



NEBRASKA STATE FAIR BOARD

Nebraska State Fair * 501 E Fonner Park Rd, Ste 200 * PO Box 1387 * Grand Island, NE * 68802-1387 * 308-382-1620

MEETING MINUTES

November 11, 2016 –1:00 p.m.

Holiday Inn Express & Suites (Sioux room), 300 Holiday Frontage Rd, North Platte NE

A regular monthly meeting of the Nebraska State Fair Board was held on Friday, November 11, 2016, at 1:00 p.m. Public notice of this meeting was published in the October 31 & November 1, 2016, issues of the Grand Island Independent newspaper and posted to the Nebraska Public meeting calendar website from October 27 – November 11, 2016.

Roll call was read with the following members present: Bob Haag; Harry Hoch; Chris Kircher, Chairperson; Jeff Kliment; Kathleen Lodl; Doug Lukassen; Chuck Rolf, Vice-Chairperson; Marvin Rousey, Secretary; Kirk Shane; Steve Wehrbein and Kent Zeller. Others in attendance were: Joseph McDermott, Executive Director; Kelly O'Brien, Administrative Assistant; Shaun Schleif, Marketing & Sponsorship Director; Jace Robinson, Marketing & Sponsorship Assistant; Jaime Parr, Facility Director; Janna Kuklis, Facility Assistant; Chelsey Jungck, Events & Entertainment Director; Kelsey Brozek, Events & Entertainment Assistant; Grace Childress, Special Events Assistant; Bill Angell, Livestock Superintendent; Sandy Spiehs, Assistant Livestock Superintendent; Scott Yound, Maintenance Director; Jason Fry, Maintenance Assistant; Lindsey Koepke, 1868 Foundation Executive Director and Ryan Hasebrook.

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.

Minutes of October 13, 2016

There being no corrections:

**Motion made by Lukassen to approve the minutes of October 13, 2016 as printed.
Haag seconded the motion. Upon voice vote, motion passed unanimously.**

Foundation Update

Koepke reported working on year end items.

October Financial Report

McDermott reported total current assets of \$2,226,788; payables at \$482,082; total direct revenue at \$4,648,107 and direct expenses at \$7,025,897.

**Motion made by Kliment to approve the October Financial Report.
Hoch seconded the motion. Upon voice vote, motion passed unanimously.**

Opening – President Kircher

Kircher thanked everyone for coming to North Platte for the November Board meeting. Kircher stated our next agenda item is the Retreat sessions. There are six different topics to discuss and asked that we limited the conversation to 10 minutes for each one.

Retreat sessions

a) Shuttle Routes

McDermott stated we all know the problems. McDermott and some board members met with a small group of shuttle drivers on November 3 to get a better idea of what the driver's deal with.

Rolf and Shane shared there was a lot of good discussion at the shuttle driver meeting. They heard a lot of information from the driver's that the board members didn't realize:

- Better signage at tram stops needed.
- Volunteers are done at 9 p.m. leaving no one on the shuttle to monitor the activity on the shuttles.
- Is there a different route that could be utilized during the busy times on the grounds?

McDermott commented that we will continue to review the shuttle route and the other items of concern.

b) Technology in the Livestock Barns/Arena

Angell stated our mission statement is "The nation's most innovative exhibition focusing on interactive, agriculture and educational experiences, promoting families, fun and Nebraska pride". We have big screens in the barns and Arenas yet he hears a lot of people ask, what is going on in these buildings. We don't have anything in the barns to help tell our story. Angell asked, what are some ideas that we could do from a technology stand point?

- Install Kiosks with educational information regarding the animals.
- Build something in the State Fair app.
- Look at doing more video (i.e. Birthing Pavilion and Dairy Parlor)
- Signage outside the Arena telling people what is going on inside the building.

Schleif mentioned there is a meeting coming up with the tech folks that may have some ideas for us.

Kircher added it would be nice to have some of this on the East end as well to help move people to the events.

Jungck shared at one time we talked about doing the opposite, showing the horse shows that were happening in the East Entertainment Area on video in the Market Place or by the Five Points Bank Arena so the guests know what is going on at the Thompson Foods Outdoor Arena in the East Entertainment Area.

