



October 28, 2014

The Honorable Dave Heineman,  
Governor of Nebraska  
Office of the Governor  
P.O. Box 94848  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4848

Dear Governor Heineman:

On behalf of the Nebraska State Fair Board, it is our pleasure to present to you the enclosed accounting of expenditures in accordance with Article III-24 of the Constitution of the State of Nebraska, specifying the expenditure of funds the Nebraska State Fair has made in the fiscal year ending June 30, 2014. An explanation of the expenditures contained in the report is also enclosed.

All expenditures were designed to improve the quality of the Nebraska State Fair and the experience the fair provides for all Nebraskans.

Should you have any questions or require further information regarding the aforementioned items, please feel free to contact me at 308-382-1620.

As you know, the 2014 Nebraska State Fair was successful despite the rain and we will work to ensure the success continues.

Sincerely,

Joseph McDermott, CFE  
Executive Director  
Nebraska State Fair

Enclosure

cc: Senator Greg L. Adams, Speaker of the Legislature  
Patrick J. O'Donnell, Clerk of the Legislature  
Gerry Oligmueller, Acting D.A.S. Director  
Gerry Oligmueller, State Budget Administrator  
Cindy Miserez, State Budget Analyst



**State Fair Funds Account**  
**July 1, 2013 Through June 30, 2014**

**Balance of State Fair Funds account on June 30, 2013** \$2,505,167.00

**Contributions**

State Lottery funds	\$3,750,009.00	
Interest earned	\$8,622.02	
City match	\$375,001.00	
<b>Total contributions during the period</b>	<b>\$4,133,632.02</b>	

**Expenditures**

**Note** **Building & Grounds**

1	Various sidewalks/driveways	\$34,790.00
2	Handicap accessible door openers	\$10,798.00
3	Large scale fans for equine facilities	\$20,473.25
4	Plumbing for hand washing stations	\$10,275.00
5	Enlarged Water Line for the East Area	\$41,646.55
6	Barn Bar expansion	\$18,739.92
7	Wireless Upgrades	\$24,180.88
	<b>Totals - Buildings &amp; Grounds</b>	<b>\$160,903.60</b>

**Equipment**

8	Seating - Bleachers/Tables/Umbrellas	\$49,321.00
9	Shade structures	\$19,750.00
10	Carnival Barker Stand	\$6,887.98
11	Shuttle Handicap Lifts	\$24,206.00
12	Case IH Scouts (5)	\$51,117.62
13	Tennant Floor Scrubber	\$32,550.00
14	Parade Float	\$21,375.00
15	Dog Show Foam Puzzle Mat	\$15,384.96
16	Cattle Ties for Barns	\$16,900.00
17	Custom Printed Tent Gables	\$12,350.00
18	Furnishings for the Nebraska Building	\$39,799.31
19	Volunteer Website	\$7,923.33
20	Wiese Research Study	\$29,000.00
	<b>Total - Equipment</b>	<b>\$326,565.20</b>

**Operations**

21	Fair Operations	\$2,223,833.00
	<b>Total - Operations</b>	<b>\$2,223,833.00</b>

**Nebraska Building**

22	Construction Costs for the Nebraska Building	\$709,113.66
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**Debt Repayment**

23	Payment on debt	\$973,736.38
	<b>Total - Debt Repayment</b>	<b>\$973,736.38</b>

**Total Expenditures** \$4,394,151.84

**Balance of State Fair Funds account on June 30, 2014** \$2,244,647.18

**Note: Project\Equipment costs are as of June 30 and not necessarily reflective of final project costs**



## **Expenditures from Nebraska State Fair Funds Account**

**July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014**

To follow is a list of improvements made to the Nebraska State Fair as approved by the board of directors:

### **1) Various sidewalks/driveways**

In order to provide easy guest access to the Nebraska Building, sidewalks, drives and a parking lot were constructed to serve not only during the 11 days of the fair, but throughout the year. The Nebraska Building houses State Fair administration and the University of Nebraska's "Raising Nebraska" Exhibit—both requiring year round access.

### **2) Handicap accessible door openers**

While already ADA compliant, the Nebraska State Fair took additional steps to add automatic door openers for guests requiring additional help. Those buildings affected are The Five Points Bank Arena, the Pinnacle Bank Expo Center, the Swine Arena and the 4-H/FFA building. The other livestock buildings have easy access through overhead doors that are always open during the fair.

### **3) Large scale fans for equine**

In our efforts to enhance the fair guest experience, our work continues on buildings that were already present when the State Fair moved to Grand Island. As an example, like our new livestock buildings, we added large-scale fans to the Thompson Horse Arena to provide better air movement and cooler temperatures for exhibitors and horse show patrons alike.

### **4) Plumbing for hand washing stations**

With other State Fair's around the nation experiencing problems with E. coli contamination affecting the health of fair patrons, the Nebraska State Fair is working to stay in front of the issue with additional hand washing stations available to fairgoers. While the hand washing stations were already purchased, plumbing was added to accommodate those stations in the

swine, sheep and cattle barns. A hand washing station was already available in the Birthing Pavilion.

### **5) Enlarged Water Line for the East Entertainment Area**

An enlarged water line was installed from the core to the east end of the fairgrounds to accommodate the appropriate level of pressure in case of fire emergency.

