

Fair Board Meeting Minutes April 12, 2022

Started the meeting at 6:00pm.

Those present were:

Board Members: Ron Rowan, Dean Defrees, Cliff Schoeningh, Mark Johnson, Michelle Kaseberg, Terri Siddoway, Mark Bennett & Rob Ellingson

Also present: Angela Robb and Brian Tweit, Economic Development, Dan Garrick, Jeff Pettingill, Linda Byrd (President of Pine Valley Fair Grounds), Phyllis Thomas, Treasurer, Becky ____, President of Hells Canyon Chamber of Commerce and a member of the Baker County Chamber of Commerce

Brian Tweit, Economic Development, gave a small presentation on a community event center he would like to have built here. He is working on getting funding and finding partners to achieve this project. Mentioned using it for rodeos, monster trucks, sporting events, concerts, etc. This is a long term goal he is working towards. Brian mentioned meeting with the Fair Board later to give specifics.

Jefry Pettingill from the County Weed Department talked to us about spraying weeds. He gave us his background in spraying weeds and his qualifications. 60% grass and 40% weeds. If you spray the broad leaf and water the grass, your grass will grow. When we start doing construction in the field, level it out and he will re-evaluate what needs to be done at that time. He offered to spray our weeds around our facility, including the Leo Adler Field, 5 acre field, rodeo grounds and around the facility. **There was a motion to pay Jefry to spray the weeds by Mark Johnson and 2nd by Terri Siddoway. All were in favor.** Jef will keep an eye on our place and let us know if something shows up that needs taken care of.

Linda Byrd from Halfway introduced a couple ladies she brought with her. She turned the attention to over Becky. She spoke about the \$2million that was coming to the fairgrounds and starting asking questions and realized Halfway was not the County Fair. She gave a presentation about the timeframe of when the county fair switched from Halfway to Baker City. She talked about the board that runs the fair grounds and how everyone is a volunteer there. Commissioner Mark Bennett spoke and mentioned that the ask for \$2 million was not done by the Board of Commissioners or the Fair Board. These monies were allocated and the counties were not consulted. This was a legislative action by the lobbyist for the Fairs, and the money is specifically designated to the fairs. It is set in stone or a new bill would have to be drawn up. Mark talked with Senator Owens and Senator Finley twice today to see if there was a fix. Halfway is an association and the Baker County Fair is a County Department. The land for the Pine Valley Fairgrounds is privately owned and not owned by the county. This funding is for governmental bodies. Mark Bennett told the group that the Fair Board cannot give the money to any other entity. The money will be tracked for proper use. Legislature passes a bill and says "give the fairs \$2 Millions." Then the Department of Administrative Service of Oregon and then they decipher what the government really meant. The money must be committed by 2024. The money is locked. Mark mentioned that if the Pine Valley Fairgrounds was a governmental body, they might be able to get different funding. The Commissioners cannot give taxpayers dollars to a private entity. There was a question: What makes the Baker County Fair a state entity? Bennett: They are a department of Baker County. Question: Do they get county dollars? Bennett: they get county dollars and they are a county department. The grounds and facilities are owned by the county. One of the ladies from Halfway ask where they fell through the cracks? Bennett mentioned that where they are sitting is the Baker County. Our facility is the same as the courthouse or the road department. Baker County owns it. The facility in

Halfway is not owned by the taxpayers. Bennett explained that they could turn their place into a special district and that would turn it into a governmental department. Becky thanked the Fair Board for letting her speak and that she learned a lot.

It was noted that Angela missed Rob Ellingson and Mark Bennett on the attendance of the minutes from March 2022. Also Angela will change the wording to say “fix the steps to the crow’s nest and replace the south steps at the grand stands.” She will fix the minutes and bring them to the next board meeting. Michelle Kaseberg motioned to approve the minutes with the amendments and Terri Siddoway 2nd it. Moved and passed with amendments.

