



NEBRASKA STATE FAIR BOARD
Meeting Minutes
Friday, February 24, 2023

The annual meeting of the Nebraska State Fair Board was held on Friday, February 24, 2023, at 11:00 am at the Rembolt Ludtke Law Offices in Lincoln, NE. Public notice of this meeting was published in the Grand Island Independent newspaper on February 17th & 18th, 2023; 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; Boyd Strope, Treasurer; Tom Schellpeper, Secretary; Kevin Jorgensen; Kathleen Lodl; Lanna Hubbard; Brett Lindstrom, via Zoom; Ryan Hassebrook; and Steve Wehrbein. Absent: Tom Dinsdale, Jeff Kliment, and Beth Smith.

Others in attendance:

Jaime Parr, Executive Director; Tammy Baker, Business Administrator; Karli Schulz, Entertainment & Events Director, via Zoom; Ray Massie, Marketing Director; Shirley McCallum, Sponsorship & Hospitality Manager; Tina Thuernagle, Operations Director; Terry Galloway, Lindsey Koepke, both of 1868 Foundation; Mark Fahleson, Rembolt Ludtke; and Connie Decker, Box Office Manager.

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 January Financial Reports as presented by Joe Stump and Jaime Parr.

Motion made by Boyd Strope to approve Financial Reports for January 2023.

Second by Steve Wehrbein.

Upon roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

Executive Office Elections

Bob asked for nominations for the Chair.

Motion by Boyd Strope to nominate Dawn Caldwell as Chair for the Nebraska State Fair Board.

Bob asked for further nominations.

Motion by Kevin Jorgensen to nominate Bob Haag as Chair for the Nebraska State Fair Board.

Bob asked for further nominations for Chair. No further nominations.

Steve Wehrbein motioned to cease nominations.

Boyd Strope seconded motion.

Ballots distributed, collected and tallied.

Dawn Caldwell declared new Chairperson of Nebraska State Fair Board upon majority vote.

Bob congratulated Dawn and passed the gavel to her.

Dawn thanked Bob for his service.

Newly elected Chair Dawn Caldwell called for nominations for Vice Chair.

Tom Schellpeper nominated Jeff Kliment for Vice Chair.

Tom Schellpeper motioned to cease nominations.

Boyd Strope seconded motion.

Upon roll call vote, motion to elect Jeff Kliment as Vice Chair of the Nebraska State Fair Board passed unanimously.

Dawn called for nominations for Treasurer.

Boyd Strope was nominated for Treasurer by Lanna Hubbard.

Bob Haag motioned to cease nominations.

Steve Wehrbein seconded.

Upon roll call vote, motion to elect Boyd Strobe as Treasurer passed unanimously.

Dawn called for nominations for Secretary.

Boyd Strobe nominated Tom Schellpeper.

Steve Wehrbein motioned to cease nominations.

Lanna Hubbard seconded motion.

Upon roll call vote, motion to elect Tom Schellpeper as Secretary passed unanimously.

Approval of Consent Agenda

Motion made by Steve Wehrbein for Approval of Consent Agenda which included Regular Meeting Minutes of January 20, 2023.

Second by Boyd Strobe.

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

Board Committee Reports

Events Committee report by Steve Wehrbein – no report.

Facilities committee report Dawn Caldwell

Visited with Lee Will from the budget office regarding ARPA funding.

- NSF was originally granted \$20 million of federal funds.
 - \$10 million will still be water abatement, water, sewage project fund.
 - \$5 million will come from “lost revenue”.
 - \$5 million will be for shovel ready projects. We do not have to match because funds are federal, not state.
 - ALL funds granted INSIDE federal aspect.
- Guidance & direction to work with 1868 Foundation for extra \$5 mil originally requested from appropriations committee.
- We have 2023 Fair to decide what works and what doesn't; to determine what buildings need to go up next on the Fairgrounds.
- Tina will report on equipment upgrades and capital projects progress in her report.
- Terry Galloway asked questions regarding allocation and appropriations of ARPA funding.
- Jaime spoke about meeting earlier in week with City of Grand Island (storm water management) regarding projects that can be started and completed for 2023 Fair.

Ag Committee Report by Jeff Kliment – no report. Jeff not present.

Finance Committee Report by Boyd Strobe

Discussed CD investments – going well.