### **6) Barn Bar Expansion**

A portion of the Barn Bar in the Cattle Barn was left unfinished during the original construction in 2009/2010. That space was put into use this year for expansion of the bar by pouring cement to finish the floor and other accommodations to create more room in this popular spot.

### **7) Wi-Fi Upgrades**

With changing technology, so too is the need for the Nebraska State Fair to improve wireless access throughout the fairgrounds. Updated systems were installed in the Cattle Barn, Five Points Bank Arena, Sheep Barn and Thompson Arena. This not only enhances the guest experience but also allows the Nebraska State Fair to stream video via the Internet of livestock and equine shows to a worldwide audience. Video storage capacity was also increased as part of the improvements.

### **8) Seating**

Each year our research indicates that fair guests want more seating. In a continuing effort to better the experience, two sets of 10-row bleachers and four sets of 5-row bleachers were added to create more seating for grounds entertainment and attractions. In addition, picnic tables and benches were purchased to create even more seating.

### **9) Shade Areas**

The second biggest request from our guests, along with seating, is more shaded areas. Since the Fonner Park Campus is void of trees, we have added five portable shade structures that are 40 foot square and provide a welcome respite from the sun.

### **10) Carnival Barker Stand**

After seeing a similar attraction at the State Fair of Texas, the Nebraska State Fair commissioned a local cabinet company to build (from nothing more than photos) a barker stand that makes the "talker" look as though she has but half a body, perched up on a stool and talks to fairgoers about a myriad of topics. The barker stand was built in 2013 and the barker tent was added in 2014. The Carnival Barker's likeness is used as a mascot for the Nebraska State Fair.

### **11) Shuttle Handicap Lifts**

In an effort to make the Nebraska State Fair more handicap accessible, wheelchair lifts were added to the remaining grounds shuttles that carry fairgoers from one end of the fairgrounds to another. This addition adds to the overall convenience to fairgoers that require assistance when boarding the shuttles.

### **12) CaseIH Scouts**

To assist staff with the set up, operation and tear down of the fair each year, the Nebraska State Fair has purchased a total of five CaseIH Scouts (small four-wheelers) to help with the work. Four two-seaters with box and one four-seater with box are invaluable at all times during the year.

### **13) Tennant Floor Scrubber**

In an effort to become more efficient in the cleaning of the livestock barns, the Nebraska State Fair has purchased a Tennant Floor Scrubber that accomplishes the work of several people and in less time.

### **14) Parade Float**

The Nebraska State Fair purchased a professionally designed parade float to add to our daily parades. Parades have been part of the State Fair for many years and the float adds to the pageantry of the event.

### **15) Dog Show Foam Mat**

The 4-H dog show was moved from the aged Big Red Barn to the Heartland Events Center to provide a better venue for the event. Foam Mats were purchased to cover the floor of the Events Center to give the dogs the appropriate footing to perform.

### **16) Cattle Ties for Barns**

Due to the ever expanding 4-H and FFA livestock programs, new cattle ties (pens) were purchased to create additional room.

### **17) Custom Printed Tent Gables**

Custom printed tent gables were purchased to be more visible for fair guests from a distance. Those tents include the Bristol Windows Stage, the Good Life Lounge, and the Silver Spur beer garden.

## **18) Furnishings for the Nebraska Building**

Furnishings for the Nebraska State Fair administrative offices such as board room table/chairs, conference room table/chairs, desks and other amenities were purchased to fill the additional rooms the Nebraska Building offers.

## **19) Volunteer Website**

The Nebraska State Fair Volunteer Website is available for individuals interested in signing up to volunteer at the Nebraska State Fair. First created in 2013, volunteers can go to the site ([statefairvolunteer.org](http://statefairvolunteer.org)) to view available volunteer positions for the upcoming fair.

## **20) Wiese Research Study**

In an effort to better attract fairgoers from the eastern part of Nebraska, we contracted with Weise Research in Lincoln/Omaha to conduct phone interviews in Lincoln, NE (our closest large metro) and find out why residents there don't currently attend the Nebraska State Fair. Distance/Too Far/Inconvenient Location was the overwhelming reasons respondents gave as their reason for not attending. This data will be reviewed for the 2015 event to better communicate with eastern Nebraska about the many reasons to attend the Nebraska State Fair.

## **21) Fair Operations**

Operations were subsidized to improve the overall quality of events produced at the State Fair as well as improve customer service within those events resulting in attendance of 317,785. In a survey of guests at the 2014 Nebraska State Fair attendees feel the Nebraska State Fair is doing an 'excellent' job of *providing family fun, educating, informing and entertaining* its patrons.

## **22) Construction Costs for the Nebraska Building**

In 2013, the Fair began construction on the new Nebraska Building. The building is the home of Nebraska Game and Park's "Outdoor Encounter" featuring shooting sports, a 6,500-gallon Nebraska Fish aquarium, an indoor stream complete with waterfall and an outdoor children's play area. The building also contains the University of Nebraska's "Raising Nebraska" exhibit. The museum quality area explains, through interactive media, the process by which we get our food from "farm to fork." The 2<sup>nd</sup> level of the building contains the administrative offices of the Nebraska State Fair.

## **23) Debt Repayment**

As a result of the construction of the facilities built in 2009-2010 and the new Nebraska Building, the Board has accumulated debt, on which we are making monthly payments and additional payments directly toward the principal of the loans.