



## **NEBRASKA STATE FAIR BOARD**

Nebraska State Fair Board Room, Grand Island, NE

### **MEETING MINUTES**

**December 13, 2019 – 11 a.m.**

A regular monthly meeting of the Nebraska State Fair Board was held on Friday, December 13, 2019, at 11:00 am. Public notice of this meeting was published in the December 2-3, 2019, issues of the Grand Island Independent newspaper and posted to the Nebraska Public meeting calendar website from December 1, 2019 – December 12, 2019.

Roll call was read with the following members present: Stan Brodine; Dawn Caldwell; Bob Haag; Jeremy Jensen, Chris Kircher; Jeff Kliment; Kathleen Lodl; Chuck Rolf, Secretary; Kirk Shane, Vice President; Beth Smith; Steve Wehrbein, and Kent Zeller. Others in attendance were: Lori Cox, Executive Director; Laura Hurley, Experiential Partnerships; Tish Eckstrom, Executive Assistant; Greg Harder, Chief Operations Officer and Aksarben Stock Show Director; Kelley O'Brien, Livestock/Domestics Manager; Scott Yound, Director of Operations; Jaime Parr, Director of Sales; Janna Kuklis, Sales Deputy; Terry Galloway and Lindsey Koepke, 1868 Foundation: and several members of the media.

Kircher 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.

#### **Minutes of November 22, 2019 Meeting**

Amended the spelling of an attendee's name.

**Motion made by Wehrbein to approve the amended minutes of November 22, 2019 meeting.**

**Rolf seconded the motion. Upon voice vote, motion passed unanimously.**

#### **Executive Director's Report**

Cox reported the Fair will be spending less than last year on concerts. During the IAFE conference, she met with Wade Shows and they discussed renewing their contract after for 2021. There were ideas shared about bringing in some larger rides and utilizing a tram route to service the north gates.

A promotion opened online at 10 am today for a \$15 carnival wristband and a \$6 admission for adults to the 2020 Nebraska State Fair. This promotion will run through December 24.

Cox read some of the comments from a survey taken during the 2011 Fair and ironically comments were very similar to comments from the 2019 survey.

#### **Financial Report**

Cox reported total current assets of \$333,468; total current liabilities \$1,138,593; total current operating revenues \$1,086,933.36; total current operating expenses \$1,404,240.68. The line of credit withdrawal is \$322,000.

Beth Smith noted the new look of the financial report given to the board, asking for financial reports. Cox responded to expect the accounting service to return to more formal, but understandable, reporting documents once they are up and running on Sage.

**Motion made by Jensen to approve the Financial Report as presented.**

**Kliment seconded the motion. Upon voice vote, motion passed unanimously.**

### **Aksarben Report**

Greg Harder reported the final AP's of 2019. Next Saturday is the Calf Challenge. Judge invitations have been sent. A coloring contest for Barr Middle School will involve urban youth with agriculture. There is new interest from local businesses to form buyers groups for 2020. Calls are coming in from other states on how to participate in Aksarben. Vendors are now committing for the 2020 show, September 24-27. The Memorandum of Understanding between the Nebraska State Fair and the Aksarben Foundation was discussed.

### **FAQ**

Chris Kircher stated there will be an FAQ posted to the Nebraska State Fair website that will address frequently-asked questions from the public.

### **Board Governance**

Kircher presented Board members with a confidential memo from Baylor Evnen concerning Code of Conduct for board members. He encouraged Board members to review and be prepared to discuss at the January meeting. There will be no media release until it is approved.

### **Committee Reports**

a. Facility Planning

Chuck Rolf reported the committee invited Chris Kotulak to begin discussions on laying groundwork and goals from Fonner and Nebraska State Fair. The committee asked Kotulak to take ideas back to share with the Fonner Board.

Exhaust fans and belts were replaced in the livestock barns, greatly improving air quality.

b. Finance

Jeremy Jensen reported the committee discussed the weekly meetings being held by staff to look over finances. This has been a massive step in communication for the staff. The Line of Credit will be paid off beginning in February and paid on a quarterly basis. Jensen discussed the new look to the financial reports stating the importance to have consistency and clarity. The committee is pushing for a simpler, standard document. Any Board member can ask for a more detailed report, if needed. Formal documents are available for auditing purposes.

c. Public Affairs and Outreach

Did not meet.

d. Livestock

Kirk Shane reported the committee discussed at length the future costs of bedding, feed, etc. to the livestock showmen. Cox presented the new Agriculture Department structure.

Shane discussed future building expansion with 4-H and FFA numbers growing, and noted the pressing need of a small animal barn.

e. Events

Steve Wehrbein reported that the committee discussed the Grand Marshall program, marching bands and motorsports.

f. Executive

Chris Kircher reported that Cox updated the committee on the efforts involved in the transition. They discussed the FAQ, the board governance piece and the staffing of the Agriculture Department going forward.

**1868 Foundation**

Terry Galloway reported the 1868 Foundation board met last month. The nominee committee is busy looking for 4-6 new board members. The Foundation has its own budget challenges as well.

Lindsey Koepke spoke about the end-of-year campaign. The Foundation has 353 current members.

**Other Business**

Chuck Rolf pointed out this is the last meeting for both Kent Zeller and Kirk Shane. Rolfed thanked them for their years of service to the Nebraska State Fair.

Bob Haag asked about the welding camp. A grant of \$10,000 was awarded to NSF by the Aksarben Foundation to hold the first welding camp. It may run on opening weekend of the Fair with the goal of instructing 50 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders.

Stan Brodine, Dawn Caldwell and Beth Smith part of a personnel task force that would consider strategic planning for the Board involving mission and Core statements and work on a performance/improvement plan for the Executive Director.

The lease of the Brunk and Luebbe lots was discussed.

**Executive Session- Personnel**

**Motion made by Jensen to go into Executive session at 11:54 am. Kliment seconded the motion. Upon voice vote, motion passed unanimously.**

**Motion made by Shane to come out of Executive Session at 12:46 pm. Motion seconded by Brodine. Upon voice vote, motion passed unanimously.**

**Adjourn**

**Motion made by Caldwell to adjourn.**

**Wehrbein seconded the motion. Upon voice vote, motion passed unanimously.**

**Time adjourned: 12:48 p.m.**