

Marion County Fair Board

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

Monthly Meeting/Fair Recap

Commissioners' Board Room

555 Court St NE, Salem OR

August 1, 2018 5:30 PM

In Attendance

Board Members: Joel Conder, Brandi Crandall, Heidi DeCoster, Shannon Gubbels, Nathan Leao, Dylan Wells, Pam Zielinski

Key Volunteers: Mike Adams, Bry Taylor-Campos

Staff: Denise Clark, Tamra Goettsch

BOC Liaisons: Commissioner Sam Brentano, Commissioner Janet Carlson

Guests: Jill & Scott Ingalls, Ingalls & Associates; Melanie McCabe, 4H; Abbey Lewis, 4H

I. **Call to Order/Introductions – 5:30 PM**

II. **Public Comments-** None

III. **Approval of June 26, 2018 Meeting Summary Notes-** Brandi made a motion to accept the June 26, 2018 Meeting Summary Notes; Heidi seconded. Motion approved. (Approval of July 11 notes has been moved to the next meeting.)

IV. **Financial Report-** Tamra:

- Latest changes in the budget document are reflected in yellow.
- Approximately \$38,800 in revenue is still to come in.
- Gate revenue is down approximately \$7,500.
- 4H revenue has not yet been received. Melanie indicated that camping fees will be \$7,310 and horse stalls-\$2,745.
- Money was saved in the STEAM line item this year.
- The Fair Foundation will send a \$3,000 invoice for the fair's share of the 4H premium payouts.
- Dylan asked about the \$715.04 listed separately at the top of Events & Activities; this is just a remaining balance in the category.
- Heidi made a motion to accept the Financial Report as presented; Joel seconded. Motion passed.

V. **Items of Special Interest**

The Bylaws were updated in 2017.

Discussion was held on Nathan's verbal resignation from the fair board and his later rescinding that resignation. Dylan consulted with Tamra on resignation procedures. After review of the fair board bylaws and consultation with county counsel, the fair board chair (Dylan) has the authority to request a member's resignation; all requests to date were allowable. On Saturday at the fair, Nathan verbally gave his resignation to Tamra; on Sunday he rescinded his resignation. A verbal resignation was also given by Nathan over the phone to Dylan on the following Monday.

However, since the bylaws require board member resignations to be in writing, and nothing was received in writing, Nathan is still a fair board member.

When Shannon was consulted, she suggested the fair board's conflict resolution process be used in this situation. She encouraged members to work through their differences and does not believe it is in the best interest of the board to remove a member. This document was reviewed, but the document outlines "values statement" more than action steps to address these types of situations.

Pam expressed that it should be a full board decision regarding a member's resignation, not one individual making the decision. Tamra confirmed that Dylan did not remove anyone; he only asked for Nathan's resignation.

Tamra is drafting a procedures document for members of the board, staff, and key volunteers to use in the future. Steps will be outlined to give board members direction when dealing with this kind of situation; it was requested that resignation be included in the process document. There are steps outlined in state statutes on the removal of a fair board member.

Commissioner Carlson noted that the Marion County Board of Commissioners (BOC) is the only body that can remove a fair board member; they appoint and remove board members. If the fair board elected to remove a member, the first step would be submitting a recommendation to the board of commissioners. Fair Board members are unlike other board members in that there are special statutory rights for fair board members as they are bonded and oversee property, money, etc. If conflict resolution steps could be used, that would be the BOC's preference.

Nathan felt that the existing conflict resolution process was not utilized in this instance. As a board member for ten years; he supports conflict resolution.

Commissioner Carlson indicated that as a public body, the fair board has not made a decision regarding a member's resignation. To take such action would need formal public meeting notification. Anything discussed since the last fair board meeting is just informal conversation.

Brandi asked for background on what happened. Nathan stated that Saturday at the fair, near lunch time, a security staff member stopped him from entering because he wasn't wearing a wristband. He indicated that he had the band with him, just wasn't wearing it. As Tamra was approaching the fair office, the security staff member asked for her assistance. Nathan expressed that he didn't like the way she approached the situation; he felt that she should have taken him aside to address the problem. He became angry and decided to resign. The next day, he reconsidered and decided to rescind his resignation to Tamra. There were separate allegations that Nathan authorized the opening of the yellow gate to let out grill-off participants which resulted in car show participants also leaving through that gate; Nathan stated that he did not do so. He did note that in the past, vehicles were allowed on the grounds (*when the fair was open*) with an escort. Nathan stated Dylan called him Monday and asked him to submit his resignation. Nathan requested Dylan to document the allegations; Dylan complied and sent them to him the following day.

Tamra was brought into the situation by the security staff member when Nathan was circumventing security. Tamra's comment to Nathan supported the fair board's decision at the July 11th fair board meeting; all were to wear wristbands, they were not to be carried separately, and were needed to gain entry to the fair. All fair board members were in attendance at the July 11th meeting.

