



NEBRASKA STATE FAIR BOARD
Nebraska State Fair Office Board Room, Grand Island NE
Meeting Minutes
March 19, 2021

A regular meeting of the Nebraska State Fair Board was held on Friday, March 19, 2021, at 11 a.m. Public notice of this meeting was published in the March 12 & 13 issues of the Grand Island Independent newspaper and posted to the Nebraska Public meeting calendar website from March 5, 2021 and on the Nebraska State Fair Website. The public and press were invited to attend via Zoom due to Covid-19 social distancing recommendations.

Roll call was read with the following members present: Dawn Caldwell, Vice Chair; Bob Haag, Secretary; Ryan Hasebrook; Lanna Hubbard; Kevin Jorgensen; Beth Smith, Chair; Boyd Strope, Treasurer; Steve Wehrbein; Kathleen Lodi; Tom Schellpeper; Jeff Kliment; Tom Dinsdale, via zoom; Chris Kircher via zoom. Others in attendance at the board room were: Bill Ogg, Executive Director; Jaime Parr, Deputy Executive Director; Gary Kubicek, Director of Marketing; Vaughn Sievers, Director of Agriculture; Scott Yound, Director of Operations; Tish Eckstrom, HR; Laura Hurley, Experiential Partnerships; Judy Trent, Office Administrator/ Board Liaison; Holle Evert, Director of Sales; Janna Kuklis, Sales Deputy; Mark Fahleson, Rembolt Ludtke; Lindsey Koepke, 1868 Foundation; Joe Stump, AMGL.

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 February 19, 2021 Fair Board Meeting Minutes

Motion made by Boyd Strope to approve February's Board meeting minutes as written.

Second by Bob Haag.

Discussion: No discussion.

Upon roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

Accept 2020 Audit -BKD CPA's

BKD audit report and communication letter presented by Chris Lindner CPA, CGFF of BKD CPA & Advisors.

Motion made by Tom Dinsdale to approve BKD audit for 2020.

Second by Dawn Caldwell

Discussion: Chris Lindener reviewed recommendations highlighted in communication letter.

Bill Ogg commented "I applaud the thoroughness and the accuracy BKD, Chris and the staff that lent to this process. It is not an easy or a light process. They dug in very deeply and I want to say my appreciation to them for that objectivity and thoroughness. The numbers from the audit are very creditable and solid and the public and investors of this public institution can feel confident in this audit."

Upon roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

February Financials

Introduction:

- Joe Stump and Jaime Parr reported on the February financials.

Approval of February Financials

Motion made by Kevin Jorgensen that the financial documents through February 28, 2021 be approved by the Board as presented:

1. Balance Sheet
2. YTD Income Statement
3. YTD Income Statement vs. Year-to-Date Budget
4. YTD Statement of Revenue
5. YTD Statement of Expenses

Second by Lanna Hubbard.

Discussion: Dawn Caldwell introduced a question regarding reserve funds. Joe Stump from AMGL replied he will be drafting fiscal policies to address this issue and presenting them to the finance committee.

Upon roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

Executive Director's Report: Bill Ogg

- 2021 Fair Planning.
- Staff updates are critical board information and appreciates staff participation.
- Joint zoom meeting with all superintendents happened this month. Plan is to work on meeting quarterly all together. During the planning of the 2021 Nebraska State Fair superintendents will meet independently with in their areas.
- Complimented Vaughn Sievers for his production immediately upon arriving. There will be two hired positions in the Agriculture Department. Their job will be to work together on Fair and Aksarben.
- Nebraska State Fair is retaining individuals who worked during the 2019 fair to help plan the 2021 fair.
- Fonner Park relayed that the Fonner Park concourse area will be available to us in 2021 but not in 2022.
- Met with city officials about the field house and layout of the fair.
- The city would like the playground area located in the fieldhouse to become permanent.
- Empowered staff to check with the distribution of phone lines and find out which lines are needed.
- Shared Organizational Chart.
- Reported on the DISC training staff went through. The training was valuable for staff. Board will be doing the DISC training Tuesday March 23, 2020.

Deputy Executive Report: Jaime Parr

- Working on financials with BKD audit and AMGL.
- On boarding of new team members.
- Volunteer banquet will be coming up May 13th. The banquet is when Nebraska State Fair recognizes the volunteers and looks for new volunteers.

Department Reports

- Agriculture and Aksarben: Vaughn Sievers
 - Reported to board about professional and life background.
 - There are two positions going to be filled in the Agriculture Department. The department received 19 applicants.
 - Working on the yearly budgets.
 - Reviewing the rules document with 4-H, FFA and board.

