

Marion County Fair Board Meeting
December 8, 2010
Marion County Public Works

Minutes by Denise Clark

Members: Shannon Gubbels, Nathan Leao, Pam Zielinski, Melissa High, Diannah Dolby

Staff: Denise Clark, Joel Conder, Sara McDonald

Guests: Shirley Lomax, Cassie McFarland (Sweeney Promotions), Pamela Rose (4H)
Dean Sweeney (Sweeney Promotions)

- I. **Call To Order:** 5:38 PM
- II. **Introductions:**
Shirley Lomax is a prospective fair board member; she interviewed to fill the position vacated by Kelly Walther.
- III. **Public Comments:** Sara thanked folks for coming to the work session last Tuesday. Dean said he thought it went well. Shannon said good questions were asked regarding attendance and gate receipts, areas we know we need to address.
- IV. **Approval of Meeting Minutes-** Pam made a motion to approve the November 3 meeting minutes, Diannah seconded; motion passes.
- V. **4H Report- Pamela Rose**

Pamela has taken on the state-wide responsibility of expressive arts and family and consumer science, a 50% job. The other 50% of her time will be dedicated to Marion County providing youth and adult leadership development.

There have been some adjustments in their organization. They have hired Mary Stewart, 50%, as a program assistant for the animal projects. Cristian, an office co-worker, has taken on some new projects. Sue Pilcher has been out due to surgery and Pamela herself fractured some fingers that limited her movements.

The market auction has instituted a new policy of no student "buy backs". A "buy back" is when an animal is sold at auction, but the buyer isn't interested in the meat. The student seller is then given the opportunity to buy the animal back, essentially letting the animal live instead of being butchered. This new policy stipulates that a member can no longer buy an animal back. Problems have arisen in the past such as the animal showing up at another fair (even state fair) or there is inequity in the fact that one student is given the opportunity to buy their animal back and another is not. The changes make the auction officially a "Terminal Show."

The "Rate of Gain" (weigh-in at fair time) contest is now optional. All exhibitors still have to weigh their animals at fair time, but they don't have to participate in the contest. This year there will be more than one weigh-in day. Weigh-ins will be May 2-5.

The "Ranch Horse" category has now been added to the horse program. It involves classes on roping, trail, showmanship, and riding. Denise said she had heard that Linn County had added it this year and that they hoped it would draw more young men to participate. Pamela said yes, that it is now a statewide program.

Regarding the 4H exhibit hall, they are moving the Competitive Food Preparation and Mini Meal contests to March. Holding the contest during fair time was a conflict for many members who had other shows and activities going on at that time; they'd end up dropping out of the contest. The regular food and table setting fun contests will still be held during fair.

4H is working on getting judges for the 2011 fair. They have developed a more structured process for choosing livestock judges. A judges committee of nine members has been established. They will share ideas and voice their interests. The hope is to keep the quality of judges high and will help eliminate any conflicts of interest. Joel asked if they wanted the judges paid up-front again for the coming fair as was done last fair; answer- yes.

Sara said she had heard this coming year will be the 100th anniversary of Oregon State Extension and wondered if there were any plans for celebrating that at the fair. Pamela said that they were planning on capturing 100 stories. They want to find people who were impacted by the extension in some way over the years, capture it in written form, possibly including pictures, and share this at the fair. (It was suggested this be added to the marketing for fair.) Dan Hoynacki, in their office, is coordinating this. Shirley said Jed Lowery (who Pamela knew) would be a good contact for her.

Pamela said because of their responsibilities, Mary, Sue, or Pamela may be representing 4H at future fair board meetings.

VI. Treasurer's Report- Joel Conder

- Very little changes this month
- Under actual projected budget, the \$77,000 hasn't been spent, just projected. (Commissioner Carlson requested it be put in there.)
- We stayed within budget for the last fair
- Revenues fell short on gate receipts. Carnival, food, sponsor fees were all up.
- Per Dean, Joel shifted a few things such as consulting dollars, making some adjustments via journal ledgers.
- Operations the same as last month.
- No changes in Administration

Diannah made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report, Pam seconded; motion passes.

