

Benton County Fair Board Meeting

Monday, March 15, 2021, 6:00 p.m.

Board Members Present: Carl Chambers, Darrell Oakes, Mark Baumgartner, Gregg Thompson and Trudy Overlin, Chair

Liaisons Present: Commissioner Pat Malone; 4-H Liaison Chloe Hendrickson

Others Present: Carolyn Aston, 4-H; Crystal Cleveland, 4-H leader

Staff Present: Lynne McKee, Manager and Nancy Swain, recorder

1. Call Meeting to Order
2. Review of Agenda – Chair May Alter Agenda
3. Consent Agenda
 - a. Review and Approval of February 8, 2021 Fair Board Meeting Minutes
 - b. Acceptance of Correspondence & Informational Items
4. Citizens Comments – Overlin suggested this be saved for after the 2021 Benton County Fair & Rodeo update is discussed as citizen would want to hear that before making comments.
5. Discussion Topics
 - a. Manager’s Report - McKee suggested she report on the 2021 Benton County Fair & Rodeo plans first since public attending the meeting are most interested in that. McKee stated she had sent the Financials out prior to the meeting and they show the Fairgrounds is still in the black despite a greatly reduced Transient Lodging Tax (TLT) check for Oct/Nov/Dec (\$32,270). McKee noted to-date we have received \$473,675 in TLT revenue. McKee reported on projects next noting the Auditorium kitchen project is well underway but will be started and stopped and re-started to accommodate Benton County Courts trials scheduled in April. She does anticipate the project will be completed by May. Commissioner Malone noted frequently trials are settled out-of-court and maybe we will catch a break. McKee stated the Auditorium closet project is moving forward since the State will be reimbursing us back for \$35,000 of the projected \$40,000 cost and that it makes sense to move forward both financially and for the sake of the workers the State funding is earmarked to support. McKee reported the playground equipment and picnic shelter for Benton Oaks will be delayed to the next biennium. McKee shared her new deputy director will start on April 1; she is excited to welcome Jesse Ott from Oak Harbor, WA as he brings his skills in Parks administration. McKee recruitments for other positions due to retirement and internal position changes are planned. Reporting on the Houseless population camping at the Fairgrounds, McKee shared the program is set to end April 1 and that she is working with the partners (BC Health and Corvallis Housing First) on transition plans. McKee shared Benton County is planning on re-opening lobbies on April 12 and that she hopes to start the Event Center re-opening with outdoors events then as well. The Rotary 1/2 Marathon will be a good test for the re-opening plans; McKee will sit down with staff in the coming weeks to discuss re-opening plans. Answering a question from the Board, McKee stated the Indoor Winter Market was deemed an essential business as it serves the community like a grocery store. McKee ended her report with news that Oregon Fairs Association (OFA) lobby efforts are focusing on lifting the cap placed on lottery funds allocated to Fairs; McKee will send the Board information so that they can also lobby their representatives.
 - b. Exotic Animal Ordinance Update -Overlin reported McKee presented to the BOC. It was agreed a committee to include BC Animal Control, non-profit and commercial animal exhibitors, an animal rights activist, 4-H and the Fairgrounds will bring an amendment in April making it possible for horses to be on the Fairgrounds and then continue to meet to craft a new recommendation to the BOC at a later date.

- c. 2021 Benton County Fair & Rodeo - McKee stated she is committed and already working with Carolyn Ashton and Ellie Korthuis, 4-H; and Benton County Health Department to offer at least a modified Fair. McKee shared she has already informed storage clients there will be no summer extension for their space as it is needed for livestock. While McKee and Ashton both noted they understand and support all the parents who contacted them regarding the importance of having an in-person Fair, the guidelines for youth and group gatherings are mandated by Oregon Health Authority and OSU (governing 4-H). 4-H Leader Cleveland spoke of the urgency for decisions breeders need and warned some are already backing out. Cleveland was thanked for her comments and attendance. Commissioner Malone assured Cleveland an auction will be held. Baumgartner noted he is feeling very positive about this year's auction; the success of last year's virtual auction gives him great confidence that this year's auction.
 - d. Board Member Recruitment - Overlin thanked Thompson for continuing to serve as his replacement is recruited and reported the potential candidate suggested by Bruce Ashenbrenner is not ready to commit. McKee will follow up with Chris Bielenberg; Overlin reminded the Board she is the current out-of-county Board representative.
6. Fair Board Committee Reports
 - a. Executive Committee - No report
 - b. Business Development Committee - No report
 - c. Facilities Committee - No report
 - d. Fair Committee -No report
 - e. Rodeo Committee - No report
 - f. Governance Committee - No report
 7. Other Reports and Announcements
 - a. 4-H Liaison Chloe Hendrickson reported they are working with OSU/4-H to figure out exactly what they can do.
 - b. Other - no other business was brought to the Board.

Adjournment – 6:58 p.m.

Next Meeting: April 19, 2021

The Fair Board may call an executive session when necessary pursuant to ORS 192.660. The Board is not required to provide advance notice of an executive session. However, every effort will be made to give notice of an executive session. If an executive session is the only item on the agenda for the Board meeting, notice shall be given as for all public meetings (ORS 192.640(2)) and the notice shall state the specific reason for the executive session as required by ORS 192.660.

The meeting location is accessible to persons with disabilities. A request for an interpreter for the hearing impaired or for other accommodations for persons with disabilities should be made at least 48 hours before the meeting to the Fairgrounds Office (541)766-6521

** Indicates that support materials were distributed prior to meeting*