

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,

June 5, 2024 5:30 PM

Meeting Convened: 5:34 PM

I. Call to Order/Introductions

In Attendance

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

Key Volunteer: Rebecca Kaufman

Guests: Joseph Billington, FFA; Melanie McCabe, 4H; Jill & Scott Ingalls, Ingalls & Associates

Staff: Denise Clark, Community Services; Sarah Coutley, Community Services; Chris Eppley, Community Services; Kelli Weese, Community Services

In Shannon's absence, Pam conducted the meeting. Pam left early; Kelli Weese continued the meeting.

II. Public Comments: None

III. **Approval of May 1, 2024 Meeting Summary Notes.** Greg made a motion to accept the May 1 notes; Dana seconded. Motion passed.

IV. 4H/FFA Reports

4H Report- Melanie McCabe

Everything is "moving along." Work orders will be in at the end of the week. They had a successful weigh-in. The fair participation numbers will be similar to the last couple of years. The auction committee is sending out their 2024 fair brochure. They have some parking questions. Melanie will not be in the office during most of June as she will be down at the OSU campus; however, she will be available by email or by phone.

FFA Report- Joseph Billington

There is nothing new to report. He said that he will not be an FFA advisor in the future, however he will be participating in the coming fair as he is still a FFA superintendent.

V. Financial Report- Denise Clark

Denise gave the financial Report as Brandi was participating virtually and did not have the report in front of her.

- Food booth and commercial fees (have surpassed our goal.) It was asked if we changed the line item figure for the commercial vendors with our increase in fees. Answer- no. The fees are up because of increased fees and we have an increase in the number of vendors participating at this point in time.

- Sponsor fees have almost reached the established goal; more is expected to come in so we will be surpassing the goal.
- The regularly scheduled Ingalls payments are reflected.
- We paid a down payment on the fair office air conditioner, and will be paying out more on that line item in the future.
- Fair administration shows investment earnings are higher than expected.

Denise gave kudos to Sarah Coutley for getting the budget information to her so quickly and efficiently each month in order for Denise to be able to update the budget document and send out to the fair board in a timely manner.

Melanie asked if Jill ordered two golf carts for Melanie. Jill confirmed they had. Melanie will watch for the invoice.

Greg made a motion to accept the budget report as presented; Amy seconded. Motion passed.

VI. **Items of Special Interest-** Denise Clark

Budget Change Requests

Denise presented a budget change request form for paying the annual fee of \$1614.40 for Security Storage. This is to move the fair office furnishings off of the state fairgrounds post fair and into the storage facility on Silverton Road. The money will come out of Carryover. Greg made a motion to approve the budget change request for the annual Security Storage fee; Dana second. Motion Passed.

Denise presented a budget change request form to pay for the printing of new Food Vendor Sales Report forms changing the amount in the "Office Supplies" line item to \$160. These are duplicate forms that are given to fair food vendors every day of fair to record their sales. Post fair they settle with the Fair Treasurer using these completed forms. Dana asked about how long the forms last. Denise indicated that they needed to be purchased every 3-4 years. Dana made a motion to approve the budget change request; Greg seconded. Motion Passed.

Jill presented a budget change request form in the amount of \$4,560 to pay for additional security needed to monitor the camping areas for Flyball and 4H. The state fair is changing things this year and says that all camping must be done within the gate parameters of our event. The flyball campers will be located just inside the fence at the Aqua gate. A security person will need to monitor that gate. Melanie has requested increased security to monitor the camping area in the back of the grounds. In addition to the security person, we will use cones and fencing to secure the area. Camping will be in the east end of the horse barn and across to the arena.

Melanie said last year security allowed people in to park in areas in which they were restricted. She would like to see monitors placed one at the first gate (near the blue lot), and then a second closer in at the gold gate.

Denise asked how we might communicate clearly with security personnel as to who is allowed in and where, and who is not? Scott responded that we will always "chase" security guards; meaning we must monitor how they are operating. He said that until they make a mistake, we can't address it.

It was suggested to keep license plate descriptions on file of those that receive parking passes.

The parking lot behind the horse show barn is for horse people. 4H campers have one additional vehicle pass that goes with their camping site.

Melanie said that they print their parking passes in bright red as that color is harder to duplicate.

