

Country Fair Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 6, 2006

Present: Lisa Mills, Colleen Terrazas, Robin & Jim Miotke, Tracy Charles, Stacey & Erin Demerle, Lori Zeiser, Charlie Deschamps, Scot Meader, Paula Marcinkowski, Kim Marr, Tara & Barney Sheridan, Will Abbott, Jerry Marks

Input regarding 2006 & suggestions for 2007:

1. Identifying the Country Fair as a destination point was a great idea.
2. The area along Russell Street looked bleak this year. Perhaps next year we can display silhouettes, mini horses, gardens, or antique equipment.
(Note: Jim Duffalo handles the antique tractor show for the Ravalli County Fair).
3. Information Booth was a fabulous focal point.
4. Public asked for directions to horses, petting zoo, rabbits and poultry — more/better/bigger signage needed here.
5. People want to see large horses as well as mini horses. We need to have a display of large horses.
6. Need the kiddie rodeo to be offered more than once.
7. Need better flow in the northwest end.
8. Need a portable microphone.
9. Need way more volunteers for petting zoo, information booth, 4-H Exhibit Building & opening & closing gates.
10. The Kiwanis need orienting regarding letting vehicles on the fairgrounds.
11. We need to seek help from other civic groups and/or the senior citizens.
12. Petting Zoo needs a tent to itself. That way people won't be feeding the sheep and the Petting Zoo could offer more animals such as adding a mini horse, if they had more room.
13. Communication with Parsons Pony Farm needs to be clear, particularly in regards to our role in helping out with volunteers, if we offer their pony rides in the future.
14. Tim Furey of Opportunity Resources said they have crews that could water all the plants next year.
15. The public did not feel pressured to buy anything in the Country Fair.
16. Tents - wind - heat a problem. Two injuries happened to people trying to help during the storm. Several small rips occurred and a pole was bent. Next year we need secure anchors with a come-along system on the corners. We need coolers like those in the llama barn and add the sides onto the tents. (Kim Marr mentioned that it is highly likely that we will lose the 3 sheep barn superintendents if the sheep are under the tent next year).
17. Scot was asked to obtain an estimate on expanding the cement on the open ice rink and adding a lean-to 60' x 120' on the west side.
18. Sheep tent had a shortage of electricity, water and lighting.

19. The Department of Livestock reported to Lisa that we had the best layout for livestock of any Fair they had visited in Montana this year.
20. Llama location and schedule needs to be taken a closer look at for future. Smell was an issue cited for the llama area.
21. Beef: it would be better for everyone if we could have the public view the beef by walking in front of the animals rather than behind.
22. The slick surface on the ice rink cement continues to be a problem. After watching several beef animals go down, Kevin Mytty went out and bought a sandpaper material to stop the slippage of the animals. Extension and the Fair helped reimburse part of the costs.
23. The ribbon cutting ceremony was a plus.
24. Emergencies. We need to identify how to contact in case of emergencies and have those phone numbers readily available to all key people involved with the Fair.
25. Thematically we should include the Agriculture/Culinary Building and 4-H café and exhibit building into the Country Fair by expanding the front perimeter and creating two main openings. This would also help improve handicapped accessibility by incorporating the main walkway that is paved as the main walkway.

Petition to move the livestock into the enclosed ice rink

- The wind storm which created havoc with the tents prompted a 4-H parent to start gathering signatures on a petition to present to the Fair Board requesting that our animals be housed in the enclosed ice rink in the future.

Attendees at this meeting cited reasons that proposal would **not** work: ventilation, glass doors, floor not finished, animal movement to the show ring, and location from the new wash rack.

Possible reasons to use the enclosed ice rink: display of 4-H exhibits, agriculture-related commercial exhibits, and demonstrations.

We would like to create a unified vision of what would work for youth and agriculture exhibitors and the fairgrounds.

Some discussion occurred regarding the possibility of expanding the open ice rink roof.

Fairgrounds Master Plan

- Scot Meader mentioned that more public meetings regarding the year-round use of the fairgrounds will be scheduled soon. The community needs to express their opinions NOW as an architect will be hired to draw up plans based upon public input. The Commissioners hope to have something on the 2008 ballot asking the community to pay for the renovation of the fairgrounds. The only buildings designated as off-limits (meaning they will remain on the fairgrounds) are the commercial building and the ice rinks.

The next Fair Board meeting is Tuesday, September 19, 1:00 pm at the Missoula Chamber of Commerce. Everyone is welcome to attend. Lisa Mills and Barney Sheridan will ask the Fair Board to allow the Country Fair Committee to continue the Country Fair as a destination point at the 2007 Western Montana Fair.

Submitted by Colleen Terrazas