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 1, 2026 5:30 PM

I. Call to Order/Introductions

Meeting Convened: 5:35 PM

In Attendance: Joe Billington, Amy Goulter Allen, Shannon Gubbels, Pam Zielinski

Key Volunteer: Jeff Simons

Guests: Jill and Scott Ingalls

Staff: Chip Bury, Denise Clark, Sarah Coutley, Eric Mason, Laura McClellen, William White (County's Risk Manager)

II. Public Comments- None
III. Approval of March 4, 2026 Meeting Summary Notes. Amy made a motion to approve the notes; Joe seconded. Motion passed
IV. Financial Report- Shannon Gubbels

Changes to the document since last month's meeting are highlighted in yellow. Denise noted that the Intercept Survey line item ($5500) was added per last month's meeting decision. Amy made a motion to approve the financial report; Joe seconded. Motion passed.

Jill requested permission to move funds between program areas. She'd like to move big name act's money, that isn't spent, to the local regional acts' lines. She said we will be under budget on national acts and she'd like to cover more hours on the stages. She also wants to increase the size of the community stage to accommodate all types of acts.

Denise responded that moving money within the same account code makes no difference. Moving money to stage, sound, and lights would involve a different account number, but it still can be easily done.

Shannon responded that as long as Jill shows the final changes she's made, it doesn't require a vote for her to move the money.

Eric noted that the new ERP (Oracle accounting program the county will soon be switching to) is changing things in the future anyway and account numbers/line items will be changed.

Treasurer Position

Shannon indicated that Dana has stepped down from the board's treasurer position and that Joe has said that he would be willing to be the treasurer.

The Security RFP includes statements regarding assisting the treasurer at fair time.

Jill said that the treasurer has the ability to assign duties under their supervision. She said she herself, at times, has acted as the "dual custody" person.

Shannon noted that this is a working fair board; that everyone should have a job or role. A new person is given one year to shadow someone and then after that you need to be assigned a role.

Shannon requested that Brandi put together a schedule of an average day at the fair to hand off the role to the next treasurer. She would like Brandi to work with Denise to develop this. It was suggested that a virtual meeting be called with Brandi, Jill, Joe and Denise attending.

Shannon reminded Joe that Brandi is willing to assist with the treasurer's duties at the coming fair.

Joe said he will do it; he just wants clear direction on how it's done. He is willing to step down as vice chair to switch to the treasurer position. Amy is willing to be the vice chair.

Pam made a motion for Amy to become the board's vice chair and Joe to become the board's treasurer; Amy seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Fair Revenue Update- Eric Mason

Per last month's meeting directive, Eric said he is bringing back an updated revenue chart using 10 years of data. The previous report he presented had just 5 years of data.

He pointed out the importance of state and county subsidies, that they make a big difference in our total operating revenue and reserves.

The 10-year forecast results in the same conclusion- in 2030 the fair will have a negative ending fund balance if the projected increased state fair rental prices are implemented.

Jill noted that the state lottery funds' subsidy will come in somewhere between $120-220k per fair with the legislative action underway of removing the ceiling cap. This is up from the $71k that fairs have received in the past. The Oregon Fairs Association's lobbyist is keeping everyone abreast of the status.

Denise noted that our interest earnings will be going down as our reserves are spent; we can't expect that revenue to come in as it once did.

It was suggested to establish a new bottom line of reserves to maintain.

V. 4H/FFA Reports- No one present to report
   Shannon said fair entries open up next month.

There is an FFA Leaders meeting on April 13.

VI. Items of Special Interest

Work Session March 26 Update

Shannon said she was encouraged that legal counsel is looking closely at the land deed which the county gave the land to the state in the 1800's. They will be writing a memo to the state fair. The commissioners are interested in our communication with the state fair and are "on our side." Commissioner Willis was keenly interested in the gate receipts. She felt it was nice that they didn't offer their suggestions on how the fair should be run.

Chip said he spoke to Jen, our legal counsel representative, yesterday. She needs more time in developing a response to the state fair. Shannon asked Chip to reach out to them before every board meeting and come back with a report.

Scott expressed that he was happy that the BOC has the state fair on the "top of their mind" with Commissioner Cameron being willing to go before the state legislature to address the county's history with the land deed. He said we aren't asking for the rent to be free, just reasonable. He said the BOC understands what the fair does for the community.

We will continue to be conservative in our budgeting going forward.

Jill observed that Commissioner Willis looks at the fair from a financial analyst position only. It was hard for her to process some of his questions. This reminded her that she needs to create more documentation/language that helps us project future numbers.

The BOC suggested Geo Fencing to find out where our customers are coming from. Jill said this is very expensive; it's a marketing ploy.

Denise noted that we need to show the other things that measure the success of a fair, not just the bottom line financially.

Chip complimented Shannon on how she conducted herself in the work session. He noted that, "She was in complete control and did well."

Jill said that after the work session Jen, legal counsel, asked for time with the Ingalls to go over the "boots on the grounds stuff." They haven't heard from her but are glad to meet with her to be able to "tell her the stories."

Jill is frustrated with the state fair's communication. She said they won't confirm when we can move in, or anything on the work orders. They had originally indicated that they would follow-up with the county confirming the document within two weeks; that was last January.

Shannon asked if the BOC would be willing to be cc'd on an email to the state fair. Chip was tasked with following-up on this and determining how the BOC wants to be involved with the communication.

Scott reminded folks that at fair time do not ask state fair staff for anything, only ask Scott as it will cost us $95 an hour if they assist. Shannon asked Scott to remind folks of this again the night before fair starts.

