



Westerner Park

MEDIA RELEASE

Westerner Park 2021-2022 Annual General Meeting & Election Results

June 10, 2022 | Red Deer, AB – Westerner Park hosted its 2021-2022 Annual General Meeting on June 9, returning to an in-person event and welcoming Shareholders to the Chalet.

As an agricultural society and a registered not-for-profit with charitable status, Westerner Park has been a place for Central Albertans to gather and celebrate community events since 1891. In a typical year, Westerner Park generates more than \$150 million in economic activity, with more than 1.5 million visitors come through our gates to celebrate over 1,500 unique events.

Westerner Park is guided by a volunteer Board of Directors comprised of local, dedicated central Albertans who steer the organization towards a sustainable future by adopting sound, ethical governance and financial management policies, as well as making sure the organization has the needed resources to advance its mission in order to maximize the benefit to the citizens of Central Alberta.

In attending to the business of the meeting, the Shareholders approved amendments to the Articles of Association, heard reports from the Governance and Nominating Committees, and received the Financial Statements and Auditor's Report for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2022.

2021 – 2022 Financial Results

Shareholders were updated on the health of Westerner Park operations, including insights into the key activities and financial impacts of this recent fiscal year.

Total Revenue of \$12.38 million was less than budgeted, but prudent cost controls of \$7.29 million in Event Expenses and \$6.89 million in Non-Event Expenses, resulted in an overall Operating Income of \$404,495 (before non-cash charges and contributions), which outperformed budget by \$372,860.

While events were limited by the pandemic, grants received were higher than anticipated, and Westerner Park was able to achieve its first payments on the City of Red Deer loan.

In looking forward, the 2022 - 2023 budget is projected to materially break even. Key risks Westerner Park is facing that impact budget include:

- A steady return to business is expected for the coming year, but pandemic recovery is still a factor that will continue to impact the event industry and Westerner Park.
- Industry economic factors: our business partners are also recovering from the past two years.



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- Asset management: developed in conjunction with the City of Red Deer, the asset management plan will provide a clear picture of the full extent of our overall facility health and required investments in the future.

“Westerner Park must focus on improving its overall profitability to ensure the stability and health of our organization, says Mike Olesen, Chief Executive Officer. “As an Agricultural Society and registered Not-For-Profit, increased revenues will mean more reinvestment back into our facilities.”

Election Results

Westerner Park Shareholders also celebrated five Retiring Directors: Lars Rogers, Dianne Harder, Rick Polutnik, Scott Wyzykoski, and Damian Zapisocky. Their contributions and commitment to Westerner Park are appreciated, and we are fortunate to have these leaders volunteering to benefit our organization and the Central Alberta community.

Eight candidates also addressed the Shareholders to seek election for the four vacant positions. Thank you to all nominees for their willingness to contribute their time and expertise to Westerner Park.

“On behalf of the Westerner Park Board of Directors, I would like to extend a sincere thanks to our Past Presidents, Shareholders, former and fellow Board members for their leadership and dedication,” says Deb Beck, Westerner Park President and Board Chair. “I’m pleased to continue working with Board incumbent, Marty Vellner, who was re-elected for another three-year term, and to welcome three new candidates to our Team – Alicia Erickson, Nicole Lorrain, and Darcy Mykytyshyn. I look forward to working with this strong group of individuals to chart a course for Westerner Park that keeps us true to our mission while seeking new ideas and direction that will be best for our long-term financial success and stability.”

The 2022 – 2023 Board of Directors:

Following the Annual General Meeting, the Board held a brief organizational meeting, and we are pleased to announce the 2022-2023 Board of Directors:

- Deb Beck, President
- Tyler Nightingale, Vice President
- Janice Wing, Past President
- Elected Directors
 - Garrett Cupples
 - Alicia Erickson
 - Dave Harvey
 - Nicole Lorrain
 - Al Lucas
 - Darcy Mykytyshyn
 - Gil Vallee
 - Marty Vellner



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- Appointed Directors
 - Vesna Higham, City of Red Deer
 - Lawrence Lee, City of Red Deer
 - Christine Moore, Red Deer County
- Mike Olesen, Chief Executive Officer
- Tara Lodewyk, Acting City Manager & Advisor

2022 – 2023 Strategic Priorities

As experienced across all businesses, 2021 – 2022 was a tumultuous year for the event industry and Westerner Park was negatively impacted by limitations and cancellations due to the pandemic. Despite the challenges, our team of Westerners persevered, and we were able to celebrate with modified or scaled-down events including Wagons at Westerner, the Canadian Finals Rodeo, Agri-Trade, numerous Agriculturally Focused event, and a very successful Red Deer Rebels season.

“Looking forward, several key developments will serve us well in overcoming the challenges that Westerner Park has faced and help us to pursue future success. Westerner Park has been focused on realigning ourselves to our core purpose,” added Olesen, “We are intent on ensuring each decision we make is true to our agriculture roots and delivers on our commitment to our stakeholders and the Central Alberta community. We have prioritized four key focus areas that will take us into the future with a solid foundation and an eye to growth and sustainability.”

These four strategies priorities include:

1. Stabilization, positioning us for sustainable growth
2. Positive Brand Position, with our stakeholders recognizing the value of working with Westerner Park and how this contributes to the economic well-being of central Alberta
3. Premier Experiences, being known for creating exceptional experiences for our clients, guests, volunteers, and staff, and
4. Governance and Stewardship, as the Board of Directors of a Registered Charity and Non-Profit Agricultural Society, we will steward the organization with sound governance practices.

Our leaders will guide the delivery of our mission to provide exceptional guest experiences through premier facilities and services and focus on Westerner Park’s return as a hub of activity and a source of pride for our community.

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