

Marion County Fair Board

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

Monthly Meeting

By Zoom

December 2, 2020 5:30 PM

In Attendance

Board Members: Mike Adams, Joel Conder, Brandi Crandall, Shannon Gubbels, Ken Outfleet, Pam Zielinski,

Key Volunteers: Colleen Busch, Amy Goulter-Allen, Rebecca Turner

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

Staff: Denise Clark; Tamra Goetsch, Community Services Department Director

Meeting Minutes:

I. Call to Order/Introductions

II. Approval of October 7 and November 14, 2020 Meeting Summary Notes- Shannon made a motion to approve the meeting summary notes; Ken seconded. Motion passed

III. 4H/FFA Reports

4H- Melanie

4H is currently in a programming pause; there is some virtual programming going on but no in-person meetings. Some robotics and horse clubs started up and had to shut down with the pandemic freeze. Melanie is currently “wrapping up end of year stuff.”

FFA- Amy

Stayton High is allowing some in-person attendance; it is limited to only 100 kids on the campus at a time. They are targeting kids that need extra help or have special needs. (This is also being done at Cascade High School.) Both schools are putting together food boxes for local businesses. There are some virtual agriculture sale competitions occurring. Stayton is also doing fundraising with poinsettia sales.

Silverton FFA is fundraising via tree sales at Wilco.

IV. Financial Report- Brandi

There has been no new activity to report. Ken made a motion to accept the financial report as presented; Shannon seconded. Motion passed.

V. Items of Special Interest:

Member Reappointments- Denise Clark

Denise noted that three members’ terms were expiring in December. As per protocol the individuals’ names are to be brought before the fair board for review. (She is also writing a reappointment policy/procedures document for the fair

board's review.) Those with terms expiring are board members Pam Zielinski and Brandi Crandall and key volunteer Amy Goulter-Allen. Ken made a motion to recommend to the board of commissioners (BOC) these three individuals be reappointed for another term; Shannon seconded. There was no discussion. Motion passed.

Preparation for December 15 Work Session- Tamra Goettsch

Tamra said she'd like to have a discussion on what will be presented to the BOC at the December 15 work session. She indicated that the conversation includes Jill and Scott giving us their thoughts on types of future fairs options. We need to present what we anticipate, what we desire, and also our recommendations for the 2021 fair.

Jill said that she was tasked with developing plans A, B, and C (she has added a D) based on the goals talked about at the annual fall retreat. The topic of her presentation is entitled "Planning to Hit a Moving Target."

Plan A- A Fair That is as Close to Normal as Possible. It would be a three-day fair at a cost of approximately \$198,100. She included projected revenue as to how to come up with that figure, including a fund raiser. The cliff date (time in which we need to decide if there will be a fair or not) for plan A is April 1.

Plan B- Local Flair. This is a more affordable, budget friendly, option. It would also be a three-day fair. The fair footprint would be scaled down, would cost approximately \$154,600, would include a fund raiser, and have a cliff date of April 25.

Plan C- Hybrid. The fair would be limited to just fair participants and family members. The footprint would be reduced to just three areas (Columbia Hall, barns/arena and 4H Auditorium) and would include a virtual market place. The cost would be approximately \$119,300, and would include a \$1 gate admission. The cliff date is May 30.

Plan D- Virtual. This would be similar to the 2020 fair; it will be new and improved having experienced one already and gathering new information on holding virtual fairs. It would include a fully interactive marketplace on the website. There would be live demonstrations. The cost would be approximately \$99,300.

Discussion:

- The carnival in Plan C would be open to the public; most likely we would separate it out from the rest of the fair and control the foot traffic.
- Plan D might include virtual events such as demonstration videos of knitting or wood carving on the community stage.
- Vendors could showcase their products virtually; it would be more interactive than something like televisions QVC. You would click on a product on their web page; they might utilize product videos. A viewer might be able to join them live in their "booth."
- We would start with Plan A, and then peel off elements as needed based on the COVID restrictions. We can progress through the different fair plan options based on the associated cliff dates.

