



NEBRASKA STATE FAIR BOARD
Meeting Minutes
Friday June 17, 2022

A regular meeting of the Nebraska State Fair Board was held on Friday, June 17, 2022 at 1:00 PM at the Nebraska State Fair Board Room, Grand Island NE. Public notice of this meeting was published in the Grand Island Independent newspaper on June 9th & 10th, 2022; 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: Bob Haag, Chair; Dawn Caldwell, Vice Chair; Tom Schellpeper, Treasurer; Ryan Hassebrook, via Zoom; Lanna Hubbard, via Zoom; Kevin Jorgensen; Jeff Kliment; Kathleen Lodi; Beth Smith, via Zoom; Tom Dinsdale; and Steve Wehrbein.

Others in attendance:

Bill Ogg, Executive Director; Jaime Parr, Deputy Executive Director; Tammy Baker, Business Administrator; Eileen Dawes, Office Administrator; Holle Evert, Director of Sales; Vaughn Sievers, Director of Agriculture; Ray Massie, Marketing Director; Sam Foglesong, Sponsorship Director; Joe Ripp; Director of Operations; Kelsey Loseke, Aksarben Stock Show Manager; Monica Troester, Events Manager; Joe Stump, AMGL- State Fair contracted accounting firm, via Zoom; Mark Fahleson, Rembolt Ludtke, via Zoom, Brandon Summers, Grand Island Independent, Carla Warneke, Box Office & Volunteer.

Bob Haag 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 which included the Board Meeting Minutes of May 20, 2022.

Second by Kevin Jorgensen.

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

Approval of May Financial Report as presented by Joe Stump (balance sheet) and Jaime Parr (Profit/Loss)

Motion made by Dawn Caldwell to approve the Financial Report.

Second by Tom Schellpeper.

Upon roll call vote, motion to approve the Financial Report passed unanimously.

Board Committee Reports

Events committee report by Steve Wehrbein

- Have a nice lineup of Grand Marshals
- Aksarben Pioneer and Aksarben Heritage – have them come and show support/recognize winners of Counties
- County Fair board, County Fair Day, Board Reunion – nothing has changed. Still August 27.
- Veterans Day celebration changed to August 30th instead of last day like we've had in the past.
- Plans to notify representatives of VFW and such organizations to let them know date has changed.
- Opening ceremony 11:00 am on Friday, August 26.
 - Looking into having mayor as main speaker, and introduction of board members.
- Volleyball still on schedule for first Saturday

- **Tractor pull on Sunday, September 4**
- **Demolition Derby on Monday, September 5**

Agriculture Committee report by Jeff Kliment

- **Committee met this morning, (Friday, June 17)**
- **Team busy getting everything laid out in Competitive Exhibits area**
- **Agriculture & Equine – entries open and judges in place, finalizing superintendents**
- **Aksarben lining up as well**

Finance Committee report by Bob Haag for Boyd Strobe who is not in attendance.

- **Committee meeting this morning**
- **Reviewed the monthly financial reports as presented by Joe Stump & Jaime Parr**
- **Agreed that staff is doing good job of holding down expenses – appreciation expressed**

FFA report by Ryan Hassebrook.

- **4-H & FFA nomination and DNA submission deadline was Wednesday (June 15).**
- **Teachers in Kearney last week for career education**
- **Ag education in state is growing**
- **Great demand for Ag teachers**
- **Helping young people to connect with agriculture in a meaningful way with our exhibits**

4-H report by Kathleen Lodi.

- **Daily programs – local day camps, public speaking contests, judging clinics & contests, progress shows, and much educational programming at this time of year.**
- **Livestock judging clinics helping create pathway for young people – raising the animal and realizing applications for future.**
- **National shooting sports starting in a few weeks with about 5,000 people coming from across the country to use our Grand Island facilities.**
- **Enrollment for 4-H can happen all year, but you must be enrolled by June 15 to participate in current year State Fair.**

Executive Committee report by Bob Haag - did not meet this month

Facilities Planning report by Dawn Caldwell.