Jill said that she wants to designate the area in Oak Grove as vendor parking. She said that the state fair has prohibited camping in there. She'd like to see vendor camping outside of the oak grove in the gravel parking area.

Greg made a motion to approve the budget change request for additional security for camping areas; Dana seconded. Motion passed.

Updated Commercial Exhibits Policy

Denise said that in a previous fair board meeting it was suggested to update the commercial exhibits policy to address the selling of weapons such as knives at the fair. She has done that and brought it forth for review. Members suggested some slight wording changes. Denise will make those changes and bring the revision back to the September meeting since the July meeting agenda will be full.

MCFair Website Domain Update

Denise has spoken with County IT. They feel that since the fair is no longer using the *mcfair.net* domain, using *marioncountyfair.net* instead, that we should no longer pay the annual fee to maintain it. Jill concurs and since Ingalls and Associates maintain the *marioncountyfair.net* site, she said they will pay the associated invoice and then seek reimbursement from the fair.

Fair Partners' On-site Camping Update

This was discussed previously in this meeting.

VII. Ingalls Report-

Scott said that sponsorship is up over last year's budget even though we lost a couple of sponsors. Chris asked Scott how sponsors' view the Marion County Fair? Scott says it is favorable. The only reason we have lost some is due to area economics where some don't have the expendable funds they used to.

The Fair's Financial Stability

Chris remarked that when he made the annual budget presentation to the Board of Commissioners (BOC), he pointed out that the fair is now, "standing on its own" without a general fund subsidy. This fair is fully self-supported. The BOC feels, that "the fair is on the right track, going the right direction, and they are happy with the work the fair board is doing."

Scott expressed that he is pleased that the county fair has its "own footprint." It has a separate identity from the state fair. He said he would, "Put our fair up against state fair any day of the week."

Scott said he meant to do a survey of other county fairs to determine how many county fairs operate without a fair subsidy from their county's general fund. He doesn't know of any.

Chris noted that the fair is conservative in its planning in both revenue projections and planned expenses. He said this will be the third year of "real data points" following Covid. Going forward for next year's fair, we will have the data to do a "re-calibration" with the real numbers.

Tickets

Jill said we will need to order wristbands soon; she needs to know how many to order.

Melanie said that 4H participants can buy entry tickets for \$5. They will also be able to buy 4-day (season) passes on-line in addition to discounted carnival wristbands

Melanie told Jill she will need an Afton ticket scanner by Tuesday, July 9.

Parking Passes

Rebecca asked if there will be a parking passes request form. Denise said we are still working out the details including the process for distribution of the parking passes.

Jill said she has asked state fair for "x amount" of free parking passes. She said we hope to sell vendor passes and special passes for \$2 to our participants. It would be nice if we could return any unused passes and pay for the difference between those used and those unused.

Discussion:

- It was noted that AGFEST paid \$27,500 for parking at their 2024 event.
- It was suggested that the auction committee buy x number of tickets up front and have them available for their buyers.
- Perhaps we can buy state fair out in 2025? Jill would like to see there be an electronic tracking system in the future.
- The 4H passes will be for all 4 days of the fair. We also will need individual day parking passes.
- We can negotiate the process with TCB (the security company) next year, but not this year.

Cameras in the Barns

Melanie brought up the issue that a request has been made for a person to put a private camera up in the barn to monitor their animal because they felt their animal was tampered with at last year's fair.

Discussion ensued:

- If a participant feels that their animal may be tampered with at the fair, then maybe the fair is not the place for them.
- Melanie said that 4H students are taught the principles of trust, accountability, and making personal decisions.
- Placing cameras on public property is an issue.

- Jill said that they've heard the concerns and the stories. She feels the fair should just say no cameras. Mounting a camera in a public area, could catch something else; it could be an invasion of privacy.
- It could be a liability.
- Any kind of surveillance should not be allowed.
- Everyone would have to sign a waiver if they were on camera.
- Wifi streaming would be an issue.
- It was suggested a policy be drafted.
- Everyone needs to sign-off on the use of cameras policy.
- The camera may be removed immediately by a fair manager.
- Would need to define a way to notify everyone about the new policy.
- Melanie said that 4H has opt in/out for media photos utilized for the program's interests; this doesn't extend to a private party's behavior.
- Have something like "I agree to abide by all the rules, when I accept the passes." 4H can put a one-page document together that they sign when they pick up the pass.
- Add the policy review to the June 18th Emergency Review agenda. We need to stress that we will need to have everyone in attendance as we will need a quorum to approve the policy.

