

Mission- To promote the diverse agricultural and cultural heritage of Marion County through active participation of its citizens.

Marion County Fair Board Monthly Meeting

Board of Commissioners' Board Room

May 13, 2026 5:30 PM

Meeting Convened: 5:36 PM

I. Call to Order/Introductions

Fair Board Members: Joseph Billington, Brandi Crandall, Amy Goulter Allen, Shannon Gubbels, Pam Zielinski

Key Volunteer: Jeff Simons

Guests: Jill and Scott Ingalls, Ingalls & Associates; Melanie McCabe, 4H

Staff: Chip Bury, Denise Clark, Sarah Coutley, Laura McClellen, William White (County's Risk Manager)

II. Public Comments: None

III. Approval of April 1 Meeting Summary Notes- Amy made a motion to approve the meeting summary notes; Joe seconded. Motion passed.

IV. Financial Report: Joe Billington

The changes for the month are highlighted in yellow. Joe noted the current percentage of funds utilized on each item.

Questions raised:

- The cell phone usage costs- This phone is used for communication with the fair volunteers. The cost is split with the Community and Economic Development Department as it is also used with Dog Services.
- The Event Coordinator line item is over budget- The payment is now broken down into two payments. Previously, it was broken out into four payments that crossed over into the next fiscal year.

Amy made a motion to approve the financial report as presented; Pam seconded. Motion passed.

V. 4H/FFA Reports

4H- Melanie

Fair entries opened May 5; entry deadline is May 22nd. Record books are due May 29. They recently held a weigh-in for sheep, goats, and pigs. There were 391 animals. The weigh-in also included a station for checking the students' record books. Ciara, her assistant, is currently in Silverton checking student record books. She will also be going to St. Paul on Sunday to do the same.

Melanie was disappointed that 4H had to cancel the horse practice ride night that was to be held in the state fairground's horse stadium. This is an opportunity for horses (and riders) to be exposed to that environment before fair so the animals won't be fearful at fair time. State fair would not accept OSU's standard contract amendments to the agreement state fair had sent. State fair insisted there could be no changes to the agreement. She was so surprised that they weren't willing to work with another government agency.

She will have stall counts to Scott after May 22.

For FFA work order needs, Kristi Duyck will work with Melanie.

FFA- Amy presented for Kristi

District competitions are completed. They are "wrapping up the year" and looking forward to the fair.

There will not be a Swine and Wine event in 2026 as it will now be held every other year. The next one will be in 2027.

VI. **Items of Special Interest:**

Increase in Private Fair Storage Costs- Denise Clark

She recently received an invoice with information that the cost of storage is going up. It will be slightly over what is currently budgeted but is within the parameters in which a budget request form is not required.

Awarding of Fair Security Contract- Chip Bury

The contract has been awarded to Chiron Security Solutions LLC. They will provide security, cash handling, and first aid services.

The question has been raised as to what level of medical expertise is needed at the fair. Per the fair's emergency plan do we need an EMR (Emergency Medical Responder) a medic, or an EMT? Discussion ensued. It was noted that there are three levels of EMT's- basic which does first aid; intermediate which can do medications; and a paramedic which is like a nurse.

Scott said that all that is needed is a "medic" on site. Falk, our former emergency services provider, just had EMR's. Chiron does have EMTs. Scott checked with the Salem Fire Marshall's office as to what they thought was needed at our event. They didn't have a definitive answer.

EMTs are sufficient when there's an incident as "we do a triage" onsite and call for an ambulance when needed.

Chip said that legal counsel told him that county code indicates that we just need one first aid station with two individuals trained in first aid techniques. So, we are meeting county standards.

Scott will look into the "first aid station" and will talk to Chiron as to what that means. He prefers the EMT to be mobile. However, the Information Booth could be called the first aid station as they often call for a medic when needed.

Joe thinks we can utilize the basic EMT level.

Security will be provided by Chiron; ticket taking will be provided by our previous security provider, TCB.