- **Committee – “Master Plan Small Committee” (includes Chamber of Commerce, City of Grand Island, GILCA, Fonner Park, Nebraska State Fair, 1868 Foundation) met last week.**
- **Looked at big picture together because it involves City property, all of Fonner Park property, 1868 Foundation spear-headed master plan, and NSF was awarded the ARPA grant.**
- **ARPA project – \$20,000,000 grant received from the Unicameral ALL for Wastewater/Rainwater Abatement – we don’t want the grounds to flood like it did a few years ago.**
- **Acronyms Olsson will use:**
 - **SRF – State Revolving Fund**
 - **NDEE – Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy (overseen by military department)**
- **We have to meet certain criteria with how we utilize grant, all fall within Clean Water Act type tasks**
- **Anything we do on the grounds in the future, needs to have this work that we’re doing through the ARPA funding done first (right type of drainage, adequate parking areas, etc)**
- **Three zones in project:**
 - **Zone 1 starts at the front of the livestock buildings and goes west clear to the edge of property including maintenance buildings.**
 - **Zone 2 – middle of fairgrounds primarily from Events Center south; nothing to do with north parking or casino – truly State Fair focused.**

- Zone 3 – starts just to east of big red barn, or west side of main race track, east of grandstand, and whole east end of fairgrounds (because we use the practice track for entertainment, not only concerts, but also tractor pulls and demolition derby, in addition to horse trailer parking, horse shows, ranch rodeo, etc.) A lot of water builds up there.
- Introduced Brian Friedrichsen, Associate Engineer and Matt Rief, Team Leader from Olsson Engineering – they described the project in more detail and gave cost estimates.

Motion to approve that Olsson submit their scope of project and cost estimates as presented today to NDEE for approval to move forward with ARPA project.

Dawn Caldwell motion

Tom Dinsdale second

Discussion: Olsson has done a lot of work for us already. They were subcontracted by Populous before for the master plan, and it makes sense to continue with them. We are very fortunate to be as far along as we are, given the deadline we are now facing. Olsson has presented letter of engagement so that we comply business-wise also.

Upon roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

Department Staff Reports

Agriculture by Vaughn Sievers

Competitive Exhibits / 4-H Static / FFA Static / 4-H Dog Show

- All rental needs have been submitted for pipe, drape, tables, and table skirting
- CE, 4-H static, and 4-H dog show schedules have been posted to the website
- Helping Hand moving company to help with 4-H Static set up
- Goal For next month
 - Have online entries open for Competitive Exhibits on July 1st

Livestock/Equine

- Entry Books – All are on the website.
- Advertisement – Sending information to breed associations to share
- Celebrity Showmanship – Partnering with Brad Mellema (sponsoring through the Grand Life campaign). Will take place Saturday, August 27th at 7 p.m. in Five Points Bank Arena.
- Goal for Next month to open online entries for livestock and equine on July 1st.

Aksarben

- All, except for the Broiler judge, have signed their contracts and have been announced
- Around 250 Broilers have been ordered and 2100 DNA Envelopes. The deadline for both is July 1st .
- Schedule has been finalized and will be shared on the website and social media.
 - The only major changes are: Showmanship will be on Friday night and exhibitors will have to enter during the online entry process. 2- making the check deadlines more logistically clear
- Goal for next month
 - Rules & Regulations Book and Entry Books confirmed and posted on the website.

GILCA

- ABGA show finishing up today
- Prepping Charolais Junior national shows

Events report by Jaime Parr for Karli Schulz

- Thanks to Steve Wehrbein for his updates from the Events Committee
- Introduced Monica Troester, new Events Manager
- Marissa Porter starting on Monday (June 20, 2022). Her focus will be Entertainment.
- Still looking for two coordinators
- Karli Schulz has been out on unexpected/extended leave but starting to step back into the Fair now.

Marketing by Ray Massie

- Dip period in terms of concert sales
- Have sold almost 10,000 tickets compared to 0 at this time last year
- New (General Fair – food, rides, all the things people can do at NSF) tv spots being produced now. Will be airing statewide within the next week or so.
- New website rfp is out. Should be back within next week.
- Video production for Fair – 3 responses to our rfp. Good numbers.
- New gate book design includes brand new map... revamped, recolored, new name for eastern entertainment area – The Grand District.
- Over 115,000 emails have been sent this month. 23% have been opened. That is a good rate.
- Concert sales – traditional 1/3, 1/3, 1/3 formula doesn't apply in 2022. Currently 60 – 75% of ticket sales occur in the last 2 – 3 weeks before event. If we come anywhere close, we will have an outstanding fair in August 2022.

