



NEBRASKA STATE FAIR BOARD
Meeting Minutes
Friday, February 21, 2025

The Annual meeting of the Nebraska State Fair Board was held on Friday, February 21, 2025, at 2:00 pm at Rembolt Ludtke Law Offices in Lincoln. Public notice of this meeting was published in the Grand Island Independent newspaper on February 14 & 15, 2025; 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: Jeff Kliment, Chair; Boyd Strope, Vice Chair; Lanna Hubbard, Treasurer; Tom Schellpeper, Secretary; Dawn Caldwell; Anna Castner Wightman; Tom Dinsdale, via Zoom; Ryan Hassebrook, via Zoom; Kevin Havlovic; Kevin Jorgensen; Alan Kahle; and John McKeever, and Beth Smith. Absent: Kathleen Lodl.

Others in attendance:

Jaime Parr, Executive Director; Tammy Baker, Business Administrator, via Zoom; Joe Stump, AMGL; Courtney Glock, Marketing Director; Nicki Stoltenberg, Sponsorship Director; Keaton Irwin, Sales Director; Karli Schulz, Entertainment & Events Director; Tina Thuernagle, Operations Director; Vaughn Sievers, Ag Director; and Lindsey Koepke, 1868 Foundation.

Jeff Kliment 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 Dawn Caldwell for Approval of Consent Agenda, which included Regular Meeting Minutes of January 204, 2025.

Second by Kevin Jorgensen.

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

Financial Report by Joe Stump and Jaime Parr

Boyd Strope moved to approve December Financials as presented.

Second by Lanna Hubbard.

Upon roll call vote, motion to approve passed unanimously.

Board Committee Reports

Events Report by John McKeever

- RFPs narrowed down to three.
- Discussion regarding Venu Works proposal.
- Next step Zoom call with each talent group.

Facilities Report by Tom Schellpeper

- Tina presented Capital purchases and Rental Breakdown sheet.
- Cindy Johnson gave Good Life District update.
- Jaime gave ARPA updates

Agriculture Report by Dawn Caldwell

- Friday, February 28 – Statehood Days – Rotunda at the Capitol
- Nebraska’s Largest Classroom
- Vaughn go ahead with EID tags for pigs.
- Welcome Tyler to Ag Team
- New Equine events – good feedback

Finance Report by Lanna Hubbard

- Reviewed Cash Reserve policy
- Reviewed Investment Policy Statement

Lanna moved to ratify the approval of 2025 budget as presented with no changes, and to ratify the Capital Expenditures up to \$400,000.

Second by Boyd Strobe.

Roll call vote. Motion carried.

Lanna moved to approve Investment Policy.

Second by Boyd Strobe.

Roll call vote. Motion carried.

Lanna moved to consider the Cash Reserve Policy as presented.

Beth Smith seconded.

Roll call vote. Motion carried.

FFA Report by Ryan Hassebrook

- Friday last day of FFA week
- Bring Your Tractor to School Day postponed because of weather.
- State FFA Convention April 2 thru 4.
- Finalizing updates to premium book.
- Some scheduling changes to accommodate exhibitors.
- Finalizing staff for good event coming up on Labor Day weekend.

4-H Report by Kathleen Lodl

- Kathleen not in attendance. No report.

Executive Report by Boyd Strobe

- Brunks property – few soft offers. Discussed pricing options.
- Cindy Johnson gave update on GILCA.

Staff Department Reports

Events Report by Karli Schulz

- Final Concert confirmation received this morning. Concert lineup for 2025 completely booked.
- Reviewing contracts for concerts, other ticketed events and grounds attractions.
- Working on layouts and reconfiguration of spaces.
- RFP Talent Buyer, narrowed down to three bids.
- RFP for production, both grounds wide and main stage due next week.
- RFP for catering for main stage and staff meals sent out yesterday.
- Attended eTix Live conference in California last week – ticketing software education.
 - Registration for events - Nebraska’s Largest Classroom, marching bands, parades, cheer and dance, etc.
 - All will open on Monday online.
 - Olivia has worked hard at making website more user friendly.

Operations by Tina Thuernagle

- Maintenance – focus for February

- Brian working on equipment
- Brent focusing on Livestock Department
- Snow removal
- Maintaining things in sub-zero temps
- Assisting campus partners (Venue Works) with “growing pains”.
- ARPA meetings, Director’s meetings, and weekly staff meetings
- 1:1 Director’s meetings and weekly “Ops Talk” – project load and efficiencies and safety protocols
- Working with cleaning department – working on keeping seasonal employees returning
- GILCA update
 - American Shorthorns late June
 - American Dairy Goats middle of July
- Thankful for teammates and positive work environment.
- Thanked Board for their continuing support.

Agriculture Report by Vaughn Sievers

- Challenge applications due March 1.
- Did interview with KRVN to get word out for more kids to apply.
- Tyler Griffeth will join Staff Team on March 1.
- Jacque’s last day was Wednesday, February 19.
- Jacque and Kourtney conducted Intern interviews.
- Nicki attended to glean sponsorship opportunities.
- Attended Black Hills Stock Show past weekend.

Marketing Report by Courtney Glock

- Concert rollout announcements – week of March 17
 - Radio, social media, newsletter
 - Teaser on Monday 17th
 - Tuesday-Twisted Chrome and Stampede series (motorsports, bull events in open air arena)
 - Indoor series Wednesday
 - Outdoor series Thursday
 - Presale on Friday – pushed out via newsletter
 - Public On Sale starts Monday.
- Budgetary and advertising break out next month (48% of total advertising dollars go are spent on ticketed series. The other 52% is spent on general Fair).
- Target audience: middle aged mom with kids still under her roof. “If mama ain’t happy, nobody’s happy.”
- Lindsey will talk about Tourism Grant that she helped us with.
- Emergency Management Training – CISA (yesterday)
- Media – Board and staff response (handouts)
- ADA compliance – advertising in Spanish, any language translation on website.

