



NEBRASKA STATE FAIR BOARD
Nebraska State Fair Board Room, Grand Island, NE
Meeting Minutes
July 17, 2020

A regular meeting of the Nebraska State Fair Board was held on Friday, July 17, 2020, at 1 p.m. Public notice of this meeting was published in the July 10 & 11 issues of the Grand Island Independent newspaper and posted to the Nebraska Public meeting calendar website from July 7, 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, via Zoom; Jeremy Jensen; Kevin Jorgensen; Chris Kircher, via Zoom; Jeff Kliment; Kathleen Lodl, via Zoom; Beth Smith, Chair; Boyd Strobe, Treasurer; and Steve Wehrbein, via Zoom. Absent: Chuck Rolf. Others in attendance at the board room were: Bill Ogg, Executive Director; Jaime Parr, Director of Sales; Tish Eckstrom, Executive Specialist/HR Coordinator, Greg Harder, NSF Livestock Director/ Aksarben Stock Show Director; Gretchen Kirchmann, NSF/Aksarben Communications Manager; Laura Hurley, Experiential Partnerships; Janna Kuklis, Sales Deputy; Judy Trent, Administrative Office Assistant; Kelly O'Brien, Livestock/Competitive Exhibits Manager; Scott Yound, Director of Operations; Chris Lindner, BKD CPA & Advisors. Terry Galloway and Lindsey Koepke of the 1868 Foundation were present 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.

Laura Hurley gave a report on the 80 hand sanitizing stations that were gifted to the Nebraska State Fair. These were designed and sourced by UNL through a connection with Randy Gar and Brandon Beck of Bosselman's. who also provided 1000 gallons of hand sanitizer to the Nebraska State Fair. This is almost a \$20,000 savings for the Fair.

Minutes of June 12, 2020 Regular Meeting and June 30, 2020 Special Meeting

There being no corrections:

Motion made by Strobe to approve the minutes of June 12, 2020 and June 30, 2020 meetings as printed.

Jorgensen seconded the motion.

Discussion: none

Upon roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

June Financials

Jaime Parr reported total current assets of \$2,763,541; prepaid expenses \$79,028; total building/improvements/equip 12,881,834; total liabilities \$1,433,343; total long term liabilities \$4,194,291; total liabilities and equity \$15,726,579.

Work is being done with the audit company and Parr hopes to have financials that can be presented for approval at the next meeting.

Strope stated there will be no recommendation of approval at this time.

Audit Report- BKD

Chris Lindner of BKD CPA & Advisors gave a report on the 2019 Nebraska State Fair audit.

Motion made by Jensen to accept the Audit as presented.

Seconded by Haag.

Upon roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

Interim Director's Report

Bill Ogg spoke about Nebraska State Fair being a public trust and managing that trust with the best intentions.

Requests for proposal for were sent out for Accounting Services. May rescind original request and enhance the information supplied to potential contractors.

The decision to showcase and celebrate Nebraska 4-H and FFA has been a significant commitment and will remain our cornerstones. Other activities are being considered and vetted by the Board and staff.

Jaime Parr, Director of Sales, reported on concessionaires and commercial vendors. There will be an outdoor shopping experience and an outdoor vendor area. Number of booths will be less but a variety will be provided. 4-H and FFA will be the anchors for the weekends. Raising Nebraska building will be open all 11 days. Nebraska Game & Parks will have a limited hours and activities. Taverns will be open. The Campground will be available.

All planning and programming will be planned determined by what phase of Covid-19 we are in. All recommendations are taking into consideration.

Laura Hurley, Sponsorship & Hospitality Director, reported on Sponsorships. \$671,037 already in the collected. Of that, about \$95,000 will roll over to next year. Hurley had 15 new sponsors come on this year.

The 'Boulevard Bombing' is underway. 35 of the 50 trees have been spoken for by non-profits to decorate. The decorating will be done by July 31 and will remain up until October 10. Sponsors for this activity are Case IH, Bosselman's, Anderson Auto Group, and Copycat Printing.

Gretchen Kirchmann, Media Lead, gave an update on media team which consists of Judy Trent, Laura Hurley, Whitney Todd, Abbie Philmalee and is headed up by Kirchmann. Predominately using Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter for social platforms. There are now new GIFS for Nebraska State Fair to be used on these platforms.

Scott Yound, Director of Operations, had no report.

Greg Harder, Livestock Director, reported on the limited events that can be brought in and the tentative schedule of events. Events include four Equine shows, 4-H & FFA livestock shows and potential open class livestock shows. The open class cattle and goat shows must meet the entry requirement numbers or these shows will not go on. The Equine shows are being put on by the entities organizing those shows. Swine show organizers will also produce that show on a net zero cost basis to the Fair. The only small animal shows will be 4-H poultry and rabbit shows.

Aksarben Report

Greg Harder introduced the Aksarben interns, Sierra Day and Abbie Philmalee.

Shelby Leonhard, Aksarben Operations Manager, has been taking care of DNA entry books, awards, and any questions coming in. Online entries start August 1. DNA entries are up this year. 36% of the total number was Nebraska 4-H and FFA, 30% was South Dakota, and 34% Aksarben. Broiler show entries are strong.

