



NEBRASKA STATE FAIR BOARD

Nebraska State Fair Board Room, Grand Island, NE

Meeting Minutes

August 28, 2020

A regular meeting of the Nebraska State Fair Board was held on Friday, August 28, 2020, at 1 p.m. Public notice of this meeting was published in the August 21 & 22 issues of the Grand Island Independent newspaper and posted to the Nebraska Public meeting calendar website from August 14, 2020. The public and press was 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 Hassebrook; Lanna Hubbard; Jeremy Jensen; Kevin Jorgensen; Chris Kircher; Jeff Kliment; Kathleen Lodl; Beth Smith, Chair; Boyd Strobe, Treasurer; and Steve Wehrbein. Absent: Chuck Rolf. Others in attendance at the board room were: Bill Ogg, Executive Director; Jaime Parr, Director of Sales; Tish Eckstrom, HR & Finance Administrator, Gretchen Kirchmann, NSF/Aksarben Communications Manager; Laura Hurley, Experiential Partnerships; Kelly O'Brien, Livestock/Competitive Exhibits Manager; Scott Yound, Director of Operations; Chris Lindner, BKD CPA & Advisors; Terry Galloway, CPA and Lindsey Koepke of the 1868 Foundation; Kent Zeller, and Sheila Foster, Event Liaison.

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.

Minutes of July 17, 2020 Meeting

Motion made by Strobe to approve the minutes of July 17, 2020 meeting .

Wehrbein seconded the motion.

Chris Kircher noted the date listed for the current meeting was incorrect in the minutes.

The Chair directed that correction made.

Upon roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

Financial Review and Update

Terry Galloway presented the Board with a general overview of the Fair's financial documents. He reviewed several financial reports explaining details/specific adjustments he recommended the Board make to bring the financial records current and within general accounting standards.

Chris Lindner of BKD, the auditing firm of the Nebraska State Fair informed the Board he discussed with Terry the review and updates Terry had completed and agrees with the updates. Chris recommended the financial documents as adjusted by Terry should be approved.

Terry and Chris responded to questions from Board Members. Chairman Smith informed the Board that Terry has also completed an analysis of Aksarben financial records, which will be presented at a future meeting.

July Financials

It was moved by Jeremy Jensen and seconded by Boyd Strobe that the following financial documents presented by Terry Galloway through July 31, 2020 should be approved by the Board:

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

After discussion by the Board, a unanimous roll call vote was taken in favor of the motion.

Executive Director's Report

Bill Ogg requested department heads and liaisons each report to the Board.

Jaime Parr reported on the Sales Department.

- 14 food/beverage vendors
- 40 commercial spaces
- 60 antique tractors
- 2 veteran memorials
- Veterans Program on Labor Day
- 11 bands performing

Sheila Foster reported Remember the Fallen and Hero Flights both have veterans displays at the Fair. Veteran Program on Sept 7. Opening Ceremonies will be Saturday with Steve White as emcee. At 7 pm each night, there is a band performing on the Pepsi Party Deck Stage. Five National Anthem singers will be doing 29 performances throughout fair.

Gretchen Kirchmann reported on multiple media contacts and interviews. Ogg mentioned minimal additional cost has been incurred on paid advertising.

Scott Yound reported Operations Department has had long hours of preparation and only a few minor issues remain to take care of.

Laura Hurley reported the Sponsorship Department will take in about \$460,000 in cash. Tree Bombing has been taking place on State Fair Boulevard and now moving to statewide contest. Nebraska State Fair is partnering with HyVee to host the Harvest for Hunger food drive. Food donated will go to four different food pantries.

Kathleen Lodi reported on 4-H livestock shows, static exhibits in the Pinnacle Bank Arena with the County displays, contests, and fashion show happening which will bring about 3500 young people to the State Fairgrounds with approximately 9000 entries. Lodi discussed the use of the 4-H App. NET is providing livestreaming of events. Discussion of not having paper programs reminded Board touch points need to be reduced and at least eliminated so no paper programs.

Ryan Hassebrook reported on FFA events starting next weekend. Expecting around 1000 youth to be onsite. Livestock and static exhibits will start moving in end of the week. Hassebrook mentioned any assistance board members could provide during FFA would be appreciated.

Ogg let the Board know Gate 5 is closed and will remain closed through the Fair. Come in Gate 6 to get to lot 5 for parking. Ogg reminded Board members golf carts need to be tagged before driving on Fairgrounds. Ogg advised masks are recommended while at the Fairgrounds and each Board Member should get their temperature taken daily upon arrival at one of 3 locations: main offices, livestock office, or first-aid station. Attendance will be recorded by clicker count.

