



NEBRASKA STATE FAIR BOARD
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, September 1, 2026

The meeting of the Nebraska State Fair Board was held on Tuesday, September 1 at 11:00 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 August 28th, 2026; 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, Chairman; Tom Schellpeper, Vice Chair; Lanna Hubbard, Treasurer; John McKeever, Secretary; Anna Castner Wightman; Alan Kahle; Dawn Caldwell; Kathleen Lodi; Kevin Havlovic; Mark Hesser; Ryan Hassebrook; Scott Russman; and Tom Dinsdale. None were absent.

Others in attendance: Jaime Parr, Executive Director; Breanna Kozisek, Business Administrator; and Cindy Johnson, consultant.

The September 1 meeting of the Nebraska State Fair Board was called to order by Chairman Boyd Strobe.

Strobe announced the meeting had been properly advertised as an open meeting and informed those in attendance of the on-site posting location of the Open Meetings Act.

Approval of Consent Agenda

Motion made by Kevin Havlovic for the Approval of Consent Agenda, which included the Regular Meeting Minutes of August 28, 2026.

Second by Anna Castner Wightman.

Upon roll call vote, motion to approve passed unanimously.

Committee & Staff Reports

4-H Report by Kathleen Lodi

- The first weekend of the State Fair was stellar. Thanks to all who helped.
- All exhibits are being checked for correct placings. Youth award checks will be printed, stuffed in county packets, and sent when exhibits are released. This process is faster than years before when envelopes were sent four weeks later. Thanks to those who have improved this process.

Executive Director Report by Jaime Parr

- Thanks to the Board for being here and participating in this year's State Fair – it's been amazing. The State Fair staff are appreciative as well.
- Mark Hesser has been keeping track of attendance at the free entertainment stages.
 - Hesser shared that the biggest attractions this year have included the BMX riders and the Flying Royals.
 - Parr shared that entertainers are usually rotated after three years, except for the BMX riders. They speak to youth in a way that hasn't been matched. Thanks were given to Hesser for shedding light on those events.
- Updates on ticketed events –

- The Roughstock Rodeo has been the biggest non-concert ticketed event.
- Indoor concerts started with Phil Wickham and KC & The Sunshine Band.
- Entertainment & Events Director, Karli Bartz, is actively working on offers for 2027.
- The Finance Committee received the cash requirements report, which is reviewed weekly by the staff and committee in order to pay bills.
- Early Fair numbers were discussed.
- Strategic planning will begin soon for 2027 through 2031. A local consultant will assist.
- Upcoming Fair Events –
 - September 1: US Senator Debate starts at 6 pm with doors opening at 5:15 pm.
 - September 3: The Open Beef Supreme Drive starts at 5 pm with an awards presentation.
 - September 4: During the day there will be marching band performances and in the evening Home Free will start the Fair's outdoor concert series.
 - September 5: There will be a parade during the day along with a grand marshal reception. The ticketed events that day will include the Ranch Rodeo in US Foods and the Shinedown rock concert at TD Landing.
 - September 6: There will be a cruise-in car show, grand marshal reception, a chicken crowing and calling contest, and the chainsaw carving auction. The evening will also feature Hardy at TD Landing.
 - September 7: The last day of Fair is Veterans Day and will include a 10 am program. The day's events include a parade, grand marshal reception, demo derby at 2 pm, and the FFA Champion Supreme Drive at 3:30 pm.
- Thanks to the Board.

Adjournment

Motion made by Dawn Caldwell to adjourn.

Second by Anna Castner Wightman.

All in favor. Motion carried.

Minutes of September 1, 2026

Nebraska State Fair Approved:

Date: September 7, 2026

By:



John McKeever, Board Secretary