



**Nebraska Semiquincentennial Commission Meeting
November 20, 2025 - 3:30 p.m.**

The Meeting was conducted in person and virtually via Teams

The public was invited to attend in person at:

Nebraska State Historical Society

Capitol View Room

1500 R Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68508

or virtually at: <https://tinyurl.com/4c68s5aa>

MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Daryl Bohac, Commission Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

Roll Call – Quorum confirmed.

ATTENDING IN PERSON – Daryl Bohac, Jeff Barnes, Gabriel Bruguier, Roy Christensen, Heidi Cuca, Chris Kratochvil, Chris Sommerich and Bre Wilton.

ATTENDING ONLINE– Candace Cain, Tim Clark, and Kate Ellingson. Christine Vail arrived online at 3:31 pm.

ABSENT: Tyeisha Kosmicki and Ashley Olson

CERTIFICATION OF PUBLICATION – NOTIFICATION OF OPEN MEETINGS ACT

- The public legal notice required by state statute was published in the *Lincoln Journal Star* on November 14, 2025
- The meeting complies with the Open Meetings Act
- A copy of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act is posted on the wall.

Discussion on quorum and meeting format ensured. Clarification from the Attorney General's office has been received. Hybrid meetings are valid for quorum if the virtual conferencing requirements are met. Commissioners attending virtually may vote. Reminder – no more than half of the meetings each year may be virtual.

OPENING REMARKS AND CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

Commission Chair Daryl Bohac welcomed all in attendance.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

- Madeline LaFerla, Nebraska Governor's Office
- Scott Clarke, Clarke Design
- Jenn Gjerde, Visit Nebraska
- Cassandra Dean, Gage County Historical Society - online
- Anne Alston, Nebraska Arts Council - online
- Meagan Dion, Nebraska Arts Council - online
- Clark Kolterman, Seward 4th of July - online
- Gerry Meyer, Seward 4th of July – online

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Cassandra Dean inquired about Commission support for museums planning 250th exhibits. Chair Bohac shared that a centralized website is being developed to promote events statewide.

UPDATES:

Commission Membership Update:

- Semiquincentennial Commission Vacancies
 - There are seventeen seats on the Commission, with three vacancies remaining. One at-large candidate has been identified, and progress is being made with the Latino American Commission position. Goal: full or near-full membership by December meeting.

KEY PARTNER UPDATES:

Anne Alston, Nebraska Arts Council, Update:

- *My Nebraska, Our America* is the theme for the public art challenge for K-12 and homeschool students. The website and a highly adaptable lesson plan toolkit will launch in December. Student artwork will be judged, and the winners will be displayed both online and at the State Capitol in July 2026. The Council is also working on other sites that the exhibit can travel to later.

Meagan Dion, Nebraska Arts Council, Update:

- The Council is continuing to work out the details on the John Raimondi talks. Potentially they may livestream from at least one location.
- Discussion was had on videos that already exist on the I-80 sculptures and a new video that is being produced by a group in Omaha.

Jenn Gjerde, Visit Nebraska, Update:

- Programs for *25 Historic Nebraska Spots* and a *250 Passport Tour* are in development.
- The new *Nebraska 2026 Official State Travel Guide* was just published, and copies were

distributed to Commissioners in attendance. An advertisement featuring the Nebraska 250 logo is located inside the back cover as well as a Timeline of historic Nebraska events and an America's 250th Tribute Trivia game.

- Jenn has been contacted by Explore America, a national digital guide, which will feature Carhenge, the Sandhill Crane migration and the Scotts Bluff monument as places to visit in Nebraska.

