

Minutes
Washington County Fair Complex Board
Wednesday, February 1, 2006

Convened: 4:30 pm

FAIR BOARD:

Chair Rich Vial

Vice Chair Herb Hirst

Board Member W. Rafe Flagg

Board Member Kathy Christy

Board Member Ken Madden

Board Member Dan Logan

Board Member Mike Steward

STAFF:

Don Hillman, Executive Director

Lisa DuPre, Marketing/Events Director

Leah Perkins, Fair Coordinator

Chair Vial called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m., and welcomed the audience. Chair Vial welcomed newly appointed Board Member Mike Steward. Chair Vial performed the Oath of Office for Mike Steward and Kathy Christy.

Chair Vial asked that the Air Show/Dog Show Dates discussion be taken out of order on the agenda.

Chair Vial reported that he and Board Members Logan and Hirst met with Air Show representatives this week and they will not be changing their 2006 Air Show dates to accommodate the AKC Dog Show scheduled for the same weekend in July.

Chair Vial reported that the Air Show Board is willing to work with the Fair Complex to avoid similar conflicts in the future. Vial reported that the Air Show Board is willing to agree on three (3) dates that they could hold the Air Show and that they must report to ICAS by July their 2007 Air Show dates.

Board Member Logan noted that the three (3) dates being offered by the Air Show Board are the last weekend in July (County Fair dates), second weekend in August and the weekend after Labor Day (Hardy Plant Sale dates). Logan explained that the reason they are looking at the County Fair dates is that the Seattle Air Show is the weekend after the County Fair.

Board Member Christy asked that the staff be proactive in the future by sending them our event calendar.

Board Member Hirst commented that dialogue would continue regarding these three (3) proposed dates.

Denise Lukins, Attorney for the Dog Show – Indicated that her clients are disappointed on how this has turned out, they are very upset and are looking at their legal options. Asked the Fair Board that should the Dog Show decide to pursue legal action, would the Fair Board join them in this action?

Chair Vial stated that her question would have to be deferred to County Council.

Ms. Lukins stated that her clients still have a contract for the facility and parking lots for that weekend, and are looking for ways to make money.

Board Member Hirst explained that there would be no jet teams this year, so the noise impact would be less and traffic would not be as bad because there would be no closures due to a sterile corridor.

Chair Vial stated that as far as the Fair Complex Board is concerned, staff is prepared to supply the facility as per the contract; believes that the Dog Show is capable of conducting business since there is no jet teams, but will not hold the Dog Show to the contract if they want to leave because of the conflict with the Air Show.

Board Member Christy asked if the Air Show has a schedule of events.

Board Member Hirst reported that the Air Show has committed to work with the Dog Show on scheduling is they decide to stay.

Attorney Lukins asked what could her clients expect with regards to traffic.

Chair Vial asked her to work directly with staff on these types of details.

Chair Vial opened Public Audience time for comments from the audience on matters not on the regular agenda. There were none.

1. Consent Agenda

Chair Vial asked the Board and the public if any items were requested to be removed from the Consent Agenda. There were none.

Motion by Board Member Hirst to approve the Consent Agenda. Second by Board Member Flagg. Motion carried 7-0.

2. Special Reports

A. Airshow & Airport Report – Board Member Hirst reported that the Air Show Board has not yet determined if it will be a two or three day show.

B. Fair Visioning Committee Report – Board Member Christy reported that they had a good meeting, and that the group has come up with ideas for the county fair that can be used for long range planning such as Iron Chef cook-offs, Folk Dancing, American Idol style competitions, BMX & Bicycle events, special exhibits like Oktoberfest, Cinco de Mayo, and living farm displays.

Christy read aloud a letter from the Sherwood Chamber of Commerce.

Christy reported that there is a fair in Canada that splits their fair into two different events, one is an Ag Fair and the other is an Urban Fest, held on different weekends.

Chair Vial stated that they have talked about this type of thing with Opus.

Board Member Madden asked for a Booster member to join this group.

Board Member Steward asked for the Committee meetings be posted on the Fair Complex website calendar.

C. Boosters/Coalition Liaison Report – Board Member Logan had nothing to add to the Boosters minutes provided in the Board packet.

