

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

February 7, 2024 5:30 PM

Meeting Convened: 5:35 PM

I. Call to Order/Introductions

In Attendance

Board Members: Dana Castano, Brandi Crandall, Amy Goulter-Allen, Shannon Gubbels, Greg Martin

Key Volunteer: Rebecca Turner

Guests: Joseph Billington, FFA; Jill & Scott Ingalls, Ingalls & Assoc.; Margi Tipton, 4H; Victor Sanchez, board member interviewee; Pam Zielinski, board member applicant

Staff: Denise Clark, Sarah Coutley, Ashley Gresley, County Contracts; Cody Waltermann, Kelli Weese

Jill requested, and was granted, adding "Ingalls Report" to the agenda under "Items of Special Interest"

I. Public Comments- None

II. Fair Board Member Applicant- Victor Sanchez

III. Public Comment- None

IV. Approval of January 3, 2024 Meeting Summary Notes- Jill needs to be included in the attendance in the January and December meeting summary notes. (*Denise checked and Jill is listed in the December meeting summary notes.*) Amy made a motion to approve the January meeting summary notes with the addition of Jill added into the attendance; Greg seconded the motion. Motion passed.

V. 4H/FFA Reports

4H- Margi Tipton

- Melanie is out of town at a national conference.
- There were 35 students who came to the weigh-in last Saturday.
- All of the fair judges have been identified.
- The deadline for 4H membership has passed.
- Margi will be attending the upcoming ShoWorks conference in Wyoming. She will be coordinating the ShoWorks registration for both 4H and FFA at the fair.

FFA- Joseph Billington

The students are in the process of "finding" their animals and static projects. They are putting groups together to make a quicker, and easier, process this year.

VI. Financial Report- Denise Clark

Denise pointed out the items that have changed in the past month that are reflected in yellow. Operations- we have paid a Verizon payment, county administrative charges and Ingalls' quarterly payments. Revenue- we are receiving commercial vendor payments and investment earnings.

The 2024 proposed budget will be reviewed at the upcoming retreat on February 17. Once approved, the adopted budget will be shown in the monthly report presented. It was also suggested to add a column showing a percentage of the total used.

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

VII. Items of Special Interest

Big Name Entertainment- Amy

Ned Ledoux has been confirmed for Saturday night; the Ely Young Band for Friday night. (Jill noted that this information is not for public notice as we do not have permission from the band managers to publish yet.)

State Fair New Policies- Kelli

The state fair had previously sent out new policies to be implemented in 2024 to all its facility users. It listed a parking fee of \$10 a car, an RV charge, and a food vendor buyout fee. We were concerned about this, and it was brought to the board of commissioners' (BOC) attention. Commissioner Cameron, who was on the state fair council, said he would try to get the county fair exempt from these new fees.

Kelli sent an email to Kim Grewe-Powell, the state fair CEO, asking for an exemption as we are their "partners." Kim responded clarifying the fees will be \$5 a car; they will have their personnel collect the fee. Because of our current IGA with the state fair, we won't have to pay the RV fee or the food buyout fee, the latter because we are a food vending event.

We had a virtual meeting with the state fair staff followed by attending the January 25 State Fair Council meeting. The state fair explained that they have a lot of capital improvements to be made, including improving the parking surfaces. They need to charge these fees to all their customers to help cover the improvement costs. At the council meeting they reiterated that they would not be giving us an exemption and that there would be a \$5 per car parking fee.

Since the state fair's position is clear, we now need to work out the logistics. Jill said it's all about strategy and how we negotiate it. We need to figure out a gate admission strategy and we also need to negotiate the parking fee with state fair for our vendors, 4H/FFA, volunteers, etc.

Jill said that their wine show was the second event held on the grounds operating under these new policies. She said it went relatively well. They did not receive any complaints about the \$5 parking fee. The state fair provided complimentary parking passes for staff and two complimentary passes per vendor. Vendors could

purchase additional passes for \$2.

The state fair will collect the money at the entrance to the parking area; we will need to provide a parking crew to direct cars where to park within the area.

Miscellaneous thoughts:

- According to Kim, volunteers would need to pay \$2 per car.
- Other fairs around the state charge for parking.
- Brandi said that Agfest is figuring out what they are going to do regarding parking, for their April event.
- Have a week's pass for 4H/FFA?
- Will there be designated parking areas?
- Jill has asked for an integration of the parking fees through Afton's electronic ticketing.
- State fair will start charging when a public activity begins, not during setup.
- It was suggested that we encourage our fairgoers to use public transportation to get around parking fees. Jill said that we can get that message out to our fairgoers through Afton tickets as a person is making a purchase.
- Jill noted that we will need to identify if there are going to be any additional fees that we need to be aware of with state fair.

