



**NEBRASKA STATE FAIR BOARD**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Friday, November 15, 2024**

The regular meeting of the Nebraska State Fair Board was held on Friday, November 15, 2024, at 1:00 pm at the State Fair Administrative Offices in Grand Island, NE. Public notice of this meeting was published in the Grand Island Independent newspaper on November 8 & 9, 2024; posted to the Nebraska Public meeting calendar website; and on the Nebraska State Fair website. The public was invited to attend in person.

Roll call was read with the following Board members present: Boyd Strobe, Vice Chair; Lanna Hubbard, Treasurer; Tom Schellpeper, Secretary; Ryan Hassebrook; Kevin Jorgensen; Alan Kahle; Kathleen Lodt; John McKeever; and Beth Smith. Absent: Jeff Kliment, Chair; Dawn Caldwell; Tom Dinsdale; and Brett Lindstrom.

**Others in attendance:**

Jaime Parr, Executive Director; Tammy Baker, Business Administrator; Joe Stump, AMGL; Lindsey Koepke, 1868 Foundation; Keaton Irwin, Sales Director; Karli Schulz, Events & Entertainment Director; Vaughn Sievers, Ag Director; Tina Thuernagle, Operations Director; and Carla Warneke, Box Office and Volunteer.

Boyd Strobe 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 Consent Agenda**

**Motion made by Beth Smith for Approval of Consent Agenda, which included Regular Meeting Minutes of October 18, 2024.**

**Second by Lanna Hubbard.**

**Upon roll call vote, motion to approve consent agenda passed unanimously.**

**Financial Report by Joe Stump and Jaime Parr**

**John McKeever moved to approve October Financials as presented.**

**Second by Alan Kahle.**

**Upon roll call vote, motion to approve passed unanimously.**

**Board Committee Reports**

**Events Report**

- No report.

**Facilities Report by Tom Schellpeper**

- New truck for Operations department
- Brunks property walk-thru for insurance purposes, property line, etc.
- GILCA and Good Life District reports given by Jaime Parr and Cindy Johnson
- Brian Friedrichsen with OLSSON shared Engineer recommendation resulting from the ARPA phase 2 bid opening that occurred previously.

**Tom Schellpeper moved to award ARPA phase 2 bid to Elsbury Construction at \$16,985,305.46.**

**Second by Lanna Hubbard.**

**Roll call vote. Motion carried.**

## **Agriculture Report**

- No report – Vaughn will share later.

## **Finance Report by Lanna Hubbard**

- Concessions, commercial space, and motorsports attendance increased in 2024.
- Keaton shared campground software program – simplifies, more efficient.
- Recommended rate change for campground fee.

**Lanna Hubbard moved to increase campground fees to \$50 per night, inclusive of all taxes and fees.**

Second by Kevin Jorgensen.

Roll call vote. Motion carried.

- Changes to admission fees will not be considered at this time.

## **FFA Report by Ryan Hassebrook**

- Programming updates
- Handbook
- DNA envelope processes for 4-H and FFA remain the same.

## **4-H Report by Kathleen Lodi**

- 4-H operates under FEDERAL fiscal year which ended September 30.
- Numbers increased by 10,000 people.
- Participation models are changing.
- 25% club enrollment – won't change much.
- How will we appeal to new 4-Hers?
- How do we make it more lucrative for new families?
- 2025 planning

## **Executive Report by Boyd Strope**

- GILCA and Good Life updates

## **Human Resources Report by Beth Smith**

- Discussed upcoming Gratitude & Recognition workshop for staff
- Hope to have Executive Director review data by next meeting.

## **Staff Department Reports**

### **Marketing Report by Jaime Parr**

- Budget
- Planning media buys.
- Identifying partners for announcing concerts.
- NAFM Conference January 2025 in Kearney.
- Zone 5 Conference February 28 thru March 2 in Wichita, KS.
- Brands Barn Bar project
- 1868 Foundation grant for tourism marketing
- RFP for internet service
- Met with City of Grand Island regarding GITV and recorded videos.
- Billboards on I-80 not changed yet.
- 2025 State Fair theme will be announced at NAFM in January.
- Staff team working to determine 2025 Fair Flash Sales.
- Presentation at leadership – interns 2025

### Sponsorship Report by Jaime Parr

- 4<sup>th</sup> quarter; connected with 40 – 50 accounts and new partners.
- Nature Hill, TD Auto, Bomgaars, Chief Industries, FNBO, Aurora Coop, and City of GI
- Nicki shares upcoming meetings with staff team.
- Meetings in Lincoln Monday with Nebraska Lottery & Farm Bureau
- Encouraged Board to please share your ideas for regional and national partner contacts. We appreciate your leads to establish new partnerships.
- Thanked Board for 2024 successes.