D. Treasurer Report – Board Member Flagg referred to the financial reports. Flagg also explained the cash practices of the staff and noted that the County Finance Department did an audit in August and found staff to be in compliance.

E. Operations Report – Executive Director Hillman reported that due to a collapsed drain tile many years ago, a lot of water is pooling around the grounds.

Executive Director Hillman also noted that a company is interested in providing WiFi service to the facility on a revenue sharing basis.

Board Member Flagg explained WiFi technology and how it works.

Board Member Madden asked if there would be interference from the neighborhoods. Discussion ensued.

Hillman also noted that staff has received a bid on remodeling the Livestock Restrooms and would like to include washbasins on the outside of the facility to help with E-coli issues during the Fair.

F. Other, if any – None

3. Old Business

A. Redevelopment Update – Chair Vial reported that we are in a holding pattern in regards to the City Planning Commission and that Opus is waiting on a decision to move forward.

Chair Vial reminded each Board Member that the physical layout is still preliminary and that it would be a mistake to not remain actively engaged and asked that they remain proactive regardless of each person's objective on this topic.

Chair Vial reported that he, Board Members Flagg and Hirst, and the staff went to the Clark County Fairgrounds in Ridgefield Washington, and spent 2 1/2 hours with their Executive Director touring their new facility.

Chair Vial also noted that Board Member Steward presented the Boosters Vision to the Washington County Livestock Association.

Discussion ensued regarding what Clark County does in regards to 4-H usage of their facilities.

Chair Vial discussed meeting with the Military Department in connection with the development.

Board Member Flagg noted that some people had heard that Clark County was very unhappy with their new facility, but after speaking to their Executive Director, they were emphatic about how please that they are.

B. Hearing on Proposed 2006/2007 Budget – Chair Vial opened the budget hearing.

Staff report – Executive Director Hillman referred to page 20, the document includes the budget that was part of the January 2006 Board Packet.

Executive Director Hillman reported that he is working with Tom Black on the fire hydrant project and that this project may cost upwards of \$600,000. Hillman explained how this project would be approached so the work would not be abandoned and could be incorporated into the development. Hillman also noted that staff would continue to work with the Fire Marshall to refine these numbers before June 1st.

Hillman stated that the County would loan funds to the Fair Complex to complete the fire hydrant project with the first loan payment being due in 2008. Executive Director Hillman also noted that for budget purposes, it is staff's goal to maintain a beginning budget cash balance of approximately \$300,000 in that the Fair Complex's cash flow is very low after the annual County Fair, and that loan payments to the County would occur every December.

Chair Vial asked about timing for the requested Fire Marshall projects. Executive Director Hillman explained that the Fire Marshall deficiencies applicable to the Main Exhibit Hall need to be done prior to the 2006 County Fair and that the fire hydrant project would begin after the County Fair.

Board Member Flagg asked who would benefit from having the new fire hydrant lines extend from the proposed Grant Street extension. Executive Director Hillman explained that we would be credited for providing the new water line. Discussion ensued.

Board Member Steward asked about re-zoning and the text amendment. Discussion ensued.

Executive Director Hillman finished by explaining that the budget mirrors last years budget on Interim and the Fairtime with the exception of increasing expenses and sponsor revenue due to the Dock Dogs competition occurring at the 2006 County Fair.

Chair Vial opened public comment time on the proposed budget.

Dave Rohrer and Judy Marsh – Representatives of the Boosters Budget Committee – They are concerned about the 10% rental rate increase in the Interim Facility Rental Program in that the Fair Complex is loosing business because they have priced themselves out of the market. Also concerned that the Fair Complex is borrowing more funds such as for the bleachers purchased in 2005 and new hydrants proposed in 2006. Asked where will the cash flow come from to pay for this or will it be eating into the Hotel/Motel tax.

Concerned about re-development expenses being allocated and no breakdown of what the expenses are.

Noted that bleachers are supposed to be rented out on a continual basis.

Stated that there should not be any development expenses in that these expenses should belong to Opus.

Stated that insurance is split out and utilities are over exaggerated.

Asked what is County Indirect Costs and whether it is payroll.

