



NEBRASKA STATE FAIR BOARD
Meeting Minutes
Thursday February 17th, 2022

A regular meeting of the Nebraska State Fair Board was held on Thursday February 17, 2022,
at 9:00 AM at Rembolt Ludtke Offices, 1126 Lincoln Mall Suite 300 Lincoln, NE E

Public notice of this meeting was published in the February 11th and 12th issues of the Grand Island Independent newspaper and posted to the Nebraska Public meeting calendar website on February xx, 2022, and on the Nebraska State Fair Website. The public was invited to attend in person.

Roll call was read with the following members present: Beth Smith, Chair; Dawn Caldwell, Vice Chair; Bob Haag, Secretary; Boyd Strobe, Treasurer; Kevin Jorgensen; Lanna Hubbard; Tom Schellpeper; Kathleen Lodi; Ryan Hassebrook via zoom; Jeff Kliment; Steve Wehrbein via zoom; Tom Dinsdale via zoom. Others in attendance in the board room were: Bill Ogg, Executive Director; Jaime Parr, Deputy Executive Director; Eileen Dawes, Office Administrator; Holle Evert, Director of Sales; Karli Schulz, Director of Events; Via zoom Joe Stump Finance; Vaughn Sievers, Director of Agriculture; Sam Foglesong, Sponsorship; Joe Ripp; Director of Operations; 1868 Foundation; Terry Galloway; Lindsey Koepke; and Don Dun; Mark Fahelson, Attorney; Guests; Theresa Jorgenson, and Doug Hubbard

Smith 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 Tom Dinsdale for Approval of Consent Agenda.
Second by Steve Wehrbein.
Upon roll call vote, motion to approve consent agenda passed unanimously.

Financial Reports were reported by Joe Stump and Jaime Parr.

Approval of January 2022 Financial Report

Motion made by Boyd Strobe for Approval of January 2022 Financials.
Second by Lanna Hubbard.
Upon roll call vote, motion to approve financials passed unanimously.

Executive Director Employment Agreement

Motion made by Bob Haag to approve the employment agreement.
Second by Tom Schellpeper.
Upon roll call vote, motion to approve the employment agreement for Bill Ogg passed unanimously.

457(b) – Executive Director Retirement Plan

Motion made by Dawn Caldwell to approve the resolution 457 (b).
Second by Kevin Jorgensen.
Upon roll call vote, motion to approve the 457(b) – Executive Retirement Plan passed unanimously.

401(a) – Employees Retirement Plan

Motion made by Boyd Strobe to amend the employee retirement plan 401 (a)
To include; employees eligible after 3 months and increase the State Fair match from 3 % to 5%.
Second by Bob Haag.
Upon roll call vote, motion to approve the employee retirement plan 401 (a) passed unanimously.

Board Committee Reports

- **Agriculture Committee was reported by Jeff Kliment.**
Jeff commented on how in a year and half we hired a whole new livestock team who knocked it out of the park, it was tough but they did an amazing job.
- **Deadlines & goals are being met covering Competitive Exhibits, Ag Education, Livestock, Equine and Aksarben.**
- **Events was reported by Steve Wehrbein.**
 - Steve reported on reminding everyone about applications forms that are available for special events.
 - Karli is working on contracts, and historical timelines for the Nebraska State Fair and Aksarben.
 - Discussion about contracts for the Tractor Pull, Demo Derby and the Antique Tractor Pull.
 - Kids Pedal Pull is moved to Saturday September 3rd.
- **Executive Meeting Report reported by Beth Smith.**
 - Beth reported on the great turn out event with the State Senators.
 - Beth thanked Dawn Caldwell for being the key in making this event work.
 - Beth thanked the 1868 Foundation for the delicious meal.
- **Facilities Planning was reported by Dawn Caldwell.**
 - Facilities committee did not meet this month.
 - Waiting for the legislative session to find out about the ARPA allocations.
 - Looking forward to what improvements we can start with now and for the next 10 years.
- **Finance Committee reported by Boyd Strobe.**
 - Boyd reported on the cash reserve that have been built back up putting us in a good position.
 - Went over the financials that Joe and Jaime reported on.
 - Bill presented the draft on the reserve policy; board will review this after Bill makes some touch ups.
- **4-H reported by Kathleen Lodl.**
 - Continuing to work on 2022 events. Counties are writing their fair books.
 - Kathleen expressed thanks to the board for agreeing to expand the static exhibit space.
- **FFA reported by Ryan Hasebrook.**
 - Final stages of updating the premium books.
 - Work on Static and FFA exhibits for the fair.
 - Excited to showcase FFA exhibits on the 2nd weekend of the fair.
 - State FFA convention is to be back in person this April 2022.

