

**New Mexico State Fair Commission Minutes
Of the Regular Commission Meeting
Monday, April 10, 2017
African American Performing Arts Center
300 San Pedro, NE
New Mexico State Fairgrounds
11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.**

Call to Order: Chairman Kennedy called the meeting to order at approximately 11:01 a.m.

Commission Roll Call: Commissioners present:

Chairman, Larry Kennedy
Secretary-Treasurer, David "Hossie" Sanchez
Commissioner Charles "Chuck" Brown
Commissioner William "Bill" Lee
Commissioner Xavier Jurado

Pledge of Allegiance: led by General Manager Dan Mourning

Introduction of Guests:

Bill Nordin
Ken Salazar
Erin Thompson
Dan Mourning
Dupuy Bateman

Chairman Kennedy introduced Joseph Holloway, the new General Counsel for the New Mexico State Fair/Expo NM. Mr. Holloway takes the place of Lisa Liegeot who will now be working at the New Mexico Worker's Compensation Administration.

Chairman Kennedy also introduced Valerie Cole with the Horse Council.

Action Item: Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Lee made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brown, with all members voting in the affirmative.

Action Item: Approval of Minutes of January 9, 2017 Regular Meeting

Commissioner Brown made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 9, 2017 regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lee. Chairman Kennedy asked if all were in favor of the minutes, all voted in the affirmative.

Public Comment: Valerie Cole told the Commission that the 2016 New Mexico State Fair was a great success and added that the Fair personnel were exceptional and worked well with the Horse Council and their outreach efforts.

Chairman's Agenda:

A. Committee Reports

- 1) **Racing Committee Report:** Commissioner Sanchez told the commission that the Racing Commission was also meeting today to discuss their race dates. Commissioner Sanchez added that he had been in contact with Donnie at the Downs of Albuquerque and that

he reported that every month the proceeds from the Race meets just get better and better and the purses are getting better. The better purses we have the better horses we have and the more people attend. Commissioner Sanchez added that he thought it would be a record year for the Downs of Albuquerque as far as Horse Racing goes. Commissioner Brown asked if Commissioner Sanchez knew the start date for live racing. Commissioner Sanchez stated that the Fair meet will start right before Fair and the Downs meet will begin in June sometime. He did not have the exact dates at this time but as soon as he did have the dates he would share them with the commission.

- 2) **Arena Committee Report:** Commission Lee stated that he had been talking with General Manager Dan Mourning about the plan for the new arena and asked Mr. Mourning to bring the commission up to speed on this project. Mr. Mourning told the commission that he, Mr. Bateman and Mr. Paul Cassidy had been meeting with local leaders to discuss this project. Mr. Mourning added that this arena will not be a State Fair facility; it will be the result of a conglomeration of a lot of different municipalities as well as the private sector. One of the ideas being discussed would be to create an authority as a financial model much the same as they have in Houston, Texas for the Houston Stock Show and Rodeo. Mr. Mourning stated that we are waiting for the study to be completed which will include more details like what it will look like and how it will be funded. This summer Dan Mourning will be visiting other facilities around the country that are similar in size to what we would like to have done to look for additional ideas for this project. Mr. Mourning told the commission that he has been working on dispelling the myth of a “Central park of New Mexico” on the Fairgrounds. He stated that he believes people are realizing that idea is a pipe dream at best and would be very expensive. He added that for the cost of that, we could build two arenas. His goal is to educate folks and show the pride in the fairgrounds when talking about any plans and improvements for the future. Mr. Mourning opened the floor for questions and comments.

Questions and comments:

Commissioner Sanchez stated that the pride of the staff showed during the Elton John Concert and that the staff did an excellent job. Commissioner Sanchez added that during the concert he listened to people talking around him and they were ecstatic and could not believe it was the same place and were very impressed with the transformation of Tingley Coliseum for this event. Commissioner Sanchez added that every time he comes to the grounds there is something new and better which shows the pride that this crew has for the State Fair. He loves the digital signs which he thinks add class to facility.

Chairman Kennedy stated if the Elton John concert was any indication of what can be done here, imagine what could be done if we had a venue that could hold 15,000 people.

Commissioner Lee added that the success of the Elton John concert shows that we can provide a place where people want to come and we could have more concerts of this calibre year round.

Commissioner Jurado asked what was on the “wish list” for the new arena. What kind of venue are we looking at, at least a 15,000 seat facility?

Dan Mourning answered that the study actually shows that the city of Albuquerque could sustain a venue that holds at least 10,000 people (at a minimum).

Mr. Mourning added that there are approximately 978,000 people who live within 100 miles of the fairgrounds and the surveys shows they are ready for a better facility. Mr. Mourning added that there are many promotion companies that want to route through Albuquerque and just need the facility to do so.