It was asked where the money would be kept, with security or in the state fair's safe room? A- It is unknown at this point.

Scott is working through the ticket taking and security schedule; he will work with Brandi in determining what is needed.

State Fair Communication- Chip Bury

He has not received anything from legal counsel regarding a communication memo to state fair. He will push to have an update for next month's meeting.

It was noted that after Melanie's recent experience with the state fair, we need assurance of their cooperation, and we need the commissioners' help.

River Church Fair Participation- Jill Ingalls

Last year the River Church did not adhere to the Rules Governing Commercial Vendors and were asked to leave. This year, they reached out to Jill and asked to come back, utilizing a special location set aside for their activities. Jill responded to them that they were not allowed to return due to last year's infractions.

New Harvest will be holding their church service at the fair again.

Fair Insurance Coverage- William White

William said that he had researched the cost of including volunteer injury coverage in the fair's insurance plan. It would cost an additional \$271 to cover volunteers, bringing the cost up to \$5154. He said that is an estimate; 30 days out he will get an official quote.

It was asked if there is a limit to the number of volunteers covered. William responded that this quote covers approximately 100 volunteers. The dates of coverage are July 5 through July 14. William said he will have a firm quote around the first of June.

Amy made a motion to approve purchasing the \$5154 insurance that would cover the volunteers; Brandi seconded. Motion passed.

The fair volunteer training will be held Wednesday night July 8.

Change in the Fair Sponsoring Caterer Policy- Denise Clark

Denise indicated that this policy was addressed in the last meeting. Post meeting, when she and Jill discussed making changes to the policy, it was evident that the policy was no longer needed. She had included a document in the meeting packet justifying this change. The initial motivation for having the policy is no longer valid.

Jill added that there is a new law that does not allow just anyone to be able to cater an event. Only those with a brick and mortar business (not just a food truck) are eligible to cater an event.

Brandi made a motion to remove the Fair Sponsoring Catering Policy for the 2026 fair and beyond; Amy seconded. Motion passed.

VII. **Ingalls Report-** Jill Ingalls

Jill noted that she had sent the Ingalls' Report out earlier and asked if there were any questions.

Denise asked for clarification on the following:

1. Who is this year's camp host? A- The same as last year, Bob.
2. What does searching for anthem singers mean? A- Looking for national anthem singers for the main stage.
3. What does "arranged for flowers décor" refer to? A- It is the flower baskets we place outside on the grounds. Fessler Nursery is willing to sponsor again this year.
4. What does sponsor prospecting to "cover churn" mean? A- Looking for new sponsors to replace those you have lost.
5. Reviewing inventory offerings... what are they referring to stating "waiting for final from fair board re:days and budgets." A- This means adding and deleting activities as we get closer to the fair. The "inventory" includes acts on the main stage, a themed day, etc.

Per the State Fair Facility Use Agreement, we have to notify/confirm with state fair our new security company.

Ingalls will send the state fair our changes to the agreement they sent and notify them of our new security company in the next couple of days. Shannon would like to be copied on any email communication with the state fair.

The early promotion of purchasing tickets for only \$3 on-line did really well; it sold 3,350 tickets. Usually, the amount sold in the month of April is around 200 tickets. However, this does mean those folks are not paying \$9 when they arrive at the gates at fair time. Ticket prices increase the closer we get to the fair; they are currently \$6 per ticket.

There is a new county communication policy which requires all media (including social) communication be reviewed by the county's Public Information Officers (PIO) before being published. Jill said that this really set us back waiting for a response to her recent submission. This caused a 2.6% dip in the algorithms. They change the ads constantly to address the algorithms. It isn't feasible to take the time to have these approved each time before making a change.

Jill submitted an "Ad Deck" (an advertising and promotions messaging plan) that the PIO approved for moving forward.

Chip indicated that the fair board is an independent body and can operate outside of county rules. The public needs to hear the fair's advertising/messaging; it shouldn't be restricted. Kelli Weese is taking this on writing a department policy; she's including the fair's interest in this, hoping to exclude it from county scrutiny.

