

Country Fair Committee Minutes  
February 25, 2009 meeting

Present: Campbell Barrett (Chair, 4-H Office); John Warehime (4-H Beef Barn Super); Roger Christopher (4-H Exhibit Bldg Super); Sally Tromp (4-H Exhibit Bldg Super); Will Johnson (Farm Bureau Financial); Becky Robinson (NW Farm Credit); Joey Hennes (NW Farm Credit, 4-H Board of Directors); Scot Meader (Western MT Fair); Charles Deschamps (Msla Chamber Agri-Business Committee); Kim Latrielle (Msla Chamber, Exposition Facility Executive Board); Lori Zeiser (4-H Board of Directors); Gretchen Kirchmann (Missoula Stampede Committee); Kristine Zimmerman (4-H Goat Barn Super); Kim VanDeRiet (Seeley Lake Trailblazers 4-H Club); Sharon & Jackie Teague (Seeley Lake Trailblazers 4-H Club); Christina Evelo (Mullan Trail Mustangs 4-H Club); Jerry Marks (Extension Office); Dale Clouse (Frenchtown Valley 4-H Club); Larry Henderson (Chair of 4-H Livestock Committee); and Colleen Terrazas (4-H Office)

1. **Fairground Update from Scot Meader, Fair Manager**

- There is a permanent wall on the west wall of the open ice rink with two roll-up doors.
- The area in front of the enclosed ice rink and 4-H café *may* be paved.
- *May* bring in a marketing person for Fair fundraising efforts.
- Working on a time when 4-H Horse members can showcase their work since the 4-H Horse Show happens prior to the fair
- The 2009 Fair Theme is "I Heard It Through the Bo-vine"

2. **Country Fair Update from Campbell Barrett, 4-H Agent**

- Shane Clouse, Pink Grizzly, will donate potted flowers again
- Lou's Petting Zoo has our fair week available if we want her to come to our fair and run her own petting zoo. Cost is \$800/day plus lodging
- Need to raise several thousand dollars for this years Country Fair

3. **Fair Planning Process with Crandall/Arambula**

- Scot Meader reported that Crandall/Arambula met with 14-16 groups last fall to discuss the future of the fair. The horse racing group had the largest attendance. Crandall/Arambula will come to Missoula in late March or early April with three recommendations.
- Jerry Marks observed that the community is very divided - with no common vision.
- Scot Meader reported that Strikers Soccer organizations would like to build a 50,000 square foot building for indoor soccer. This building could be used for fair activities during the week of the fair.
- Kim Latrielle reported that she is on the Exposition Facility Missoula Executive Board. This is an informal group made up of people wishing to see an Exhibition Center in Missoula, not necessarily on the fairgrounds, but somewhere in Missoula. There is no official membership. The group is willing to raise private dollars to support an Exhibition Center. The Center would be 110,000 square feet or larger. There is a facility in Deschutes County, Oregon they are modeling. In Deschutes County, 4-H uses the building for free. A feasibility study is in the process right now and if it is determined that this facility can carry itself, the group will move forward.

4. **2008 Country Fair Comments**

- There is a need to engage partners and donors in the planning process.
- Access to the bathrooms on the fairgrounds by the show ring was a hassle that needs to be worked out ahead of time.
- If Charlie Russell Riders are part of the County Fair in 2009, issues with them need working out.
- One idea was for the Country Fair Coordinator to meet with key people every morning in the 4-H café for breakfast to discuss schedule, issues, etc.

5. **Unloading Animals on Tuesday**

- Tuesday is free gate admission.
- Spectator safety when unloading animals on Tuesday needs resolution. Last year signs were placed on the gates saying the area was closed. This year it was suggested that the gates on the east side perimeter be locked to keep the public out of the barns. It was suggested that a deputy be posted at gates.
- Perhaps some type of entertainment should be going on outside the east side perimeter during this time. Perhaps miniature horses?

6. **Country Fair Coordinator**

- The past three years Lisa Mills has served as Country Fair Coordinator. Lisa has a job now and is unable to perform Country Fair Coordinator duties any longer. Lisa was paid out of the Extension Office budget for her services. County funds are most likely not available. If we want a paid Country Fair Coordinator position, we will have to find another way to pay for it.
- Campbell said the Country Fair Coordinator may actually end up being several volunteers who handle set up, displaying plants, organizing events, getting entertainment in and out of the grounds, etc.

7. **Lou's Petting Zoo**

- The petting zoo was handled by Lou's Petting Zoo last year. It is licensed and insured. Having an independent handle this responsibility is great because 4-H people are too busy to run a petting zoo in addition to 4-H café shifts, animal shows, etc. Cost is \$800 per day plus lodging for the animals.
- Several years ago the petting zoo was run by FFA. Before we go any further, Larry Henderson will check with Tom Andres regarding the possibility of FFA running the petting zoo.
- Regardless of who manages the petting zoo, money will be needed. Cow Pie Bingo was mentioned and Kim Latrielle suggested that it be held at a public event prior to the fair because 4-H is too busy to add one more thing to their plate during the fair.

8. **Potential Spread of Country Fair Theme Fair-Wide**

- The reason the Country Fair theme started in the first place was because we wanted a noncommercial, family-friendly, rural feeling atmosphere.
- We want an area away from carnival and other happenings at the fair. A place where people sit under a tree at a picnic table to relax and visit.
- We have worked hard on the Country Fair concept, we enjoy our uniqueness, and while we welcome the spread of family friendly, youth and community-oriented concepts throughout the Fair, we are not interested in spreading the Country Fair theme itself fair-wide.

9. **Next Meeting**

The next Country Fair Committee meeting will be **Tuesday, March 24, 6:30 pm**. We welcome anyone who wishes to attend.