

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' "Library" 5th Floor

December 4, 2024 5:30 PM

Meeting Convened: 5:39 PM

Call to Order/Introductions

In Attendance

Board Members: Dana Castano, Shannon Gubbels, Greg Martin, Pam Zielinski

Key Volunteers: Rebecca Kauffman

Staff: Denise Clark, Kelli Weese

Guests: Joe Billington, Jill and Scott Ingalls

I. No Public Comments

Jill asked to add to the agenda a discussion on a possible corn-hole tournament and also Big Name Entertainment costs.

Denise asked that an item be removed (Presentation of 2024 Final Report) as we still have not received the 4H revenue for camping and stall fees. (Denise noted she has been working with Althea from OSU to obtain this.)

II. Approval of meeting summary notes 10/2/24 and 11/2/24 (title amended, listed as 2/2/24 on agenda.)

Greg made a motion to approve the summary notes; Dana seconded. Motion passed.

III. Financial Report- Denise

The chair told Jill to present her information first. Jill said that the entertainment committee is working hard. She said it's a tough time in the industry as there are not as many artists available. Live Nation (concert organizer) is "snatching up" acts for their purposes. This affects those left behind who are now raising their prices. Pat Wood is suggesting raising this budget line-item to \$50,000 or \$60,000. A tribute act would be reasonably priced, but Jill doesn't know the quality of such a show. We currently have \$42,500 left in the line-item as we have \$27,500 committed to "Lit" a rock act for Friday night. (The possible arena act is currently "off the table.") The board decided to increase the amount available for a Saturday night country act to \$60,000. Greg made a motion to increase the budget line-item "Band Fees" to \$87,500 to secure an act for Saturday night; Dana seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Approve the 2025 Proposed Budget- Denise

Denise indicated that she had made the changes to the 2025 budget that were suggested at the November retreat. These items are highlighted in yellow.

Pam presented a Marion County Fair Foundation (FF) request that the fair board increase its support to the 4H program for haul-out fees and 4H Premiums. The fair board asked that the FF speak with Melanie McCabe, the OSU extension agent and 4H representative. They also suggested Melanie should be the one to make the request of the fair board.

Pam said that the FF will be holding its annual *Swine and Wine* fundraiser on April 10 in Mt. Angel at the Octoberfest building.

Dana made a motion to approve the 2025 Proposed Budget with the addition of increasing the Big Name Entertainment Band Fees to \$87,500; Pam seconded the motion. Motion passed.

IV. 4H/FFA Reports. No representative from either organization present.

V. Items of Special Interest

Approval of Board Member Re-appointments Castano, Goulter-Allen and Gubbels- Denise

There were no fair board concerns regarding these re-appointments. Denise was authorized to move forward in presenting the re-appointments to the Board of Commissioners (BOC.)

Policy- Fair Budget Change Authorization Criteria- Kelli

This policy was created last year to address small line-item changes. It authorizes a county manager to be able to pay an expenditure that comes in slightly higher without the item having to come before the fair board via the formal action of a budget change request form. Kelli recommends doubling the authorization to 20% of the category, versus line-item, or no more than \$400. The reasoning is there are some line-items that are so small (ex. \$150) that at 10%, a \$20 increase would still require the change be brought back to the fair board for approval; that wastes everyone's time. Kelli assured the board that if she has any concerns about an item, it will be brought back to the fair board for approval.

Rebecca pointed out a grammatical error on 3b in the policy in which the word "taking" should be changed to "taken."

Dana made a motion to approve the Fair Budget Change Authorization Policy with Kelli's suggested changes of 20% or \$400 in any one category, and the grammar correction to 3b; Pam seconded. Motion passed.

Rules Governing Commercial Exhibits- Legal Counsel edits- Denise

The fair board had previously edited this policy regarding refund requests. Denise has since had Legal Counsel review the document. They came up with a few additional changes in how items were worded.

Pam made a motion to approve the Legal Counsel edits to the document; Greg seconded. Discussion- it was noted the daily hours are not correct at the end of the document as we are opening later on Thursday. Denise replied that she would be sure and reflect the current year's schedule on the document. Motion passed.

