

FSMG Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 12th, 2010
7:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.
Public Service Center, CR 623

Attendees: Scott Horenstein, Judy Stanton, Chris Palmer, Mark McCauley, Justin Kobluk, John Morrison

Meeting was called to order at 7:30. Mark McCauley opened the meeting by explaining that he hadn't finished the December meeting minutes and that they would be done by the next meeting.

Mark began by discussing the Event Center's line of credit balance. We have a balance approaching \$300,000. We had hoped to use the PFD subsidy to keep us off the line of credit but the Event Center Dedicated Fund is under some financial pressure and that subsidy may not be realized. Mark then reported that the Fairgrounds Master Plan Update/Developer's Agreement was going to a public hearing on the January 19th and that some FSMG Board support would be helpful. We believe it is sure to be approved but some positive testimony is always helpful.

Mark went on to explain that the Commissioners were very supportive of securing additional parking capability and that the upcoming road construction bond issue might be used to acquire land for that purpose.

Mark then discussed the Friends of the Fair and their interest in securing an off site facility to incubate new 4-H and FFA members---by teaching kids how to cultivate crops and raise livestock. In our increasingly urban environment that is becoming more difficult. They are seeking a location in the Hazel Dell area.

Lastly, Mark discussed the transportation planning process and how we needed to get a fix on where we are with studying a new southern access route into the fairgrounds complex. Mark will determine the status of that effort and report to the Board at the next meeting.

John Morrison picked up next with a fair discussion. He began by discussing the new Exhibitor's Guide. He said it would be much simpler and easier to understand. He also reported that it would be ready much earlier this year and that it would be available on line and that we would print fewer copies (money saver). Superintendents were involved in the process so everyone should be on the same sheet of music.

It looks as though we are going to push our traditional theme set---"Big, Wild, Fun" and "This Summer's Best Party" and somewhat reduce the emphasis on the featured exhibit---though we will still push that, along with a number of smaller features. For example, we will have an alien exhibit with the theme "The Day the

Fair Stood Still.” We will also have a wild animal exhibit and are working with Best Buy to get a gaming tournament organized.

John spent some time discussing the state budget problem and its affect on the fair. The Governor’s budget appears to eliminate the Fair Commission in 2011 and along with it the fair subsidy. This saves the state about \$2 million a year. The money used to fund the Fair Commission comes from paramutual tax revenues that previously were kept separate. These revenues now go to the general fund and are, therefore, at risk. We and others who support fairs will work towards changing this decision. We typically receive about \$85,000 per year (helps to have been the top fair in each of the past seven years). There has been some talk of splitting the remaining funds and paying out half in each of the next two years. We disagree with this because we fear the second half would disappear. There is a Washington State Fair Association Legislative Day coming up on 28 January—we will hit that in force and will try to meet with all our senators and representatives.

Here is a story that will make you feel good: We have had a problem with scales at the fair for a while---ours are garbage---and sometimes they break right when you don’t want them too. We’ve tried to keep working with them to save money. Roy Garrison and Hershel Yarnell each donated a new scale. Roy gave us one for the swine and sheep and Hershel gave us one for goats--great gifts. We now have three small and one large scale---so we are in good shape.

John reported that we had won a number of awards. Our River Ramble won a first place at IAFE for a special project. At the Western Fairs Association we won: 1st place for our web site; 2nd place for our innovative marketing; 1st place for our cultural tamale. Our River Ramble video won an honorable mention.

Our sponsorship efforts continue. We are shooting for \$132,000 and are currently at \$85,000 with another \$14,000 reasonably assured. Scott and John will work hard to convince any fence sitters to come our way.

Grandstand entertainment is firming up nicely with two shows per day. We are working to beef up grandstand entertainment over the first weekend with rodeo style events so we can boost attendance and have two high attendance weekends “book ending” the week. We continue to look for new and exciting motorized concepts. Musical entertainment will be in the Amphitheater. We hope to book two rock, two country, and one in between. So far we are looking solid with two acts.

Justin took the floor and discussed a couple of items. First he reported on a meeting of the Clark County Equestrian Advisory Council where the future of horse events at the fairgrounds was discussed. We don’t make money on frequent small events. We can make money on the larger events. To take full

advantage of larger shows we need more and better parking and additional stalls. We lost quite a few stalls when the Exhibition Hall was constructed.

Justin then discussed a problem getting reimbursed for expenditures through the Auditor's Office. That discussion continued after the meeting adjourned.

Lastly, Justin asked why Event Center/Fairgrounds/Amphitheater/Tri-Mountain Golf Course Events couldn't be advertised directly to county employees. This question will be researched and answered at the next meeting.

Next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday January 5th in PSC Conference Room 623.

Adjourned.