Boyd Strobe moved to ratify investments made on behalf of Nebraska State Fair by Jaime Parr, Executive Director, to execute any investment documents at the financial institutions she determines.

Second by Lanna Hubbard.

Roll call vote taken. Motion passed.

Boyd Strobe moved that subject to final review by the Board Finance Committee and legal counsel, Mark Fahleson authorize Jaime Parr to execute Fonner Lease Amendment.

Second by Tom Schellpeper.

Roll call vote – motion passed unanimously.

- **GILCA – Jana Sittler has been hired as Show Manager.**
 - Jaime still meeting with GILCA to protect Fair's interest with all GILCA partners.
 - Reimbursements received (financial report given earlier)
- **Last month approved 2023 Capital Expenditures (Tina will give details in her report).**

Boyd Strobe moved that we add \$40,000 to Capital Expenditures budget.

Second by Bob Haag.
Roll call vote. Motion passed.

FFA Committee Report - Ryan Hassebrook

- For the first time offering rabbit and poultry shows at the 2023 State Fair
- Working through scheduling, rules, premium books with new superintendents
- Getting new animals – working through tagging, weigh-ins, etc.
- FFA State Convention in Lincoln – opportunities to judge or volunteer.

4-H Committee Report by Kathleen Lodi

- Met with 4-H team this morning on campus.
 - 70 people in attendance this morning, educators across state, plus assistants.
 - Making sure they have a true youth experience is top of their agenda.
 - Zero negative comments received about age change.

Executive Committee Report by Bob Haag

- Dawn, Tom and Bob accompanied Jaime at State Liquor commission this morning.
- Discussed walk-around liquor license – Board and staff to receive more training.

Staff Reports

Marketing Report by Ray Massie

- Set up to announce ticketed events in April.
 - First day announce dirt and outside events.
 - Second day announce concerts.
 - Everything goes on sale in April.
- Have met with all radio partners.
 - Discussed launches and events.
 - Amount of buys with each organization has been completed.
- Yesterday completed flash sale #2 - 11 admissions to the Fair at a discounted rate of more than 50%
- Launched a new relationship with email provider, closely connected to ETIX.
- Sponsorships – projecting a big number to give you next week.
 - Planning to pitch to 20 – 25 new businesses in next month.
 - Way ahead of where we were last year at this time.
- Placer AI – presentations at NAFM, Visit Grand Island, CVB Board, and staff.
 - Changes made in platform based on suggestions we made.
 - Extreme difference between NSF and Aksarben attendees, no overlap.
 - Data we are getting from Placer AI is providing revenue for us, and greater understanding of our marketplace; allowing us to use our money more efficiently to reach people.

Operations Report by Tina Thuernagle

- Board approved purchase of new telehandler.
- With last month's board approval of capital expenditures, purchased new skid steer and scrubber.
- Recognized Brian Hoffman and Mike Kraft, Ops Team
 - Meet weekly – regarding efficiency.
 - Meet w/department heads and plan projects.

Agriculture, Events and Sales Reports by Jaime Parr

Vaughn, Karli, Holle at Summit (leadership training) for IFM (Institute of Fair Management) in Washington DC

Agriculture

- Competitive Exhibits
 - Long-time Education Department Superintendent resignation
 - Statehood Day top priority
 - Kourtney preparing to present awards to exhibitors for State Fair accomplishments.

- Friday, March 3 in Rotunda (Capitol Building)
 - Superintendents updating entry books for 2023 State Fair.
 - Finalizing job descriptions for Volunteers – Volunteer Banquet end of April.
- Livestock & Equine
 - Sara Kucera new Equine Coordinator – will create new equine experiences for fair goers.
 - RFPs finished up for streaming & photography.
 - Show Barn Flix won 3-year bid for livestock shows.
 - Legacy Livestock received photography bid.
 - Nebraska Swine Circuit working to bring a show for ACP on opening day of Fair (Friday, August 25).
 - Plans in progress for establishing livestock shows in 5 Points Arena that day also (4-H weekend).
- Aksarben Stock Show
 - Received 28 applications for the Sheep Challenge Program – more than received in last two years.
 - Committee outside of the NSF and AKSS has selected winners who will receive animals.
 - Animals will be distributed first Sunday in April.
 - In process of hiring a DNA Coordinator for Stock Show – narrowed to two. Will finalize offer soon.
 - Walton Webcasting won 3 year bid for Stock Show streaming and photography.
 - Legacy received photography bid.
- From Ag Director
 - Vaughn thanked Board for opportunity to attend IFM training to continue his professional development and education.
 - Also, continuing Executive Training with HR Provider, Keele Taylor with HR Minded Consulting.
 - Volunteering and being part of community still high priority.

