

**New Mexico State Fair Commission Minutes  
Of the Regular Commission Meeting  
Tuesday, October 17, 2017  
African American Pavilion  
300 San Pedro NE- NM State Fairgrounds  
Albuquerque, NM  
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

**Call to Order** by Chairman Kennedy at approximately 11:00 a.m.

**Commission Roll Call:**

Commissioners present:  
Chairman, Larry Kennedy  
Secretary-Treasurer, David "Hossie" Sanchez  
Commissioner Charles "Chuck" Brown  
Commissioner Xavier Jurado- via telephone

**Pledge of Allegiance:** led by Chairman Kennedy

**Staff present:**

Erin Thompson, Deputy Manager  
Ken Salazar, Operations Director  
Bill Nordin, CFO  
Adam Feldman, Special Projects  
Joseph Holloway, General Counsel

**Introduction of Guests:** None

**Action Item: Approval of Agenda**

Commissioner Sanchez made a motion for approval of the agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brown, Chairman Kennedy asked if all were in favor of the agenda, all voted in the affirmative.

**Action Item: Approval of Minutes of July 10, 2017 Regular Meeting**

Commissioner Sanchez made a motion for approval of the minutes from the July 10, 2017 regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brown. Chairman Kennedy asked if all were in favor of the minutes, all voted in the affirmative.

**Public Comment:** None at this time

**Chairman's Agenda:**

**A. Committee Reports**

- 1) **Racing Committee Report:** Commissioner Sanchez stated that the Downs had a very good meet this last meet. Commissioner Sanchez added that the race meets are getting better and better each year, the 'handle' was up 8%, which is very good. The attendance is also up even though the meet ran two days less than previous meets. Much of the increase is attributable to night racing. The Casino was up by about ½ % during the State Fair. Don Cook of the Downs Racetrack said that this was the

smoothest race meet he can remember and he attributes much of the success to support from the State Fair Commission. Commissioner Sanchez added that he had big news to share with the Commission. The Fall Quarter Horse Championship, which is one of the most prestigious races for Quarter horses, was held at the Downs Racetrack in September. The winner of this race, Jessies First Down, is invited to the Champion of Champions race held in November at the race track in Los Alamitos, CA. If the winner of the Fall Quarter Horse Championship, wins the Champion of Champions race that will be great for racing in New Mexico and specifically racing at the Downs at Albuquerque.

Commissioner Jurado asked when the Champion of Champions race will be held. Commissioner Sanchez stated that he will get the exact date and share with the commission.

- 2) **Arena Committee Report:** Dan Mourning stated that the arena study is moving forward, the committee is getting really close to a first draft and hope to be able to present to the commission before the end of the year. This is something that Albuquerque and the state of New Mexico does want and need.
- 3) **Committee suggestions:** None at this time.

### **State Fair Management Report:**

#### **A. 2017 State Fair/EXPO NM Report:**

- 1) **2017 State Fair:** Dan Mourning began his report by stating that this had been a really great Fair. We had visitors from other Fairs (5) come to see how we do things at the New Mexico State Fair. Mr. Mourning added that he has also been asked to speak at the upcoming IAFE conference in Las Vegas, NV during a roundtable discussion on programming and how to get the best value for your dollar. Mr. Mourning added that he has also been asked to speak about the Medical Marijuana issue and how it impacts Fairs.
  - Attendance- outlined in highlights "By the Numbers" (please see handout). Mr. Mourning added that the first week of the 2017 NM State Fair was tough and felt like much of the low attendance could be attributed to events happening around the country as well as the ART project much closer to home.
  - Concert Lineup – great attendance at shows despite competition around town at the same time as the 2017 NM State Fair. There were 25,000 tickets sold in total.
  - Rodeo Update – Rodeo continues to get better and better and draws a good base crowd. Rank Lil buckers, Xtreme Bulls and other PRCA events, and Trixie chicks were a hit. New PRCA free style bull fights were a big hit as well!
  - Transportation: Over 23,000 people used the Park and Ride system from the Coronado Mall location – this program was a big success; Continued partnership with Uber with increased riders as well; The donation of 10 bike racks from Bike ABQ were well utilized by folks riding to the fair

