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**Missoula County Fair Event Committee**

Thursday, February 9th, at 10 a.m.

Fair Office, Building #12

Missoula County Fairgrounds

1101 South Avenue West, Missoula, MT 59801

DRAFT

**Committee Members**

1. Jim Sadler – Chair – present
2. Dave Bell – Vice Chair – present
3. Sarah Knobel – present
4. Brooke Martin - present
5. Campbell Barrett – present
6. Tonya Robert - present
7. Jane Kelly - present

**Meeting Minutes**

1. **Meeting commencement**
	1. Chair Jim Sadler called the meeting to order at 10:02 am
2. **Rollcall and introductions.**
	1. The following committee members were in attendance. Jim Sadler, Brooke Martin, Tonya Robert, Dave Bell, Jane Kelly, and Campbell Barrett were present. Staff included Billie Ayers, Fairgrounds Events and Operations Manager, Tenzin Lhaze, Communications and Graphic Design Specialist, and Zanna Kortenhof, Events and Recreation Specialist, and Allison Wilson, Outreach and Programming Specialist.
3. **Approval of agenda**
	1. Agenda approved as published.
4. **Public comment on items not on the agenda**
	1. Letter of concern sent to Tonya. This letter has been added to the agenda and shared with all members.
5. **Action items – Approval of minutes from July**
	1. Jim Sadler made a motion to approve the minutes. Minutes passed with no objections.
6. **Discussion items**
7. Western Montana Fair
	1. Legends Night Nominations
		1. Wilson reports that the Fairgrounds needs to figure out a nomination system for Legends night. Ayers adds that the Fairgrounds needs to set parameters for this. Sadler mentioned that the Fairgrounds can use other models from the community to set a foundation. Sadler adds that parameter should note that the individual should be someone who has been deeply involved in rodeo/animals/fair life. Sadler also adds that Legends must be open for nominations. Ayers adds that a standing plaque will be created for display in the Fair Office for Legends. Sadler further adds that board members cannot nominate themselves. Kelly suggests that a rubric should be created to help remove any political qualms. The following suggestions have been put forth for Legends night nomination process: Legends night nomination process will go live on March 1. Legends deliverables will be provided before the Fair. Nomination process will be public, and the Fair board will vote on it. Selection process for Legends will be in-house and will have made a significant contribution for the Western Montana Fair & Rodeo. The Legends rubric will be provided to the public. Wilson further suggests that the rubric be created based on the Fairgrounds mission statement. Rubric will also include the number of years that the individual has contributed to the Fair. Any nominations that have not been selected will be considered in perpetuity until the nominator reaches out to take out the nomination. Nominations and nominators will be kept anonymous until the vote.
	2. Paddleheads Partnership
		1. Kortenhof reports that the Missoula County Fairgrounds and Missoula Paddleheads will be collaborating for the Fair this year. Ayers adds that Paddleheads game attendance has been low during Fair week which is why the Paddleheads has been eager to partner with the Fairgrounds. The partnership will be as follows: Thursday night will be Paddleheads night. Paddleheads members will be coming to the Rodeo to help draw people to the “Barn Dance”. On Wednesday night, the Rodeo queens and barrel man will be going to the Paddleheads game which will happen earlier to accommodate the rodeo that night. Sammy and the Paddleheads mascot will be coming to the Lords of Dirt race on Sunday night to help lengthen the race’s performance time.
	3. Entertainment Update
		1. Roberts adds that they were emailed a letter a letter from this concerned person as well. Roberts shares copies of the letter to the rest of the board.
		2. Ayers reports that the County has been contacted by a concerned person. The person is disappointed that the Fairgrounds has not hired his friend’s band for the Fair. The person wants to see more country music at the Fair. The person has received previous year’s band contracts as per his request. The board asked whether the Fairgrounds has looked into Country Bands. Ayers reports that they’ve looked into adding more local County bands, but they’ve been over budget. The County’s current purchasing policy determines that purchases can be made under $25,000 at the County’s discretion which the music for the Fair falls under. The Fairgrounds has consistently kept music contracts for Fair at $20,000 or under. The County has been assisting the person since November. Sadler adds that as far as the board is concerned, the Fairgrounds has done everything ok.
	4. Vendors
		1. Kortenhof reports that concession vendor application and amusement vendor application are now open. Currently 13 food vendors have applied. Food vendor applications will start to be reviewed March 15 but will not close until April 1st. Currently no amusement vendors have applied. The Fairgrounds is still looking at the mechanical bull, bounce castle and others for the 2023 Fair. The Fair will also be bringing back the aluminum bottled water.
		2. Kortenhof reports a meeting with a local group who is interested in setting up a second bingo in home arts. This bingo would be great for older people because it takes places indoors and has air conditioning. Kortenhof adds that there will also be arcade machines in the Home Arts building and are exploring the idea of having a bar set up in the Home Arts building. The group with the potential second bingo is in favor of having a bar in Home Arts to help with their event. Ayers reports that starting the band earlier during the day will help bring more energy to Home Arts.
