

Marion County Fair Board

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

Fair Board Retreat

Oregon Farm Bureau, Heritage Room
1320 Capitol St NE #200 Salem, OR

November 17, 2018 9:00 AM

In Attendance

Board Members: Joel Conder, Brandi Crandall, Heidi DeCoster, Shannon Gubbels, Nathan Leao, Dylan Wells, Pam Zielinski

Key Volunteers: Mike Adams, Amy Goulter-Allen, Ken Outfleet

Guests: Jill & Scott Ingalls, Ingalls & Associates; Ann Schaubert, Caracolores, LLC

Staff: Denise Clark, Tamra Goettsch, Commissioner Carlson (BOC Liaison)

Meeting Convened: 9:05 AM

Call to Order/Introductions

Public Comments: None

Approval of November 7, 2018 Meeting Summary Notes- Shannon made a motion to approve the meeting summary notes; Heidi seconded. Motion passed.

Approval of Conflict Resolution Procedures edited document- This is the document that was reviewed in a previous fair board meeting in which there were suggested minor changes. Shannon made a motion to approve the edited Conflict Resolution Procedures document; Pam seconded. Motion passed.

(Denise noted that the Customer Service Policy edits are under review with Legal Counsel. When they provide a response, it will be brought back before the fair board.)

2019 Operating Budget Draft- Tamra

Overview:

- There is now only \$61,000 in "carry over" because of attendance (and therefore revenue) being low due to excessive heat. (Previously we had \$140,000 in carryover.)
- Revenue projections are intentionally set low to be conservative.
- Identifying places to make monetary cuts.
- In the past three years the average gate revenue was \$67,000 so that figure is listed for 2019.
- Sponsorship should help revenue; entered it low, has a \$12,000 "cushion."

Denise noted that Alan Haley, director of Public Works, is retiring. We hope that his leaving doesn't impact PW's support to the fair.

- The MCE4H Service District's Agricultural Development contribution is being raised from \$17,000 to \$25,000.
- \$60,000 is identified for an asphalt project with the state fair in 2019.
- Currently the state fair rent is paid (by trade) until 2021; with an asphalt project occurring in 2019, we hope to have rent paid until 2024-25.

The question was raised would any changes in state fair leadership impact funding the rental trades? Answer- probably not as we have it all captured in contract.

- A cut in 4H/FFA fair premiums. (This is outside of what the Fair Foundation provides.)
- A potential added cost of \$600 for fire marshal and tent permits.
- Parking attendants' payment cut \$200.
- The ambulance service has been donated in the past but we need to enter the cost figure (\$4400) as a placeholder.
- Promotions& Advertising was cut \$5,000.
- Big Name Entertainment is set at \$60,000.
- Nothing is listed in Herdsmanship as the Fair Foundation pays that.
- The question was raised as to why STEAM costs have increased. Answer- we may have to purchase new trivia boards- signage and infrastructure. With sponsor involvement increasing, we want to increase the available activities such as this.
- The Teen Idol talent show winners haven't been paid; Jill is working on it.
- We have a \$20,000 in contingency in case it is needed at some point for future grounds rental.
- There is a slight increase in the Events and Activities budget line item. Ingalls determine how to allocate the funds.

2019 Budget Discussion:

- Folks are not comfortable with cutting 4H/FFA premium payouts. They would like to keep them at \$3,000 for 4H and \$4,000 for FFA. Joel feels that the Fair Foundation (FF) will continue to assist with premium payouts and also in the bedding haul-out.
- The county will send a letter of request (as is done annually) to confirm the FF's participation in the fair. Add support of the FFA premiums to the list.
- The FF paid almost \$600 this past fair for Open Class premiums. It was suggested that this be increased to \$750.
- Melanie will speak to FF directly as to what 4H needs and also give information as to where the fees they charge go to. (Commissioner Carlson requested that 4H provide a spreadsheet as to where the fair fees go.)
- There are scholarships available from the market auction for kids going to fair.
- It was noted that Marion County is ahead of other counties in growing their 4H/FFA programs.
- Open class livestock haul-out is listed as \$1500 in case we have to help pay for that.

Commissioner Carlson suggested that Tamra request an increase in funds from the county to cover the extra costs, versus making cuts. She suggests that as costs for the fair go up (STEAM, 4H, FFA) that the request for funds should go up. If the commissioners say "no" than get a commitment from them that if there is a second bad year that Tamra can come back to them for re-consideration.

- Jill will help promote the Herdsmanship Scholarship as it is part of the fair's biosecurity plan. She also suggests that there it be increased from \$400 to \$600.
- Tamra will see that a FF draft letter of request is ready for approval at the December meeting.
- This budget document is a draft; it will be brought back to December meeting with the suggested changes made.

Ann Schauber facilitated a group activity to help determine a theme (or identity) for each day of the fair.

Suggestions included:

Thursday: Honor Day; Boomer Day

Friday: TGIF/Mystery; 70's 80's; Selfie Day

Saturday: AG Day

Sunday: Family Day; Homestead Day; Craft/Build Day; Fun, Happy, Active Day; Culture Day

Main Stage Entertainment:

- It is hard to fill the stage with local acts throughout the day because national acts tie-up the stage for hours.
- Place a temporary stage in front of the main stage for local acts. (There would be a budget impact to add more staging.)
- Have a comedy act for Friday night. This would free up the main stage during the day because there would be no need for sound checks.
- Have a robotic club, or battle bots, on the stage. Hold preliminaries on one night, finals on another night.

