

Marion County Fair Board

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

Monthly Meeting

Commissioners' Board Room, 555 Court St NE, Salem OR

October 2, 2019 5:30 PM

In Attendance

Board Members Present: Mike Adams, Joel Conder, Brandi Crandall, Shannon Gubbels, Ken Outfleet, Pam Zielinski

Key Volunteer: Amy Goulter-Allen, FFA

Guests: Jill Ingalls, Ingalls & Associates

Staff: Denise Clark, Tamra Goettsch, Community Services Department Director; Commissioner Colm Willis, BOC Liaison

I. **Call to Order/Introductions**

II. **No Public Comments**

III. **Approval of September 4, 2019 Meeting Summary Notes-** Ken made a motion to approve the meeting summary notes; Mike seconded the motion. Motion passed.

IV. **Financial Report-** Brandi

Year-to-date changes (monies in/out) is reflected in yellow.

Jill noted the following:

- Media bills and printing invoices are not included; they will be reflected in a future document.
- The plumber costs are still being negotiated and so are not listed. The plumber's responsibilities for our fair are RV and food vendor hook-ups and beef barns "de-winterizing." The fair usually pays around \$1500; it was \$1,000 more than that this year. In investigating the invoice, Jill found that they included general state fairgrounds maintenance tasks on the invoice. She spoke with Wayne, of state fair, and he confirmed we should not have been billed for all of it. She has requested an invoice break-down from the plumber of just the county fair's items. She also will be talking to Mike Paulazak (State Fair Manager) about this.
- The electrical dollar figure should have been less. Jill said we did have a couple over-time charges but that the number of vendor drops was lower than the past and so the charges should have been less.
- Tamra suggested looking into seeing if we still have an electricity credit with state fair. (Jill thought the credit has already been used.)
- Joel said that he knows the owners of Northside Electric and is willing to go with Jill to visit them to discuss the charges.

Denise said that the 4H and FFA invoices have just been received; those costs will be reflected in next month's document.

Ken made a motion to accept the financial report as presented; Shannon seconded the motion. Motion passed.

V. Items of Special Interest

New Member Recruitment

Tamra said that in response to Heidi announcing that she would not be serving another term, we have reached out to the existing key volunteers to see if they were interested in the position and its responsibilities of working with public competitions. They all responded, "Not at this time." However, Camber Schlag has indicated that she might be interested in the future.

The fair board expressed interest in going more broadly in reaching out to find a new fair board member and also would like to find more key volunteers. Shannon expressed that she'd like to find someone who has a "passion" for the position.

Joel has a contact, a former Home Economics teacher at McKay High School, which has expressed some interest in being involved with the fair board. Amy said that she knows her well and will reach out to her.

Tamra indicated that staff will put together some promotional material for recruiting and get it out to everyone. Denise noted that the county volunteer coordinator position is currently vacant so that resource is not available at this time.

Tamra said that the recommendation for Joel to be re-appointed for another term went before the BOC and has been approved to move forward with the official paperwork.

Public Competitions Post Fair Meeting Update

Heidi is not present to give an update on the post fair public competitions meeting. Joel asked that this item be moved to the next meeting's agenda.

Fair Board Retreat Planning

The retreat will be held November 24 from 1-5 at the Oregon Farm Bureau building (1320 Capitol ST NE, Salem.) Board members are to bring snacks. Tamra said that Community Services will provide drinks.

Tamra asked for agenda items and what materials are needed to facilitate the retreat discussions.

Suggestions included:

- A draft budget for the 2020 fair.
- Big Name Entertainment discussion.
- Discussion on programming interests.
- Review of the 2019 Garten Waste Diversion report. (Joel asked Tamra to check with Public Works as to whether they will be providing a grant again for the 2020 fair.)
- Discuss whether to hold a December board meeting.

Community Services will work with Jill to develop the retreat agenda. Board members were asked to email in their ideas of anything else that they would like to see on the agenda.

With the Jr. Market Auction time being moved up, the auction buyers will have time to take in some of the other fair activities as it won't be ending as late. (The market animals will still be hauled out at the same time as in the past, around midnight.)

Carnival RFP

The carnival RFP had one responder- Funtastic. The evaluation committee (Krista Ulm, Jill, and Joel) will meet to review the proposal. There is a meeting scheduled for Friday, October 4 with Funtastic to discuss their proposal; from that meeting, a recommendation will be made to the fair board at the retreat.

Jill said that she and Krista talked about the wording in the RFP; perhaps it was a bit restrictive and limited the number of responders. Some changes will be made on any future RFP sent out.

Board Member Self- Evaluations

Referring to the results of the self-evaluation documents that she sent out to everyone for review, Denise pointed out areas in which the fair board might want to take action. She said it was up to the board to determine what they wanted to do with the information. Tamra said the purpose of the document is to identify what's working for the board and where improvement is needed.

Discussion Included:

- The board didn't want to discuss the results in depth at this time, perhaps discuss it at the upcoming retreat.
- Shannon would like to see everyone address things up front if they have an issue with someone, and not take up time at the retreat to discuss things that happened in the past. She would like everyone to consume the information and take note. She also suggests that responses might be specific to a certain time or event.
- At the retreat, identify what needs to be changed or adjusted based on the results.
- Joel said that with only one person indicating an extreme response (one end of the spectrum or the other) may skew the whole picture.

Ken and Mike, as newest members on the board, expressed that this is a mostly positive board and that they haven't experienced any real negatives in the meetings.

It was suggested that since this is the first time to conduct the evaluation, everyone synthesize this year's information and then complete it again a year from now; and then compare the two.

It was noted that the meetings can't always be fun when there are challenges to address. Denise said that she didn't do the evaluation (as it was just for fair board members and key volunteers) but that she wanted to express that she enjoys the meetings; she enjoys the members and seeing them each month.