When considering other options for future fairs, Nathan suggested that a bar code could be added to the back of a badge for tracking the in/out of gates. Jill noted that lanyards can be handed off to someone else very easily; wristbands work best because they can't pass it off to another person.

Tamra suggests that the chair, vice chair, and a couple of other board members meet to review the policy and procedures drafted. Tamra, Dylan, Heidi, Shannon, Jill and Denise agreed to review and bring recommendations to the next fair board meeting. Shannon suggested having a consultant come in and do some training in the fall on how to work with difficult people; everyone could benefit from it. Tamra suggested the board consider performance expectations on a member's performance and could include behavioral expectations. Brandi suggested a "code of conduct" be developed. The fair board has its policies and the county has another set of policies; the fair board is held equally accountable to both.

Nathan stated that he wishes to continue as a "productive member" of the fair board. When asked if Nathan thought he behaved appropriately regarding the wristband incident, he stated that he put himself in "time out."

Dylan clarified that the email he sent to the board regarding Nathan's resignation was due to Nathan's comments to him that he was only giving a verbal resignation and was not going to submit a written one. Nathan requested Dylan send him something in writing after their phone conversation on July 30th. Dylan wrote the following: "I am asking for your letter of resignation because of your actions at the most recent Marion County Fair. As a member of the Marion County Fair Board, your actions demonstrated a lack of respect and inappropriate behavior when dealing with contractors and staff members. Slamming of doors, disparaging remarks, and undermining egress plans. This behavior is unacceptable, violates Marion County Fair Customer Service policy, and does not promote a favorable image of our fair. If no resignation is turned in by the next fair board meeting, I will start the member removal process outlined in the Fair Board Bylaws. As board members, all members are to treat others with respect, and provide a social local and fun environment at the Marion County Fair."

Per Nathan's request, Dylan researched what had happened at fair. In their conversation Nathan indicated that it was not appropriate for him to wear wristbands due to the nature of his employment. Nathan confirmed that he did not mention this at the previous fair board meeting where this was approved.

Tamra indicated that she was originally consulted on the verbal, versus written, notice. However, upon her further review and input from Marion County Legal Counsel, it was confirmed that a written letter of resignation was needed from Nathan. The other option could have been for the fair board to take it to the Board of Commissioners to start the administrative process of removal.

Jill confirmed that she received a call from Nathan to authorize the opening of the yellow gate; she said "no." She then said that Nathan abruptly hung up on her.

Jill was told from security that a board member had told them that Scott had authorized the opening of the yellow gate. The security guard at the yellow gate was questioned and stated that when they asked another board member "who the person was who was walking away," they were told that it was Nathan.

Commissioner Carlson suggested that the customer service policy be modified to incorporate the respect and ethical behavior issues to be utilized in internal communication. It was suggested that everyone review all of the existing

policies prior to the fall work day.

Fair Attendance Report- Brandi

- The preliminary attendance report was sent out immediately after fair was over. Brandi confirmed that those figures are not “set in stone.”
- The numbers in the report are based on box office sales from Afton and only includes paid entries, not the additional non-paid (credentialed) entries. (She works those numbers out with Denise at a later time.)
- Overall, the numbers are down; the 98 degree weather kept folks away from the fair.
- Easton Corbin’s act on Saturday still drew decent numbers.
- Food vendor numbers and Afton’s detailed reports are available, if anyone wants a copy; however, Oregon Beverage numbers are not yet available.
- Scott commented that Oregon Beverage’s numbers were up and he is working with them to get the monetary figures.
- Food vendors reported that they did okay, even though their sales were down. Java Oasis served breakfast, which helped with their sales.
- Brandi felt that all parties did a good job managing the effects of the heat.
- Friday’s and Sunday’s attendance took the biggest hit; future efforts should strive to improve those two days’ attendance.
- Dylan stated that weather is uncontrollable and that there wasn’t anything the fair board could do to change that.

Commissioner Carlson thanked Brandi for providing the numbers so quickly following fair. Brandi indicated that next year she will strive to provide “half way through the fair numbers.”

Commissioner Brentano stated that if it’s going to be hotter each year, we need to identify new ways to invite people to attend; suggested adding misters and air conditioned buildings to advertisements. It was suggested that there are innovative ways to hang shade cloth to protect areas from the heat. Perhaps there are grant opportunities that could also help solve the heat issue.

Junior Market Auction:

- The buyers were very appreciative of having beer at the auction dinner; each buyer received two free drink tickets in their buyer packet.
- Comments received from auction-goers indicated that the beer was removed too soon; the vendor left at 4:45 PM to serve at the rodeo.
- Junior Market Auction sales were way up; approximately \$500,000.