Gretchen Kirchmann, Aksarben Communications Manager & Sponsorships, has been working on Sponsorships and has secured a sponsorship from Wrangler. Kirchmann spoke at the Omaha Rotary recently and made good contacts at that meeting. Live streaming the Aksarben Stock Show and Auction is being looked into with Rural Radio Network and Nebraska Public Television. There is work being done on building an Aksarben alumni database to engage alumni in sponsorships and also being aware of alumni interests. The trade show is looking to be up in numbers. Monitoring Covid-19 travel restrictions as they apply to Quiz Bowl and judging contests.

The Aksarben Purple Ribbon Auction invitation draft was passed out to Board members.

Ogg spoke about relationship with Fonner Park and hopes for going forward.

Ogg recognized the University of Nebraska, Nebraska Department of Agriculture and Ag Industry partners for stepping up to assist the Nebraska State Fair during this challenging time.

The entertainment portion of the State Fair will be dramatically reduced this year. There will still be some entertainment available, but at no cost to the Fair. There will be no gate entry fees this year in an effort to give back to the community. There will still be security and monitoring of gates.

Kathleen Lodl discussed showcase of static exhibits and also the virtual display of certain static exhibits on website at no cost to the Fair. There will be no premiums awarded this year as well as no judging of exhibits to cut costs.

Committee Reports

a. Facilities-

Dawn Caldwell reported the Facilities Committee met and discussed the parking lot project. The Foundation has worked directly with Pat O'Neill to get the cost down so that project can move forward. The seating map for spectators was discussed with the Director of Operations.

b. Finance –

Boyd Strobe reported the Finance Committee met with all members present. Parr reviewed the financial documents with the committee continuing the reclassification of certain line items including items from 2019 that were paid for in 2020. Commercial Vendors and Concessionaires are being looked at to include during the week and also having a presence at the Equine events. Vendor fees are being negotiated due to the uncertainty of this year's event.

Interest amounts listed on the financials are actuals and not estimates as they were prior. Work has been done to clarify Aksarben allocations. Formats of financial documents is still being worked out. There will be no stamped signatures on checks. Checks in excess of \$5000 will required 2 signatures. Ogg has been looking into expense reports, receipts and policies on expense reimbursements. Clean up of old Account Receivables has begun. Smith provided a 5 year over look of the Lottery funds allocated to the Nebraska State Fair.

Ogg discussed new Procurement Policy.

Discussion: Jensen, Strobe.

c. Livestock-

Jeff Kliment reported the Livestock Committee discussed the schedule of events, splitting duties between the 2 weekends, cutting down on bedding, security needs, and vet needs, and overall operation of events.

Discussion: Wehrbein, Lodl, Hassebrook.

d. Events-

Steve Wehrbein reported the Events Committee met and decided not to have the Grand Marshall or County Fair Day events this year.

The Board Reunion and Opening Ceremonies will happen on the first Saturday with times TBD. The Veterans Day program will happen on Monday, Sept.7.

Jeff Kliment reported there was discussion about having the Tractor Pull. The outdoor event possibly be 2 days with the cost around \$65,000. The event can be cancelled up to 1 week before the event. Demo Derby may be cancelled.

Discussion Wehrbein, Kliment, Smith, Caldwell, Strobe.

Motion made by Caldwell to pursue Tractor Pull event at Nebraska State Fair 2020.

Seconded by Jorgensen.

Upon roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

Discussion: Smith, Ogg, Haag, Jensen, Caldwell

e. Executive-

Beth Smith reported the Executive Committee met and discussed the audit and the Covid Working group meetings. Meetings will continue to be held weekly on Thursday's at 9 a.m.

The next NSF board meeting will not be the 2nd Friday in August. It will be the August 29, the first Saturday of the Fair. Smith encouraged committees to meet virtually prior to that date as needed or on Friday before the Fair.

f. Public Affairs & Outreach-

Beth Smith reported the Committee met and discussed social media updates for Fair. There will be a newspaper pull out in the Grand Island Independent.

Foundation Update

Terry Galloway reported on the 1868 Foundation's efforts to continue fundraising. The Foundation is looking forward to the new fundraising project for Nebraska State Fair.

Grants for operation funding have been applied for.

Lindsey Koepke discussed fundraising and the Foundation's upcoming board meeting.

Other Business

Ryan Hassebrook reported on nomination numbers for 4-H and FFA. Fees are up and consistent with other states. Premium money is still available. FFA static entries will still have premiums.

Kathleen Lodi reported 4-H is moving ahead with Livestock exhibits, static exhibits, contests, fashion show, and Quilts of Valor. There will be educational programs in Raising Nebraska building.

Future Nebraska State Fair Board Meeting Dates

a. August 28, 2020

b. October 9, 2020

Bill Ogg reminded the Board that the Educational Exhibits will be available to the public Sunday through Monday of the Fair in the Quilt room located in the Pinnacle Bank Arena.

Adjourn

**Motion made by Strobe to adjourn.
Kliment seconded the motion.**

**Upon voice vote, motion passed unanimously.
Time adjourned: 2:55 p.m.**