



NEBRASKA STATE FAIR BOARD

Board Room in the Nebraska Building – Fonner Park, Grand Island, NE

MEETING MINUTES

February 22, 2019, – 10:00 a.m.

A regular monthly meeting of the Nebraska State Fair Board was held on Friday, February 22, 2019, at 10:00 a.m. Public notice of this meeting was published in the February 10 & 11, 2019, issues of the Grand Island Independent newspaper and posted to the Nebraska Public meeting calendar website since February 10, 2019.

Roll call was read with the following members present: Stan Brodine; Bob Haag; Chris Kircher, Chair; Jeff Kliment; Kathleen Lodl; Doug Lukassen; Chuck Rolf, Secretary; Kirk Shane, Vice Chair; Beth Smith (via phone); Steve Wehrbein and Kent Zeller. Others in attendance were: Lori Cox, Executive Director; Laura Hurley, Executive Assistant; Bill Angell, Director of Livestock Division; Greg Harder, Chief Operations Officer and Aksarben Stock Show Director; Chelsey Jungck, Chief of Events & Entertainment; Jamie Parr, Chief of Sales; Lori Arterburn, Financial Controller; Scott Yound, Director of Operations; Patrick Kopke, Chief of Finance and Administration; Lindsey Koepke, director 1868 Foundation; Roger Henrichs; Ryan Hasselbrook, FFA; Steve White, NTV News; Robert Pore, The Independent.

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.

Introduction of New Board Members

Kircher introduced Dawn Caldwell and Jeremy Jensen as our newly appointed State Board members.

Election of Officers

Kircher opened the floor for Chair nominations. Haag nominated Lukassen; Shane nominated Kircher. Rolf motioned to close nominations, Haag seconded.

By written ballot, Kircher was re-elected as Chair.

Kircher opened the floor for Vice Chair nominations. Rolf nominated Shane to retain his position as Vice Chair. Lukassen motioned to close the nominations, Haag seconded.

Motion made by Caldwell to re-elect Kirk Shane as Vice Chair, Lukassen seconded.

Upon voice vote, motion passed unanimously.

Kircher opened the floor for Secretary nominations. Shane nominated Rolf.

Motion made by Haag to close nominations and retain Rolf as Secretary. Brodine seconded.

Upon voice vote, motion carried unanimously.

Kircher opened the floor for Treasurer nominations (note departure of former Treasurer, Harry Hoch). Shane nominated Lukassen. Rolf nominated Wehrbein. Wehrbein motioned to close nominations. Shane seconded.

By written ballot Lukassen was elected as Secretary.

Kircher will be emailing board members to request their desired placement on committees.

Minutes of January 18, 2019 Meeting

Corrections were noted and amended to the notes.

Motion made by Lukassen to approve the minutes of January 18, 2019 as amended.

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

Executive Director's Report

Cox presented an overview of accomplishments during the last 14 months. This list includes but not limited to:

1. Aksarben and its net of \$80K+; two of their three staff members also serve dual positions with NSF.
2. Building better GILCA practices.
3. Strengthening cross-state public relations; developing local relationships through Grow Grand Island, Rotary, Chamber, CVB, Economic Development; continue to spread and reinforce our State Fair brand across the state.
4. Forming a financial strategy team instead of just accounting.
5. Improved marketing and sales by bringing on a marketing agency, and sponsorship revenues have increased 17%. Created neighborhood programming to improve our target marketing; executed the first annual sponsor summit with 53 sponsors attending.
6. In HR, changed and improved our health, dental and vision benefits with no cost increase; developing staff into leaders and forming a collaborative culture.
7. Listened to our visitors and improving the main entrance; also bringing back new forms of the mega pass.
8. Executive director reports to the Board between meetings.
9. Hosted the first annual volunteer social with over 300 attending.

Cox visited about the difference between county fairs and state fairs, comparing them to district ball games vs. a state tournament. She asked the Board to trust the team they've put in place to bring about the most high quality programming, as the State Fair senior staff has over 98 years of collective experience in the fair business.

