

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

Marion County Fair Board
Monthly Meeting
Commissioners' Board Room and by Zoom
October 6, 2021 5:30 PM

In Attendance

Board Members: Mike Adams, Mark Banick, Joel Conder, Shannon Gubbels, Ken Outfleet

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

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

Staff: Denise Clark, Fair Program Coordinator; Tamra Goettsch, Community Services Department Director

Meeting Convened: 5:40 PM

I. Call to Order/Introductions

II. Public Comments- None

III. Approval of the September 1, 2021 Meeting Summary Notes- Mark made a motion to approve the notes; Shannon seconded. Motion passed.

IV. 4H/FFA Reports

4H- Melanie McCabe

- 4H clubs have now been authorized to meet in person.
- The all leaders' meeting was held last week.
- October 1 was the first day of the enrollment year.
- 100 kids are waiting to get into clubs.
- Melanie doing her first leader training since 2020.
- This is national 4H week.
- 4H got some good press for a llama loose in Woodburn that a 4H family rescued.

FFA- Amy Goulter-Allen

- Leadership camp was held the end of September.
- A soil judging event was held yesterday (10/5).
- Getting back to normal for most things.
- Going to Nationals the end of October.
- The ag teachers have been meeting in person right along.

V. Financial Report- Tamra Goettsch

In not holding a regular fair in 2020, the department's budget analyst was able to get caught up on the overall fair budget. With the crossover of fiscal years during each fair, it is difficult to track the real carryover. In looking back as far as 2014, she's been able to find "pots of money" left here and there over the years. The budget has never really balanced before; now we are only about \$1,000 off. Tamra is confident that we now have identified the correct amount of money going forward. The carryover is currently listed at \$538,727; there are still some items to be paid out.

Melanie asked if Denise received the documents she sent which included an invoice. Denise replied that yes she had.

Only items that were paid out in the past month are reflected on this report. Tamra noted that if items haven't hit the General Ledger (GL) then they won't be reflected on this document. Some Ingalls reimbursements are still outstanding along with the 4H invoice.

On the fair administration side, an adjustment was needed to reflect money being divided between both the 2020 and 2021 fairs.

Mike asked what the carryover figure has been in the past. Tamra indicated that it has been around \$100-140,000.

Tamra said that some of the carryover money is to be set aside for future state fairgrounds rental. It costs about \$40,000 in rent per fair. She indicated that we don't need to do a "trade" with the state fair every single year.

It was asked if having a 3-day fair cost us less rent this year. Answer- no, as we used a 4th day on Sept. 6. The county held a wildfires volunteer recognition event and concert at the state fairgrounds during state fair.

Denise brought up that the arena grounds work invoice of \$900, which was discussed in last month's meeting, has been decreased to \$525. Jill was able to work with the service provider and State Fair to have the mechanical work taken off our invoice.

Mark made a motion to approve the Financial Report as presented; Ken seconded. Motion passed.

VI. Items of Special Interest

Outfleet Letter- Denise Clark

Ken submitted a letter to the fair board indicating that he has a scheduling conflict for the 2022 fair; he will be out of town for work. He wanted the fair board to have a "heads up;" if the board deemed he can no longer be a fair board member because of this, he will submit his resignation.

The board responded that they appreciated Ken giving plenty of notice on this. They feel he can work on his responsibilities right up until fair time and still be a significant contributor to the fair board. Ken responded that he does want to stay on as a board member but wanted to be respectful of any rules that might indicate he must be present at the fair to remain on the board.

Denise noted that we ask all board applicants in the interview process if they are available during fair time which helps us screen applicants. However, there are no hard and fast rules that indicate if a person cannot be at the fair at fair time, they cannot be on the fair board.

Mike responded that he believes we can work with Ken on this.

2021 Volunteer Appreciation Event- Denise Clark

Denise gave a recap on the volunteer appreciation event.

- 44, of the 59 people who indicated they were coming, attended the event. Attendants was impacted by the grid lock of traffic in the Salem area (due to a potential suicide on the Market Street bridge) and the meeting location change from an outdoor event to an indoor event due to the rain forecast.
- Delicious food was donated by Adam's Rib; they set it all up and provided all the food and utensils.
- The music was good and provided by Rachel Varayne.
- One person expressed interest in becoming a key volunteer for the fair. (Denise has since sent her all the pertinent information and application.)

Book Agent RFP- Tamra Goettsch

We are now in the contract development phase with The Source Management to be the Big Name Entertainment buyer (or Booking Agent) for our fair. Tamra has asked them to be available at the upcoming retreat by Zoom during the pertinent part of the agenda. She'd like them to be able to meet the fair board and learn of the board's goals and expectations of them.

Joel asked who will be buying the talent as their RFP submission did not indicate that they had experience buying talent. Answer- Patrick with The Source Management. Tamra said that she spoke with Patrick and determined he has handled the talent buyer for some large fairs. He does not subcontract the buying, he does it himself. She said the process includes that once we have an interest in an act, we enter into a separate contract with the talent themselves; the buyer gets paid for ensuring the artist is secured. Tamra said that she received "glowing references" in her reference checks on The Source Management. They don't just use one organization, like Romeo Entertainment, they use many different national entertainment brokers.

Joel says he knows Patrick and gets along "great" with him. He agrees with Ken that we should hold a meeting with them in the near future before the retreat. He also suggests we have a budgeted amount, "a ballpark figure," agreed upon before going into the meeting.

