

Lewis and Clark County Fairgrounds – Fair Board Meeting Minutes
November 17, 2021 – 11:30 am
98 W. Custer Ave., Helena MT 59602

Attendees:

Board members: Phil Porrini, Greg Pace, Jay Sherley, FayDee Hamilton, Jo Young, Mike Murray, Judy Rolfe

Staff: Kevin Tenney, Sandy McIntyre

Jerry Blythe, City Parks Board Liaison

Public: Carmela Romerio, Helena Team Penners

Phil Porrini, Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:35 am.

Approval of Minutes:

There were no corrections or additions to the October 27, 2021 minutes. Mike Murray motioned to approve the October 27, 2021 minutes, seconded by Greg Pace. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment:

- Carmela Romerio, representing the Helena Team Penners discussed their November 27, 2021 event to be held in the Multi-purpose building. The concerns are the condition of the arena's dirt and the need for stall rentals for participants from out of town.
 - The team penners would like to upgrade the arena dirt by removing manure and adding sand. They would provide the materials and labor to do this.
 - Kevin Tenny will meet with Carmela/team penners representative later this week to discuss what can be done, nothing that other events are held in this building that need packed dirt.
 - They feel that the pens need to be pulled out and re-set.
 - They want to have stalls available for rental. The Fairgrounds is not renting stalls at this time due to horses that are evidence in a criminal case are being kept in the stall area and there is no public access to the stall area.
 - Kevin Tenney said that if the Sheriff's Department is okay with the group renting stalls, they can.
 - The penners would also like additional water troughs for the cattle at the Multi-purpose building.

Financial Report:

Kevin Tenney reviewed financials:

- Financial situation looks good.
 - Tax revenues should start coming in at the end of the month.
- Phil Porrini asked when any Covid relief funds might come in. Kevin said those funds, possibly upwards of \$750,000, would not come in until next fiscal year (July).

Events Report:

- Kevin Tenney gave an update on Events.
 - Gun Show – well attended, took \$20,000 out of ATM
 - Rabbit Habit – record # of rabbits
 - A number of vaccine clinics have been held and are scheduled for December.
 - Three craft shows are scheduled over the holidays.

Operations Report:

Kevin Tenney reported on operations:

- Maintenance has been short-handed due to illness and a resignation. Position has been posted and we are trying to get temps in.
- Visit Helena Montana
 - Kevin met with people from the Myrna Loy, Grandstreet Theatre and the Civic Center as part of Visit Helena which is exploring events to develop Helena into a destination point.
 - This was the first meeting to discuss a coordinated, unified vision and approach.
 - There's interest in creating a "Winter Fest" with winter carnival, skijoring, and other activities with the various facilities and grounds available.
 - There's also interest in developing a "Fall Fest" event.
 - There are plans for a downtown Winter Carnival in February 2022.
 - Visit Helena has grant money available to support these events.
- Fairgrounds Spring Fest
 - The Fairgrounds is planning Spring Fest 2022, with a carnival, concert(s) and possibly rough stock rodeo events. We have re-contracted with North Star Carnivals (who will be at the Stampede.)
 - Jo Young suggested looking into bringing Montana Mule Days or a similar event to the Fairgrounds as part of the Visit Helena initiative.
- VIP Room
 - We are continuing to pursue the possibility of receiving ARPA funds to add water and sewer to the VIP room.
 - With water, sewer, heat and air conditioning, the VIP room could be rented out for events.
- Paving Project Update
 - KLJ is currently doing drone surveys and getting ground samples.
 - Projected costs will be provided in late spring/early summer.
 - Breaking ground should occur after the Stampede.
- Directional Signage
 - The direction signage is here and should be installed in the next couple of weeks.
- Roofing Repairs
 - Christman Roofing finished the snowguards on the building and will do the Grandstands next.
 - Total cost is approximately \$28,000-Fairgrounds will pay \$10,000, insurance covers the balance.

- New Website
 - Work continues on re-designing Fairgrounds website. Greg Pace had the current draft version available on his laptop for the Board to take a look at.

Future Fairgrounds Projects:

- Phil Porrini distributed the list of suggested future Fairgrounds projects and estimated costs at the last meeting, and Logan sent them it out again on email prior to today's meeting.
- A number of Board members were absent and it was agreed to table this discussion until the January 2022 meeting, where members will be asked to rank the projects in order of importance. Members can also email their rankings to Logan.

Other Business:

- Linda Grady resigned from the Fair Board on November 16, 2021.
- Current Board Member Terms
 - Kevin Tenny passed out a list of when current Fair Board member terms expire.
 - Members who are at the end of their first term and want to serve a second term should email Kevin Tenney. These members are Mark Menke, Judy Rolfe, Greg Pace and Dave Duffy.
 - There are currently 2 open Board positions.
 - FayDee Hamilton suggested that once terms are up, outgoing members be a liaison for new members.

Adjournment:

- Mike Murray moved to adjourn the meeting. Phil Porrini seconded the motion. It passed unanimously and meeting was adjourned at 12:20pm.