



Kentucky Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet Kentucky Venues

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Secretary Don Parkinson Named Interim CEO of the Kentucky State Fair Board

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Jan. 26, 2018) — The Kentucky State Fair Board named Secretary Don Parkinson as interim CEO today. Parkinson will direct executive staff until a full-time CEO is hired. Dr. Mark Lynn, the chairman of the fair board, has served in the interim role since September. Lynn continues as chairman.

“We are so grateful that Dr. Lynn voluntarily ran this very complex business for the last six months,” said Don Parkinson, Secretary of the Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet. “He will remain as board chairman, but is stepping away from the CEO post to focus his attention on his own successful private business.”

The fair board oversees the Kentucky Exposition Center and the Kentucky International Convention Center in downtown Louisville. It produces the Kentucky State Fair, the National Farm Machinery Show, and the North American International Livestock Exposition.

Parkinson has a history of stepping into important interim roles, having twice served as the interim president of the Kentucky Center for the Arts in Louisville. As Secretary of the Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet, he oversees 14 state agencies.

Parkinson came to public service after a successful business and marketing career at two Fortune 500 companies. Parkinson provided leadership to KFC franchisees all over the United States in his role as Senior Vice President of KFC and YUM! Brands. Prior to joining KFC in 1980, Parkinson was the Advertising Manager of the Pontiac Motor Division of General Motors.

“I saw the need for interim leadership to bridge the gap between the invaluable work Dr. Lynn has given this organization and the selection of a permanent president and CEO,” said Secretary Parkinson.

“I hope my experience in the private sector and with the cabinet will be helpful to the Kentucky Venues team as they put both facilities on an even stronger growth track.”

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Under the [Kentucky Venues](#) brand of venues, entertainment, events and agriculture, two major convention and exhibition facilities — the Kentucky Exposition Center and the Kentucky International Convention Center — serve regional, national and international clients. Governed by the Kentucky State Fair Board, Kentucky Venues produces the Kentucky State Fair, National Farm Machinery Show, North American International Livestock Exposition, Championship Tractor Pull, World's Championship Horse Show, North American Championship Rodeo, and All-In Hoopfest.