Sponsorship report by Sam Foglesong

- High level of activity focused on sponsorship and hospitality this month.
- End of May, the report reflects \$411,000 invoiced and/or collected. Since May 31st, we've invoiced an additional \$98,000, bringing total to \$509,000 as of today.
- Some sponsorships contributing to that number are Pepsi, Nebraska Lottery, Lutz, University of Nebraska College of Agriculture & Natural Resources, the Buffet Early Childhood Foundation, and Bath Planet.
- Expects to close on another \$100,000 in the next 15 days as there are 16 contracts under review and awaiting authorization and subsequent invoicing. Confident that we'll hit those numbers as planned.
- Hospitality: 5 Points Bank Loft is booking up quickly
- Recognized Sara Vierregger (front desk assistant) for her efforts in helping with hospitality booking.

Operations report by Joe Ripp

- Capital expenditure list
 - Outdoor concert area/rock rfp is posted. Have received responses and questions, so we know people are looking at it.
 - Shade structures ordered. Hopefully they'll be here in June.
 - Bleacher repair – aluminum in place, structural steel in place. Only thing left is some reinforcing steel for pick points so they can be moved.
 - Still looking for very specific cleaning vehicle. Hard to find.
 - Five Points video cameras for west side are ordered.
 - Sheep & goat pens ordered. Will arrive early July.
 - Backup cameras are installed. Planning to get Kubota camera next.
 - Landscaping Day – 44 volunteers arrived. What we had planned for a whole morning was done in an hour and a half.
 - Plants have been cut back so they will bloom for Fair time. Surviving heat – thanks to Rich Deardorf for his help with sprinklers, water, etc.
 - Windmills – Isaiah picked up windmill motor on Wednesday and is planning to store it. New windmill contractor backed out. Looking for another.
 - Covered for golf carts
 - Tractors ordered, looking for drivers
 - Trams are all ready to go
- Show planning & set-up
 - Competitive Exhibits shelving plan
 - The Bore goat show has been going on for last couple of weeks
 - Brian/Tina planning, seasonal staff has been working hard
 - Doniphan/Trumbull football team helped set up pens – went very well
 - Turnover for Charolais show tonight

- Recent hailstorm did damage to F150. Got estimates for repair. Hail punched 3" holes through windshield.
- Inventory, mowing, maintenance, upkeep – thanked Brian Hoffman for his work
- Sprinklers have been repaired.
- Multiple storage areas in all of the barns are being cleaned.
- Drains cleaned and working properly – has helped tremendously with goat fitting. Flooding issues minimized.
- Exhibit space in Nebraska Building cleaned (former "Sand Room"). Will be ready for displays at Fair time.
- Repair list presented to Fonner Park (minor and major).
- Float Day – July 13, 8 – 11 am (repairing & rejuvenating floats for parade)
 - Working with Lee McComb – float preservation and restoration
 - New décor for floats has been ordered, ready for application
 - Restored animal décor will be put back on floats
- ARPA funding – already discussed

Sales Report by Holle Evert

- July 1 is deadline for vendor contracts to be signed and returned with their final payments
- Vendor spaces in Pinnacle Bank Expo Building are full, as well as north section of outdoor market space
- Looking for more Ag Market space partners
- New & Unique Food Contest promotion will follow opening ceremonies (11 am at Earl May Fair Center)
- Equipment rentals (tents, pipe & drape on order)
- Two new programming partners confirmed this week
 - Jackson Dinsdale Art Center (Hastings College) will be doing glass blowing demonstrations Labor Day Weekend
- Sustainability Pavilion
 - Toured Central Community College – they have been working on pollinators, native plants, upcycled container gardens, and solar lighting
- Getting Aksarben vendor contracts out and returned
- Bore goat show – met some potential new vendors
- Need for Ag educators in our state

1868 Foundation update by Bill Ogg for Lindsey Koepke

- Great State Debate – Friday, August 26 in new Pump & Pantry Party Pit location in the Grand District
- Expressed appreciation for Foundation's continued support to the State Fair.