Business Oregon Grant

Denise indicated that she has submitted a grant application for a Business Oregon grant. This is a new grant for the county fairs' financial losses due to COVID. Profit and loss documentation had to be submitted for fair year's 2019-2022. There may be as much as \$81,000 available to each fair.

ShoWorks Software Upgrade

Denise presented information on the new 2024 ShoWorks upgrade. It has new and improved features; the biggest being it will be compatible with Denise's computer. (County IT has had to modify her computer to run ShoWorks in the past.) There are also new reports available and updated ease in processing information. There is an upgrade fee of \$599 if purchased before March 31; after that, the price goes to \$799.

Greg made a motion to approve the purchase of the ShoWorks 2024 upgrade before March 31, 2024, Amy seconded the motion; motion passed.

Event Hub Software Purchase- Denise

Denise noted that she had previously come before the board asking for support in purchasing Eventeny, a software program to coordinate vendors, volunteers, and more. She has since identified that the financial institutions utilized by the credit card processor aren't compatible with county requirements. She is now recommending a different software program- Event Hub. She has been assured that she can use her current credit card processor with this program. She presented the strengths of program to the fair board for review.

Brandi made a motion for the purchase of Event hub for 2024; Amy seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Retreat Food- Denise

Denise asked how the fair board would like to do the food for the upcoming retreat. It was decided that Denise will provide lunch makings, chips, and drinks. Board members will bring desserts should they elect to.

Ingalls' Report- Jill:

Jill presented attractions and walkaround options; it was decided to go with:

Megan the Bubbologist (does activities with large bubbles)- \$1000 per day, includes lodging. Brandi made the motion to approve the purchase of this attraction; Greg seconded. Motion passed.

Brightheart Circus- \$1250 per day, no lodging. Dana made the motion to approve the purchase; Brandi seconded. Motion passed.

Eric Haines Stilt Walker- \$4800, no lodging. Greg made the motion to approve the purchase; Dana seconded. Motion passed.

Puzzlemania \$8400- Brandi made a motion to approve the purchase; Dana seconded. Motion passed.

Alaskan Racing and Brad's Reptiles, or possibly replacements for those acts for a total of \$19,000. Brandi made a motion to approve; Greg seconded. Motion passed.

VIII. February Strategic Plan Items

1.2.6 *Negotiate agreements with State Fair on parking and fairgrounds rental include dates for move-in/move-out.*- In process.

2.2.4 *Explore other venues (library/mall displays, chamber press outlets, Saturday Market, First Wednesday, Iris Festival, etc.)*- Greg asked if we could get info into the county newsletter. Jill works with the county PIO to get the information out via the BOC newsletter and the county-wide newsletter. The BOC has their own media outlets. Jill reviews the calendar with them.

2.2.5 *Target chamber newsletter articles*- Discussed previously.

2.2.6 *Create activities that draw cross-cultural participants.* Jill is trying to get the basics of the community stage done which plays an important role in this objective.

3.2.9 *Present fair layout (including booths) to fair board.* This will be reviewed at the retreat.

4.3.4 *Update MOU with public competitions' animal groups (pygmy goats, llamas, mini herefords, etc.)* Shannon will reach out them in April.

Rebecca indicated she has confirmed that the *sheep to shawl* demo is coming again for Public Competitions. She still needs superintendents for floral and creative arts.

IX. Other

Discussion on Fair Board Applicant Victor Sanchez:

His community connection is a strength including connection to the youth. He indicated that he could get fliers out to the schools via the soccer club. He has connections to the Hispanic community.

Brandi made a motion to recommend to the BOC Victor Sanchez's appointment to the fair board; Greg seconded. Motion passed. It was suggested that we invite Victor to the retreat on February 17.

Jill would like to re-visit the fair's opening day activities. She says that Thursday is a difficult day. It currently is Honor Day and has the BOC activities in the morning and some public competitions' special entries. She said that other fairs are incorporating different activities on opening day. She'd like a review of that day and what we do with it, making it more of a community reception. It was suggested that this item be discussed at the retreat. It can also be taken to a BOC Management Update to discuss their role.

X. Meeting adjourned: 6:17 PM.