



## Missoula County Fair Event Committee

Thursday January 11, 2018 at 10AM

Missoula Fairgrounds Office

1101 South Avenue West, Missoula

### 1. Meeting commencement

The meeting was called to order at 10:04 am.

### 2. Rollcall & introduction of guests none

Committee Members

- |                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Jim Sadler – Chair, present        | 5. Peter HagEstad, absent                   |
| 2. Brooke Martin- Vice-Chair, present | 6. Laura Mitchell, present                  |
| 3. Janie Scheben, absent              | 7. Jim Solomon, absent                      |
| 4. Dave Bell, present                 | Alternate: Campbell Barrett, present/seated |

Fairgrounds Staff: Tom Aldrich, Monte Harris, Pirrie Harris, Tracy Mullennix

### 3. Approval of agenda

There were no changes or additions made to the January meeting agenda.

### 4. Public comment on items not on the agenda - none

### 5. Action Items

#### a. Approval of minutes from October 2017

The October 2017 meeting minutes were accepted as published.

### 6. Discussion Items

#### A. MCFEC and 2018

#### a. Lots of upcoming contracts - selection committee scheduling

Aldrich is to send an email to query the selection committee as to a meeting time to review the motorsports contract details. There are several repeat contracts for 2018, such as diving dogs. Motorsports would be a one year contract. Consideration could be given to a multiple year contract for diving dogs, due to the popularity. The Selection committee was to convene in approximately 2 weeks.

If approved, a famous music artist would be the highlight of the musical acts. Lower cost local artists would be contracted to fill in the rest. Aldrich had included a list of acts and bids with the agenda. The exact nights each artist would play would be further negotiated. If approved, Aldrich would like to schedule a meet and greet with the famous musician on a weeknight to increase rodeo attendance. Rodeo is already packed on the weekends. The music entertainment would still be free to the

public. Aldrich is looking for a major radio sponsorship. The previous sponsors would have the first right of refusal. The formal offer to a music manager must include who the radio station sponsor will be, for artist promotion purposes. Singing of the national anthem would also be built into the package. Discussion about Colt Ford followed. Mitchell moved that the Committee recommend Fair staff proceed in making a formal offer to the famous musician's management for a performance at the 2018 Western Montana Fair, and forward a contract for approval to the Board of Missoula County Commissioners. Barrett seconded the motion. The motion carried.

It was suggested that Aldrich investigate bluegrass band, Milltown Damn. The selection committee will also look at other local acts. Aldrich will provide a fresh price sheet to the selection committee after the major acts are solidified. New contracts will include weather, no show and radius clauses. All contracts go through an approval process with the County attorney and Risk and Benefits.

**b. MCFEC Schedule – times, frequency, times of day**

Aldrich inquired as to whether the committee would like to make any changes to the committee meeting frequency, days, or times. Discussion followed as to Scheben's availability and Solomon's lack of attendance. Concern was expressed about making quorum and whether the committee could find a way to eliminate the issue. The Alternate has always been seated in order to make quorum. The question was posed as to whether the number of seats on the committee should or could be changed. Aldrich shared that Hagestad, due to his employment, needed to be near his phone during the day. Hagestad and his wife bolstered the Fair several ways, including through a sponsorship. Scheben was integral to the Winter Fair. Sadler advised that the sub committees set up specific meetings and work out their own schedule. Aldrich would send out a poll for available meeting times.

**c. Attendance & Engagement** – discussed as part of the agenda item above.

**B. Staff Reports**

**a. Winter Fair**

Aldrich reported that Winter Fair went well, with ample traffic on Saturday. It was quite a bit slower on Sunday. In the future, a one day event seems like a good plan. There was a lot of positive feedback. This year, Winter Fair was organized purposely in a smaller area on the grounds. Attendance at Skate with Santa was up to 830 people during Winter Fair. The attendance was down, however, the next weekend at Glacier Ice Rink Winter Wonderland event. Due to the route for the wagon rides, parking was an issue for the rink. In the future, the committee could be assigned to look into the caroling groups, and licensing for movies.