Melanie said she will need the updated emergency plan by June 10 to get it out to everyone.

Other:

Kelli noted that the RFP (Request for Proposals) for stage, sound, and lights has been reviewed and scored for the 2025 fair. There is a selection committee and a contract process. This subcommittee suggests moving forward to continue using Cascade Sound. The question was raised does the fair board need to approve this. Answer- at this point we agree that the "fair manager" could move forward on this with the fair board ratifying the decision at a later time.

VIII. June Strategic Plan Items

2.2.7 Create activities schedule to help with public awareness and insure coordination. (Working schedule master list of specials, daily printout.) In process. Melanie will be getting a schedule of activities for Columbia Hall to Jill.

3.1.2 Confirm garbage and clean-up is handled by an organization; coordinate any 4H/FFA specifics with them. We have a contract with Jani-King. Jill will clarify with the state fair who pays for the dumpsters. We arranged for the dumpsters last year and they ended up using them.

3.2.11 Submit Fire Permit Application for Special Event/Trade Show to the Salem Fire Dept.- Done

3.2.12 Submit Tent or Canopy Permit Application to Salem's Building and Safety Division/Permit Application Center. Done

3.3.1 Maintain two information booth notebooks- In process

3.3.2 Improve "signage" throughout fairgrounds- directing people to commercial exhibits, posting prices at ticket booths, etc.- Working on it. If anyone has additional signage requests, let Jill know. It was noted that the fire lane red lines in the barns are not visible. Commercial vendors complain that there is not enough signage to get

people to the exhibit hall. Sarah said last year's printed maps and web information need updating with changes like there will be no pig racing this year.

The groups having large picnics will provide their own instructions to their participants. The day sheet maps should include language that there are commercial exhibits in Columbia Hall.

3.3.4 *Review Emergency Plan mid-June (Scheduled for June 18)* Make sure everyone attends.

3.3.6 *Schedule date for Volunteer Appreciation Night in Sept. Give "Save the date" notices out during fair.* N/A; will be presenting volunteers with a gift(s) at fair time.

3.3.7 *Identify a Management Update meeting date to provide post fair gate numbers and revenue.* Kelli has it on her radar.

4.5.1 *Maximize commercial space in exhibit hall and outside-* In process

4.5.2 *Commercial vendor coordination (communication, application, payment)* In process through Eventhub

4.5.3 *Food vendor coordination (communication, application, payment)* In process through Eventhub

5.2.6 *Prepare upcoming fair presentation (Fair Highlights) for a BOC session-* We usually do a presentation to the BOC at one of the board sessions right before fair. Our intent is to reach those watching CCTV. In looking at the schedule, there is not a management update (and subsequent related board session) scheduled in time before the coming fair. Kelli proposes we not do it this year. No one was opposed.

Scott noted that our social media is well planned and also Ingalls will be providing Jon Heynen (The BOC Public Information Officer) with the highlights reel and other messaging that will be much more efficient than coordinating fair partners coming to a board session.

Dana suggested that perhaps the BOC would be doing a video introducing the fair as they've done in the past.

It was suggested to change the wording in this strategic plan item (5.2.6) to "Alignment with the Boards Communication Staff."

IX. Other:

Rebecca noted that she has recently gotten involved with another public board. Lack of communication and transparency gives her appreciation for what Denise does with the quality of the minutes and the prepared board meeting packet with its supplemental content. She thanked Denise and said she does an "amazing job."

Greg asked if everyone has completed their bond application. Answer- no.

Greg expressed how much he enjoyed the "facilitated team building event" (the retreat) and wants to see it occur again. (The is an annual event that happens every fall.)

Jill said she has been working with another public board, a large community event that has 38 board members. She said there are problems such as having not established any policies. They also don't work as a team, instead

operate out of individual “silos.” She expressed “blessings” on this board. She exclaimed it’s hard to imagine how “messy” boards can be.

Joseph asked when work orders were due. Answer- May 31 (they are over-due.) He also asked about the gray gate hours. Answer- gray gate is open from 6 AM- 9 AM; it’s not a 24 hr. gate. Blue gate opens at 6 AM and stays open throughout the fair hours.

Meeting Adjourned: 7:10 PM.