

Minutes
Fairgrounds Advisory Committee
Wednesday, August 5th, 2015

Convened: 9:00 a.m

FAIRGROUNDS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Daniel Vazquez	Andy Duyck, Board of Commissioners
Jerry Willey	Steve Nagy
Erin Wakefield, Fair Board President	Carolyn McCormick
Pamela Treece	Larry Pedersen, Chair
Hal Ballard	

STAFF:

Rob Massar, Assistant County Administrator	Sia Lindstrom, Deputy County Administrator
Leah Perkins-Hagele, Fair Complex Manager	Nancy Karnas, Fair Assistant
Todd Winter, Parks Superintendent	

A) Call to Order- Chair Larry Pedersen called the meeting to order at approximately 9:00 a.m. by acknowledging Mayor Wiley's merit award at the Oregon Mayors Association summer conference. Members Nagy, Vazquez, Ballard and Fair Board President Wakefield were absent.

1) Public Comment I- None

2) Committee Introductions- Chair Larry Pedersen asked the committee and staff members present to introduce themselves to the audience. Pedersen stated that the committee does have a full roster of members but there will be three terms that will expire at the end of the year.

3) Roles and Responsibilities-Deputy County Administrator Sia Lindstrom presented a slide that was discussed at the joint Board of Commissioners /Fair Board meeting on June 15th summarizing the roles and responsibilities of the three bodies. Member McCormick asked if the committee had overstepped their purview. Chair Pedersen responded that there was just some clarification needed for the duties of each party for the facility.

4) RV Park - Assistant County Administrator Rob Massar recapped the proposed agreement between the City of Hillsboro and the County regarding the Fairgrounds Ball Field property. Member Duyck asked if there was a timeline or estimate of completion at this point from the city. Mayor Willey responded that he had met with some planning officials and understood it would be a rather quick process once the land use approvals are cleared. Chair Pedersen asked staff to clarify why this is an exciting project. Fairgrounds Manager Perkins-Hagele responded that there are no parks in the region and there is demand. Member McCormick asked for clarification that this would be a short term facility. Fairgrounds Manager Perkins-Hagele stated that yes it was a transient facility, 30 days or less for each stay. Parks Superintendent Todd Winter presented a detailed overview of the design and amenities of the park. Member McCormick asked if a dump station was on site, Perkins-Hagele replied each site has sewer access. Winter stressed the Park would have security 24/7 either via hosts or hired security staff during quiet hours. Member McCormick asked what the estimated cost would be to the consumer per

night. Winter stated there have been several consultants brought in and preliminary conservative estimates are at approximately fifty dollars per night at thirty eight percent occupancy. Member McCormick asked if completion is likely by this time next year. Winter stated that it is very likely.