It was asked what other fairs are planning on doing. Answer- different things, some are acting like COVID is not happening. Some fairs are in "dire straits" trying to determine if they can even keep their fairgrounds open at all. Other states are fully open, so fairs aren't hurting like in Oregon.

Scott noted that he is looking at creating new sponsors; he's looking for businesses that are thriving during these COVID times. He is not making sales calls at this point in time.

Jill suggests that to make expenses, the fair is going to need more volunteers to offset costs. Volunteers could be used for gates, welcoming/greeters, cashiers, etc.

- Rebecca suggested adding the number of volunteers needed to each fair plan. Jill agrees that can be done when we are further along in our planning.
- Jill said she still needs to reach out to suppliers to see how reducing to a 3-day fair might impact them.
- Denise is working on parceling out the two state subsidy checks received in a 6 month period between 2019 and 2020.
- Jill indicated that the Crosby's are again willing to work on garnering local talent for the stages.

We don't necessarily have a \$9 ticket value in the modified plans; instead \$5 a ticket for Plan A, and the cost goes down for the subsequent plans.

We can consider reducing the price on singular days, having "specials." It was asked about having free days or an afternoon? Answer- it is better to have a discount on just one day as a free day greatly impacts the other days. Jill feels that it is possible to get creative and have fun with this.

If we go down to a free gate entrance during COVID, there is still the possibility that we can go back to regular entrance fees in subsequent years. Ingalls can research this more.

Tamra suggested putting the general fund (\$70,000) back into Jill's budget figures. This may reduce the need for a fund raiser. Jill noted that organizations are "having great luck" with on-line fundraisers.

After making the suggested changes, Jill will send the fair plans document out to the fair board for review. The finished product will be presented to the BOC, letting them know how we are looking to manage this moving target.

Denise's 2020 fair written summary document will be used to assign board member talking points at the work session. Following this we'll transition into Jill's plans. Jill said that she would also incorporate some of the talking points into her presentation.

Melanie felt that the fair summary gives the wrong impression regarding the 2020 virtual Jr. market auction bringing in less money. She explained that there was a 40 animal difference going into the auction, down from 2019, but that the prices were the same. There were great community partners including Woodburn auction yard's assistance. Also, animals were calculated by head and not by pound. It was a successful event; both buyers and sellers were pleased. Denise indicated that she will edit the document and re-send.

Jill would like to provide examples from other fairs as to what they did last year; indicating how we compared to other counties.

Melanie is grateful to the BOC for not pressing for something live, leaving it up to 4H/FFA to make the appropriate decision.

Tamra noted that the fair board needs to be in agreement on the following:

- The need for county support
- The need for increased volunteers
- The need for increased PPE
- Choosing the correct path for the 2021 fair

Rebecca noted that Plan A, though it's close to normal, doesn't indicate what was left out. Jill said that she would fix that.

VI. Strategic Plan Items- November & December

It was decided that since we don't know what kind of fair we will be putting on, it is not feasible to go through all of the strategic plan items at this time as they are pertinent to a regular fair year.

Tamra would like to see Denise bring strategic plan items back to the fair board, when appropriate, for future planning.

Volunteers

- Jill reminded everyone that it is important to recruit volunteers now.
- Jill has emailed Melinda Hautala that the fair volunteer web page link needs to go to the right spot, not to the hours of fair as it is currently.
- The recent Beachie Creek fire evacuation center at the fairgrounds offered up a good pool of volunteers to tap into for the fair.
- Denise reminded everyone to keep Melinda Hautala in the loop as to whatever is being done regarding fair volunteers, as she is the volunteer coordinator for the fair.
- Jill encouraged that we need to create another fair volunteer level. Currently we have board members, key volunteers, and people that show up at fair time to work at the fair. We also need a pool of volunteers that work throughout the year on subcommittees.

VII. Other:

Ken announced that as of December 20 he will no longer be working for the Oregon National Guard; he has taken a faculty position at Oregon State University.

A reminder was given to all to sign up on-line for the Oregon Fairs Association virtual conference which will be held on January 19. (Denise will send out the link for the on-line registration.)

VIII. Meeting Convened: 6:53 PM