- Beer – Very successful this year with record numbers sold with new Marble partnership – over 3,500 cases sold statewide.
- New recycling program with Coca Cola resulted in 850 pounds of plastic being recycled
- New program – the new Sensory station for kids and guests with special needs was a great success and very well received by fairgoers.
- Attractions- Alligators, sea lions, the conjurer were all very popular and well received by fairgoers. Returning attractions such as the Deming Duck Races and Maceo Circus continued to draw big crowds.
- Parade – we had approximately 45,000 spectators! With over 230 entries.
- Livestock –Featured 4 H kids in videos for social media and web, added a nice personal touch to show what the kids do. We have submitted to IAFE for communications award consideration, along with three other submissions for commercials, radio and the beer promotions.
- Media – Good coverage by local media with approximately 460 stories or mentions in broadcast media and 65 printed articles; Social media was very active with contests and giveaways, including a new Instagram photo contest which resulted in great images on viewers news feeds.
- Jr. Livestock Sale – proceeds were up significantly from last year, as provided in the “by the numbers” document. Mr. Mourning thanked the commissioners for their support of the Jr. Livestock Sale and stated that the Sale brought in \$348,000 which is an increase of 15% from last Year. The Grand Champion steer sold for \$25,000 this Fair.
- Online ticketing – A few glitches with online ticketing for the first year, but overall, a great new tool for fairgoers
- Groupon – Groupon discount on admission was offered twice -- during the summer and leading up to and during fair. The numbers were great, \$118,438 worth of tickets sold
- Mobile app – Our first iteration of a mobile app was very good and provided useful information such as show times, food descriptions, locations and comprehensive mapping. A few thousand people downloaded the app and we will work to build more users in coming years, perhaps through incentives.
- Sponsorships – Strong participation by new (Sleep Number, Melloy Nissan, Ruth’s Chris) and returning sponsors (Fuddruckers, Just Squeezed, McDonald’s)
- Competitions and entries – Entries were strong this year in all categories. The Green Chile Cheeseburger competition was especially cool, with lots of participants from areas throughout New Mexico, including the winner- Sparky’s from Hatch.
- Carnival – Reithoffer continues to be a great partner and present a professional midway.
- Hiring – this year we supplemented hiring with a new volunteer program, spearheaded by Adam Feldman. It was a big success with over 500 hours contributed, which helped us save money on personnel.
- Promotions - Walgreens sold the mega passes statewide again this year starting on August 7, 2017 and we also had many discounted days and free days for public servants again this

year. In addition, we had a special discount day for those who brought in food which resulted in 3,800 pounds of food donated to Roadrunner Food Bank

- Concessions – we had record numbers for vendor and concessions agreements and increased revenues. The layout in Manuel Lujan was great, very well received and included attractions such as Chef Ray and the S.T.E.A.M. interactive area.

## **2) Expo NM Report:**

- Gathering of Nations – we have already been meeting with them to discuss taking things to the next level for 2018. Expo NM will take on a bigger role in public relations and promotion of this event.
- Events –
  - Chinese Lantern Festival has been a huge success so far, they will be on grounds through November 12, 2017.
  - Concerts in Villa Hispana such as Rebelution, Young the Giant and Khalid were incredibly good, drawing big crowds.
  - Christmas Cantata and A Perfect Circle concert coming up in Tingley.
  - Dragon’s Haunted house and Quarantine are going well.
  - NM Brew Fest had a big turn out and the new layout worked well.
  - Looking forward to more events such as ,Roller Derby, Ski Swap, Rio Grande Arts and Crafts, Monster Jam, Chocolate and Coffee just to name a few.
- Security – we know this is prominent in people’s minds and we are always reviewing and fine tuning procedures to provide the safest environment possible.
- Albuquerque Rapid Transit – had a few issues as we got closer to the Fair but the city worked with Expo NM to address them.
- Redevelopment – should have an arena study done by the end of the year.
- Flea Market – new logo looks sharp. Attendance is up in recent weeks and we have plans for more promotions and giveaways throughout the year.

## **B. Legislative Update:**

- Capital Outlay situation – Expo NM has made our application and presented at the recent hearing, which went well. We hope to get a good allocation this fiscal year.
- The next LFC budget for Expo NM hearing is next week on the 26<sup>th</sup> of October.

Dan Mourning finished his report by stating that he and his staff are already working on the 2018 NM State Fair and then opened the floor up for questions and comments at this time.

Chairman Kennedy took the opportunity to make a few comments at this time about the 2017 NM State Fair;

- The new State Fair APP was great because he could look at schedules for spectacles without having to go to the location to see the times of the shows.

- He noticed that there were fewer issues and complaints this year regarding getting the Cowboys on and off of the grounds with their big rigs. The Sheriff's posse seemed to have this under control.
- The Bucking Bar after the Rodeo was a huge success. There was great talent on the stage and that encouraged people to stay and enjoy the music and atmosphere.
- As far as spectaculars went, Chairman Kennedy stated that the Alligator guy was very cool and the Sea Lions were a huge success. He also noticed that the Duck races were very busy for every race.
- The Rodeo/Concert talent was very good this Fair. The band Midland was awesome and complimented the NM State Fair by stating that if all they could do for the rest of their career was smaller arenas they would want to come back to Tingley Coliseum.
- He had gotten a few complaints about the "wandering" at the gates but thought that was not such a bad thing, it meant security was doing their job at the gates.
- It was really great to have the actors from the TV Show 'Brave' here at the Fair and he thought they had fun riding in the truck during the Rodeo on the National Patriot Rodeo Night.
- Chairman Kennedy stated that he had visited with the representatives from other Fairs during their visits and they all seemed to be very impressed and had a good time while they were here.

Chairman Kennedy added that he wanted to thank Ken Salazar for all of his hard work and dedication during the Fair, and stated that it shows that he really cares about the Fair and Expo NM.

Chairman Kennedy added that he has seen everything about the Fair get better and better each year and he appreciates all of the hard work that goes into making that happen. Chairman Kennedy also thanked the other commissioners for their attendance during the Fair despite their very busy schedules.

Commission Jurado added his appreciation to the staff for all of the hard work.

**Discussion of meeting calendar:**

Chairman Kennedy suggested the next commission meeting be held on Monday, January 8, 2018.

Chairman Kennedy added that Erin Thompson would coordinate the scheduling of the next meeting with the other members of the commission.

**Discussion of agenda items for next meeting:** none at this time.

**Adjournment:** Chairman Kennedy asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Brown made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Commissioner Jurado with all present voting in favor. Meeting adjourned at approximately 11:52 a.m.