Fair Schedule for Board Members

Ogg highlighted a few of the events he would like to have Board members attend:

- Observe Bull Fighting VIP 6-7 p.m. Friday and Saturday night
- 1868 Foundation hosting a nightly hospitality event in the Five Points loft
- Opening Ceremonies, Saturday 8:30 a.m. at Party Pit- then moves inside the Five Points Bank Arena at 9:30 a.m.

Ogg spoke about the responsibilities and opportunities of serving as a Board member for the Nebraska State Fair.

Seasonal Employee Internal Controls Discussion

Ogg spoke about nepotism that has happened in the past at Nebraska State Fair. The nepotism policy in place is not against family members working together, but some rules need to be followed. Overtime will be kept to a minimum this year. Nebraska approves the Federal law that exempts the Fair from paying overtime to seasonal workers.

Members of the Board discussed discrepancy in pay rates for family members above other employees doing the same job and the nepotism policy in the Employee Handbook being enforced.

Other Business

Terry Galloway invited Board and Staff to the Five Points Arena Loft for the nightly hospitality events.

Jensen asked for an update on the Attorney General/ State Patrol investigation. Smith reported the State Patrol had completed its investigation and had sent results to the Attorney General's Office.

Smith thanked the volunteers and recognized Mayor Steele and Teresa Anderson for all their work and. Smith also thanked Bill, Jaime and staff for all their hard work and the Board for voting to proceed with producing a Fair.

The Board will meet Monday, September 7 at 8:30 a.m.

Smith called for a motion to recess the meeting until September 7.

It was moved by Bob Haag and seconded by Chris Kircher to recess the meeting at 2:50. Upon voice vote, motion passed unanimously.

September 7, 2020

Nebraska State Fair Board meeting reconvened at 8:31 a.m.

Board members present: Dawn Caldwell; Bob Haag; Lanna Hubbard, via Zoom, Jeremy Jensen, via Zoom; Kevin Jorgensen; Jeff Kliment, Beth Smith; Boyd Strope; and Steve Wehrbein. Absent: Chris Kircher, Chuck Rolf.

August 2020 Financial Report

Terry Galloway reported on the August 2020 financials.

Approval of August 2020 Financials

It was moved by Strope and seconded by Haag that the following financial documents presented by Terry Galloway through August 31, 2020 be approved by the Board as presented.

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

Upon roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

Ak-sar-ben Update

Greg Harder, Aksarben Director, reported on the upcoming 2020 Aksarben Stock Show.

Gretchen Kirchmann, Aksarben Strategic Development Planner, reported on media campaign, buying groups and some events included in Aksarben.

Smith noted the impressive entry numbers reported by Harder and commented what a great event this is for the Grand Island community. Smith encouraged Board members to attend the Purple Ribbon Auction on Saturday during Aksarben.

Terry Galloway reported on the Aksarben financials.

Ogg commented that NSF and Aksarben financials have been looked at as a collective and independently.

Hassebrook questioned if Aksarben needed to become its own entity financially.

Ogg pointed out the rumored allegations in the community surrounding the State Fair Board voting to cancel Aksarben, were not true. Aksarben is on the agenda for discussion due to being under the umbrella of the State Fair. Ogg noted the sizeable event this is for the community, but can not recommend the NSF, year after year, to underwrite an event for \$50,000 to \$200,000. There is a need to make the event more sustainable with support from the community. There is leadership in the community that have offered to step up with financial support and possible leadership for Aksarben.

Jensen questioned if all events would be looked at separately.

Ogg responded in fact they would.

Smith noted that Aksarben was originally under the GILCA umbrella when it moved to Grand Island. GILCA negotiated with Aksarben to bring the livestock show here. It was then shifted solely to the Nebraska State Fair in 2018.

Jensen suggested a discussion about GILCA and the Nebraska State Fair's involvement in that.

Smith thanked Terry for volunteering his time to go over financials.

Discussion of 2020 Nebraska State Fair

Bill Ogg summarized the overall challenge of the 2020 Nebraska State Fair and some of the struggles it presented as well as the positive outcomes.

Ogg asked for Board members to comment on their experiences at this year's Fair.

Upcoming Board Meeting Dates

October 9, 2020

November 20, 2020

December 11, 2020

Possible Holiday gathering December 10, 2020.

Adjourn

Motion made by Caldwell to adjourn the meeting.

Seconded by Wehrbein.

Upon voice vote, motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:47 a.m.