



**Nebraska Semiquincentennial Commission Meeting
January 22, 2026 - 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/ypw3n2xw>

MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Daryl Bohac, Commission Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m.

Roll Call – Quorum confirmed.

ATTENDING IN PERSON – Daryl Bohac, Jeff Barnes, Gabriel Bruguier, Heidi Cuca, Evelyn Haro and Chris Sommerich.

ATTENDING ONLINE– Candace Cain, Kate Ellingson, Beth Smith, Christine Vail and Bre Wilton.

ABSENT: Roy Christensen, Tim Clark, Christopher Kratochvil 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 January 14, 2026
- The meeting complies with the Open Meetings Act
- A copy of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act is posted on the wall.

OPENING REMARKS

Commission Chair Daryl Bohac welcomed all in attendance.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

- Mark Byars, Nebraska Society of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR)
- Meagan Dion, Nebraska Arts Council - online
- Carly Harroun, Stuhr Museum
- Madeline Hart, Nebraska Governor's Office – online
- Laura Strimple, Nebraska Governor's Office – online
- Scott Clarke
- Mike Markey, Nebraska Arts Council – online
- Jenn Gjerde, Nebraska Tourism Commission
- Micah Huyser, Nebraska Museum Association & Nebraska Prairie Museum - online

INTRODUCTION OF NEW COMMISSION MEMBERS

- Beth Smith, new member representing an At-Large seat. Beth is a fifth generation Nebraskan and a Lincoln native. She has just come off from serving on the State Fair Board for nine years and hopes to be a conduit to both groups.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

No comments or questions were offered.

APPROVAL OF DECEMBER SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL MEETING MINUTES

Motion to approve the December Meeting Minutes

Motion by: Bruguier

Second by: Cuca

Yeas: Bohac, Barnes, Bruguier, Cain, Cuca, Ellingson, Haro, Olson, Smith, Sommerich, Wilton and Vail.

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Motion approved.

COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP UPDATE:

- Vacancy for the Second Congressional District seat and one At-Large position. Hope to have in place for the February meeting.
- Today's meeting was a hybrid Virtual/In-Person meeting. No more than half of our annual meetings may be conducted in this manner. In the future we may have to carefully consider which meetings will be hybrid and which will allow Commission members to attend online but not vote.

CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

- **Time Capsule Discussion**
 - Written description due **March 15, 2026**; contents due **April 30, 2026**.
 - Ideas discussed:
 - State poet contribution (poem by Jewel Rogers).
 - Governor's letter signed by living governors.
 - Nebraska history in 250 words (Candace volunteered to draft).
 - Map with state symbols, motto, indigenous tribes, and notable quotes (e.g., Willa Cather).
 - Due to time, size and funding constraints, the submission will probably be two-sided, 8.5x11 sheet on archival paper.
 - As a part of the national time capsule submission, it was suggested to add printed directions, coordinates to a larger state time capsule that could be created by the Commission with more items reflecting each of Nebraska's counties.
 - Possible inclusion of native seeds (pending durability clarification).
 - Nebraska Prairie Museum's would potentially provide a location.
- **America 250 National Update** will occur Wednesday, January 28th. Key updates will be sent to Commission members.

KEY PARTNER UPDATES:

Great American State Fair, Madeline Hart, Governor's Office: Working directly with the White House. Official dates are set up on June 23rd and open June 25th-July 10th, 2026. Governor's office will appoint a point person. Nebraska will have a pavilion; specialty pavilions include Arts, Innovation, Faith and Family, American Worker and Agriculture. Awaiting logistics and role clarity from White House task force.

Mike Byars, SAR: Planning Liberty Tree dedications, July 4th State Capitol event, July 8th Declaration reading. Thursday, January 29th Congressman Adrian Smith will be here at NSHS to add his signature to the replica Declaration that each state is having signed. They are working to coordinate the additional Nebraska signatures needed. A calendar of planned SAR events was distributed and will be used to create calendar events.

State Capitol Building Projection: Jeff Barnes proposed projection mapping on the building during the week of July 4th. He was asked to create a one-page proposal that could be used to create a feasibility study, funding plan and the governor's approval.

Daryl Bohac, Nebraska Tourism Visionary Award

Commission nominated as finalist for Nebraska Tourism Visionary Award (Feb 11 reception).

[Awards | VisitNebraska.com](#)

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION, REVIEW AND UPDATES:

Community Relations and Social Media Update:

- Community Relations subcommittee met in Omaha to form guidelines.
 - Goal: maximize participation statewide.
 - Events must be apolitical, nonpartisan, and reflect Nebraska heritage.

- Submission form will include categories aligned with national America250 site.
- Review committee to approve events and logo use (Chris V., Evelyn, Jeff volunteered).
- Possible development of Public Service Announcements (PSA) involving the Declaration, Nebraska history and all different groups of Nebraskans participating.
- Website Development: Progress was reported by Chris Vail and should launch soon.
 - Features event submission form, partner registration and logo guidelines.
- Social Media accounts have been created. Additional administrators are needed.
 - Features event submission form, partner registration and logo guidelines.
 - Chris Vail offered to set up a Google Alert to track publicity for 250 events.

Education Update:

- Bre Wilton secured 350 free STEM kits for rural Nebraska schools that relate to American Innovation.

Fundraising Update:

- No report.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:39 pm

Next meeting: Thursday, February 26, 2026, at 3:30 PM, Central Time. Meeting will last 90 minutes.

Minutes approved by:
Nebraska Semiquincentennial Commission
February 26, 2026