Clark Kolterman and Gerry Meyer, Seward 4th of July

- *One Nation, Many Stories* is the theme for their major 4th of July celebration with a Chautauqua-style event to feature actors portraying U.S. presidents and first ladies, banners and potentially a live NET broadcast.
- They are also involved with the National Guard Birthday party on December 18th at the Nebraska National Guard Museum where the Nebraska Federation of Women's Club will present a flag to the Governor.
- The red, white and blue Semiquincentennial watercolor is finished. It will be unveiled on the 18th on KOLN TV with Grace McDonald from Pure Nebraska.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION, REVIEW AND UPDATES:

Community Relations and Social Media Update:

- The Committee hasn't met since the last meeting.
- Chris Vail shared her progress with developing social media sites:
 - She has created a website and sent a draft to Daryl for approval.
 - Created a page each for X, Twitter, Instagram and Facebook of which she is waiting for approval before posting information to them.
 - She continues to engage local leaders and organizations (Rotary, Keep America Beautiful, Boy Scouts, Nebraska Association of County Officials and the League of Municipalities). The proposed statewide cleanup and beautification campaign starts January 1, 2026.
- Jeff Barnes shared that he has been approached by the Architectural Foundation of Nebraska to update and republish his *150@150 Nebraska's Landmark Buildings at the State's Sesquicentennial* coffee table book for the Semiquincentennial. Their foundation would be responsible for the fundraising and Jeff is working to coordinate the updates.

Education Update:

- Supporting arts and civics education initiatives such as the National Civics Bee.
- Collaborating with Nebraska Arts Council, Department of Education, and Poetry Out Loud.
- Exploring partnerships with NSAA, Nebraska Brewers, and others.
- Susan Longhenry, Sheldon Museum of Art director, has reached out and is interested in partnering relating to the *Hyphen America: Intersections of Identity* exhibit they are hosting from late January through July 5th. It will focus on Lincoln's rich history of welcoming immigrants, refugees and new Americans.

- First Lady Suzanne Pillen expressed interest in supporting literacy and student engagement. She has ideas and Chair Bohac will get her connected to members of the Education committee.

Fundraising Update:

- Roy Christensen has raised \$4,000 of the \$5,000 needed for Capitol Display Project. The display is to be installed in January 2026 and will remain through September.
- Tim Clark will get together with Chair Bohac to discuss what sponsorship needs have been identified, what projects/partners have been approached in the Omaha area and how to get the community more involved.

Action Items:

- **Approval of the Capitol Display Project** – Declaration of Independence Signers, Influential Women portraits and Events project.

Motion to approve the Capitol Display Project

Motion by: Kratochvil
Second by: Sommerich

Yeas: Bohac, Barnes, Bruguier, Cain, Christensen, Clark, Cuca, Ellingson, Kratochvil, Sommerich, Wilton and Vail.

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Motion approved.

- **Official Nebraska 250 Logo Approval**

Motion to approve the current Nebraska 250 logo

Motion by: Cain
Second by: Cuca

Yeas: Bohac, Barnes, Bruguier, Cain, Christensen, Clark, Cuca, Ellingson, Kratochvil, Sommerich, Wilton and Vail.

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Motion approved.

Daryl Bohac, Commission Chair, Update:

- Press conference planned for early January 2026 with the Governor to launch the logo and public campaign. Commissioners will be asked to participate as more details are finalized.
- Website development underway with OCIO and Jacht agency. Hope to have more clarity right after Thanksgiving.

- Commissioners are encouraged to act as ambassadors to engage with national and local partners (e.g., FFA, 4-H, FCCLA, DAR, Rotary) to discover potential opportunities for Nebraska communities to participate in. Challenge was issued - What are five groups each commissioner reaches that could potentially include a 250 celebration/recognition event?
- Awaiting details on potential presence at the National Mall in July 2026.
- The next America 250 online Zoom meeting with Ed Perez is December 3rd at 2 pm CST and all commissioners are encouraged to participate. Here is the link to the meeting for those who are interested:

<https://america250org.zoom.us/j/83539909059?pwd=XbhuglTeZCnyKrEJX0sII0DAcTtqPr.1>

The meeting was adjourned at 4:46 pm

Next meeting: Thursday, December 18, 2025, at 3:30 PM, Central Time

Minutes are in draft form until approved at the next meeting.