



Westerner Park

MEDIA RELEASE

Westerner Park - 2019 Annual General Meeting

September 9, 2020 | Red Deer, AB – Westerner Park hosted its 2019 Annual General Meeting today as a virtual event through Facebook Live and an in person event for up to 100 of their Shareholders.

“On behalf of the Westerner Park Board of Directors, I would like to thank all our Past Presidents, Shareholders and fellow board members for their vision, leadership and continued dedication,” says Janice Wing, Westerner Park President and Board Chair. “I’d also like to welcome the two returning candidates; Deb Beck, and Gil Vallee and one new candidate; Garrett Cupples to our slate.”

Westerner Park Board of Directors and Chief Executive Officer hosted an information session for Shareholders prior to the AGM reporting on their past fiscal year. Detailed insight into the key activities of this past year was provided. Discussion was had about the key changes and strategies that have been implemented to pursue success and over come the challenges that Westerner Park has faced.

“We have been working very hard in the past nine months, on a mission to truly understand where we need to be better, to regroup and rally behind our true purpose,” says Mike Olesen, Chief Executive Officer, “We are pursuing a state where we are living with intent and thriving to better serve those who own this organization; the Central Alberta community.”

Addressing the Past & Moving Forward

Westerner Park identified several factors that contributed to their current state, including;

- the decision to expand and take on debt for the Exhibition Hall based on an aggressive business case,
- the need to redefine the hosting model of the Canadian Finals Rodeo in Central Alberta
- Cancelling the in house Westerner Park catering programing and creating a new casual dining and catering strategy that involved sending an RFP out for a catering partner
- 2019-2020 financial performance, operating at a cash loss, impacted by the above listed factors, economy and COVID-19

Fiscal Year 2020-21 Financial Plan

Budget considerations have been made for pre and post COVID scenarios. Westerner Park continues to be negatively impacted by limitations due to precautions to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 including physical distancing requirements.

Westerner Park recognizes the City of Red Deer and City Council as a major funding party for their \$3 million dollar grant. With continued financial oversight and support from the City of Red Deer, Westerner Park will balance minimizing costs and pursuing improved viability strategies.

Relaunching Westerner Park's Purpose

Westerner Park relaunched their purpose statement:

“Westerner Park delivers a celebration experience. We pair first class facilities with down home service. We treat all of our event organizers



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and guests with the same welcoming, approachable and trustworthy style that has defined our organization for the past 129 years. We enable and service other organizations to gather and celebrate their own purpose and cause.”

They reinforced what they stand for:

“We are Westerners; born from a sense of community and a commitment to agriculture, we have always been guided by the people, for the people. Our pride is deep and our determination strong. Our practical and resilient nature keep us grounded.

We are committed. We are invested. We are focused. We are family. We are Westerners!”

The Westerner Park Board recently engaged in a strategic session to refocus on the purpose of Westerner Park. To continue to serve the Central Alberta community Westerner Park is hiring a senior leadership team that is responsible for the successful execution of the organization's strategic plan. For more information visit their Employment Opportunities section on their website:

<https://westernerpark.ca/employment-opportunities>

Westerner Park will be actively raising funds to promote and invest in initiatives that support Westerner Park's mission. This will encourage the enhanced quality of life for Central Alberta and support improvement to the agriculture industry. Specifically, they will focus on innovation and events, capital programs, and education and development.

Westerner Park's 2020-2021 Current Strategic Priorities Include:

- Premier Facilities, Services & Event Promotion
- Governance & Stewardship
- Customer Service
- Financial Sustainability & Economic Benefits
- Staff & Volunteer Development
- Community Engagement

Since 1891, Westerner Park has been a place for Central Albertans to gather and celebrate community events. Westerner Park is both an agricultural society and registered not-for-profit with charitable status.

Each year, Westerner Park generates more than \$150 million in economic activity, more than 1.5 million visitors come through our gates to celebrate over 1,500 unique events. From weddings and banquets, hockey games and agricultural shows to concerts and trades shows, we continue to be there as Central Albertans join to share in their most memorable moments.

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