	5. New Exhibits
		1. Wilson reports that there is going to be a new division in 2023 called ‘Gems & Minerals’. The local Mineral Society will be assisting in promoting this new division as well as the providing display cases.
		2. Wilson reports that ‘Plein-Air at the Fair’ is officially returning to the Fairgrounds and will be included in 2023’s Fair premium book as an insert. The Plein-Air program welcomes artists to paint the Fairgrounds on Wednesday of the Fair and then display it for the rest of the Fair week. Artists will be responsible for providing their own materials and hanging systems and will be required to sign up for the event prior to the Fair. Artists also have the option to sell their paintings however, the Fairgrounds will not be directly assisting them with this.
		3. Wilson reports that the Fairgrounds will continue to host the Native Arts Market during the Western Montana Fair. Ayers suggests that moving the Market to Saturday will allow more artist to be involved since it is a weekend.
		4. Wilson reports that there will be a new division to the Beef section called ‘Bottle Babies’. This division will include young children and bottle-fed calves. This showmanship division will include costumes. Sadler comments that this division should be popular with families and will have a good draw from the community.
		5. Lhaze reports that the ‘Chicken Workshop Series’ will be starting soon. This series was created with Missoula Urban Demonstration and Blue Mountain Flowers. Lhaze encourages the board to share the event with anyone they know. This series is part of the 2023 ‘Pre-Fair’ events.
		6. Wilson reports that a rabbit education series is in development with Missoula Urban Demonstration. The series will launch after the Fair and will be included in the “Pre-Fair” series started next year.
		7. Wilson reports on a recent meeting with the Programming Librarian on developing some partnership marketing with the Fairgrounds and the Missoula Public Library. Wilson will be spearheading this project and Lhaze will be assisting in marketing and design. This collaboration will include expanding on the Altered Books collaboration to the makerspace.
		8. Wilson reports that the Garden City Harvest and The Food Bank will partner with the Fairgrounds for a canning workshop in July. This will be the second year the Fairgrounds will be working with Garden City Harvest and The Food Bank. Sadler suggested to Wilson that the Garden City Harvest members should enter their produce in the Fair and Wilson took note.
	6. First Nations Family Day
		1. Ayers reports that the Fairgrounds has learned a lot through a meeting with Anna who has a lot of experience working with the tribal nations. The biggest takeaway is that the tribal nations typically are not interested in organizing events off the reservation. Ayers additionally reports that All Nations is partnering to organize First Nations Family Day and would rather focus on their food booth. The Fairgrounds is revaluating First Nations Family Day. Instead of one day dedicated to First Nations, every day will feature Native programming. This will mean the Fairgrounds will move away from “themed” days. When the opportunity to revise the Premium Book arrives, there will be more additions such as Indigenous Cooking and Indigenous Produce.
		2. Wilson and Lhaze reports that they attended the Salish Storytelling event at the Fort Missoula the other day. Wilson confirmed that the Storytelling event was geared towards children but that the event was very interactive and would be perfect for the Fair. Wilson suggested expanding the theater area in the commercial building to include the Salish Storytelling series within the Fair week programming.
	7. Analytics
		1. Ayers reports that the Fairgrounds has officially acquired placer.ai. The cost of this program will be shared between the Fairgrounds and Glacier Ice Rink. Placer.ai will allow the Fairgrounds to look at granular information regarding attendance for events and buildings. This program will allow the Fairgrounds to be more competitive. The Fairgrounds staff will be getting training on this program in the following weeks.
	8. Junior Barrels, Steer Riding
		1. Ayers reports that the Fairgrounds has negotiated a deal with Marsh Performance Horses to have Junior Barrels. Another organization will be reaching out to Ayers about being involved in the Junior Steer Riding. Ayers adds that these two new programs will add more content to Wednesday. Additionally, these two programs will feature local kids.
8. 4-H Update
	1. 4H
		1. Campbell reports that numbers are up for 4-H, and a lot of young kids are taking interest as well as first time 4-H’ers. Enrollment is still open for 4-H but it greatly depends on the clubs since some clubs require a certain number of attendances.
		2. Lhaze adds that 4H and FFA kids can keep certain animals in the city as per the City’s newest ordinance.
9. Development
	1. Floriculture update.
		1. Ayers reports that the floriculture building is being updated. The walls and flooring will be refreshed.
		2. Sadler asks whether the linens for the floriculture building will be updated for the Fair and Wilson confirms that fresh black table linens will be purchased.
	2. Ayers will be visiting with a private donor regarding the barn for 4-H & FFA.
10. Adjournment
	1. Next meeting will be Thursday, March 9th at 10am in the Fair Office
	2. Chair Jim Sadler adjourned the meeting at 11:12AM