- 5) **Gain Share Update-** Assistant County Administrator Rob Massar reported that new changes have occurred with the gain share program that have capped the amount any county can receive annually to sixteen million. Massar stated that the changes did extend the overall program to thirteen years which is a benefit. Member McCormick asked how firm that extension is. Massar replied there is always a risk but they are relatively confident this is stable. Member Treece stated that the county fought a long difficult battle to obtain the outcome and it was beneficial that gain share is a clearly defined statewide program now. Member McCormick asked if bonds can now be issued against this program. Massar replied that yes that is a possibility now. Massar stated the county will need to approach the Board of Commissioners with how they would like to approach the gain share program use. Massar stated that the previous plan was for the larger facility and the budget that was available but that would need to be examined with the current program. Chair Pedersen stated that with this new certainty for funding it is time to move forward with planning for some type of new center and improvements of the facility. Member McCormick stated she recommends moving forward with any upgrades to the facility and infrastructure such as bringing the electrical and utilities in from Veteran's Way. She added that the Visitors Association would be willing to also financially invest in a larger capacity in the project. Massar stated a new consultation will need to occur for estimates on a smaller scale event center. Mayor Willey expressed concern about scaling back on the project as the need for the large facility seems to be there for the region and asked if a public /private partnership should be considered. Discussion ensued on the prior attempts to obtain that type of partnership for development. Massar concluded with stating that addressing some of the facility deficiencies and folding those costs into the scope of the event center should be considered. Member McCormick agreed it was crucial to have the facility overall be in good condition.
- 6) **County Fair Update-** Fairgrounds Manager Leah Perkins-Hagele provided a recap of the 2015 County Fair stating the weather was extremely hot and attendance was down significantly. She reported the evenings picked up and the concert had four thousand attendees on opening day. Member McCormick asked if the fair had a contingency fund available in cases such as this to cover expenses. Perkins-Hagele stated that yes this is why reserves are kept but there is not enough to have another year such as this. Perkins-Hagele stated that animal welfare is a big concern and with the hot weather there were some issues where some animals needed to be sent home. Chair Pedersen asked if the tent structures some of the animals use work better for them than the traditional barn facility. Perkins-Hagele replied that yes there is more air flow and ventilation for most. She added that Goat and Sheep participants are asking for that type of structure since their barns are overflowing at this time.
- 7) **Facility Maintenance Plan-** Deputy County Administrator Sia Lindstrom provided an outline of maintenance needs of the fairgrounds facility and the funding required in completing the projects. Lindstrom reported this is a high level look at the overall facility needs for the next several years broken down into tiers or phases by priority. Chair Pedersen asked if the electrical upgrades would help with the fair vendor concerns. Perkins-Hagele replied that she believes that it would. Chair Pedersen stated the he was unaware that the Main Exhibit Hall was in such poor condition and applauded the maintenance team for keeping it going but it's on borrowed time. Perkins-Hagele stated a structural inspection will be done to assess the complete state of the hall and what can or cannot be done to repair or if they advise replacement. Lindstrom stated she hesitated to assign a dollar amount to that project as it is an unknown at this time.

8) **Subcommittee-** Chair Pedersen stated that there is a need to create a subcommittee to be a working group to address the issues of the facility. Pedersen stated the group would not make decisions but address maintenance and development concerns and work on a budget outline consistent with the master plan. Chair Pedersen designated himself and Members Treece, McCormick, Willey and Duyck to the subcommittee to meet with staff regularly on these overall facility matters. Pedersen stated this committee would report back project recommendations to staff for consideration of funding. McCormick asked what type of time frame is being considered for the project planning. Pedersen stated he would like to meet often and to have most of the road maps completed by the end of the calendar year.

9) **Public Comment II-**

- i) **Shirley Evers-** Ms. Evers stated she would like to see historical buildings on the grounds such as the Jailhouse as her ancestors donated the land. Evers asked what the outcome of the Yamhill county fair was that occurred where she showed as the fair doesn't do entries the way she likes. Evers asked what happened to the Totem Pole. Perkins-Hagele replied that it is at the maintenance compound. Lindstrom replied that the pole had been decimated by woodpeckers and also had rotted beyond repair. Evers stated that staff just needs to ask the right people on how to handle the situation. Evers stated she didn't hear anything about this fair and would like this committee to look at how that is handled. Evers stated she was told volunteers are required to have insurance and what can be done to waive that requirement. Lindstrom stated that the county is working on that policy and wants to preserve volunteerism but they have to balance risk liability in those situations. Chair Pedersen thanked Ms. Evers for her enthusiasm but she exceeded the time allotted for comments.
- ii) **Tom Black-** Mr. Black stated he agreed the fair had hot weather but noted there was not anything to bring him to the event. Black stated that there were no unique events in the arena and felt there was a lack of planning. Black questioned the logistics of the planned RV Park and stated it is not a safe distance for the 4H kids to walk to care for their animals. He stated the historical uses have not been taken into account for the planned development. Black stated he agreed there is maintenance that needs to be done for the facility. Black stated that the barn work was done by volunteers in 2006 but believes they need to be reroofed and/ or drainage be fixed. Black stated that the facility is a community center and feels that it is not being utilized enough with constituent involvement.
- iii) **Anthony Mills-** Mr. Mills stated he was the chair of the Park and Rec board and he wanted to share his praise of Todd Winter and the work he has done for the parks. Mills stated Winter has brought a wealth of knowledge to the facilities in Washington County and is a great asset to the county.

B) **Adjourn-**With no further business before the Committee, Chair Pedersen adjourned the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

Leah Perkins-Hagele
Recording Secretary

Larry Pedersen
Committee Chair