



NEBRASKA STATE FAIR BOARD

Nebraska State Fair Board Room, Grand Island, NE

Meeting Minutes

December 18, 2020

A regular meeting of the Nebraska State Fair Board was held on Friday, December 18, 2020, at 10 a.m. Public notice of this meeting was published in the December 11 & 12 issues of the Grand Island Independent newspaper and posted to the Nebraska Public meeting calendar website from December 4, 2020 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, via zoom; Bob Haag, Secretary, via Zoom; Ryan Hassebrook via zoom; Lanna Hubbard, via Zoom; Jeremy Jensen, via Zoom; Kevin Jorgensen; Chris Kircher, via Zoom; Jeff Kliment, via Zoom; Beth Smith, Chair, via Zoom; Boyd Strope, Treasurer, via Zoom; and Steve Wehrbein, via Zoom; Kathleen Lodl via zoom, Chuck Rolf absent. Others in attendance at the board room were: Bill Ogg, Executive Director; Jaime Parr, Director of Sales; Tish Eckstrom, Executive Administrator; Laura Hurley, Experiential Partnerships; Judy Trent, Administrative Administrator/ Board Liaison; Kelly O'Brien, Livestock/Competitive Exhibits Manager; Scott Yound, Director of Operations, via Zoom; Terry Galloway, CPA; Lindsey Koepke, 1868 Foundation, via Zoom.

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 November Fair Board Meeting Minutes

Motion made by Lanna Hubbard to approve November Board meeting minutes as written.

Second by Jeff Kliment

Discussion: No Discussion

Upon roll call vote, passed unanimously

November Financials

Introduction:

- **Terry Galloway, CPA who has voluntarily assisted with the reconciliation and improvement to the fair financials, prefaced presentation of the November financial statement:**
 - **Financials are dependably accurate and more easily read and understood.**
 - **Tremendous improvement from last year in cash position.**

Approval of November Financials

Motion made by Dawn Caldwell that the financial documents through November 30, 2020 to 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

Second by Boyd Strope

Upon voice vote, passed unanimously

Approval of 2021 Budget

Motion made by Boyd Strope to approve the 2021 Nebraska State Fair Budget.

Second by Dawn Caldwell

Introduction:

Bill Ogg offered comment on the budget:

- Budget is an important management tool that requires regular reference as it continues. The budget was presented to the board in November for review, questions, and comments.
- Proposed budget is significantly less than recent years and it is imperative that communication is open and honest as the year progresses.
- Budget is conservative on revenue and adequate on expenses.

Discussion:

- Jeremy Jensen raised questions regarding wages and disclosure of information.

Jaime Parr presented narrative and review of budget

Upon roll call vote, Motion passed with Caldwell, Haag, Hubbard, Jorgensen, Kliment, Strope, Wehrbein For; Jensen and Kircher Against

Executive Director's Report

- a. Accounting Services
 - Distributed an RFP and currently reviewing 12 responses.
 - For continued transparency and accountability will continue with outside source instead of in-house personnel.
 - Thanked Randy Skalka for his services in 2020
- b. Employee Handbook Review
 - Distributed to Board for comments and questions
 - Will implement first of the year unless need for re-editing
- c. "There is Nothing More Nebraskan" - 2021 Fair Planning
 - With budget approved, staff will continue with planning and decisions
 - Marketing strategy is to reach all Nebraskans and neighboring states
 - Livestock on the grounds all days of the fair
 - Entertainment and committee assignments will be made in new year
 - State Fair welcomes ideas to strengthen the Board alumni engagement
 - Idea of creating a focus group to see what people from large communities and young people would like to see at the fair

Department Reports

- Agriculture
 - Bill Ogg reported on Agriculture
 - AG Director position is still open
 - Plan to hire AG Director in beginning of 2021 year
 - Working on premium list, events list, and schedule
- Marketing/Sponsorship
 - Laura Hurley reported on marketing
 - Decorate your door challenge has been a great success
 - Flash and Dash promotion (limited time of deals)
 - Historical items
 - 1957 State Fair trophy
 - 1920 Red glass
 - 100-year-old coin
 - 1911 medal
 - Other items for historical display
 - State Fair Scrabble Board
- Operations
 - Scott Yound reported on operations
 - Equipment has been winterized
 - Working on ticket booths
- Sales
 - Jaime Parr reported on Sales
 - Close to hiring a Sales Director
 - Janna Kuklis has been working on vendor applications
 - Working on credit card user policy
- Sponsorship
 - Laura Hurley reported on Sponsorship
 - Connecting with sponsors and planning for 2021

Aksarben Report

- Based on approval of budget the Nebraska State Fair will officially and eagerly continue with Aksarben
- GILCA will meet the first of the year to discuss Aksarben
- Aksarben will continue with traditional activities in 2021 but will research if a different time, divisions, and entertainment would help in participation and revenue.

Fair Board Committee Reports

- a. Agriculture
 - Jeff Kliment reported on Agriculture Committee Meeting
 - Discussed Aksarben and general programing
 - Funding and reaching outside of Grand Island Area
 - State Fair schedule planning
 - Discussion on separate weekends for FFA and 4-H exhibits

- b. Finance
 - Boyd Strope reported on Finance Committee Meeting
 - Mentioned significant 2021 budget discussion was conducted
- c. Executive
 - Beth Smith reported on Executive Committee Meeting
 - Reiterated in depth 2021 budget discussion was conducted
 - Aksarben support confirmed
 - Will conduct 6-month evaluation of Bill in January 2021

1868 Foundation Update

- Terry Galloway reported on the 1868 Foundation
- Funding options
 - Fundraising with partners
- Improvements to the fair
- Lindsey reported on charity
 - End of the year giving
 - Behind the scenes communication methods
 - Rock the Lot Project is done
 - \$120,000 raised for The Nebraska State Fair in 2020

Other Business

- Kevin Jorgensen reported on importance of working with Fonner Park and the impact of the gambling changes may have on State Fair and County fairs.
- Jeremy Jensen announced this was his last meeting as a Nebraska State Fair Board member as he will not seek reappointment.
- Bill Ogg offered to present to the City Council of Grand Island, Hall County or any entity about The Nebraska State Fair as requested.

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

- a. January 23, 2021 10 am Board meeting preceding NAFM Business meeting beginning at 12:30 pm
- b. February 12, 2021 11 am - Board Meeting, Lincoln, NE

Adjournment

**Motion made by Boyd Strope to adjourn the meeting.
Second by Steve Wehrbein**

**Upon voice vote, motion passed unanimously
Time adjourned: 12:05**