Other Activity Ideas:

- Have drone racing in the pavilion. Would need to look into insurance requirements and also find a group to coordinate it.
- American Ninja type acts cost the same amount as a big name act.
- Have a "golf shoot-out" in which a participant pays to have a chance to win a car by hitting a hole in one.
- The 4H building is isolated; it doesn't engage the general public. Perhaps tie them into the community stage.
- Move the 4H guinea pig dress-up to the community stage and also the pine car derby races.
- Think about Disneyland, where they have something new around every corner. Have walk-arounds/intercepts like Washboard Willy, Disney characters, and super heroes. Have mascot day- OSU Beaver, Volcanoes Crater.
- Have the National Guard mobile recruiting team come and bring their rock wall and other activities that draw a crowd.
- The Woods- want to have sound, but not a stage, for live music in that area. Hold it in the cement area next to the building in the National Resource area.
- Need to reach the millennial set.

(A break was taken for the catered lunch sponsored by Joel.)

Review of Existing Fair Activities

Discussion held on whether to keep the following activities:

- Petting zoo- keep but with improvements; perhaps have a different vendor.
- Racing pigs- keep, last year there was limited attendance due to it being too hot and poor signage. They also do the pedal tractors.

Jill noted that it is important to change 20% of the grounds each year.

- Grill-off-
 - Would like to eventually add a youth competition and other meats for grilling.
 - Pairing the car show and the BBQ grill-off was a good idea.
 - Make sure the cars and grill-off participants stay until 6 PM and not leave early.
 - Add some other activities to transition around the event such as a watermelon spitting contest.
- Barnyard Adventures- keep
- Real Heroes- keep
- STEAM- keep
- Rodeo- keep
- Talent Show- would like to keep with modifications. Find another organization to coordinate it. Jill indicated that local performing arts group might be interested. No matter the organizer, preliminaries can still be done at the county fair to roll-up to finals at the state fair.
- The Woods- keep
- Home Depot- keep

Utilize some of the local entertainment money for walk-around acts.

Fill-up the down time on the stage with local, cheaper acts.

Other Ideas:

- A baby (crawlers) race contest
- Weiner dog races

Fair Security and Ticket Taking Performance Review:

Cash handling/transfer component- "Satisfactory" will be seeking improvements for next year. (TCB had loose guidelines to work with this year.)

Matt, the TCB supervisor, was the identified security cash transfer person. He wasn't always available; this needs to be improved. Maybe have another person transport for them. Brandi had to do more of the skims herself this year. For balancing out at the end of the night, Matt wasn't available as he was closing gates. Brandi had to rely on others for dual custody and assistance in balancing out.

The security office in the Jackman Long building was locked much of the time. The key Brandi had didn't always get her into where she needed to be. She needs a key to the entire building, not just the side door.

The money counting machine that the county treasurer provided didn't work properly. (Denise can get a quote on the cost of a new one.) Jill suggested that TCB can provide one as they have several.

Clarify/refine the language in the contract to make our expectations clearer.

Need a fair board member and security at each gate during load-out.

Have security scheduled to arrive at the gates 15 minutes before opening time in the morning.

Heidi made a motion to approve the 2018 Fair Security and Ticketing Services contract performance review with the suggested changes made; Nathan seconded. Motion passed.

Discussion regarding extending TCB's security contract length from one year:

- We've invested a year in their training.
- They provided good customer service this year.
- They were friendly.
- Denise noted that they were really helpful at the green gate. They screened entrants reducing the amount of traffic coming through the fair office.

Joel made a motion to change the security and ticketing contract length to a multi-year matching the RFP length. Heidi seconded. Motion passed.

Elections:

Dylan was listed for chair and Heidi for vice-chair on the ballot. It was opened up for additional nominations. Shannon nominated Nathan for vice chair. Pam nominated Joel for chair.

Brandi is interested in being the treasurer again if changes are made. She needs some additional help as she can't start at 5 AM each day of fair and stay until 1:00 AM. The person to assist her must be bonded. It could be a board member or a staff member. Brandi feels that the treasurer position is more of a "figure head" with the budget being developed through the county. Her work is mostly at fair time.

Discussion regarding a treasurer assistant:

- Hire a temp staff.
- Write into the security contract that the cash will be signed over to security the night before so that they can transport to the gates in the morning instead of Brandi.
- Help is needed mostly during opening and closing.
- The monetary safe isn't large enough in the state fair's secure room. (In the past, the previous security contractor brought their safe in that was larger.)
- Have security do the drops (skims.)
- Need to make sure the checks and balances are in place. Need a dual custody, sign-in/sign-off process.
- Having security take a greater role in this may increase the cost of security services.
- Tamra would like the county to have a depth of knowledge regarding the treasurer's fair process; having a person from the county, or another board member, involved would be helpful.
- Jill's staff has cash handling procedures training; they can be available for providing dual custody.

- Heidi is willing to assist and be available for Friday and Saturday nights.
- Joel is willing to help with Thursday and Sunday nights.
- Brandi is willing to work with Denise on developing a Fair Treasurer's Operations Procedures document.

Nominations were closed and voting commenced by secret ballot. Results: Chair- Joel, Vice Chair- Nathan, Treasurer- Brandi

Meeting Adjourned: 1:05 PM