Department Staff Reports

- **Agriculture by Vaughn Sievers**
 - Vaughn thanked the board for their leadership.
 - Vaughn gave thanks to the Ag team who take responsibility and get the job done.
 - Competitive Exhibits area bringing back the beer competition.
 - Working on a drop off/pickup area to increase more exhibits with ease make the area more attractive.
 - Increasing the size of the static exhibits area.
 - Livestock: Amy posted on social media the judges so exhibitors can see who is judging for 4-H and FFA.
 - Working on a new program to make getting signed contracts back with more efficiency.
 - Goals to get schedules finalized by March 1st and more conversations with superintendents.
 - Aksarben: Kelsey Loseke is working on a judge committee by industry leaders.
 - Working on premium books to make them look better.
 - Working on getting interns to help.
 - Tejilor Strobe is working on the calf challenge program.
 - GILCA: Big Red Beef Show coming first weekend in March
 - Contract signed and down payment for the National Junior Angus Show for 2023

- **Operations: Welcome by Bill Ogg**
 - Bill introduced Joe Ripp as the new Director of Operations.
 - Joe said he is from excited to learn the facilities and get to know everyone.
 - Joe went on to say he is from Ravenna, a Scout Master and knows Kent Zeller he was his Ag teacher.
- **Sales by Holle Evert**
 - Return Vendor applications due March 1.
 - New vendors can also sign up for this year.
 - Keaton is working on the campground applications being new he is doing a great job.
 - March 1 committee meetings with vendors in 3 areas concessionaires outdoor, and indoor.
 - RFP for decorators we have some good interest.
 - We have 5 - 6 new vendors who called and want to be at Aksarben
- **Events report by Karli Schulz**
 - In January over NAFAM she and Vauhgn were able to attend the Institute Summit in Denver.
 - RFP's have been sent out for production.
 - Continued work on event planning.
 - Applications for regional and Nebraska talent.
 - Preparing job descriptions for events manager and event interns.

Foundation Update

- Lindsey thanked Don Dunn and Mark Fahelson for hosting the board at Rembolt Ludtke Offices.
- Lindsey introduced her assistant Heidi Davis and Terry Galloway.
- Lindsey met with Sam Foglesong to get to know him and offer assistance where needed.
- Lindsey thanked Karli for submitting the Foundation Blue Ribbon Kickoff to the IAFE (won 1st place).
- The Foundation is working on new ways to appeal to donors to increase their giving levels.
- Foundation working on updating website content and marketing materials.
- Terry mentioned the Master Plan that is still a work in progress.
- Plans in place to attending large fundraiser events.

Deputy Executive Director Report – Jamie Parr

- Working on the Audit which is going well. Auditors will be onsite 2nd week of March for final details.
- Presentation of the full audit at the March board meeting.
- Working through Strategic Plan – Mission and Core Value statements in our weekly staff meetings.
- Jaime thanked the board for passing the retirement plan for the staff.
- Working on strengthen our team in our teamwork.
- Working on the challenging labor force now to bring in more seasonal help.
- Jaime reported she helps covers questions and concerns, to help the staff have information/tools they need to make their decisions and to support the full team as well as the Director.
- Working on RFPs with a number of partners to update new and updated quotes.

Executive Director Report – Bill Ogg

- Bill introduced Sam Foglesong the new Sponsorship and Hospitality Coordinator.
- Bill thanked the board for the extension of his employment agreement. Bill said he is humbled to serve the Nebraska State Fair. Bill went on to thank the board for their reorganization development as a board and how well the communication is among the board and how supportive you all are “you deserve tremendous credit”.
- Bill mentioned that we have some important decisions to make with some healthy discussions and good understanding we have a great future ahead of us.
- The financial situation, we cannot emphasize enough the turnaround that has put us in a good position. We have good challenges instead of negativity and struggle. We have to thank Joe and Jennifer Stump and Terry Galloway on our behalf for their hard work. To help us continue to be good stewards of this fine institution.
- Bill echoed the sentiments for the adjustments to the staff retirement which will help with recruit and retention process. Thank you to the board for this support.