New Budget Adoption:

Joel reminded folks that he had given the proposed budget to members last month for review and was seeking input. He said he'd heard from Dean and Cassie regarding adjusting the ambulance (Rural Metro) line item and added money for the appreciation dinner. He said he hasn't heard from anyone else. He'd like this budget adopted by February; Denise will add it to the February agenda.

Dean said he likes to keep the budget "open as long as possible". He asked if there was any reason it needs adopting soon, was there an upcoming expenditure. Joel said not that he knew of, that he's just planting a seed so that it will get done on time.

Garten Services discussion

Joel said he's heard from Garten regarding services for the 2011 fair. The costs will increase by \$3,000. Dean says in addition to that, we'll be paying for clean-up, dumpsters, and liners. We'll again be applying for a grant from Public Works Environmental Services (ES) so that there will be no costs to the fair. Joel said Denise would be writing the grant. Cassie and Denise will meet to ensure everything needed is included in the grant request.

Sara mentioned the food vendors' costs in using recyclable products. She suggested we share that cost with the vendors by including that in the grant request. Joel said, in his talking with ES, they suggested we apply for a separate grant for supplying the vendors with those products. He said it is very expensive for vendors to purchase and will be very tough to push it upon vendors for just one event such as ours, as these vendors buy their supplies in bulk. Shannon said if we can't get a grant to assist the food vendors with these purchases, she questions whether we should ask that of them considering the state of the economy. Dean said that it is in Garten's proposed contract, it's not negotiable. It was asked if we have to use Garten, or could we go with another organization. Denise said ES is part of Public Works and they are particularly interested in us going green; that ES and Garten have a history of working partnerships. Cassie knows of another organization in the Portland area that she will check out.

Sara said the revenues showing an infusion of \$40,000 from a community development block grant fund was a one time event. The ending balance of \$14,000 will be spent down significantly. It is budgeted "pretty liberally with the revenues." She said the board needs to be careful. Joel says when we do the budget we project what the revenues are going to be.

Shannon says we need to compromise in going green. She said we are talking about a lot of money, that we need to find a balance. Dean said that for \$10,000 we really shouldn't have any additional costs. Joel agreed; a figure that large should cover everything.

It was asked whether Garten indicated what the \$10,000 covered. Joel said staff time was the greatest cost. Cassie said they had more employees than needed last year, that there was a lot of sitting or running around. She said they also don't do the pick-up which puts a lot more pressure on her and her work force. Joel said it would be good to have a "sit-down" with Garten ahead of time to work out these details.

Sara said the state legislature meets this year. As this is a budget year, they will be looking at the state allocation to fairs; it could change. Joel said the spreadsheet shows the figure has been dropping over the last couple of years. We won't know until June of 2011 as to whether we're getting the money to use for the 2012 fair.

It was suggested we take the projected gate receipts down to \$50,000 (averaging the last 5 yrs.) to reflect the trend we've recently seen. Dean said we wouldn't want to do that because it's matching entertainment. Joel said the figure has been inflated to \$70,000 due to the multiple acts and concerts we are working on specifically to increase the gate revenue. (Joel has since taken the figure down \$10,000 to \$60,000.)

Dean suggested we need to add a line item for "profit sharing" with Oregon Event Center (OEC). If revenue goes above the figure established in the original agreement, we need to share the first \$10,000 profit with them. Joel put \$6,000 in a line-item for whatever services we use above the 2009 baseline. We paid just under \$6,000 for the 2010 fair.

Shannon asked Joel if the group could get a copy of the proposal from Garten.

Items of Special Interest:

Oregon County Fairs Convention

Denise handed out copies of the Oregon County Fair's annual report compliance letter we received in response to submitting the 2009 fair report.

