

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

November 5, 2025

Meeting Convened: 5:34 PM

I. Call to Order/Introductions

In Attendance

Board Members: Joseph Billington, Brandi Crandall, Shannon Gubbels, Greg Martin, Pam Zielinski

Staff: Chip Bury, Denise Clark, Kelli Weese, Eric Mason, Community and Economic Development Department Finance Specialist

Guests: Jill & Scott Ingalls, Ingalls & Associates; Kristi Duyck, FFA

I. Approval of October 1, 2025 Summary Notes- Brandi made a motion to approve the summary notes; Greg seconded. Motion passed.

II. Financial Report- Brandi

The actuals are highlighted in yellow as to what has occurred since the last month's report.

Denise said the state subsidy check arrived today in the amount of \$79,783, a 74% increase from the last few years.

Chip noted that the 2025 fair ended in a deficit of \$177,000. We will be discussing this at the upcoming fair board retreat.

Greg motioned to accept the financial report as presented; Joe seconded the motion. Motion passed.

III. 4H/FFA Reports

4H- No one present to report

FFA- Kristi indicated that there is nothing new to report.

IV. Items of Special Interest

New Policy "Meeting Agenda Items"- Denise

Denise said she brought this to the fair board last month for review; she indicated she had sent it to Legal Counsel for review. She's since heard from Legal Counsel; they've made some minor grammar

changes. Greg made a motion to accept the new Meeting Agenda Items Policy; Joe seconded the motion. Motion passed.

OFA Convention Update- Jill/Greg

Jill said she attended the event as an Area 2 representative. They networked and met with potential attractions. They didn't stay the whole conference. She heard various fair reports and learned that many fairs, our size, were down in attendance. Rural fairs do well as they're the only event around the area.

Greg said he received new information in a workshop he attended on control freaks. He also noted it seems there were not very many volunteers there; he'd like to see more attend.

Ashley did a good job building our fair's auction item of a basket; it made it into the live auction.

V. Ingalls Report

Jill said she sent their report out separately from the meeting packet. She asked if there were any questions. They are looking forward to the coming fair.

VI. November Strategic Plan Items

Many of the items will be addressed at the coming retreat on November 22.

4.1.3 *Discuss whether the fair should feature a “big name act.”* Jill noted that the fair board pre-approved money for big name entertainment. Pat Wood is having trouble finding acts for us. We need to get offers out now. The entertainment committee is currently focusing on Saturday. They are looking for younger, well known acts in the \$30-\$40k range.

Jill said that Radio Ready is secured.

5.2.5 Review of Strategic Plan Items

Denise said that we review this document monthly and modifications are made throughout the year. The changes she's made, per the fair board's directives, are shown in red font. They include putting the "obtaining Salem permits" all on one line versus breaking them out and removing "Schedule date for Volunteer Appreciation" as that is done at the fair.

Shannon noted that we look at this "living document" all year long; we may "tweak things" throughout the year.

The last couple of years we haven't been making a presentation to the BOC in June to promote the fair. The original reason for doing this task was to reach CCTV viewers as the board session is televised. However, that may not be the best marketing tool. Denise asked if we wanted to keep it in the strategic plan.

Jill said that we need to have "a strategic approach," getting in front of organizations and chambers. She said getting the county departments engaged is important.

It was decided to leave the presentation to the BOC in the strategic plan.

Jill feels that the November timeframe for making decisions for the coming fair is “rather late.” She said that we need to consider the 2027 fair at the 2026 fall retreat. She feels certain things need to be decided earlier than we are currently doing.

It was suggested to add to the December meeting agenda the scheduling for planning the future fair, moving some items off of November and on to earlier months of the year.

5.2.6 Review Conflict Resolution Policy

Denise said that this document came about because of a real conflict within the fair board. When a conflict arises, there are clear steps to be taken. If a conflict can't be resolved by the two individuals, the issue can be escalated to higher levels of authority to make a determination.

VII. Other

Denise said that she has put together a potluck sign-up for the retreat; she encouraged everyone to watch for the email link she will be sending and to sign-up.

Denise reminded everyone that elections for new board officers are held at the fair board retreat. She said if someone wants to be on the ballot to hold one of the offices (Chair, Vice Chair, or Treasurer) to email her.

Brandi announced that she will not be seeking the Treasurer position for the coming fair. However, she will be there at fair time and available to help.

Greg said that he is “playing phone tag” with the sheriff’s office about providing the honor guard for the fair. He hasn’t yet heard back from the Salem Police Department.

Kelli said the Community Services Department’s name has been changed to the *Community and Economic Development Department*; the BOC approved it at this morning’s board session. Denise explained the reasoning being “Community Services” is a misnomer for the public. The department gets calls from folks looking to do their community service as part of their restitution or needing housing assistance or other personal needs. This department does not provide those services. Our new name is a better descriptor of what we do.

VIII. Meeting Adjourned: 6:18 PM