It was suggested that perhaps in the fall, when reviewing the management agreement, we include language addressing the fair's autonomy regarding a communication plan.

VIII. May Strategic Plan Items

2.1.6 Interface with other state fairgrounds' events occurring at the same time as the county fair- *We are not aware of anything occurring at the same time.*

2.1.7 Put together CH2 (county bldg.) window display. *Sarah is working on this. The display will be up June 5 through the end of the fair.*

2.2.2 Increase public participation in Public Competitions events- *Ongoing*

3.2.6 Identify the type of tickets for free entry in Afton's device- Public Competitions, Participant, FV, CV, etc. The board asked that this item be moved to December.

3.2.7 Further develop state fair/MC fair cooperation- more effective layout; communication of needs; fencing; better signage.- *Discussed earlier on the agenda.*

3.2.8 Develop Grange log cabin agreement- *Done*

3.3.3 Increase clarity of process with security personnel- who does what; informational (print, signs, etc.)-*Ongoing*

3.3.5 Provide event listing information for program publication to Event Coordinator. *If you have an area that there is something to talk about; or something you want listed in the master schedule, let Ingalls know.*

4.3.1 Create detailed work orders. *Work orders are due June 10. Amy requested a copy of the past work order for public competitions. (Denise will send it to her.)*

4.3.2 Hold meeting with State Fair to address logistics, parking, work orders, barns, and other issues. Negotiate horse stadium arena grooming. *Denise indicated that this used to be called the "barns meeting" in which we would finalize the back-end needs for fair.*

Jill noted that she had reached out to Mr. Riffle about the arena grooming. He will coordinate the specifics with Melanie.

Shannon said that at Agfest the pig area had standing water where the drain was plugged.

Jill has requested an in-person meeting with state fair to go over the parking plans. They are not interested in meeting; they are requesting we put our needs in writing.

Shannon is concerned that the state fair is resistant to many things that we are requesting. She'd like to see Legal, or the BOC, weigh-in providing some authority to represent the fair board's interests.

Chip suggested capturing all verbal conversations with the state fair in writing, consolidating the records.

It was suggested that Jill operate on, "If I don't hear back by this date, I'll assume we can move forward."

4.7.3 Coordinate veterans' uniform display. *Jill said it's a little early to hear from the veterans' uniform coordinator.*

IX. Other:

Denise pointed out a correction. The next meeting (June 3) is at 5:30 PM, not 9:30 AM as listed at the bottom of tonight's meeting agenda.

Photo policy update- Sarah

She had previously brought the photo policy edits to last month's meeting. She has since spoken with legal counsel and received the answers to board members' questions.

- Legal realizes that it won't be possible to get a photo waiver from everyone; they think the wording of the document is broad enough to cover this issue.
- Attempting to have a minimum of two or three people in a photo is a good policy.
- Everything in the document highlighted in yellow is something that has been changed from the original document.

Amy made a motion to accept the updated Fair Photos Policy; Joe seconded. Motion passed.

Agfest Update- Jill

- She thanked all of the volunteers that helped at Agfest. She noted that Jeff went the extra mile in trying to recruit volunteers while working at the event.
- She has leftover fliers and coloring contests for members to take and distribute.
- Next year we need to invest in upgrading the booth; displays are getting "tawdry looking."
- Sarah noted that the photos were "very cool."
- For the photo boards, in which a participant sticks their head through a hole, it was suggested to also include an adult size one located much higher on the board.
- In the future, Jill would like to have an interactive booth not a commercial booth. Perhaps this could be shared with other county fairs. This would be in a different building where the hands-on experiential activities are held.
- Jill had to purchase volunteer passes at a cost of \$17 each this year. If she had known the number of volunteers earlier in the season, it would have helped. Sarah asked that next year Jill provide a deadline by which she needs the information.

X. Meeting Adjourned: 7:10 PM