2018 Fair- What went well/what could be improved?

- The Alaskan Racing Pigs organizers took two days to post its racing times for fairgoers. Viewing attendees were lower this year than last year.
- Talk with the state fair about using the beef barn; more room is needed for the increased number of animals.
- The Woods, where alcoholic beverages were dispensed, didn’t get a “fair trial,” according to Jill. It should be included again next year; it has potential. The games need to be better lit during the evening hours.

- The company picnics went well; even though they were moved into buildings at the last minute for the air conditioning. The picnic participants were happy. The one picnic held in the pavilion was too far away from everything. Perhaps shade cloth would work well next year for the picnics.
- Shannon suggests updating the pygmy goat MOU to include them submitting their entry credential needs a month ahead of fair.
- The veterans' event needs improvement. Both the Paralyzed Veterans and MC Emergency Management organizers expressed interest in getting involved in this. Perhaps get someone else to organize the event or get a volunteer on Sarah Webb's organizational committee. The outreach is what is lacking.
- Brandi suggested allowing the kids showing the market auction animals to wear t-shirts that say "Youth Auction Participant" instead of the long sleeve shirts and sweaters. Maybe have fans circulating air on them.
- Some heat related accidents; the ambulances were the "cooling stations" for those in need.
- Mike Adams spoke to Oregon Rain and they said that they would donate water next year; however the fair needs to reach out to them early in the season.
- Brandi has a contact (Universal Forest Products) that is willing to donate all the animal shavings for next year's fair. The fair would need to find a truck that will deliver it. Scott said he will find the transportation.
- Dylan witnessed Falck personnel having a difficult time taking command of an emergency situation in the barns. Parents were interfering and giving input on what needed to be done so the child could show his/her animal. Melanie noted that should a student be injured, or otherwise unable to show, there are accommodations made to have someone else show the animal.
- Scott has requested a copy of all of the incident reports from Falck. Denise also needs a copy of each to send to Risk Management.
- Bry noticed comments on Facebook about people wanting a fair schedule posted. Jill said that Full Bloom, social media contractor, knows the algorithms that drive what is posted on Facebook. They know what draws people's attention or not.
- Melanie suggests that blood-borne pathogen kits need to be available on the grounds. There was some blood where the source could not be identified; animal or human blood. Jill said that the janitorial service is supposed to take care of those needs.

Public Competitions:

- Need new superintendents for floral and textiles; board members please refer people to Heidi and Bry.
- Need more judges.
- Jill suggests having them put together the needs/roles to be filled along with the associated qualifications.
- The quilt show was a "fabulous display" this year; a great representation of art.
- The work order for quilt walks needs to include weights for the quilts. It also takes an extensive amount of pipe and drape.
- Tamra suggested using youth to assist superintendents. She offered to go with Heidi and Bry to various organizations to secure youth assistants.
- For judges, Michaels and Hobby Lobby could be a resource for interested personnel. Once you get an employee of a store working with the fair, it opens up opportunity for sponsorships.
- Pam noted commercial vendors were generally happy this year; however many left early on Sunday.
- The Fair Foundation gave out \$660 dollars in open class premiums for youth. (One child received \$59 in premium money.)

- Denise noted that many of the public competition projects did not get picked up and were delivered to Community Services. An email or phone call was completed to all owners stating they needed to pick up items by August 10 or they would be discarded; this is also written in the public competition handbook. Heidi said that any items not claimed could be used as fair decorations next year.

Volunteers:

- The public competition superintendents didn't communicate well with the volunteer coordinator and many didn't complete a volunteer application which would have recorded them in the system.
- Judy Christensen, interim fair volunteer coordinator, did well at filling the volunteer slots.
- The volunteer photographers "hit it out of the park" with some really good photos.
- Tamra indicated that David Beam had verbally resigned his position with the fair. [This was later rescinded and he wishes to continue on as a fair volunteer.]

VI. Strategic Plan Items – August

New: Add "review policies and procedures" to the strategic plan.

4.6.5 Hold an August recap meeting to address the positive and negative components of the most recent fair.
Completed at the August 2018 meeting.

4.6.6 Members to submit their attendance numbers at August recap meeting if they have not already done so.
Denise reminded folks that she needs post fair reports submitted. Any member responsible for an event or activity must complete one and send to Denise.

3.2.3 Evaluation of contracts – identify which contractors are eligible for renewal. Determine which services should be competitively solicited before the following year's fair. Tamra stated that Sarah Spinks (Contracts Coordinator) has left county employment and that Krista Ulm is the department's new Contract Specialist. However, she currently is filling many duties of three vacant positions. Tamra will look at the existing contracts and will conduct a review at the retreat.

5.2.4 Review Management Agreement every 5 years – next September, 2021

VII. Other- None

VIII. Adjourn – 7:58 PM