Concerned about Frite Lites in that there is no accounting of expenses such as personnel and utilities like there is for the annual County Fair.

Asked the Board to not accept the flawed budget.

John Growney – Growney Brothers Rodeo – John Growney explained that the PRCA does not want to loose Hillsboro as a PRCA rodeo. Also noted that the NPRA has asked him to do this rodeo if it changes to NPRA, and that NPRA would cost half as much as a PRCA rodeo.

Mr. Growney indicated that PRCA cowboys in Oregon and Washington are committed to helping promote a PRCA rodeo and that the PRCA cowboys boycotted last year due to the reduction in the purse money.

John Growney suggested that the rodeo program include a special bareback competition on Friday night and a special bull riding competition on Saturday night. PRCA will hype the top bare backer riders on Friday night and Saturday night will feature ranked bulls. Also noted the need to have a media day promoting the cowboy way of life and giving the media a tri-tip luncheon. Wrangler is willing to donate gift cards, Resistol is willing to donate hats, and Justin boots will give boots to kids.

Mr. Growney indicated that the goal is to get 5000 people to come to the rodeo over two performances. Need to get the clown out into the fair to get people excited to come to the rodeo. Will make sure that the top cowboys are here.

Chair Vial asked John Growney about the staff proposed budget, last year it was proposed for \$57,000 and spent \$59,000, this year it's set at \$62,000. Growney said that he is comfortable with the budget that staff is recommending.

Board Member Steward asked about last year's boycott. Mr. Growney explained that the cowboys are members of NPRA and PRCA, and while they go to Deschutes County for an NPRA rodeo with a purse of \$500, Hillsboro's purse was \$6000 per event and when it was cut to \$1000 per event, this upset the cowboys.

Board Member Madden asked about the two new PRCA rodeos that are coming to the area in Astoria and Vernonia.

Board Member Logan asked if we would be opposite Joseph again.

Board Member Flagg asked if Mr. Growney would be just as excited about a stand-alone rodeo as he is about a rodeo tied in with a fair. Growney said that yes he would and feels that rodeos should be stand-alone anyway.

Board Member Madden said that the cowboys were upset last year about not having been fed.

John Growney explained that they were used to the big steak feed, but it was removed due to budget reductions.

Rob Rhew – Vice Chair and General Manager of Funtastic Shows – Thanked the Fair Complex Board for the last two fairs. Explained that the carnival was up in revenue 59% for the last two years and that the Washington County Fair is the only fair that they play that has had an increase in revenue in the last three (3) years. Mr. Rhew described that their business has seen a decline in attendance at most fair, in good and bad weather, but the attendance the Washington County Fair has been great since going to the free-admission model.

Mr. Rhew also explained that they were hesitant about the reduction of days from a six (6) day fair to a four (4) day fair, but they were up in revenue over the six (6) days the first year and that other fair vendors expressed the same opinions to them.

Dave Rohrer – Booster Chair – Wanted to make it clear to the Fair Complex Board that if the Boosters were to run the Amphitheater again this year, it would only be if the other stage is eliminated and all the funds assigned to the Amphitheater. Also noted that the Boosters are concerned that there is no revenue from the Sports Complex again this year.

Brian Love – Washington County Rodeo Volunteer – Believes that the tradition such as the cowboy BBQ needs to be brought back and it doesn't have to cost as much as it used to. The budget was improved last year and Terry Amato did a good job on sponsor, but he didn't have enough time. Their group will continue to support the rodeo.

Kathy Schmidlkofer – Concerned that the proposed increase in camping fees to \$30 and increase in daily parking is too steep.

Chair Vial closed the public hearing.

Motion by Board Member Hirst to adopt the 2006/2007 Budget. Second by Board Member Christy.

Discussion – Board Member Flagg stated that as much as the proposed rodeo seems exciting, before coming tonight felt like it was time to look at something different, and still feels that that's true. Thinks that the rodeo should be stand-alone before or after the fair.

Chair Vial asked Board Member Flagg if he was not inclined to vote in favor, or does he want staff to change the budget. Board Member Flagg stated that we have wiggle room on the budget to make changes until March.

Board Member Steward feels that there is not enough line item detail to make a decision, and would like clarification on specific categories.

