

**Lewis and Clark County Fairgrounds – Fair Board Meeting Minutes**  
**May 26, 2021 – 11:30 am**  
**98 W. Custer Ave., Helena MT 59602**

**Attendees:**

Board members: Phil Porrini, Allen Cormany, Greg Pace, Dave Duffy, Mark Menke, Mike Murray, Judy Rolfe, Linda Grady, Jay Sherley

Staff: Kevin Tenney, Logan Gustafson, Sandy McIntyre.

Phil Porrini called the meeting to order at 11:30 am. New Board members Linda Grady and Jay Sherley were introduced.

**Approval of Minutes:**

There were no corrections or additions to the minutes. Greg Pace made the motion to approve the April 28, 2021 minutes, seconded by Mike Murray. Motion passed unanimously.

**Public Comment:**

Allen Cormany relayed questions from the public that he's been asked as a Board member about how the Fairgrounds decides which artists/concerts to hold at the Fairgrounds. Kevin explained how we contract with talent, proceeds to the Fairgrounds and timelines for booking talent. Exhibit Hall capacity is 3500 for stage and standing room only; 3000 for stage, bleachers and standing room only; stage and seating is 2100.

**Financial Report:**

Kevin Tenney reviewed current financials:

- Operating revenue is down from last year.
- Reviewed Year to Date (YTD) FY21 Adjusted budget.

**FY22 Budget**

Kevin Tenney reported on the FY22 Budget:

- FY2022 covers July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022.
- CARES lost revenue replacement funds goes to the County, based on whether or not the County lost revenue. It is not based on individual departments. The Fairgrounds eligibility for lost revenue (federal and state relief) funds depends on the County's finances, and it appears that the chances of receiving any of these funds has decreased significantly since they are County-based, not department-based.
- Kevin pointed out that the Fairgrounds is 100% debt free.
- Greg Pace made a motion to approve the FY22 budget; Judy Rolfe seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## **Operations Report:**

Kevin Tenney reported on operations:

- Maintenance is working on multiple water leaks around the Fairgrounds.
- The DES tents on the Promenade have been removed. The quote for sod is \$600 to replace the damaged grass, which will not come out of the Fairgrounds budget.
- The Fairgrounds-sponsored High School Prom was a success with 800 high school students attending. While the event cost the Fairgrounds money, it was a success and contribution to the community. Board members helped working at the doors and drink station.
- Last Chance Stampede and Fair update:
  - Concessions are set.
  - Vendors continue to sign up.
  - Sponsorship is strong.
  - We are looking for a new group for gate security and for front gate control. The organization that was doing it wanted significantly more compensation than in previous years.

## **Events Report:**

- Logan Gustafson gave an update on Events.
  - Upcountry Vintage market had great turn out, their concessionaire did very well. They are planning 2 more events in 2021 and 2 in 2022.
  - Last Chance Gobblers (National Wild Turkey Federation) had their best attendance ever for their annual banquet.
- Logan will include an Event Schedule for the Board in the monthly Board packet, distributed prior to each Board meeting.

## **Other Business:**

- Phil Porrini suggested getting a volunteer group together (including service groups and community residents) to do projects on the Fairgrounds, such as a duck pond cleanup day. There was discussion about a first project to start with and possible dates. The first event will be Duck Pond Cleanup, Saturday June 26<sup>th</sup> from 12p-4p.
- Road Update: The County has funds for direct Covid-related issues. The Fairgrounds' roads received significant damage from heavy traffic due to Covid testing and vaccine clinics. A map was shown of priorities, which roads will definitely be fixed and which are likely to get fixed. The cost is \$3-5 million for the project. Public Works is review the RFP. Engineering should be done this fall, with the actual repairs/reconstruction completed before the 2022 Last Chance Stampede and Fair.
- Power line: NorthWestern Energy engineers were out to look at the overhead lines and are looking at putting lines underground.
- Signage: Helena Tech should be able to work on the signage this year as it was delayed last year due to Covid. Phil suggested considering temporary placement instead of permanent placement due to the upcoming road improvements.

- Linda Grady will explore a partnership with the Helena Lions Club and Fairgrounds for the Stampede this year, to see how they might be able to help.
  - Kevin mentioned that alcohol vendors/servers are needed, though it appears that it's not economically feasible for the Lions due to insurance requirements.
- Last Chance Stampede:
  - The main arena will be formally named "Cool Alley" or "Cool Alley Arena" at this year's Stampede after the world famous bucking horse, Cool Alley. A sign will be installed over the arena announcer booth for this year's Stampede. Draft sign designs were passed around and the top three will go to the sign shop for mock-up. The sign is being paid for by C5 Rodeo, who is the stock contractor for this year's Stampede.
  - Phil passed around mock-ups of the Cool Alley poster that will be used to publicize the Stampede and possible be sold at the Stampede.
  - The Friends of the Fairgrounds (Foundation) booth at the Fair was discussed along with the possibility of selling Cool Alley posters or Robert Morgan prints. Points were made that people don't like to carry stuff around during Fair. The suggestion was made to sell magnets of the Cool Alley posters. There was agreement this was a good idea and Linda Grady volunteered into looking into cost of producing magnets.
  - There was discussion about the Foundation making sales out of their booth, and the logistics associated with sales, i.e. payment tracking, credit card transactions, etc.
    - Kevin said that if the Foundation Board approves selling items at their Fair booth, develop a system for payment and cash tracking, he can get them a laptop and credit card reader.

**Adjournment:**

Mike Murray moved to adjourn the meeting and Greg Pace seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously and meeting was adjourned at 12:54pm.