McDermott commented a lot of good ideas have been shared. We will continue to keep working on.

c) Historical Museum-where do we go from here?

Wehrbein shared the committee talked about using a kiosk as a way of displaying pictures. We have a lot of pictures. We don't seem to have enough physical items to show case. The Historical Committee is needing more ideas and direction.

Koepke suggested we talk with Jim McKey.

McDermott replied he has tried to reach out to Jim McKey, but has not received a response.

Kircher asked Lodl if a college or University would be interested in a project like this.

Lodl responded there are museum majors. Then mentioned there is the state museum and wondered if they would consider partnering with us and have a presence in Grand Island as well as Lincoln. Lodl suggested talking to the state museum.

d) Multi-Cultural programming & other entertainment

Jungck gave a brief background on the Multi-Cultural day when the Fair first moved to Grand Island. Then stated they have recently started having conversations again with the Multi-Cultural Coalition. They have encouraged us to look for meaningful reasons and to be more open and inclusive. The Multi-Cultural Coalition feels we need to showcase more multi-cultural groups and find ways to include them. They had a lot of good suggestions. We tend to focus on one day – but Jungck likes the idea of trying to include them in the entire fair.

Jungck gave a quick update on the concerts for 2017. We are looking at having two outdoor concerts. They will be the first Friday and Saturday evenings.

e) Corporate ticket sales

Schleif reported the Nebraska State Fair has, over the last couple of years, been trying to increase ticket sales in Lincoln and Omaha through increased exposure. That exposure takes the form of special pricing for corporations to buy discounted gate tickets for their employees. This is in addition to regular advertising. This year, purchases of 50+ tickets and more sold for \$7.00 each. Until now, we have executed the promotion in a shotgun approach utilizing email blasts through each community's respective Chamber of Commerce in Omaha, Lincoln, Grand Island, Hastings and Kearney, as well as our own email list (7,500) and Facebook. 2016 was our most successful year selling just shy of \$30,000 in tickets.

Moving forward Schleif suggests we continue with our email blasts because of the nominal cost and they generated close to \$30,000. Add to that, increasing our reach through direct mail to the HR managers at each of the Top 50 employers in Nebraska. Schleif added it may be a good

idea to include two gate admission tickets for the HR Manager with hopes that if all else fails, they will attend the fair to see what it's all about.

McDermott likes the idea of sending two tickets to the HR Manager.

Schleif responded we know from research if we can get them here they will keep coming back.

Hoch asked if we are mailing the tickets or delivering them.

Schleif replied they would be sent out via direct mail.

f) East Entertainment Area – how can we make stronger?

McDermott mentioned every year the East Entertainment Area keeps getting better. We need to continue to discuss the East Entertainment Area. From a cosmetic stand point there are things we have talked about that we can do.

Kircher commented it seems like there is no shade or cover in the East Entertainment Area – not a lot of ambiance.

McDermott shared one thing we talked about doing this year, but, didn't do, was to put an air conditioned tent in the East Entertainment Area.

Schleif replied we chose not to do the air conditioned tent so we could get additional air conditioning for the east side and north end of the concourse.

Parr added we had to provide the right tent, one that would keep the cold air in. Also, all four sides of the tent had to stay closed so we didn't know if people would really know what was in the tent.

Yound responded there was a small tent with tables and chairs in the East Entertainment Area. He never saw it being used.

Other Business

Kircher mentioned the Executive Committee met Thursday evening, November 10. The discussion was regarding filling the vacancy on the Executive Committee due to the passing of Lowell Minert. Per our by-laws we have the ability to have someone appointed to our Executive Committee. Kircher asked if interested to please let him know. If there are multiple people interested they will decide by vote.

Kircher also mentioned we have received a stack of Thank You notes from the folks that received the Lifetime Memberships. They will be left with O'Brien. Please read them if you want to.

Executive Session – Real Estate

**Motion made by Rousey to enter into Executive session for the purposes of Real Estate.
Haag seconded the motion. Upon voice vote, motion passed unanimously.**

Time: 2:33 p.m.

Motion made by Lukassen to exit Executive session.

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

Time: 2:42 p.m.

Adjourn

Motion made by Wehrbein to adjourn.

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

Time adjourned: 2:42 p.m.