Board Member Hirst explained that this is a very standard governmental budget and that specific detail is not provided at this level noting examples at the City and State level.

Board Member Madden noted that with the popularity of motor sports, they could also be stand-alone events.

Board Member Hirst suggested appointing a board sub-committee to take a look at these ideas for the future.

Board Member Christy noted that this should be a staff responsibility to propose a budget with these ideas.

Chair Vial asked the Board to direct their attention back to the proposed budget.

Board Member Logan suggested that instead of a Rodeo section in the budget that the category be changed to Arena Events, so the Board and staff could choose what to have and not be bound to one event.

Chair Vial stated that due to sponsorships, the Board can't take too much time deciding, and would like to move forward with this budget including the rodeo.

Board Member Steward asked about Frite Lites, since it was a break-even event, with labor and debt would this event be at risk.

Chair Vial asked if an appropriate amount of staffing and insurance is allocated to the event. Executive Director Hillman stated that when this program was adopted it was with permanent staff, it's considered an Interim Event and is a good use of permanent staff time.

Board Member Flagg also noted that he is concerned about unpaid usage of the Fair Complex facilities, how much usage are we giving and to whom. Would like to see a staff recommendation to see if this needs to be modified.

Chair Vial noted that at Clark County, 4-H has to pay to use the facilities.

Board Member Steward asked what the development costs are. Executive Director Hillman explained that it's legal expenses, consulting fees and a break out of staff time.

Board Member Hirst called for question.

Chair Vial asked if there was any objection to closing the discussion. There was none.

Motion carried 5-2 with Board Members Logan and Steward voting no.

C. **Other, if any** – None

4. New Business

A. **Extend Contract with Scott-Hookland LLP.**

Motion by Board Member Flagg to extend the contract with Scott-Hookland LLP. Second by Board Member Hirst. Motion carried 7-0.

B. Election of Officers.

Motion by Board Member Madden to accept officers as they stand. Second by Board Member Hirst.

Discussion: Board Member Madden stated that with the way things are moving we need to have consistency.

Board Member Steward commented that after Board Member Christy's comments at last months meeting that change is good, and that he would support a change.

Motion carried 5-2 with Board Members Logan and Steward voting no.

Board Member Christy indicated that she would like to have staff draft a policy about term limits for officers with the exception for special circumstances.

C. Other, if any – Board Member Christy indicated that she would like to schedule a board retreat to discuss future goals. Asked staff to prepare recommendations for dates.

Chair Vial indicated that he would like to go on record concerning the February 1, 2006, letter from Dave Rohrer, Booster President, and regarding the 2006 Fair Budget Proposal, in that he did not recommend as admission price of \$10.00 per person, and that he is committed to the Free Fair model.

Board Member Flagg indicated his displeasure regarding this same Booster letter in that there was a large amount of due diligence on the staff's behalf, noting that there were nine pages of documentation, two pages of assumptions, two pages of explanations and a lot of line item detail. Board Member Flagg also noted that it's all about the end message; and in this case, it didn't come to the end that the Boosters wanted. Board Member Flagg further noted that the Boosters only provided a single-page spreadsheet with no detail and no assumptions, and that he finds it borderline offensive that the Booster response questioned the staff's ability to produce an un-biased document.

- 5. Announcements** – Chair Vial announced that he had just learned that 4-H Extension Agent, John Baggott, who has served in his position for 21 years, has accepted another position. Vial expressed his gratitude for the impact he has had on his own children and many others.

John Baggott, OSU Extension Agent, explained that he had accepted a position as a 4-H specialist for the Military. He has seen a lot in the last 21 years and appreciates all that has transpired. He has seen the County change, the fair change and the program change. Mr. Baggott also noted that at this time, he has no idea who will be his replacement.

6. **Correspondence** - None other than what was in the packet
7. **Board Oral Communications.**
8. **Other Matters of Information.**
 - A. Newspaper Articles, if any
 - B. Website Activity
 - C. Other, if Any

With no further business before the Board, Chair Vial adjourned the meeting.

Motion by Board Member Hirst to Adjourn. Second by Board Member Christy.
Motion carried 7-0.

Don G. Hillman
Recording Secretary

Rich Vial
Board Chair