Members Present: Faron Wahl, Dusty Anderson, Amanda Stade, Kevin Hofer, Jo Beal, Denise Muntefering, Scott Cordts, Judy Stevens, Sherman Gose, Erin Yost, and Dennis Harstad.

Excused: Jamie White and Justin Bell.

Department Staff Present: Secretary Hunter Roberts, Brian Faris, Peggy Besch, Candi Briley, Kati Eslick, and Nicole Gomez.

Guests: Mike Rudd.

1. **Call to Order:** Chair Wahl called the meeting to order. The roll call was called, and a quorum was present.

**Introductions:** Besch introduced Nicole Gomez, new Vendor Coordinator.

1. **Approval of Agenda:** Muntefering made a motion; seconded by Beal to approve the agenda; motion passed.
2. **Approval of May 20, 2025, Minutes:** Gose made a motion; seconded by Hofer to approve the minutes of May 20, 2025; motion passed.
3. **Public Comment Period:** None.
4. **SHED Construction Update/Grand Opening:** Besch reported substantial completion has been met. Just waiting on a few things for the interior. Additionally, we had to bid out some additional concrete work and are hoping it will be completed before the State Fair. The grand opening is scheduled for Thursday, August 28, at 2 pm. Invites will go out soon.
5. **2025 SD State Fair**
   1. America250 Celebration: The SD State Fair will be participating in America250, the national initiative commemorating the 250th anniversary of the United States. Special events and programming are scheduled throughout the fair to include:
      * Daily America250-themed activities and contests, including America’s Ag-mazing Race, the Great American Animal Calling Contest, Great American Pie Eating Contest, Great American Hot Dog Eating Contest, Shuck Yeah! The Great American Corn Eating Contest;
      * Signing of the Declaration of Independence; and
      * The America250 Passport, encouraging families to explore fairgrounds, collect stamps, and win prizes while learning about U.S. history and agriculture.
      * Sunday, August 31: Red, White, and You Day! Fairgoers are encouraged to wear red, white, and blue to help celebrate America250. Everyone who dresses for the theme will be entered into a special prize drawing.
      * Secretary Roberts challenged commissioners to decorate their golf carts in a patriotic theme as well.
   2. **Sensory-Friendly Morning:** Offering a welcoming experience for children and adults with sensory sensitivities. The sensory-friendly morning will run from 8 AM-12 PM on Wednesday, August 27. Visitors can enjoy special programming and a calmer environment as they explore the fairgrounds in a way that best suits their needs. During the sensory-friendly morning, fairgoers can expect:
      * Reduced noise and lights;
      * Gentle animal interactions in a quiet, controlled space;
      * A peaceful calming cottage to rest, reset, and recharge;
      * Interactive, hands-on sensory activities for all ages and abilities;
      * A fun and accessible scavenger hunt; and
      * A specially modified carnival time.
   3. **Football at the Fair:** Will be held in the Tap Haus on Saturday, August 30. USD/Iowa State game at 2:30pm and SDSU/Sacramento State at 6pm. First Dakota will sponsor.
   4. **Education Entries**: Education entries closed mid-April. Entries are up substantially from the previous year. There are 8,224 education entries (up nearly 2,000 entries from the previous year).
   5. **Bob Duxbury Award:** Nominating forms were passed around, and commissioners submitted votes. The recipient will be selected, and the award presentation will be determined at a later date.
   6. **Commissioner Assignments:** Besch handed out the document outlining where volunteers were needed for commissioners to review and sign up.
   7. **Static and Exhibitor Handbooks:** Open Class livestock entry deadline is August 1 and static entries close at different dates depending on the department. Additionally, a clause was added to the livestock exhibitor books about taking photos with their animal on the Midway which, due to safety reasons, will only be allowed on Monday, September 1, 6am to 7:30am.
   8. **Staffing/Horizons Hall Superintendent:** The Horizons Hall superintendent position has been filled. Also, we will have a new Trolley Driver Superintendent this year. The current and greatest demand for employees is gates, beer garden and trolley drivers.
   9. **Camping Reservation Renewals:** The deadline for camping renewals is coming up, but we haven’t experienced very many cancellations. New reservations opened on July 1, and we have accepted 31 new reservations.
   10. **Vendor Renewals:** Approximately 287 contracts have been sent out, with 237 returned. There are not many vacancies. The food court is full.
   11. **Entertainment/Programming:** Briley gave an update on some ground and stage entertainment confirmed. Grandstand tickets and gate admission are on sale. The event guide is close to completion. The Read and Win promotion is going very well. Also mentioned doing a promotion on Wednesday to encourage people to come out for lunch.
6. **4-H Update:** Stade reported on a variety of things, including:
   1. August 12 is the entry deadline (no late entries will be accepted).
   2. Achievement Days are next month.
   3. The new stoves have been delivered to Nordby Hall.
7. **Non-Fair Time Activities:**
   1. Wheel Jam/SD BBQ Championships: Besch provided some fun statistics on this event. Agtegra’s Customer Appreciation is also coming up.
   2. Eslick provided an update on many upcoming activities in the DEX including SD Summer Spotlight and some national events.
   3. SoDak Nationals: Eslick gave an overview of this event that will take place on October 10-12, 2025, at the DEX.  The SD State Fair Foundation will host the SoDak National Junior Rodeo and is open to youth ages 10 through 18 as of October 10, 2025. Events include Girls Barrel Racing, Bareback Riding, Girls Breakaway Roping, Bull Riding, Girls Goat Tying, Girls Pole Bending, Saddle Bronc Riding, Steer Wrestling, Team Roping, and Tie Down Roping. The SoDak National Junior Rodeo will start with $15,000 in added money, 12 custom saddles, three custom felt hats, and over 40 buckles for top competitors. Unique features aim to attract out-of-state participants and elevate the competition, including:
      * For every 35 entries for a particular event, an additional $1,000 in prize money will be added to that event, ensuring even larger payouts.
      * A dedicated side pot for contestants traveling over 300 miles; and
      * The option for contestants to enter each event twice, increasing their chances to win.
8. **Maintenance and Repairs:** Besch reported on the following:
   * Dairy Barn Roof: Nearly complete.
   * Dakotaland Museum: Should start soon.
   * LED lighting project: Complete.
   * Food Court, Tap Haus, and Wine Pavilion: New siding is being installed. It should be complete by the end of the month.
   * VIP Lounge: Working on improvements to enhance the atmosphere. Work in progress.
   * Information Center/Mother’s Room: Work in progress
   * Campground water and sewer: Still work in progress but getting close to completion.
9. **Commissioners or Manager Reports:** Anderson mentioned the 4-H Steer show, Supreme Show, U-Fit It, and Beef Booster Shows will be livestreamed this year.
10. **Executive Session**: None.
11. **Next Meeting**: August 27, 2025, 9 AM.
12. **Adjourned:** Motion made by Muntefering; seconded by Stevens, to adjourn the meeting.