Events

- Karli has hired full-time, year-round Events Manager, Kayliana Cox.
 - In charge of most of Nebraska based event including marching band, County Fair Day, the Queen Meet & Greet, Board Reunion, Veterans Day, and many others.
- In process of hiring intern to help out for summer.
- Announced Battle of the Bands – “The Fairest Showdown”
 - As of Wednesday at noon, has 14 applications
 - Funneling down to finalist through Hear Grand Island
 - Final contest to be determined by online voting.

Entertainment

- Many new entertainment applications have come in already.
- Karli and Kayli have met with Fiesta Latina group to start planning for this year’s event.
 - Event Sunday, September 3

Sales

- Holle & Keaton have collected Returning Vendor applications.
 - 7.89% will not be returning for 2023 Fair (almost 83% HAVE returned their applications)
 - Another 10% have verbal commitment.
- Reminder that they are working on new layouts for Marketplace and Sustainability Pavilion.

1868 Foundation Report by Lindsey Koepke and Terry Galloway

- Congratulated Bob Haag for successful tenure as NSF Chairman.
- Acknowledged Connie Decker at meeting.
- Acknowledged NSF staff (by department) and Jaime Parr.
- Working with Idea Bank at local, regional, and statewide level to enhance NSF brand visibility.
 - Coordinating marketing efforts with NSF.
 - Launching new website development.
 - Will be rolling out campaigns closer to Fair time (donor response better at that time).
- Have event planned – invited Coach Rhule, first visit to community of Grand Island to talk about Teamwork. Will be last week of April. Will announce when more finalized.
- Thanked Board for explanation to detail on ARPA funding.

- Terry added that sooner we know future needs of NSF, better planning of timing donor ask can occur.

Executive Director's Report by Jaime Parr

- Continue 1:1 meetings with Directors
- Group meetings of Directors with Department Heads twice a month.
- Weekly staff meetings sharing payables, balance sheets, general ledger, cash detail.
- Lifetime Pass Membership Program
 - Seek input for nominations. Will revisit next month.
- Fair planning and visualizing
 - Meetings with Wade Shows regarding 2023 and 2024 Fairs.
 - Kregel Windmill Factory – met with Isaiah.
 - Audio Visual Upgrades – meetings with competitors in room.
 - IAFE Safety and Security Bootcamp has started (webinars – once a month for 6-8 months)
 - Box Office – ticketed shows
- Reminder about Statehood Day on March 3 at 1:00.
- Yesterday's Master Planning session with Board very useful.
- Audit moving along nicely. Expect to present audit at March 17 meeting.
- Fonner Park Lease Agreement Amendment
- Sutton Rodeo in town this weekend. Partnership – equipment lease agreement.
- GILCA – hired Jana Sittler to manage show.
- Staff participated in Grand Island State of the City Address.
- Zone 5 Conference – bus leaves early Friday morning for Springfield, IL and will return Sunday evening.
 - We will host Zone 5 Conference March 1 – 3, 2024.
 - Kansas needs to delay a year.
 - RFPs out now.
- District meetings start March 12. Remainder in April. Will be sending staff to each.
- State Fair volunteering at County Fairs.
- Community outreach
 - Red Sand Event
 - Grand Island Decal Blitz
 - FFA judging and State Officer interviews. Plan to help during FFA Annual Convention also.
 - Ribbon Cutting
 - Movie Night at Grand Movie Theatre
 - Rotary, Kiwanis, Grand Island Public Library
 - Thanked staff by name.

Dawn spoke about yesterday's meeting on planning & vision. Our mission and vision have not changed. Briefly discussed committees.

Other Business – None

Motion to adjourn made by Boyd Strobe.

Seconded by Steve Wehrbein.
All in favor. Motion passed.

Minutes of February 24, 2023
Nebraska State Fair Approved:
Date: March 17, 2023

By: 
Tom Schellpeper, Board Secretary