- Participated in meetings with Equine.
- Working with superintendents on schedules.
- Finished Calf Challenge and delivered calves for Aksarben, next will be the Sheep and Hog challenge.
- Working on sponsorships for the Calf, Sheep and Hog challenges.
- Discussed the budget for the purple ribbon auction. This year would like to do something different than the purple ribbon auction.
- Looking forward to working with GILCA.
- Events: Hank Parker
 - Reported to board about professional and life background.
 - Training and learning software used in the Events Department.
 - Working on coordinating events.
 - Starting to have meetings with event partners.
- Marketing & Sponsorship: Gary Kubicek & Laura Hurley
 - Sponsorship Laura Hurley
 - Working on the 1.1 million mark for sponsorship.
 - Met with NRG radio with their St. Jude fundraiser.
 - GI hospitality trio is our sponsored hotel.
 - Friday March 19th, 2021 is Anderson Auto Jeep grand opening. All Nebraska State Fair vehicles are parked at this event.
 - 308 Sale was a big success.
 - Planning hospitality reservations, BMW, and sponsor anniversary events.
 - Marketing Gary Kubicek
 - Working with sponsor planning of Nebraska State Fair.
 - Promoting Aksarben to sponsors.
 - Working on partners for Aksarben challenges.
 - Appreciation to Wagon Hammer Ranch for the calf challenge.
 - Working on Aksarben future auctions and funding.
- Operations: Scott Yound
 - Washing all the rock bottoms in the barns.
 - Ticket booths all been done, and shuttles are ready for the Fair.
 - Getting barns ready for the Alpaca Show.
 - Placed an Ad for summer help on website and Facebook.
- Sales: Holle Evert
 - Reported to board about professional and life background.
 - Due to low amount of returning vendors sales department is contacting vendors and giving them a chance to choose new areas.
 - Working on the sustainability area.

Fair Board Committee Reports

- Agriculture: Jeff Kliment
 - Introduced committee members.
 - Reported on introduced schedules.
 - Revised rules documentation recommended.

Moved to approve the proposed rules subject to legal counsel review.

Motion made by Jeff Kliment to proposed rules subject to legal review.

Second by Boyd Strobe

Discussion: Ryan Hassebrook stated it would be good to legal review. The rules are the same, but the document would be cleaned up so there would be more clarity and less redundancy.

Upon roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

- **Events: Steve Wehrbein**
 - Introduced committee members.
 - Opening Ceremony will be 2 sessions at the 2021 Nebraska State Fair. They will take place on the first Friday and Saturday of the fair.
 - Discussed the Parades and Bands will be the same route.
 - Request for Grand Marshal nominations will be sent out soon to NAFM county fairs.
 - Discussed events that will be happening this year at the Nebraska State Fair.

- **Facilities Planning: Dawn Caldwell**
 - Introduced committee members.
 - Discussed what the fairs needs are.
 - Working with 1868 foundation on the grant for master plan of facilities for long term.
 - Discussed capital expenses and outlay.
 - Went through proper protocol for RFPs.
 - In future meetings with Fonner regarding the maintenance review schedule. Nebraska State Fair needs make sure maintenance needs are met according to the lease with Fonner.
 - After May board meeting the board will be doing a walkthrough of all facilities.

- **Finance: Boyd Strobe**
 - Introduced committee members.
 - Met 2 hours on St. Patrick's Day.
 - Reviewed the audit.
 - Discussed the possibility of changing premium checks to cash.
 - No major concerns in the audit.
 - Financial reports are better and going to be simpler to understand.
 - Joe Stump reported on the PPP Loan application
 - Recovery act has made 501 C 5 included.

Approval that Nebraska State Fair submit an application to the Small Business Administration to obtain a PPP (Paycheck Protection Program) loan as a 501 C-5 organization. That the chairperson Beth Smith be authorized to sign all necessary loan application documents.

Motion by Boyd Strobe that the Nebraska State Fair submit an application to the Small Business Administration to obtain a PPP (Paycheck Protection Program) loan as a 501 C-5 organization. That the chairperson Beth Smith be authorized to sign all necessary loan application documents.

Second by Bob Haag

Discussion: Authorization of Beth Smith to be the signer of the application.

Roll Call Vote, motion passed unanimously.

- **Executive: Beth Smith**
 - Went through Agenda.
 - Reviewed and discussed the 2020 Audit.
 - Discussed the Board Code of Conduct and have the form signed yearly.

1868 Foundation Update

- Lindsey Koepke reported on the 1868 Foundation.
 - Reported on the “Make me a member of the Foundation”.
 - The Foundation has been reaching out to previous donors.
 - Presentation of the Community Redevelopment Program.
 - The 1868 Foundations is working on grant funding for ADD’s at the Nebraska State Fair buildings.
- Beth Smith stated the Steve Wehrbein was reappointed as the Nebraska State Fair liaison for the 1868 Foundation Board.

Other Business:

- Mark Fahleson will be attending the Nebraska State Fair Board meetings.
- March 19, 2021 is the blanket race at Fonner Park.

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

April 16, 2021 Nebraska State Fair Board Room, Grand Island, NE
May 21, 2021 Nebraska State Fair Board Room, Grand Island, NE

Adjournment

Motion made by Steve Wehrbein to adjourn the meeting.

Second by Jeff Kliment

Upon raise of hand, motion passed unanimously.

Time adjourned: 12:59 pm