It was noted that they'd like to see 100% participation in the evaluations. Brandi still needs to complete it; she said that she would do so in the near future.

Tamra expressed that it is important to focus on what is going well and identifying the positives, however, she recommends that as members are thinking about the evaluation results over the next month, if there is a "burning issue you want to address," to bring it forward to the next meeting (November 24, the retreat.)

Contractor Performance Reviews

Denise said that she sent out the contractor performance reviews to all the pertinent parties (fair board members and associates) those who worked closely with the contractor. She has not received many of them

back. She asked to move this to an upcoming meeting to give her time to receive them all back and then compile them for the fair board to review. It was decided to put this on the January meeting's agenda.

Jill said that she has incorporated her notes from last month's discussion on the security issues into the performance review she completed. She has also had an informal discussion with the security providers.

Joel expressed concern about doing contractor performance evaluations; he feels we need to talk very carefully with contractors if we want to continue doing business with them.

Denise said the components of the performance evaluations are taken directly out of the contracts themselves; this is just a way to hold the contractor accountable to what they've agreed to do.

Tamra said we are conducting the performance reviews in order to affect performance. For example, if we have a 5-year contract, we want to give the contractor annual feedback, not endure poor performance for 5 years. However, the contracts do have a clause that allows for canceling a contract if their performance is completely egregious.

Joel feels that "word on the street" could get around that the Marion County Fair does performance reviews and that we are hard to work with. He feels we could possibly lose a contractor and that other contractors might not be willing to work with us.

Jill noted that more and more fairs are getting savvy as to contract management. She feels the Marion County Fair is going in the right direction, operating at a more professional level than others. She indicated that as a contractor, she values the feedback she receives from performance reviews.

Shannon says that this tool provides us the opportunity to address any issues we might be having with a contractor.

Mike suggested that it's just a check-list to go over with the contractor.

Shannon feels we need to have a couple of meetings with security to better their performance for next year.

Jill noted that finding good employees is hard for security; they ended up using some temps this year who weren't all DPST certified.

Tamra said that Denise will compile the first draft (once she receives them all back) and then it will be brought back to the fair board for review to give feedback that reflects the collective thoughts of the fair board. These are being done on just our "core" contracts.

Ken suggested that it's all about "building a bridge; they do their part, we do our part;" good communication is the key.

Jill noted that we have not evaluated, or provided a performance review for the rodeo. This year the provider cut the show down by half an hour from what was agreed to in the contract. The grandstands were not full even though this year's event received the same amount of promotion as previous years. A sponsor issue came up again as it did last year. She said that putting on the rodeo requires a lot of fair staff attention. Discussion on this event will be added to the agenda under programming/entertainment discussion at the upcoming retreat.

Volunteer Appreciation update-

- Melinda made cute gifts to give certain volunteers to recognize their efforts.
- 30-40 people attended the event.
- Amy suggested the time for the event be moved to August instead of September. It was noted that we have tried that, but many folks aren't available in August.
- Jill would like to see a volunteer meeting directly after fair, or a survey feedback form given, to gain feedback from the volunteers. (Denise said she thought that one had been done in the past; a form should already be available.)
- It was asked if the hospitality room at fair could be utilized as the volunteer appreciation event. Answer- no, the volunteers have expressed that they prefer a separate celebration event after fair.
- Mike said the food could be improved; he feels that we need to show "real appreciation" for our volunteers.
- Some expressed that holding the event in an inside venue, such as a pizza place, was a better option as it was well attended when held there. Others liked holding it outside. However, it was felt that this year, the picnic table placement was not good and that they should have been placed under the tap house pavilion instead of outside of it. Also, the tables could have been set in such a way that people could better interact with one another. It was suggested that there needs to be "a little more effort put into the event."

VI. 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 the OFEA (Oregon Festivals and Events Association) award nominations are a good example of something to utilize to address this strategic plan item. She feels every single event should have a "Volunteer of the Year" submission.

Shannon asked about Facebook activity occurring throughout the winter. Jill said she's in conversation with the county about possible changes with social media, getting away from Facebook and going more towards digital and Google ads. Jill asked that people send her any information that they'd like to see posted as they will be doing a few more Facebook posts.

3.1.1 Select an Event Coordinator as Needed- Done

5.2.1 Schedule Work session with BOC for annual report; prepare documents.- Done. Scheduled for Thursday, December 12 at 9:00 AM. It was requested that Denise send an appointment out to board members.

2.2.1 Schedule opportunities for FB members to increase public awareness through presentations, promotions at service clubs, chambers and other public meetings. Jill is willing to do a presentation for any groups as this is a great recruitment tool. She is also willing to help members do the presentation themselves. Mike said he is also willing to go and speak at organizational meetings.

4.6.2 Organize and develop other activities- Commissioner Willis suggests having a soccer tournament at the fair. It could be held inside one of the buildings like the Jackman Long or the pavilion. He might have a contact person that would organize it. The board would like to see the person come to the retreat to talk about the possibilities.

5.1.2 Identify and submit OFA award nominations- Denise referred to the email she sent out earlier regarding submitting award nominations; she asked members to look at all of the nomination areas and to consider what

(or who) they might nominate. Denise said that she is willing to assist in the writing of the nominations. Jill said to look at the categories for both OFEA and OFA nominations; there are some similarities and some differences. She said that just nominating can generate a news release, "chosen" is even better; she said that these are news worthy items.

VII. Other

It was decided to go ahead and schedule a December 10 regular board meeting; if at the retreat it is decided the meeting is not necessary, it can be canceled. (December 11, Wednesday, not all board members were available.)

Meeting Adjourned: 6:58 PM