Commissioner Jurado asked Mr. Mourning to get photographs from the other facilities he will visit this summer. Mr. Mourning stated that he would be happy to get those photographs along with any additional material available for each facility to share with the Commission.

Mr. Mourning added that while in California, earlier this year, he had the opportunity to see the arena in Sacramento. This is the “Ferrari” of facilities and he was able to see the “back end” of this venue, everything that goes into creating the overall experience for their visitors. It was a great visit and he looked forward to learning more from the other facilities he will visit this summer.

Mr. Mourning added that he appreciated the kind words about his staff. The staff at Expo NM does a fantastic job and he would put his staff up against any staff at any venue.

Commissioner Brown asked if the arena plan would be like the T-Mobile arena, would the 1st 100 rows be flat. Mr. Mourning told the commission that this facility must be a multi-purpose facility, not just a concert venue. This facility must be able to accommodate not just concerts but family entertainment events like “Disney on Ice”. We already have Monster Trucks and The Circus in Tingley and those types of show are becoming more and more popular and more profitable for promoters. Mr. Mourning added that all options are still open and he is looking forward to seeing the plan which he will be happy to share with the commission when available.

3) **Committee suggestions:** None at this time

State Fair Management Report:

A. **2017 State Fair/ EXPO New Mexico Report:** Mr. Mourning stated that he would like to begin his report by talking about Expo NM first.

1. Expo NM-

- a. Elton John Concert- this was a sold out concert, sold out in minutes. The upgrades that have been done in Tingley such as the additional doors on the floor for emergency exits created the ability to add more seats on the floor. We are able to accommodate another five hundred seats for a total of twenty five hundred seats on the floor now. The staff, operations crew and events staff did a fantastic job on this event. They addressed all of the requests that Live Nation and the Elton John crew presented. Mr. Mourning added that he has great admiration for his staff and asked the commissioners if they see the staff, please thank them for the hard work that they do.
- b. Gathering of Nations- this is another major event which Expo NM has been instrumental in keeping in Albuquerque and New Mexico. There have been many upgrades and positive changes to this event because The Gathering will be held on Expo NM grounds. Mr. Mourning added that the improvements that have been done to the Creative Arts building in preparation for this event with

capital improvement money have also added to the positive changes to this event.

- c. Improvements around the grounds- Capital improvement money
 - i. IT Project- Fiber optics loop is complete and reaches specific areas on the grounds such as Tingley Coliseum and the Creative Arts building. We have also upgraded the video capabilities specifically for the Gathering of Nations to showcase what is happening in Tingley during the event. This will begin with Gathering and can continue for the Annual event and other year round events held in Tingley.
 - ii. Upgrades to electrical, sewer, gas- there was a gas leak near the Asbury Café which was in need of repair. The whole line was replaced instead of just patching the system. This is in line with the plan of doing things the right way for the long run.

Mr. Mourning stated that because the capital improvement money is being put to good use it is allowing us to bring in new events to Expo NM like Legacy Boxing in the Lujan Building.

- d. Legacy Boxing- The event turned the Lujan Building into a boxing arena, which looked fantastic. There were almost 2,600 people at this event.
- e. Chinese Lights Event in October – this will be a one-month event in Villa Hispana and Indian Village. This will be a great event for families to enjoy.
- f. Concerts- Villa Hispana – the plan is to have more outdoor concerts in Villa Hispana during the summer. The promotion company Live Nation is looking at our facility for these types of concerts like Rebelution which is a Reggae group. The sound quality/dampening equipment has been upgraded and improved so that the neighborhoods are not negatively affected.
- g. ART Project- staff of Expo NM has been meeting with the city and the contractor weekly during this project. Expo NM will gain additional parking spaces (100+) and a better entrance into the grounds from Central Ave (Gate One) as a result of this project, which will help with the growth and management of the flea market and events.

Commissioner Sanchez asked if the ART project was going to affect the Parade. Mr. Mourning told the commission that this project would not affect the Parade and in fact it will make it a bit easier because Expo NM negotiated a turn signal at Gate One (Tower gate). This will enable the parade participants to cross central onto the parade route much quicker and more efficiently.

Chairman Kennedy wanted to know if the extra parking spaces would be available to Expo NM during the Fair. Mr. Mourning stated that those spaces will revert back to us during the Fair.