Dairy Show

Kircher introduced Roger Henrichs, youth dairy superintendent. Henrichs proposed a change to a regional youth dairy show, open to any state for 10-21 yr. olds. Entrants must have registration papers on their animal, and can enter up to five animals. They would like to start this year. Kircher asked about what this would do for numbers. Henrichs assumed they would increase, as he's been approached by several other states. No other state fair is doing this in dairy. Shane commented that the livestock committee supports this. Lodi added this is for the dairy category only of 4-H and FFA.

Motion made by Shane to approve this change. Wehrbein seconded.

Upon voice vote, motion carried

Financial Report

Kopke, Chief of Finance and Administration, reported total current assets of \$2,333,566; total current liabilities \$873,782; total current operating revenues \$115,898; total current operating expenses \$216,312. Ticket sales were reported, with over 30% of total bundles sold. A zip code map and list of top 10 cities was shown where they were sold. There's concern with outdated premium checks which have not been cashed but still on the books. These will be submitted to the state; NSF will write them a check to cover; the state will post in abandoned funds and for distribution.

Motion made by Wehrbein to approve the Financial Report.

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

2019 Capital Budget

Arterburn, Financial Controller, handed out and explained the 2019 Capital Budget, including high and low priority projects. Cox mentioned that the \$100,000 budgeted for the main entrance is an estimated total only. A presentation on the new main entry will be given at the next meeting. Jungck would like the allocation for the foyer improvements to be moved to a priority so it can be started in fall, 2019.

Motion was made by Rolf to approve the Capital Budget at \$531,000, less the main gate allocation but to include the foyer improvement. Lukassen seconded. Upon voice vote, motion carried unanimously.

Committee Reports

a. Facility Planning

Rolf commented it was already discussed.

b. Finance

Kircher said it was covered during the finance report.

c. Public Affairs and Outreach

Lukassen reported NSF banners will be made for all the county fairs. The NSF board will be meeting with the 1868 Foundation Board.

d. Livestock

Shane reiterated that the only livestock change is dairy cattle opening its borders. Work is being done on the livestock schedule. The committee decided to raise the premium payout from \$34,812 to \$59,000 in response to not offering a free entry badge as a show of good will from the Fair. Lukassen commented we should make it back on entry fees, and should increase our numbers.

Motion made by Haag to accept the new livestock premium increase.

Lukassen seconded the motion. Upon a voice vote, motion passed unanimously.

e. Events

Wehrbein deferred to Kliment to report first on motorsports. Kliment reported they are working with a new group, with a higher draw of participants. Investigation is being done for lights, concessions and other improvements. Lighting will allow more evening events when it is cooler. Second, Jungck and Wehrbein gave updates on the 150th Fairabration plans; County Fair Day, Board and Grand Marshall reunions, opening ceremony, fireworks or laser light show, live muralist and more to come. Operations has repurposed the pirate ship from the Children's Museum exhibit into many functional projects throughout the grounds.

f. Executive

Kircher reported that the executive board met the previous evening. A meeting with the 1868 Foundation Executive Committee is scheduled today to address capital needs in fundraising. Every board member should have received a breakdown of the costs for board meetings from Kopke.

1868 Foundation

Koepke shared a presentation showing membership growth and financial position. The annual Blue Ribbon Rollout will be Thursday, August 22. There is a trustee dinner in May. Koepke will try to coordinate that date with our monthly board meeting.

Future Nebraska State Fair Board Meeting Dates, Locations and Other Events

March 17, 2019 in Lincoln following the Zone 5 Conference

April 12, 2019

May 10, 2019

June 14, 2019

July 12, 2019

Other Business

Cox went over concert and gate handouts, inviting members to take them for reference. Wehrbein mentioned the Cattlemen’s Ball will be Saturday June 8, 2019 in Wauneta, NE. Brodine asked for updated contact cards.

Executive Session

Kircher asked for a motion to go into executive session.

Motion made by Rolf to go into executive session. Shane seconded the motion.

Upon voice vote, motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Lukassen to exit executive session. Haag seconded the motion.

Upon voice vote, motion passed unanimously.

Lukassen made motion to approve bonus as discussed. Rolf seconded the motion.

Upon voice vote, motion passed unanimously.

Adjourn

Motion made by Wehrbein to adjourn.

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

Time adjourned: 1:10 p.m.