Missoula County Fair Event Committee

Meeting Minutes
Thursday June 8, 2017 10AM
Missoula Fairgrounds Office
1101 South Avenue West, Missoula

1. **Meeting commencement**

   The meeting was called to order at 10:10 am by Vice Chair Brooke Martin

2. **Rollcall & introduction of guests**

   Committee members present: Dave Bell, Vice Chair Brooke Martin, Laura Mitchell, Peter HagEstad, and alternate Campbell Barrett, who was seated to obtain a quorum.
   Committee members absent: Janie Scheben, Jim Solomon, Chairman Jim Sadler
   Staff present: Tom Aldrich, Tracy Mullennix, Pirrie Harris
   Public present: none

3. **Approval of agenda**

   Agenda was approved without comment.

4. **Public comment on items not on the agenda –** none.

5. **Approval of minutes –** accepted as published.

6. **Action Items –** none.

   At this point Campbell inquired as to what staff sees the committee acting on. Tom stated that the committee is advisory. The committee's role is to make recommendations, working together with staff to bring issues as needed to BCC. Contracts for 2017 Fair were put off so the committee could help make those decisions and thus, the reporting on that is coming from the subcommittee. Contracts developing next year could be reviewed as a group then. Tom also views the committee as an idea group, brainstorming and executing ideas, as each member has their own talents. Fair boards by law have to be advisory due to legislation.

   Brooke stated her interest in future vision. It was explained that development is a different, separate group, but it is important to focus on the Fair, even as we go through development and the impacts that it will have. Campbell encouraged the group to speak up to make sure that the Fair proceeds successfully through development and beyond.

7. **Discussion Items**

   A. Fair Update:
      a. Fundraising – Tom reported that we are tracking at 70 thousand in cash sponsorships, which is up from 54 thousand last year. The goal is 100 thousand in

light of the Free Fair. We did bring in some new sponsors, but it is time to give a big push for the final 30 thousand. Twelve thousand of the increase was new cash pledged by existing sponsors specifically for the Free Fair concept. If any committee members have ideas for sponsors they are asked to forward them to Tom. First Interstate Bank, Pepsi, Lithia Ford and A&E Architects are big cash sponsors this year.

b. Marketing and Promotion – Tom reported that ads were rolling out the following week. KPAX would be putting out the first commercial. We would have 6 bus signs. This year in-kind sponsorships for marketing increased dramatically. Marketing would be doubled from last year. There was a strategic social media push being made, TV appearances scheduled, and presentations by Emily and Tom. New banners will be hanging up downtown this year.

c. Security – Tom reported that we are working with City and County law enforcement once again. Jace Dickinson is the representative with the Sheriff's department this year. Bob Bouchee worked out a strategy to make security safer and cheaper this year. We were able to work out a plan to focus on peak hours and locations, positioning of security, scheduling and strategies. Overall, the contract negotiated better presence and a reduction of expense. Security at the beer gardens will be three levels, police, bouncers and private security firm.

d. Ribbon Cutting Ceremony & Fair Awards Committee – Pirrie reported that a ribbon cutting ceremony would be a good press opportunity to include Commissioners and the Fair Event Committee to cut the ribbon and officially declare the Fair open. Discussion followed as to proposed times, inclusion of sponsors, and press release. Tom will line up the dignitaries and staff will schedule the ceremony. Chamber has scissors. Campbell was designated to line up scissors for the event.

The Awards sub-committee had met and discussed online voting and Fair ambassadors circulating, incentives for voting, as well as categories for awards. Possible awards included Best Fair Food, Superintendent, Best Exhibit Building, Use of Theme and Layout, Best Commercial Booth, Entertainment, Carnival Ride, Best Music. Other ideas included utilizing Erin Yost on Friday to increase traffic, scheduling the awards on stage as a ceremony, voting on next year's Fair theme. The awards themselves were also discussed – whether certificates or ribbons and who to hand them out. Tom expressed that the staff must be careful of the work flow during Fair and that they could advise, but that it is the committee that needs to make the awards happen.

B. Committee Reports:

Tom reported that contracts are in front of the Commissioners for approval.
Rodeo - Contract begins in 2018. Sankey has been here for 30 plus years. They were the only applicant.

Carnival – NorthStar Amusements have been here for several years. They also do Kalispell, Bozeman, Butte, and Ravalli. They are the appropriate size, reliable, and have been gracious about making improvements. The RFP process was thorough. After calling references, it was determined that the second place applicant had had difficulty with no-shows. In the contract the deadlines have been consolidated, there will be an increase in tracking of finances with daily receipt reports.

Stage/Sound/Lights – This contract starts this year. Hi-Tech Stage and Lighting with local Jay Straw. This contractor will bring in a professional festival music stage, lights, and sound. He will manage and station an engineer for all acts as well as do rodeo/arena sound. We have combined the free community stage and music stage into one and programmed both at one location.

Beer Garden – A mini RFP was in process. Due to lower than expected revenue in 2016, we are looking at a potential alternative to the Tavern Owner's Association. The Badlander is interested and they are well equipped, staffed and have a revenue strategy. The Badlander has done events at the Adams Center and other large venues. They will also offer activities to draw people in with daily workshops to learn about brewing and so on. These would be adult oriented activities done in the original beer garden. We are exploring the possibility of a special expensive cocktail with local ingredients to raise funds for the Fair Foundation. There will hopefully be a total of 3 beer gardens; original beer garden area, stampede stage area and in the back side if the new VIP area.

C. Development Update – tabled due to time

D. 4-H Update:

Campbell encouraged members to follow 4-H on Facebook. Deadline for livestock entries is June 21.

8. **Adjournment –** The meeting was adjourned at 11:31am.

The next meeting will be held Thursday, July 13, 10AM, at the Fairgrounds Office