Tamra encouraged anyone that has questions of Patrick, to be ready to ask them at the meeting.

Tamra is working on a proposed budget for the retreat which is November 6; it can be finalized at the December meeting.

Tamra wants to know the dollar figure for big name entertainment. The board asked what was spent in 2019. Denise looked it up and found that we spent \$50,000 for the act itself. There was a total of \$63,050 in total for the adopted budget line item; this included back stage items, lodging, catering, etc.

Joel asked Tamra how much money has been made available for big name acts via the trades with state fair. He indicated that he originally orchestrated the trades with the purpose of financing big name acts. The money wasn't used in 2020 or 2021 for big name entertainment; he wants to know where we now stand as far as funds available.

Tamra responded that she'd have to do an analysis as to how much money was brought in because of the paving project over the course of time.

Tamra will put \$50,000 into the new budget document for big name entertainment. She asked if anyone was interested in working on the budget with her. Jill said she would be glad to help.

Jill noted that our fair did the best financially, percentage wise, of all Oregon fairs. Mike said that the ticket pre-sales had a significant impact on that. Jill agreed and wondered why other fairs didn't put effort into presales. She said our motivation was to know how many people would be on-site at a time and what we might need to do as far as social distancing because of COVID.

Denise said that Krista (Contracts Coordinator) wants to know the board's position on providing free RV space to Source Management at fair time. The board agreed that it would be fine to have them stay inside the grounds for free.

VII. Strategic Plan Items:

2.1.5 *Maximize use of "free media" (press releases, radio promotions, etc.) in addition to traditional print, radio, and TV ads.* Jill said we should take advantage of "bragging" about our fair's success wherever possible.

3.1.1 *Select an Event Coordinator as needed- Done*

5.2.1 *Schedule work session with BOC for annual report; prepare docs.* The meeting has been set for December 16 at 9:30 AM. (Denise will send an appointment to the fair board.)

2.2.1 *Schedule opportunities for FB members to increase public awareness through presentations, promotions at service clubs, chambers and other public meeting.* Mike is willing to speak anywhere, anytime, to an organization; he said to just let him know. Tamra suggested that there might be a national day that somehow can be related to the fair. This concept could be taken to a meeting, bringing the group a fun and lighthearted, presentation. Jill said if you are part of a rotary or other similar organization, to let them know. Jill likes to push public competitions; she coordinates with the “social calendar.” She said, “We’re always looking for new volunteers.”

4.6.2 *Organize and develop other activities.* Jill indicated that it’s important to talk about the different things done at this year’s fair, to include new ideas, like “Made in Marion.” She said this task is on-going. She suggests other activities and ideas be brought to the retreat. She’d like to see ideas/activities that bring in new parties. Jill will bring her own ideas and new trends.

5.1.2 *Identify and submit OFA (Oregon Fairs Association) award nominations.* Members were encouraged to be thinking about ideas for nominations. Jill asked to have OFEA (Oregon Festivals & Events Association) nominations added to the strategic plan for October. The OFEA conference will be February 24-26, 2022.

VIII. **Ingalls Report-** Jill Ingalls

- Jill is having “fun” interviewing what other fairs/events to determine what they learned during these COVID days.
- Our fair was concerned with occupancy levels and we were aggressive with on-line sales; other fairs didn’t do the same.
- OFEA is hosting a workshop Oct 22 on lessons learned this year.
- Jill is working on planning for next year and determining ways to keep the new audiences that attended this year.

IX. **Other**

Mark wants to ensure the 2021 suggested changes are addressed. Denise said that she compiled what she received from Mark and Shannon and is planning on bringing them to the upcoming retreat as was suggested. Jill suggested it might be nice to receive those ahead of time to spur other people’s ideas for bringing to the retreat.

STEAM Quest

Colleen asked about the new STEAM Quest app. in which Jill worked with Warren Franklin. Colleen said she couldn’t get it to work. Jill noted that people were confused with both the hard copy and the app. occurring at the same time. How it worked was once you had downloaded the app., when you were near the associated spot, a “beacon” lit up on your phone. Sponsors were excited about it as the phone lit up with sponsor information and a link to their web site. Both Jill and Warren felt good about this first year’s attempt and will try again next year. Warren has a new investor that is going to allow new features to be added to the app. Warren suggests having more information up front at the information booth at the fair entrance and to include information about accessing the QR code.

Mike asked where the beacons were. Jill answered that they were next to attractions or key locations like the barns, or near Mattress World. Information was given on the questions and also location of the next beacon. There are no figures on how many people participated in the app.; Jill thinks maybe several 100.

Fair Board Member Self Evaluations

Denise said that she has received seven completed *Fair Board Self Evaluation Questionnaires* from board members and key volunteers; that leaves five members still to complete one. She wants to get the data compiled in the near future so encourages the remaining folks to complete the evaluation and send it to her.

The member reappointment policy review will be moved to the next meeting as it didn't make it on this meeting's agenda.

Retreat

There will be just one board meeting in November, the retreat November 6 from 9-1:00 PM at the Marion County Farm Bureau Bldg. 1320 Capitol ST NE, Salem. Tamra and Jill will be working on plans for facilitating the retreat. Denise will send out snack potluck ideas.

Meeting Adjourned: 6:50 PM.