Suggestions for future Winter Fair include: Add a Santa mailbox and writing station, and someone to respond to the letters, have real reindeer in a pen, Breakfast with Santa and selfie/photo opportunities, light up a Christmas tree, donate to the Food Bank and receive a s'more kit in return. Movies running in Culinary all day would give a more permanent feel and use. Date and timing of the event in the future will need to be explored. Development in the historic buildings will also have an impact on timing.

**b. Western Montana Fair**

**a. Sponsorships**

Fair sponsorship packets are to go out soon. The announcement of the Made Fair and new entertainment line- up will be a boost to sponsorship. Winter Fair will also be wrapped in as part of the sponsorship package. Aldrich is working towards simplification of sponsorship. Suggestion was made for the Fair to take a more active role in making sure parking lots by outlying groups were used. Staff will be working earlier with Beach to develop shuttle bus routes and publicize the schedules which will, hopefully, help address parking issues. Aldrich is working with Missoula in Motion to develop sustainable transportation alternatives and promote them to Fair goers.

**b. Entertainment**

- 1. Music** – discussed in agenda item 6Aa above.
- 2. Motorsports** – discussed in agenda item 6Aa above.

**c. Commercial Vendors**

MADE Fair will be taking over coordination of the Commercial building. The contract with MADE Fair will pay the County \$1400, as a building rental. Those who have had booths in the Commercial building will be invited to set up on the West lawn, as we have available space there. The Fairgrounds Director is looking into a temporary lift for the Commercial building, for possible utilization of both floors in 2018. There would be joint promotion with the MADE Fair.

**d. Regulatory & Concessions**

Fair staff are working with the fire department to figure out categories of concessions, their associated needs, and establish specific guidelines which will aid in prioritization for building and development specifications. There are plans to better regulate concessionaires, requiring formal food service training for managers/co- managers, and host mass trainings. In the long run, the Fairgrounds will own and maintain equipment. A concession area will be built where buildings 17 and 18 were located. That central area being refurbished and rebuilt is being considered the “Historic Plaza” and will be the core of most event planning.

**e. Website Overhaul**

Aldrich started rebuilding the website with much of the same content, but easier access. “Event Center” will be dropped from the title. WesternMontanaFair.com was bought by an internet scavenger and the County litigated to get it back. The Fairgrounds has bought up all the URL names that match our brands. The website redesign includes internet consolidation and social media configuration.

**f. New Hire**

Pirrie Harris was promoted to an Accounting Specialist. She will be focusing on finances and financial reporting. There will be a new administrative/front desk person to work under Aldrich. The new position will manage customer service and rentals, keeping the online presence and calendars up to date. The new position will be on board in the next few weeks.

**C. Committee Reports**

- a. **Selection Committee** – no new report.
- b. **Winter Fair Committee** – discussed as agenda item 6Ba.

**D. Development Update**

The committee is welcome to reach out to the Fairgrounds Director with questions.

**E. 4-H Update**

Barrett reported that the 4-H Awards event was held on December 10 at the Fairgrounds. There were 120 people in attendance. 4-H also invited the top 10 buyers to come this year, and there was a good turnout of buyers. Fair related; the beef project weigh-in was held. There were 75 steers and additional breeding projects. The Fair Event Committee is encouraged to come to the monthly superintendent meetings and become engaged. Seventeen department superintendents were present at the January 8 meeting. Discussion took place regarding a Fair Event Committee representative attending the superintendent meetings, including the superintendent update as an agenda item and emailing the superintendent meeting agenda to the Fair Event Committee. Development has impacted the display location of 4-H project exhibits. Solutions are still being discussed.

**F. Ice Update** - no report

7. **Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 11:30am.  
The next meeting will be Thursday, February 8, 10am, at the Fair Office.