- Bill mentioned we have two more department head positions to fill. We have had a deep pool of applicants for Marketing Director and HR Business Administrator and hope to have them at the next board meeting.

Executive Office Elections

Beth Smith asked for a brief break before the elections.

After the break Beth said the first office would be for the Chair of Nebraska State Fair Board.

Beth asked for any nominations for the Chair. Boyd Strope made a motion to nominate Bob Haag as Chair for the Nebraska State Fair. Beth asked if there are any other nominations for Chair. No further nominations.

Boyd Strope moved to have Bob Haag be elected as Chair of the Nebraska State Fair Board. Second by Dawn Caldwell. Upon roll call vote, motion to elect Bob Haag to Chair of the Nebraska State Fair Board passed unanimously. Beth congratulated Bob and passed the gavel to him.

Newly elected Chair Bob Haag said we will move on to nominations for Vice Chair he asked for any nominations.

Beth Smith nominated Dawn Caldwell for Vice Chair, with no other nominations. Beth moved to have Dawn Caldwell elected as Vice Chair second made by Lanna Hubbard.

Upon roll call vote, motion to elect Dawn Caldwell to Vice Chair of the Nebraska State Fair Board passed unanimously.

Bob asked for nominations for Secretary. Jeff Kliment nominated Tom Schellpeper. Bob asked for any other nominations, no further nominations. Jeff Kliment motioned to elect Tom Schellpeper as Secretary of the Nebraska State Fair Board. Second by Steve Wehrbein.

Upon roll call vote, motion to elect Tom Schellpeper to Secretary of the Nebraska State Fair Board passed unanimously.

Bob asked for nominations for Treasurer. Dawn Caldwell nominated Boyd Strope. Bob asked for any other nominations, no further nominations. Dawn Caldwell motioned to elect Boyd Strope as Treasurer of the Nebraska State Fair Board. Second by Kevin Jorgensen.

Upon roll call vote, motion to elect Boyd Strope as Treasurer of the Nebraska State Fair Board passed unanimously.

Bob welcomed Tom Schellpeper to the executive committee, he went on to say Thank you to Beth Smith for all the work she has done.

Bob let everyone know there will be new committee assignments and to let him know what committees you are interested on being on. Try to get everyone divided up and get the committees assigned before the March meeting.

Dawn Caldwell asked Mister Chair to speak to Beth to say Thank you to her for her professionalism and grace to lead this board. To your family who has been gracious with your time. Thank you very much. Dawn presented Beth with flowers. Beth said it is so much beyond me it was all of you and to see this board come together in the last 2 years we did not know what was coming. Our financial reporting is on now on solid ground, covid hit and we had to form a covid working group and figure out what to do about a fair during covid. We did it in a beautiful way that was successful. Jaime stepped up to the plate and became a critical piece as we tried to figure things out. Bill came on board to help make the decision about what to do for a fair amidst the pandemic. We all have made huge progress to be able to have an operating reserve and a capital reserve a great turnaround. We have policy and procedures in place to keep us moving forward. Beth went on to say that she is grateful to all of you and I love the passion and devotion to the fair all of you have. Thank You.

Bill Ogg asked Beth to stand as he presented her with a plaque. The wood piece comes with history it is from the 90's from the Fair Board Activities of Fair in Lincoln. The piece of metal is from the new buildings in Grand Island it brings history, tradition and a future. On behalf of the board and staff Beth Smith Board Chair 2020 – 2022 thank you for your faithful service.

Bill followed with mentioning we lost two great fair supporters We want to reflect our appreciation to the families of Ron Miller and Bill Angel. On behalf of the board and staff a small token of remembrance was sent to the families. Some of the staff was able to attend the services to represent the Nebraska State Fair which was deeply appreciated by the families.

Other Business

Bob asked for any other business. There was no further business.

Future Nebraska State Fair Board Meeting Dates and Locations (tentative)

- **March 18th, 2022, in Grand Island, NE**

Adjournment

Motion made by Jeff Kliment to adjourn the meeting.

Second by Tom Dinsdale.

Upon vote, motion passed unanimously.

Time adjourned: 10:18 AM