

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

March 5, 2025 5:30 PM

Meeting Convened: 5:30 PM

Call to Order/Introductions

In Attendance

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

Key Volunteers: Rebecca Kauffman

Staff: Denise Clark, Sarah Coutley, Kelli Weese

Guests: Jill and Scott Ingalls, Ingalls and Associates; Karen Jajhor, Horses of Hope; Melanie McCabe, 4H

I. Public Comments

Karen Majhor, Horses of Hope, Turner Oregon

Karen is requesting a donation of tickets for their *Denim and Diamonds* fundraiser which will be held on May 17. It will be a barn party with both live and silent auctions. Tickets can be purchased on their website at www.horsesofhopeoregon.org. They provide therapeutic services in which they are "dedicated to supporting individuals with emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and physical challenges."

Rebecca said that she can attest to the good work they do. Rebecca volunteers with them; she is a "side walker" and does barn care. Greg made a motion to provide six fair entry tickets for Horses of Hope for their Denim and Diamonds fundraiser; Pam seconded the motion. Motion passed.

II. Approval of February 5, 2025 Meeting Summary Notes

Changes Needed:

- Jill noted that the fee to charge for the corn-hole tournament camping agreed to was a flat fee of \$25 for up to three nights, not \$25 per night as was listed in the notes. Discussion ensued regarding if that was the appropriate amount to charge. Jill indicated that she had already negotiated that price with the organization but that she could go back to them and re-negotiate at the fair board's request. It was decided to leave it as is for this year and to re-visit it next year.
- Dana suggested removing the personal information regarding Tricia Stoddard's absence from the fair board meetings.
- Jill will not be submitting a budget change request form for the cost of the inflatables as the money will be coming out of the *Attractions* line-item.

Amy made a motion to approve the meeting summary notes with the above listed changes; Pam seconded. Motion passed.

III. **Financial Report-** Brandi

The actuals that have occurred in the last month are reflected in yellow. This includes Commercial Vendor revenue, interest revenue, and some administration charges. Pam made a motion to accept the financial report as presented; Amy seconded. Motion passed.

IV. **4H/FFA Reports**

4H- Melanie

- She has drafted a fair animal agreement for fair participants. Components include quality care of animals, safety, who should assist when moving large animals and more.
- There were 41 animals at the beef weigh-in on February 2.

FFA- No one present

V. **Items of Special Interests**

Inflatables- Jill

Jill asked everyone to choose their top 5 favorites of the inflatable samples she presented. The top five chosen were the horse and animal friends; cowgirl and animal friends; the red barn; the marionberry; and the blue ribbon. There is a total cost of \$4,394 for 2-10', 2- 6' and one 12' inflatable. She had previously indicated it would cost \$4,000. The 12' would be placed right inside the red gate with the smaller ones further inside the grounds. These are made of cloth, not a balloon, so are sturdy. They come with a continuous fan. They are guaranteed for one year. If we take good care of them, they should last several years.

Greg made a motion to increase the amount budgeted by \$394 for the purchase of 5 inflatables; Joe seconded. Motion passed.

Policy Review- Animal Welfare- Denise

Denise indicated that this policy covers the health and safety of animals at the fair.

Melanie said that waterfowl, and lactating dairy cows, will be prohibited at this year's fair. These are the animals that have to be tested through ODA for avian flu. Melanie noted that if the disease progresses, there is a chance that other animals may require testing.

Denise pointed out that point 3.11 refers to the Herdsmanship Awards. We are no longer providing this as an incentive to keep the barn aisles clean.

Melanie does not believe the Herdsmanship award is needed as she is seeing an increase in youth cleaning the area without the incentive. She said that there is now a "general ownership" amongst the students as their areas are inspected.

Shannon noted that janitorial has done a good job of keeping the trash bins clean so that there is now a higher standard for the barns than there was before.

VI. Ingalls' Report

Scott-

- DSP Connections will be returning to hold their company picnic on Sunday.
- He is looking for a company to hold a picnic on Saturday.
- He is looking for a bottled water sponsor; also getting a price for the purchase of bottled water. He has \$2500 budgeted. Our fair goes through 5 pallets of water total between 4h and the front end (administration, volunteers, etc.)
- He is running into some pushback from sponsors due to the economy.
- He says he's raised about \$56,400 thus far.

Pam noted that the Swine and Wine fundraiser is also feeling the impact of the economy as they aren't selling out on tables as they have in the past. She also said they might be changing the April 10 date.