- h. Flea Market- the communications and marketing staff has been working on more marketing and giveaway opportunities for the flea market year round. They have been working with Newscastic on the promotions and giveaways, and have been getting a positive response. Marketing director, Oona Gonzales created a flea market- flip video which was aired on Newscastic to good reviews. Mr. Mourning and staff are working on a plan to redesign the flea market to improve the flow and attendance. Mr. Mourning added that the

redevelopment efforts are not only for the proposed new arena but about a master plan for the entire campus for the future.

- i. The Downs of Albuquerque- Mr. Mourning thanked Commissioner Sanchez for the work he does with the Racing Commission. The Downs lease has been a very positive partnership for Expo NM and the state. The Downs is contributing about \$1.1 million a month to the General Fund. Also, they have made about \$35 million in capital improvements to their facilities which have been very good for Expo NM. Expo NM gets about \$3 million a year which is a pretty good deal for all.

Mr. Mourning opened the floor for any questions or comments.

Questions/comments:

Commissioner Lee commented on the TV show, Food Paradise, which provided the New Mexico State Fair with great exposure. Everyone did a great job and Commissioner Lee was pleased that the Fair had a prominent part in the show.

Commissioner Lee also asked if a decision had been made to have the New Mexico True Fest return in 2017.

Mr. Mourning stated that it is looking less likely that we will be having the True Fest in the same form as last year. This is a difficult weekend to hold an event and he was not sure that the Midway would be coming back, as it was not profitable for them to be here for that event. Mr. Mourning added that Chris Goblet was working on different events/options for that weekend.

2. 2017 New Mexico State Fair-

- a. Food Paradise TV Show- this show has been great for the Fair. Our episode aired about March 5, 2017 to national recognition. The crew from the show was enthralled with the grounds and people they met while here filming the show. Mr. Mourning added that we hope to see more of these shows coming our way.
- b. New Food Vendors- We will be bringing in new food vendors. One example is a company that specializes in French Canadian food. We will also feature more unique foods like rattle snake and elk. All of the new and unique foods will be a fun experience for many fairgoers.
- c. Concert Line-up- the event staff is working on our concert line-up for Fair 2017. They are moving forward very well and have come up with a good mix of classic rock and country.
- d. Rodeo- Mr. Mourning and staff visited the Houston Rodeo and Stock show in the NRG stadium in Houston, Texas just recently. The visit showed that even though their rodeo is sophisticated, ours is just as good. The quality of cowboys coming to our rodeo is just a good and our show keeps getting better and better. While in Houston, Mr. Mourning and staff visited with the Stock Contractor to assure the quality of stock being provided for our upcoming Rodeo.

Mr. Mourning added that we will continue to do the outreach and marketing events during the Annual event with the Cowboys and the NMSF Queen. They visited hospitals and other venues to interact with children who may never be able to meet a cowboy or attend a Rodeo. These visits were very well received last year, and the plan going forward is to organize them for 2017.

There will be a new event during the last Saturday and Sunday of the Fair. The Barrel Men and Rodeo Clowns will be competing in a Bull Fighting event, this is a big competition for Barrel men and Rodeo clowns to show their skills against some of the toughest bulls. We will also be having the "Rank Lil Buckers" back as well as Muttin Bustin.

- e. Park & Ride- We are working with Coronado Mall to establish a Park and Ride location for both Saturdays/Sundays of Fair. We will also have the trams back again which were very popular last Fair.
- f. Parade- Working on the Theme for the 2017 Parade. The thought is to emphasize education and specifically the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) programs around the state. New Mexico is lucky to have Los Alamos Lab and Sandia Lab and we would like to recognize them during Fair.
- g. State Fair Beer- we are working with Marble Brewing Company on a new beer for the 2017 Fair. We are also working on a bigger distribution and marketing plan.
- h. Spectaculars 2017 - This is the free entertainment that is provided to all Fairgoers.
 - i. Cavallo Horse Show- gymnastics on horses
 - ii. Street Drum Corps- very popular and they are bringing a new show
 - iii. Deming Duck Races- will be in the courtyard of Youth Hall again
 - iv. Canine Barrel Racing- this spectacular is becoming more and more popular each year. They will be set up in front of the administration building like last year. They will also be bringing back the therapy dogs as a part of their show.
 - v. Conjurer fortune teller- local gentleman from Rio Rancho. New to the Fair for 2017
 - vi. Great American: Pony Rides, Petting Zoo and Pig Races- all will be back
 - vii. Pee Wee Stampede- will be back again because it wouldn't be fair without them
 - viii. Casavant Magic Show- will be back by popular demand
 - ix. Innovation Station- S.T.E.A.M (Science, Technology, Engineering Art and Math).This spectacular will be in the Lujan building. It is a very interactive activity for kids
 - x. Kachunga and the Alligator Show- this will be set up in the food court area. This spectacular has gotten very good reviews from other Fairs. It is educational as well as entertaining.
 - xi. Sea Lions- This is a new Sea Lion show and will be set up in the Kiddie Lot
 - xii. Sling Shot- will be returning for Fair 1017
 - xiii. Zip Line- will be returning for Fair 2017 in a new location.
- i. Livestock/Horse Arenas/shows- all the contractors have been hired and they are busy building the shows and hiring the judges. The hunter/jumper show is held during the Labor Day weekend and will return for Fair 2017. 4-H/FFA kids, working with them to get them involved in promotion of Fair and livestock events.