No financials to go over. Christena Cook as been out of the office. Michelle mentioned we are getting \$277,000 from lottery funds and \$2 million from Department of Admin. No exact guidance except has to be spent on infrastructure. The Fair Board will try to finalize their budget before May 25, 2022. June 3, application for projects need to be finalized and turned in. We will get half the money the first year and half the second year. Mark Johnson talked about getting our list on the paperwork for the grant and prioritizing. There was talk about the invoices being reimbursed within two weeks. Michelle Kaseberg verified this detail with the gals in charge. Four rodeo fence projects: Southeast Armory fence and sidewalk, southside west section from armory enclosure to grove street, west side on south end from rodeo ground stands down to the corner by the electrical box is, then there is east-north and northwest sections. Everything on east street and then the shorter section towards the ground stands. Does not include the 5 acre field. Johnson asked if we wanted the 5 acre field added. Terry asked if we could sell our property and sell it for building houses and then put out money to the project by Brian Tweit. Mark Bennett mentioned it would be possible but not easy. If you sold this land and bought more, the Fair Board would have to be sole owner. The \$2 million can’t be used for buying land. Ron refocused the group back to Mark Johnson for priorities. Michelle asked about the efis being a priority. Johnson mentioned yes for the efis and then talked about adding a storage outside of the Event Center for the table and chairs. Breakout curtains in the event center. Can’t add accordion style partitions unless they can be off the floor. Michelle Kaseberg asked if we should include the parking lot off the rodeo grounds to the priority list. Johnson mentioned the cameras and lighting around our building or adding the reader board on the corner lot. Should we shift to long range or short range? Longer range: rv parking multi-purpose pavilion for events, small animal pavilion. Kaseberg mentioned at the end of the small animal barn could have storage on it. Mark Johnson mentioned that the small animal pavilion is going to take a large portion of our \$2.5 million. Terri mentioned needing another beef barn out there before needing a small animal barn. Terri proposes that we move the goat and sheep to the beef barn and then you have pigs and small animals in the current pig barn and then build another barn similar to the current style we have now for beef and the beef will show outside. Kaseberg said to put all our projects on the paperwork for the \$277,000 grant even if it totals more because there is a shot we might get more. Dean Defrees said to add the Rodeo Grandstands to the paperwork which means get new metal bleachers. Ron asked Michelle was else we needed for the application? Michelle said we have to outline the projects.

Angela gave the good news that our county maintenance, Dustin Hillman, will start April 25, 2022. He accepted at the rate of step 3.

Christina Smith is resigning from the Fair Board. We need to find someone to fill the position. Mark Bennett said the county will open the position and then the Fair Board will get to go over the applications. Heidi Martin will open the position and then forward the applications to the Fair Board.

Mark Johnson gave an update on the floor. The County Commissioners and they approved moving forward with the selections. Contracts have been mailed and insurance has been received. The contracts should come back next week. If they show up to the Fair office addressed to Mark Johnson, he wants Angela to open them and take them to Commissioner Bill Harvey to be signed. The County keeps one signed, Mark Johnson keeps a signed contract and then we mail one signed contract back to the company.

The painting is scheduled to be completed April 25 thru April 30 but if the paint comes in early, Angela said they will start painting Wednesday, April 13th and be finished by April 15th. Mark Johnson said the curtains needed to come down.

Terri gave an update on the committee to improve the fairgrounds. The FFA kids came and took down all of the pins. Terri is waiting for the dimensions that Mark Johnson needs to get started. Christine Hawes said she will get that done quickly.

The 4-H Leaders Association is putting in for the Farm Credit Services Grant for more brown tables. It's a matching funds grant and they have asked the Fair Board if they will match their half which is \$2500 for the grant. Dean moved that we match their amount of \$2500. Michelle 2nd it. All were in favor. None opposed. Terri reminded everyone of the cramped spaces.

Angela handed out Fair Themes and had everyone vote on their favorite.

Michelle gave an update on the Fair Manger position. We spent a little money promoting the position. It closes April 18 2022 and it's in the paper in Baker and La Grande and the Baker City Herald put it on their Facebook page.

Dean talked about the 5 year plan. Ron and him talked with Brian Tweit about details about the community event center and didn't talk about much after that.

Terri reported on Big Ass Fans. She looked them up but can't report because she doesn't know how big she needs. It was mentioned she would need at least 8 foot fans. She will report more later.

Angela gave an update that she has deposited \$4400 since January.

May 10, 2022 at 6pm for the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned