foundation – great supporters
- Building relationships
- Current project – will need more/larger donations
 - Finishing year-end and tax return
 - Long-range giving plan
 - Give more direction to Board members for donors
 - People want to give stock, retirement plan money
- Looking for new Board members
- Administrative Policies
- Trustee Dinner
- Moved a lot of money into investment account since 2022.

Lindsey Koepke on Zoom

- Many more giving opportunities
- Allocation for State Fair improvements
- People leave funding in their estates for Foundation
- 5-year Fundraising Plan

- Developing Foundation list – Lifetime Giving amounts
- Onboarding new employee
 - Selena Aguilar of Grand Island
 - Communications Specialist and Office Administrator
 - Employed with State Fair until 2017 in Events Department
- Year End Financial Report coming in February.

Executive Director's Report by Jaime Parr

- Weekly staff meetings – transparency in finances
- Fair & Stock Show planning 2025 and some in 2026
- Different maps speak to how much ARPA will be complete.
 - Construction mode
 - Mitigate and abate storm water
- Brunk's property closing went great.
 - Vet Clinic shown to two different veterinarians.
 - Will soon be advertising opportunity and property in Equine.
- Year-end Audit – Jennifer and Tammy helping.
- Audit will be presented to Board in March – more in-depth this year because of ARPA funding.
- National Wester Stock Show
- Worked at Nebraska Tourism booth – river tanking, crane viewing, State Fair
- Reminder – February 20, 2025, DHS & Hall Co Emergency Management – Safety Training
- Friday, February 21, 2025 – Annual State Fair Board meeting in Lincoln.
 - Committee meetings in the morning.
 - Board Orientation
 - Seat Executive Committee
- Zone 5 – February 28 – March 2 (same day as Statehood Day at Capitol)
- Barr Bulldogs (middle school) – first contest today in Hastings.
- Staff collaboration & communication
- Thanked Board and all committees – budget, finances
- Thanked NAFM Staff

Other Business

- Jeff Kliment stepping down after completing 3 full terms on Nebraska State Fair Board
- Jeff thanked Team and Board

Dawn Caldwell moved to adjourn.

Second by Boyd Strobe.

All in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Minutes of January 24, 2025
Nebraska State Fair Approved:
Date: February 21, 2025

By: _____


Tom Schellpeper, Board Secretary

