

*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

April 2, 2025 5:30 PM

**Meeting Convened:** 5:31 PM

### **Call to Order/Introductions**

#### In Attendance

**Board Members:** Joseph Billington, Dana Castano, Brandi Crandall, Amy Goulter-Allen, Shannon Gubbels, Greg Martin, Pam Zielinski

**Key Volunteers:** Rebecca Kauffman

**Staff:** Denise Clark, Sarah Coutley, Kelli Weese

**Guests:** Jill and Scott Ingalls; Kristie Koenig, Creative Discoveries Preschool; Tricia Stoddard, FFA; William White, County Risk Manager;

### **I. Public Comments**

Kristie Koenig indicated that she is attending the meeting to seek a donation for Creative Discoveries Preschool. They are having a Spring Fling Fundraiser on April 12. She is asking for any amount of tickets the fair board chooses to give. (The fair board also contributed to this organization last year.) Amy made a motion to approve donating six tickets to the Creative Discoveries Preschool fundraiser; Pam seconded the motion. Motion passed.

**II. Approval of March 5 Meeting Summary Notes** Brandi made a motion to approve the notes; Amy seconded. Motion passed.

### **III. Financial Report-** Brandi

Yellow highlights on the document indicate the year-to-date changes. Brandi asked Denise what the pale yellow highlights on the document indicated. Denise responded that those are items that we may get support from another organization or a sponsor. Pam moved to accept the financial report as presented; Greg seconded the motion. Motion passed.

#### Budget Change Requests

Denise presented information on a budget change request form for increased county Administration Charges. It was noted that this is an increase of 30% and the question was raised as to why. Kelli presented a county document (Allocation Basis) that indicated how the county makes the determination on how much to charge a program. Dana made a motion to approve the budget change request form increasing the county administration line item by \$9,181 per the request form; Greg seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Denise also presented a budget change request form to increase the Public Competitions Ribbons' line item by \$245.88 due to the increase in the cost of ribbons this year. Brandi made a motion to approve the increase of \$245.88 to the ribbons line item; Pam seconded. Motion passed.

#### **IV. 4H/FFA Updates**

FFA- Tricia Stoddard

Students are identifying their fair animals. Weigh-ins are coming up. They are reviewing their fair practices.

4H- Joeseeph Billington

He spoke with Melanie; she indicated that it is a slow time of the season. Weigh-ins are coming up in May.

#### **V. Items of Special Interest**

##### Fair Website Challenges- Jill

Jill said that the fair's website (marioncountyfair.net) was hit with malware. It has since been cleaned up and the "flag" released from Google. It cost \$600 to put a special blocker (Siteblock) on it; it runs a scan every two hours. The problem came about when it was time to do an update on Wordpress. The site crashed when they updated the plug-in which was attached to a bad code. Denise said that the county's firewall won't allow county staff to access the website due to it being flagged. County IT personnel suggest building a new website on a different domain. Jill said the site is currently hosted by Bluehost; to move to a new domain would require a lot of work. Ingalls would prefer to "get through this fair" before taking the step to move to a new domain. She is currently seeking quotes on the cost of setting up on a new domain.

##### Marionberry Pie Special Contest- Denise

Denise is questioning the validity of having the Marionberry pie special contest in public competitions. She is suggesting that we discontinue the special contest, instead have participants exhibit through the Foods, 2-crust pie class. This contest was originally established at the request of the Board of Commissioners (BOC) who provided a financial prize to the winners hoping this would increase participation. Over the years, we haven't seen a significant rise in participants in this category. Discussion ensued. It was suggested to not tie a financial incentive to the contest, instead provide a "nice fair package" of entry to the fair and food coupons or something similar. It was decided to consult with the BOC to hear their thoughts on it. Jill will be reaching out to the BOC office manager, Gary White, to determine what the BOC's participation level will be at this year's fair. That discussion may shed some light on this topic. Denise will bring the findings back to next month's meeting.

##### Food Vendor Committee Update- Denise

The food vendor committee met March 24 and reviewed the 35 applications. The committee chose 12 for the coming fair. One of our past vendors, who had been with us for many years and had three booths, did not submit an application so we have several new vendors. Denise feels that we are having more vendor applications than we have had in the past due to the reputation our fair is getting as being a good fair to work with and also due to our using the on-line platform, Eventhub. We are also receiving more out-of-state applications.

## Policy Review- Restrictions on Commercial Exhibits- Denise

Denise said that previously this policy was called *Commercial Exhibits Requiring Parental Consent*. It was recently suggested that we include the prohibiting of selling live animals to this policy. When Denise made the changes, and had Legal Counsel review it. The policy morphed into a document covering all restrictions on products and services, not just on items requiring parental consent. Amy made a motion to approve the changes to the Restrictions on Commercial Exhibits, Products, or Services policy; Dana seconded. Motion passed.

### **VI. Ingalls Report- Jill**

Dani Ficken, our previous state fair event representative, has left employment with the state fair. Jill reached out to the fill-in person(s) about the coming fair. She met with them today by Zoom. They are Elin Devora and Darrell Hanson. Kevin Ziebart and Kim Grewe-Powell also attended the meeting. Ingalls were assured that there will not be anything happening in the barns directly in front of our fair; they are cleaning out the barns now. She confirmed our set-up dates. Jill felt that it was a good meeting and that they were very accommodating. Kim indicated that there is a memo going out soon to all state fair users regarding parking. The standard rate is going to be \$10 a car, however they will only charge us \$5 a car. The state fair is also planning on charging for camping; they are in the process of establishing a new policy.

Jill said that a couple of food vendors, from out of the area, are planning on camping. They will register through the OSU extension link. Cornhole and flyball will also have a camping option. Denise asked if commercial vendors will be able to camp. Jill answered, "Probably not."

Sponsorship- Scott said that getting sponsors has been a little challenging this year, but he feels he will still make his target dollars.

### **VII. April Strategic Plan Items**

2.1.10 Determine date for holding BOC board session at the fair. - *Done*

4.4.2 Pursue public competitions' award donations; touch based with sponsor coordinator verify there is no conflict with a major donor.- *No new donations at this time. Rebecca works with Scott to ensure no duplication.*

4.4.3 Pre-fair PC coordination- touch base with superintendents; ensure superintendent positions are filled.- *In process.*

4.4.5 Send out public competitions press release.- *Jill works with Jon Heynen, the county's Public Information Officer. She said this can be done, "As long as the website information is ready."*

4.6.2 Process/sign Big Name Entertainment contract.- *The contracts are currently in-house going through the county processes. Jill is considering using a limousine service, instead of a volunteer driver, to transport the national acts.*

## **VIII. Other**

Denise handed out an updated directory; there was an error on the last one she distributed.

Jill noted that Fessler Nursery, who had donated the fair's flower baskets in the past, is out of business so she is looking for a new nursery.

Dana asked about participation in the Agfest booth. Sarah said she is looking for volunteers. Dana said she can be there on Sunday. Greg will also be participating.

Rebecca suggested that when Jill provides the ticket donation to the pre-school, that she also invite them to participate in the fair.

Greg indicated that he is going to have Denise send a Real Heroes flyer/registration form to the various military organizations. He asked if the Elks could have a booth at the fair as they serve veterans. Jill said they need to complete a Real Heroes application/registration form; she will review it to see if they meet the requirements.

The Swine and Wine will be held April 10 at Zielinski's farm.

It was asked what 4H/FFA exhibitors will be paying for parking this year. Jill said the parking fees are supposed to be the same as last year according to the meeting she just had with state fair personnel.

## **IX. Meeting Adjourned: 6:55 PM**