Deputy Executive Director Report – Jamie Parr

- Weekly staff meetings, sharing payables, deposits & bank statements with Exec & Finance Committees & review with staff weekly in the interest of transparency
- Weekly one on one meetings with Directors and departments in-house
 - Marketing & Ops - RFPs take more time, commended staff for being mindful
 - Eileen finalizing details on parking hang tags, credentials & signage
 - Bulk of uniform orders are in
 - Sara working on hospitality & events
 - Commended Holly (Sales) for having building sold out in June
 - Tammy researching and learning new timekeeping system & introducing to department heads for hourly employees (up to 600)
 - Interviews & onboarding – still have a few openings
 - Booked time at a couple of "job fair" events – continuing to recruit people
 - Box Office is open Monday, Wednesday, Friday from 10am – 3pm – buy tickets in person

- Printing advance sale tickets – will soon be available at Pump & Pantry outlets in Nebraska and Kansas and Home Federal for Hometown Passes will start in July.
- Beverage, Gates, Vendor Exchange engaged in planning, making sure we're ready to activate in middle to end of August.
- City updates on major projects & plans
- Fire & Safety services with EMS – extra training to staff next Wednesday
- Nebraska State Patrol in July – Safety & incident response training for staff
- Volunteer planting day – Thank you Joe & Sheila Olson (coordinating donations & volunteers)
- Seasonal job postings are available at statefair.org – accepting applications for events, operations, beverage, cleaning, gates, security, ag team (some paid, also looking for non-profit groups fund raising efforts – fair can pay a stipend)

Executive Director Report – Bill Ogg

- Capable full-time staff, recruiting seasonal staff challenging & rewarding
- Community Partnerships – team works hard w/Board to host event, but not possible without outside organizations and agencies that help
- Annual Law Enforcement meeting (includes law enforcement, also City, County and State Departments of Transportation) – updates on construction, ongoing projects – projects complete or suspended at Fair time to accommodate extra traffic and ease of access to Fairgrounds.
- City sweeps parking lots and streets pre-fair – pro bono. They share dirt. We always need dirt.
- Nebraska State Patrol is on-grounds law enforcement. NSF plus Hall County, Sheriff's Office, and GI City Police help with traffic flow getting into and off fairgrounds.
- City will put up Stop sign on Stuhr Rd for safety at Fair time. State Patrol will step in and manually operate during busy times.
- Concert update: We are at 60% of 2021 total ticket sales already.
- Concerts: \$540,000 talent cost, \$152,000 production cost.
- Recognized cooperation of 4-H, FFA, State FFA, volunteers, support groups
- Ag department – GILCA transitioning from American Boar Goat Association to Charolais National Jr. Show
- Finance – appreciation for team at AMGL. Just because numbers are good, no reason to become complacent.
- Facilities – significantly overspent to date on repairs and maintenance, but maintenance was deferred over several years to preserve budget. Catching up now. Cognizant of budget line items. Should even out at end of year.
- ARPA funding – Olsson is doing everything they can to maximize utilization of full allocation of funds.
- Sea of Asphalt vs. Green Areas – Critically important to have some beautification within our very utilitarian types of fairgrounds, racetrack, event complexes. Expensive, yes. Worth it, yes.
- 70 days until Fair – "Prepare hard for competition, but you're never ready. Yet, somehow, your time's up to perform. You better be ready to go." -Ty Murray
- Early barometers are good. Inflation, gas prices may hurt, but just might help fair as people will want to find things to do closer to home.

Other business

Dawn Caldwell moved to go into closed Executive Session to protect the public interest, to receive privileged legal advice and discuss strategy relating to pending legal litigation.

Second by Tom Schellpeper

Dawn also requested that Bill, Jaime, and Mark Fahlsion stay.

Roll call vote to go into closed session approved unanimously.

Tom Dinsdale motion to come out of executive session.

Kevin Jorgensen second.

Roll call vote – motion passed.

Adjournment

Motion made by Dawn Caldwell to adjourn the meeting

Second by Tom Dinsdale

All in favor vote, motion passed.

Minutes of June 17, 2022

Nebraska State Fair Approved:

Date: July 15th, 2022

By:



Tom Schellpeper, Board Secretary