Bylaw edits- Member Attendance- Denise

It was suggested at the retreat that we address members' excused absences from meetings and also the requirement of their participation during the fair. Denise edited the document to reflect this. It was suggested to

remove the requirement that a person could not participate by Zoom “more than 2 meetings in a 12-month period.” Zoom participation is allowed as attending, but in-person attendance is preferred. If a member is going to be absent, please notify the chair or county staff. It was suggested to put an “E” for excused absence in the tracking spreadsheet. In the paragraph, re-organize the sentences so that the number of absences referenced is closer to the sentence regarding attendance at fair and tie the “emergency excuse” to both. Denise will re-word the paragraph and bring it back to next month’s meeting for approval.

Policy Review- Dogs on the Fairgrounds- ADA Act- Denise

Denise indicated that Shannon had requested that the board review a policy at each monthly meeting to keep us aware of them. The first one to bring forth is the ADA dog policy. Jill noted that people are getting more aggressive about their dogs being with them on the grounds. You can ask the owner what the dog is trained to do as a service for the owner. Emotional support doesn’t count; yes, they are performing a service, but the animal is not trained to do something. The only action that can be taken is to require that the owner has the dog under complete control; the dog should be well-behaved. If the dog is not under control, they can be asked to leave.

Discussion:

- There is no regulated license, or certificate, for identification of a service dog.
- We need to sign the barns better to keep dogs away from the livestock.
- We do tell security of this policy; however, they don’t always follow it.
- If you see a dog out of control, tell Jill and Scott and they will address it.
- It was suggested that Melanie provide a copy of the policy to all 4H and FFA families that will be attending the fair.

Ticketing Strategies- Jill

Jill said she’d like to address ticketing strategies after the state fair working group meets on December 10 as there are a lot of variables right now including parking costs. Generally, the policy has been to lower the ticket price down to \$5 in the spring and then escalate the figure from there. She will bring this back to January’s board meeting. It was also suggested to talk about Thursday’s special pricing in the January meeting.

Fairgrounds’ Footprint Map- Jill

- The map identifies foot traffic and critical corners.
- Maybe put camping out in the pavilion parking area.
- A corn-hole tourney organizer is interested in using the pavilion; they would bring in around 200 participants.
- Have the carnival make an opening in the southeast corner of their area to move traffic towards the pavilion.
- The corn-hole organizers would not pay a sponsor fee however, they will pay any hard costs incurred by us on their behalf. They would also pay to get into the fair and their participants would eat fair food.

New Fair Logo- Jill

Members preferred the images on the last two pages. Suggestions were made as to how to slightly improve them. Jill will bring back the modifications to the January meeting.

VI. Ingalls Report- Jill

Jill indicated that she had sent the report out to the fair board previously and was open to answering any questions. Flyball has confirmed they are returning. Denise observed that the new camping accommodations didn't "run them off." Jill responded it wasn't ideal, but they understood we didn't have a choice.

VII. December Strategic Plan Items:

1.2.1 Reminder to members to pursue recruiting new vendors and sponsors for the upcoming fair. On-going. If you know of a potential sponsor, give the lead to Scott.

1.2.2 *Review pricing structure for vendors.* Denise reminded folks that we increased the commercial vendor fees by \$50 last year. She said that the food vendor fees haven't change for years. There is a \$250 deposit, charges for electricity, and 22% of their total sales fee. Jill feels the fees are in-line with other fairs our size.

The question was raised regarding giving food vendors an incentive to be open on Thursday as they don't make that much money on the opening day of the fair.

It was asked when the on-line vendor registration site will go live. Denise said she is working with Eventeny now to set up the new year's program. Jill noted that we don't usually open registration until January.

2.1.5 *Reminder to be ready to pick a fair theme in January (if applicable.)* We will not be choosing a new theme this year.

3.2.3 *Identify carnival vendor as needed (next RFP fall 2024).* In process; the RFP has been sent out. Funtastic had some concerns about the inclusion of language around all-day wristbands which they don't provide anymore. They do provide the opportunity for 4H/FFA to purchase ride cards on-line at a discounted rate. Funtastic can submit a question through the county's contract portal, asking about the wristband requirement, this makes the process impartial.

The difference between a ride card and a wristband is the ride card is limited; the wristband is for unlimited rides.

The RFP language does include "will work with the event coordinator regarding promotions. "

3.2.4 *Identify security and ticket taking agency as needed (next RFP fall 2025.)* Not needed.

5.2.2 *Make BOC work session presentation-* Scheduled for Dec. 12, 2024 9:30 AM.

VIII. Other

Denise asked who is planning to attend the OFEA conference in Seaside in Feb. Greg is planning to attend.

Greg reminded everyone to submit their November volunteer hours to Denise.

Meeting adjourned: 7:25 PM.