Jill-

- Working on the national acts' entertainment contract components.
- Has received the okay for a release on the national acts.
- All attractions are booked.
- Working on lodging; blocking rooms.
- Jessie Leigh is booked for Thursday.
- Volunteer awards are coming together. She's reaching out to community organizations to use our stage for an awards' night.
- Taking community stage acts' applications.

Jill said that Denise conducted a county booths' survey. Denise said the survey asked things like, "Do you want to participate just one day or all four days?" "Can you break-down post fair on Sunday evening?" "Would you be open to an outside location?" etc. The results were mixed.

It was suggested to encourage participants to cover the neighbor's booth when they can't be present. They do this already; some booths are just static displays. The problem is some leave early, and then there is empty space. Scott suggested that if we know they are only going to participate one or two days, we can put something in the space like a vehicle after they leave.

VII. March Strategic Plan Items

3.2.10 Arrange transportation for Big Name Entertainment.- *Working on it.*

4.1.1 Respond to requests to participate (entertain) that come into the fair office; relay to Entertainment Coordinator for a response. Hold meeting between the Event coordinator and the Entertainment Coordinator to identify openings on the main stage. *In process.*

4.3.3 Discuss any needed changes for 4H/FFA. *Jill said a meeting was held today with 4h to discuss their needs.*

4.4.1 Inventory ribbons, order exhibit tags, update dept. classes per superintendents' requests.- *Denise said she and Rebecca are working on this. Rebecca said they are identifying ribbon needs that will make things easier for all. She is still looking for a Creative Arts Superintendent.*

4.4.4 Place Public Competitions' application, and information, on web site.- *Rebecca said that they are currently working on updating the exhibitor handbook; it's almost done. When done, all the information will be posted. She noted we are ahead of schedule this year.*

4.5.4 Vendor issues- complaints; hand holding; sales (sell booth); vendor/fair expectations; improve inside/outside layouts. *In process.*

VIII. Other

Willamette Art Center is vacating the "Tap House" building in June as the state fair did not extend their lease; they are looking for a new venue. They will not be available to participate in the fair this year. Amy noted that there are a lot of staff changes going on at the state fair right now; she said the people we are used to working with might not be there this year.

Denise indicated that the food vendor applications are all due March 21. She asked who wanted to be on the 2025 Food Vendor Committee. In addition to Denise, Jill, Pam, Amy, and possibly Brandi, will be on the committee.

Shannon noted that the mini-herefords are interested in having a sanctioned MHBA (Miniature Hereford Breeders Association) event at our fair. They will therefore have insurance coverage.

If we are having more beef entries this year, state fair might need to clean out more of the barns as they currently store items in the areas we don't use.

Shannon hasn't made contact with the llama show people yet. It was noted that they only have about three open class animals the rest are 4H/FFA kids' projects that participate in the show. Joe said that he could reach out to Justin Tim to see if they are going to have a show at the fair. They also put on a show at Agfest, maybe that is why there so few open class participants at the fair.

Jill asked if the fair board would like another intercept survey done at this year's fair. The last one was done four years ago. New information would be good to have. The Ingalls held a separate contract to conduct the survey. If the fair board wants to do one, the Ingalls need to know by the April meeting. It provides valuable information such as, "How long are you staying at the fair?" "How many people are in your party?" "What is your favorite event/activity?" etc. It will cost between \$5,000 to \$6,000 as it takes a lot of staff to walk around and "intercept" people, reaching out to them to participate. The staff fill out the survey for them. It was decided not to conduct a survey this year.

It was suggested that if the current bills pass in the legislature, there will be more funding for fairs and the additional funds could help with doing a survey.

Greg said he wants to change his fair responsibilities this year. He is glad to carry out his Honor Day responsibilities, but he doesn't want to be the driver who shuttles the national acts. He also wants to be the "Voice of the Fair." He said he will also position himself next to the stage in case the entertainers need something. However, he doesn't want to do stage duty on Sunday with the community acts. Jill responded that he will need to work with Pat (Source Management) on assisting with the stage. Jill said that the "Voice of the Fair" needs to be coordinated with the entertainers. Also, she would like to see this done from the sound box instead of the stage. Jill will work on scripts for Greg.

Dana noted that she had emailed out to everyone a standardized letter for testifying to the legislature. If the bills go through, the changes in the legislation could really benefit the fair. She said, "It's important our voices are heard." Jill said that the Oregon Fairs' Association is having a fair managers' meeting tomorrow in which they'll probably be providing an update.

Greg thanked the board for sending him to the recent Oregon Festivals and Events conference in Seaside. He said that he learned a lot and that he especially liked the Q&A session at the end.

IX. **Meeting Adjourned: 6:50 PM**