- j. Dairy Barn- a new office space/meeting room has been created in the building to accommodate the loss of the space in the old Livestock offices which have been converted to the Print shop.
- k. Online Ticketing- we are expanding this program to include admission tickets. This will help shorten the lines to buy admission tickets and will enhance the customer experience
- l. Mobile App- the communications and marketing staff is working with Albuquerque Journal to create a 2017 New Mexico State Fair App. The Journal worked with the Balloon Fiesta staff to create a Mobile App for their event. Mr. Mourning added that during his visit to San Antonio he had used their Mobile App and found it very easy to use and informative. The goal is to have the 2017 Fair Mobile App be similar.
- m. Sponsorship- the department is visiting with existing and working on getting new sponsors for Fair 2017. Melloy Nissan will join us for the 2017 NMSF and will have a very fun and interactive area at Gate One. Our Sponsors are recognizing the Fair as a viable marketing tool and want to be a part of it.

Mr. Mourning opened the floor for any questions/comments.

Questions/comments:

Chairman Kennedy asked about the Dinosaur event that was held at Expo just recently. Mr. Mourning stated that the event was great, their numbers were better than last year even though they were competing with another similar event at the convention center. Commissioner Lee asked about UBER and if they would be returning for Fair 2017. Mr. Mourning stated that yes, UBER will be back. The UBER lounge was a great success and will be enhanced from last year.

Chairman Kennedy stated that the new digital signs at the corner of Lomas/San Pedro and Lomas/Louisiana look great and they reflect really well on the grounds. He added that the signs are a great example of the goal set to make any improvements sustainable for the future. Chairman Kennedy added that the progress and success made from five years ago has been great and he does not want to go backward. All of the good work being done needs to continue.

Chairman Kennedy added that the staff here is very professional and they all have new positive ideas on improvements that can be made to the grounds and the events all of the time. Chairman Kennedy added that the atmosphere at Expo NM is very positive and he knows that Mr. Mourning encourages staff to bring their ideas to him all of the time.

Commissioner Sanchez added that he can see the vision and that starts at the top. Everyone can see it. Commissioner Sanchez shared a quote that he thought fit the situation. "The one who dreams most does most". Commissioner Sanchez added that the last five years have been amazing because of the vision and the leadership.

Mr. Mourning stated that he wanted to thank the Governor's office and the Commission for all of their support and guidance through the years, which allows all of the good ideas to grow and turn into great ideas and programs.

Commissioner Sanchez shared the proposed Racing Dates with the commission. The State Fair Racing meet will be from September 3- 25, 2017. Fair dates are September 8-

17, 2017 during which there will be live Day Racing. The Downs Race dates are June 25-September 2, 2017 during which there will be night Racing.

B. Legislative Update:

- a. Budget Approval- the outcome of the recent Legislative session with regard to Expo NM is that there will be no capital money in the budget for Expo NM/New Mexico State Fair. Mr. Mourning added that Mr. Bateman spent a lot of time in Santa Fe advocating for the Fair and he appreciated all of his efforts. Mr. Mourning added that even though Expo NM is an enterprise fund we still have to follow the SHARE procurement rules which can present some unique challenges for the accounting staff. He added that the accounting staff does a really good job under the circumstances. Mr. Mourning also added that Bill Nordin has the challenge of addressing the budget issues every day and does a very good job.

Discussion of meeting calendar: Chairman Kennedy stated that the next commission meeting would be held in July, 2017. He suggested that the middle to the end of July might be the best time to hold the meeting, perhaps July 14th would work for everyone. He added that Erin Thompson would communicate with the commissioners to coordinate the next meeting. Commissioner Jurado asked if the meeting could be held earlier in July, perhaps the week of July 10th. Commissioner Sanchez asked if the next commission meeting could be held at the Downs of Albuquerque.

Discussion of agenda items for next meeting: Chairman Kennedy asked the commissioners to send him any ideas/requests for agenda items via email for the next commission meeting.

Adjournment: Chairman Kennedy asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Sanchez made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Commissioner Brown with all present voting in favor. Meeting adjourned at approximately 12:18 p.m.