Denise asked who would be attending the Oregon Fairs Convention January 6-9 at the Salem Convention Center. All will be attending some part of it. Dean suggested if a member was trying to decide which banquet to go to, that they all go on Saturday night to sit together. Denise described the event for the new folks.

Joel requests authorization for the entertainment committee to sign entertainers at the convention. Shannon said that would require approval of the budget which isn't scheduled to happen until after convention. Joel suggested they just approve a component of it, the entertainment budget. He said this is an important aspect of the budget; \$8,000 was spent on this type of entertainment last fair. Joel said these would be acts to fill the stages during the day or late afternoon, prior to the big name acts performing.

Big Name Act

Dean introduced the new proposed fair footprint (or layout) which includes putting the main stage next to the floral building, not using the LB Day amphitheater this coming fair. Flyball is requesting to move inside, the food vendors would encircle the stage. The sound would be directed away from the barns. This is a more centralized location. Pamela asked that they ensure there is still a nice pathway to the 4H building behind the stage. She doesn't want to see it cluttered with stage related materials. The floral building will be used as the back stage; there won't be trailers in the way.

Joel said he'd like to see us bring in local bands in addition to the national acts especially if we only do one night of a big name act. Dean said it depends on what Eric Marcuse comes up with between now and convention. However, if we

find an act at convention that is a good price that we think would be a good draw; we sign them and spend less on the major entertainment.

Melissa asked if Eric has come up with any real possibilities for a big name act. Dean said no, not yet.

Dean- KRKT radio said they want to do the talent show. (Eric does the state fair talent show himself, he'd be glad to help us also.) We can keep the talent show on Thursday night with small local acts during the day. On Friday and Saturday possibly have small acts during the day but bring a major act for that night. Sunday we could have the church service on the stage in the morning followed by the Country Showdown. In the late afternoon, put on stage the traditional Hispanic acts- Ballet Folklorico and the Mariachi band.

Dean has not talked to KBZY to see what they are interested in doing.

Nathan asked about the possible conflict between auction goers and concert attendees, folks who might want to attend both. Melissa said the State Fair feels they are different targeted markets; those coming to the fair for the auction are separate from those going to the concert. Noise will not be a problem with the animals due to the way in which the stage is oriented. Pam said the auction is over and cleaned up by 9:15 PM.

Shannon would like to know when we are going to get a decision on the national act, what is the timeline? Dean said it's not easy as it depends on who's available, the routing, the price, etc. Dean has been in communication with Eric on this. They just got back from the national fair convention in Las Vegas, so he's not been available.

Melissa said one idea is to have a concert paired with another event such as a tractor pull, fireworks, monster trucks, or a Disney show/personality.

Joel has talked to the fireworks folks. He said they could put on the biggest fireworks display in the Willamette Valley for \$10,000. Pam said the Volcanoes stadium periodically puts on a fireworks display during the summer; every time they do it they have increased attendance.

Joel said there are also scaled down shows, \$5-\$7, 000, or \$8-\$10,000.

Diannah said the Sublimity Harvest Festival tried a fireworks display and didn't notice an increase in attendance. She doesn't know whether the night they chose affected this or not. (This event is held around the first of September.)

Salem Police Invoice for Tent Reimbursement

Nathan said we sent the City of Salem Police an invoice in the amount of \$55 for the tent they ordered for the Real Heroes HQ display. At fair time Officer Seibel decided he needed a larger tent than he had ordered and wanted to change locations. (The location was agreed to on a pre-fair walk through.) Since it was too late to bring the tent supplier back on grounds to change it at that point in time, the City ended up providing their own tent in their preferred location. We are trying to re-coup our costs; they don't want to pay the invoice since they didn't end up using it. Discussion followed.

After much discussion, it was suggested we change the Real Heroes HQ process. A participating organization will be required to pay up-front if they want us to order materials for them such as tents, or supply their own. The wording on the participation agreement form would indicate an applicant is to pay by a certain date (so one can be ordered for them) or they will not receive one. Nathan said Keizer Fire is also making noises about having their charges (\$232) dismissed. The board felt if we waive the fee for one organization, we need to do it for the other. Melissa made a motion to waive the fees for both Salem PD and Keizer Fire and to institute a new policy indicating a participant needs to pay up-front or bring their own tent. Diannah seconded the motion; motion passes.