Sponsorship Report by Nichole Stoltenberg

- Welcome to new board members, Kevin and Anna.
- Current methods of tracking dollars in/dollars out beyond financial reports.
- Recognized family-owned businesses who have been our partners
- New deals with new partners
- Aksarben Foundation sponsorship agreements
- Farm Families Award – went from 30 to 400 participants
- Equipment needs for Nebraska State Fair (In-Kind donations)
- Challenges – “easy” agreements turning into more complex negotiations.

Sales Report by Keaton Irwin

- Numbers and stats will be finalized by next meeting.

- Campground reservations went open to public on Monday. New reservation system, Set Your Sites, working well.
- Deadline for returning vendor applications was February 14. Will be full before March 1.
- Zone 5 – Wichita, KS
- Committee meetings with commercial vendors and concessionaires in the coming months.

1868 Foundation by Lindsey Koepke

- Thanked Chairman, Jeff Kliment, for great nine years of service on Board.
- Welcomed Anna and Kevin as new Board members, introduced herself to them.
- Gave budget update for 1868 Foundation.
- Recently approved for a grant of about \$28,000 from the Nebraska Tourism Commission. Thanked Courtney for recommending and helping with this grant.
- Went through the Foundation Resources Directory with Selena, identified 151 grant opportunities.
- Should have \$375,000 in grant funding submitted by end of March (for Youth premiums or Aksarben Stock Show)
- May be adding new board member, Kevin Cook from Omaha.
- Long range joint fundraising plan

Executive Director's Report by Jaime Parr

- Thankful for and proud of Staff Team.
- Share financials at weekly staff meetings.
- NFM in Kearney last month, Fair Board meeting and Conference.
 - Elections
 - Lanna will continue for three more years
 - Kevin Havlovic elected in District 2, replacing Jeff Kliment who has served 3 full terms.
 - Anna Castner-Wightman appointed by Governor very soon after
 - State Fair staff participated in workshops:
 - Karli and Olivia did a few workshops about booking concerts; very well received.
 - Rebecca, Seasonal Manager in Beverage Department participated in Liquor Laws conversation, which was very well attended by the County Fairs.
 - Kathleen spoke about 4-H Dept and Ribbon System (American vs. Danish)
 - Trade Show booth
 - Available for discussions regarding anything County Fairs may want to do at State Fair.
 - Grand Marshall nomination applications for parades that happen on the weekends.
 - County Fair Tour by State Fair Staff who volunteers time to help in any way possible.
 - Photo Ops – County Fairs showed their Fair Faces
 - Working on District meeting schedules
 - Awards night:
 - Tom Schellpeper received Fair Person of the Year award
 - Jeremy Wan received Associate of the Year award
 - Auction fundraiser for NAFM
 - Memorial Service on Sunday
 - Legal report about Horse Protection Act
 - Jaime gave State of the State Fair report to County Fairs
- ARPA update
- Stakeholders (Fonner Park, State Fair, Grand Island Casino Resort, the City of Grand Island, and Venue Works) continue to meet monthly.
- Financial audit underway. Hope to present to Board in March.
- CISA training yesterday – Responding to threats such as cyber and weather

- Zone 5 Conference in Wichita, KS this weekend (5 zones – Nebraska, Kansas, Missouri, Illinois, Iowa)
- Next State Fair Board meeting March 21, 2025 back in Grand Island.
- Thanked Jeff Kliment for his nine years of service to Nebraska State Fair.

Executive Committee elections

- Nominations for Chairman
Dawn Caldwell nominated Boyd Strope.
Seconded by Beth Smith.

Are there any other nominations (repeated 3 times)

Dawn Caldwell moved to cease nominations.
Beth Smith seconded.
Roll call vote. Boyd Strope abstained.
Boyd Strope elected as Chairman.

- Boyd Strope offered encouraging thanks to past Board Chairs.

- Nominations for Vice Chairman
Lanna Hubbard nominated Tom Schellpeper.

Are there any other nominations (repeated 3 times)

John McKeever moved to cease nominations.
Lanna Hubbard seconded.
Roll call vote.

Roll call vote. Motion carried.
Tom Schellpeper elected Vice Chairman.

- Nominations for Treasurer
Tom Schellpeper nominated Lanna Hubbard.
Kevin Jorgensen seconded.

Are there any other nominations (repeated 3 times)

Tom Dinsdale moved to cease nominations.
Alan Kahle seconded.
Roll call vote.

Roll call vote. Motion carried.
Lanna Hubbard elected Treasurer.

- Nominations for Secretary
Lanna Hubbard nominated John McKeever.
Seconded by Dawn Caldwell

Are there any other nominations (repeated 3 times)

Tom Dinsdale moved to cease nominations.
Lanna Hubbard seconded.
Roll call vote.

**Roll call vote. Motion carried.
John McKeever elected Secretary.**

- **Boyd will visit with Jaime and Jeff to start making committee appointments. If anyone has a specific preference, please let Boyd know.**
- **Jaime posted a list of previous (last year) Board Committees on the screen.**
- **Should have committees set up by March meeting.**

**Beth Smith moved to adjourn.
Second by Tom Dinsdale.
All in favor. Meeting adjourned.**

**Minutes of February 21, 2025
Nebraska State Fair Approved:
Date: March 21, 2025**

**By: _____
Tom Schellpeper, Board Secretary**

UNAPPROVED