### Sales Report by Keaton Irwin

- NICA (National Independent Concessionaire's Association) Convention
- RFPs out, end first week in December:
  - Bottler's service
  - Decorator service
- Concessionaire's committee meeting
- Commercial Space committee meeting
- Meeting with Directors – interaction and planning with other departments
- Refining budget
- Hosting RFP meetings schedule
- IAFE Convention

### Events Report by Karli Schulz

- Offers out on 4 shows, waiting on one official confirmation
- Planning for additional shows and additional genres
- Inside vs. outside concerts
- Considering additional dirt event to keep things interesting – encouraged Board and Staff to share any new ideas.
- Working with Haley to stop chargebacks and improve reports
- RFPs for talent buying services to start in 2026
- Received 4 proposals – Events committee will review and select talent buyer
- Grounds entertainment
  - layout changes
  - ½ booked for 2025
- Open local entertainment registrations in early March
- Replacing Battle of the Bands (keep fresh, changing it up)
- Completed first draft of budget, now refining
- Looking for grant opportunities and saving money where we can

### Operations by Tina Thuernagle

- Welcome Brent Shaw – new full-time staff member
  - Was seasonal for 2 Fairs, 2 AKSS, and 2 GILCA shows
  - Will help to oversee livestock related labor team/s
  - Scheduling and participating in 1:1s with Directors
  - Ops Team meets every Wednesday
  - HVAC RFP due next Friday
  - Aerial map frames
  - Cubbies to organize springboards
  - Competitive Exhibits project
  - Blue barrel trash containers
  - 2025 budget and capital expenditures list

### Agriculture Report by Vaughn Sievers

- Budget
- AG, FFA, 4-H post fair meetings – follow up with superintendents
- Facebook page for AKSS Calf Challenge apps out – ends today
- Challenge program costs going up
  - Two sponsors per calf to recoup some costs
  - Prospecting new sponsors (need 7 or 8 more)
- Drug testing
- New job description by Thanksgiving

### 1868 Foundation by Lindsey Koepke

- Lanna Hubbard serving as liaison on Foundation Board
- Donations through 501c3
- 5-year plan for capital
- End of year donor renewals and annual gifts
- State Tourism Marketing grant up to \$25,000
- Grand Island CVB \$50,000 for Aksarben Stock Show
- Framework for future Aksarben grant
- Looking for full-time employee

### Executive Director's Report by Jaime Parr

- 1:1 Directors' meetings every week and Director's group every other week
- Regular staff meetings every week
- Personnel working on GRID
  - Identifies which projects happen when
  - Highlighting times gives us a chance to spread out projects
- Gratitude and Recognition workshop this week
- Payments out to exhibitors
- 2025 Fair planning
- Entertainment, layouts, Marketing will present theme at NAFM
- Flash sales, sponsorship contacts
- New position in Ag department
- ARPA 1 – finish on N side of HEC before spring
- ARPA 2 – bid for new contract for Elsbury approved
- Budget for 2025 – final draft to present to Board in December
- IAFE in Phoenix – December 1 – 5
- Meetings with Terry Galloway and Cindy Johnson
- Budget for 2025 – final draft to present to Board in December
- Budget summary pages handed out and format explained for Board review.
- Boyd thanked Jaime, Jennifer, Joe and Full Staff Team for work on 2025 budget.
- ARPA 2 – Campus will likely need to seek support for the electrical work and shade that will not be covered by ARPA.
- Real estate acquisition – on schedule to close in January, 2025.

### Other Business

- None

Lanna Hubbard moved to adjourn

Second by John McKeever.

All in favor. Meeting adjourned.

**Minutes of November 15, 2024**  
**Nebraska State Fair Approved:**  
**Date: December 20, 2024**

**By:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Tom Schellpeper, Board Secretary**

UNAPPROVED