Amy said to check the state fair contact's email addresses. In the last couple of days they changed their email addresses to include "oregonexpo.com."

2026 Food Vendor Committee Update- Denise

Denise said that the food vendor committee met last week and came up with a list of proposed food vendors for the coming fair. We have several new ones offering a variety of foods. Pam made a motion to accept the recommended food vendors to participate in the 2026 fair; Amy seconded. Motion passed.

Dairy Women Partnership of Understanding Document

Denise said that the dairy women representative has a very difficult time submitting an order through Eventhub. Denise is suggesting that the organization be "grandfathered in" as they are the fair's only non-profit, have a permanent structure on the grounds, and have the highest grossing sales each year. Also, they always score the highest on the food vendor committees' scoring tool.

Pam made a motion to accept the dairy women partnership document; Joe seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Policy Review- Fair Sponsoring Caterer Selection

Denise explained the reasoning behind having a catering policy. A food vendor benefits, gaining more revenue, when they are chosen to cater a fair company picnic or special event. The fair also benefits from their increased revenue by receiving 10% of their total sales.

Jill said that this is a hard conversation to have with a sponsor. Ingalls negotiate with the caterer, getting the cost of the meal down to the lowest price possible and then have to tell the sponsor that they need to give us 10% of their total sales. Essentially, the sponsor then has to increase the price of the meal to meet the 10% fee.

Discussion ensued.

The Ingalls offer organizations a sponsorship package and take care of all the details for their experience at the fair from the food to ride tickets. Within this sponsorship agreement, the price for the catering has already been negotiated with the caterer. It was decided that the 10% fee will be taken only from those caterers that are not participating as a sponsor.

Edited Fair Photos Policy- Sarah

This policy was written in 2013; it needs updating. Everything that's highlighted shows the changes to the policy. Included is a waiver for taking an individual's photo; a form that the subject signs. Also included is a form for the photographer, who are all volunteers, to complete. When a photo is taken of a minor, the parent has the right to ask to see the photo since it is in a digital format.

Jill is concerned about requiring waivers before an individual's photo can be taken. She said that they are "very agile" in removing a public facing photo if needed. If you start requiring permission slips, not all photos may have one. Photos used are authorized as they are taken in a public setting. The Ingalls use fair photos for marketing. What do we do if a person says, "We weren't asked to sign a waiver and you used our picture." Sarah said they've added the wording, "when feasible."

It was suggested to have the use of photos policy on the website when a ticket is purchased online.

Jill suggests our policy follow the standard public photos' policy that all events follow. Essentially, if you are in a public setting, you need to be aware that your photo may be taken and utilized.

Encourage photographers to have two or more individuals in a shot.

Sarah will ask legal counsel about what happens if someone questions why their photo was used when they didn't sign a waiver.

It was noted that 4H and FFA participants are required to sign a photo waiver to participate in the fair.

Agfest participants have a similar photo policy.

<u>Church Raffle Request</u>- Denise

Denise indicated that a person came into the office asking if they could have a booth at the fair for having a 50/50 raffle as a church fundraiser. She said that she didn't think so, but that she would bring it before the fair board to consider.

Jill said that most raffles such as this require a person must be present to win; this would not have an instant winner. Also, the participant doesn't walk away with a prize; it's actually a form of gambling.

Denise referred to the fair's commercial booth guidelines which says that "free raffles" are welcome. Non-profits can hold a minimal fee raffle if the participant can walk away with a gift of some sort. This requires prior approval from fair administration.

Jill indicated that similar requests in the past have been denied. Denise will contact them and let them know this will not be allowed.

VII. Ingalls Report

Scott said that he has raised $66,420 in sponsorship money thus far.

Denise asked Scott how he felt about the sponsorships coming in thus far. He responded “moderate.”

Denise said that Krista wants to know who is willing to review/score the newly released security RFP. Those willing to participate are Amy, Scott, and William White.

William White will be at the fair mitigating issues that come up. He will also interact with the state fair’s risk manager.

Shannon noted that we are going to need to be conservative in everything we do.

Jill said that Radio Ready is set for Friday night. She’d like to have a “rave-type” DJ to set up a party atmosphere on Friday night. Jill said that the cost of the DJ was within budget.

Ads on social media are now running.

They are waiting on Casey Donahew’s final media release.

Jill encouraged everyone to share the Facebook posts, like the page, and follow the page.

The old website (.net) is up and running again by the guy that bought it; it shouldn’t be. Jill has filed all of the paperwork charging it as illegal. She is putting money towards getting “.fun” to rise above “.net.”

VIII. Strategic Plan Items- April

2.1.10 Determine date for holding BOC board session at the fair. We don''t.know.what.the.BOC.is. planning.for.this.year¡.Denise.will.reach.out.to.the.BOC¡

4.4.2 Pursue public competitions’ award donations; touch base with sponsor coordinator, verify there is no conflict with a major donor. Amy will check with the superintendents to ensure that any donations don’t take away from potential sponsorships.

4.4.3 Pre-fair PC coordination- touch base with superintendents; ensure superintendent positions are filled. Amy said she is working on this. She still needs a foods’ superintendent.

4.4.5 Send out public competitions’ press release. Jill said that this isn’t as effective as a mass email. She requested Denise send her the ShoWorks’ participants’ email list. Jill would like to see an all-county email sent out. The fair board suggested to change the wording in the strategic plan from “press release” to “email blast to past participants.”

4.6.1 Produce/sign Big Name Entertainment Contract. The fair board said to remove this as it is done earlier in the year.

IX. Other-

Denise noted that the next monthly meeting is being changed from May 6 to May 13.