New Fair Policies

Denise handed out a packet of 11 policies which she drafted for the board to review. The board had requested these policies be written as there are a lot of practices the fair has in place that haven't been captured in a policy. She said

Alan Haley, Administrative Manager, has reviewed them already and given his input. Shannon asked that once they are instituted, they be placed on the web.

Strategic Plan items- December:

1.2.1 *Members set individual goals to recruit new vendors/sponsors.* Shannon said this is on-going. If members have ideas, let Dean and Cassie know. Cassie said that year-round they look for sponsors so if anyone has connections, give Cassie names and phone numbers.

1.3.1 *Discussion regarding vision development-* It was asked what this is, answer- goal setting. It was suggested the vision should be "sustainability".

2.1.2 *Adopt marketing budget.* This can't be done in December due to the unknown entertainment factor. The board asked to have this item moved to February. It was noted the idea is to start working on marketing in December.

2.1.6 *Develop process for picking fair theme.* Denise distributed an article that Commissioner Carlson had found on Clackamas County's fair theme contest. The fair board had previously decided to not hold a contest this year. Shannon instructed Denise to bring the past suggestions to the January meeting. Board members were also encouraged to think of theme ideas and bring them to the next meeting.

3.2.3 *Identify carnival vendor as needed.* Denise said we are in the process of going out with an RFP, responses to be returned by a January date.

5.2.2 *Make work session presentation.* Shannon thanked Joel, Denise, Sara, and Sweeney Promotions for their help with the presentation.

5.2.3 *Review Bylaws and communication/conflict resolution docs.* Members had a chance to review the documents before the meeting and felt they were good, no changes needed.

5.2.4 *Review Management Agreement every 5 years (next 2012).* No action needed at this time.

5.2.5 *Update Business Plan every 3 years (next 2012).* No action needed at this time.

Other:

Denise distributed copies of the finalized strategic plan documents which incorporated members' suggested changes.

Cassie said she read in the fair theme contest article that they solicited ideas on Facebook. She said she could post an informal note (not a contest about suggesting themes) that offered two free tickets to the fair (or concert) if a person's idea was chosen. The board sanctioned the idea.

Garten Discussion (cont.)

Per Shannon's earlier request, Joel distributed a copy of the Garten letter that contained information about their proposal for the 2011 fair. The fair board is requesting a more detailed proposal or statement as to what Garten will be providing for next year. Joel said he needs more detail for putting it into the budget. He said Denise will need more information for her grant writing.

Nathan asked how much it would cost to use another organization such as Allied Waste instead of Garten. Joel said Allied would not be able to do it because of franchise territory agreements. Joel said Allied is not equipped to do the zero waste processing, they can only provide receptacles.

Many are concerned with the \$10,000 cost for doing this. Cassie said this is not just about recycling; "Zero Waste" is a whole different level. "We want to brand ourselves as a green fair." Shannon said she doesn't disagree with that, but if we are running out of money so much so that we can't run the fair because we are diverting too much money towards being green, that doesn't make sense. We should then just do the recycling level.

Joel said that right now it does not cost the fair anything due to the Environmental Services grant. Denise said that we've been told that getting the grant money again is pretty likely for the coming fair.

It was questioned whether we are always going to have the grant money available to us. There are no guarantees we go year by year. Joel said Environmental Services is the one section that is completely solvent.

Cassie said she did look into another company that is like Garten, actually having trained Garten. She doesn't know if they would come to Salem or not. Joel asked that she send the information about the company to Joel and he would contact them.

Joel said State Fair paid over \$80,000 to Garten to do the Zero Waste program over the eleven days of their fair.

Meeting Adjourned: 7:30 PM