



WYOMING STATE FAIR BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Wyoming State Library
Conference Room & Via Call In
2800 Central Ave.

Cheyenne, WY 82001

February 20, 2024

11:00am MST

Call In Information: 877 278 2734; pin #795536

I. – 11 am - CALL TO ORDER : call to order 11:01

II. - ROLL CALL

(in person) Shawn Steffen, Stacy Broda, Diane Shober, Diana Berger Amanda Marney, Laurie Boner, Nick Neylon, JD Sater, Doug Miyamoto, Courtney Conkle, AJ Deines, Kota Provence, Rindy West, Sara Doyle

(via video/phone) Vicky Haley, Devin Finson, Jill Tregemba, Joe Bridges

A. Introduction of Guests: Nick Neylon, new board member, Deputy Director of State Parks

III. - APPROVALS

A. Approval of Agenda

Motion: Berger Second: Boner carried
Wil movement of Marketing up to just after Approval of Minutes

B. Approval of Minutes – October 28th, 2023

Motion: Boner Second: Marney

C. Approval of Minutes – December 20th, 2023

Both sets, motion passed

IV. **Marketing/Promotion/Planning Events** – Director Shober

Director Shober reported. Met this morning. Discussed best use of time and resources. Summary: between now and April 16, they will meet again to determine mission statement, Jill offered to fun the facilitation of the mission statement. They feel we can best elevate in content and storytelling. We will identify our gaps. We will look at how to best support both fair and the endowment, and how to sustain year-round. Shober thanked the WSF team for all the info they brought to the table and how much they accomplish with such a small team.

V. - PUBLIC COMMENT

Please note that public comments are limited to 5 minutes per person. NONE

VI. - GENERAL MANAGER REPORT – Courtney Conkle

Conkle gave her report. We have been very busy. We met with Converse County Fair multiple times and have been able to execute their 2024 contract. She feels we are in a

good place with them. We did do an Exhibit A with them so they know exactly they are agreeing to. We will not depend on volunteers for the flip for 2024, but open to incorporating volunteers in the future, depending on the turn out for 2024.

We met with Ranch Rodeo, they are eager to 2024. They seem excited to refine their event. We are working to assure we define times better and what support they need, staffing and having things open. We have not changed rates/percentages.

Conkle is working on livestock judges. She hopes to have the last 4 set in the next few weeks with contracts initiated. She would like to announce 100 days out (which is May 5 for 2024). She is starting to work with JD Sater on a "Code of Ethics" that would be attached to the contract. She would like to include more expectations as the Under \$1500 contracts are very straight forward.

We are still looking for Champion of Champions, Beef, Swine, and Open Beef judges.

Sara will present later, but we have uncovered several things in the book that will be addressed. This is going to increase our partnerships.

Staffing updates: We had 2 vacancies, equaling 25% of our workforce. We have been stretched thin. We are extending an offer to our finalist for Partnerships & Events. We feel that this candidate will be a great addition to the team. Berger asked how many applicants we had. Conkle reported we had 20, with 19 qualified. For the maintenance position, we had 2 applicants, we did not extend to either. We reworked that job description and reopened. We have 3 applicants today.

We are also continuing our internship program. We are asking for 4 summer long and 4 fair time. One will be an assistant to Conkle, one for Marketing, one for hospitality, and one for Partnership. We are also looking for an Intern Superintendent to be a contact for them that is outside the area they are working in.

Legislative Updates: SF014 is still active. We are optimistic to see how it goes in the House. We will be keeping an eye on that, it will have major impacts. The CapCon bill was redacted by it's sponsor. It impacts Silver and the Dairy Barn Feasibility Study. We do have an engineer that will make it useable but it needs a rehaul. It was last done in the 1940 and the supports are not supported and almost completely rotted through. So what we are doing now is a band-aid. This also impacts our Master Plan expansion. There may be a few ways around that, but it will limit that.

The Steering Committee, under Rindy West, have gotten up and going and are making a great effort. We appreciate the amazing team she has brought together. She brought in a team we could not have done without her.

We have some folk wanting to bring back the Wyoming Team Roping. Conkle will be meeting with them over the next few weeks.

The next board meeting is in April 16. This is slightly different date but was moved to accommodate schedules for several board members.

Conkle's main goal for the year is really focused on team sustainability. We have been more critical for our open positions so we can make sure we maximizing our abilities. We want to make sure we have the best people who can sustain over the long haul. We want to move forward with a structure that is sustainable. She is also looking at financial elements, refining those procedures and policies. We need some formal protocols just for State Fair. We want to clean up our financial handling and accountability.

Shober mentioned the awards that were won. She wants to brag on the team for all the great work.

Conkle will be gone March 7-11 for Cowgirls 30 Under 30.

VII. - OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR REPORT – AJ Deines

Deines presented. Since the last board meeting, we have been just keeping up with weekly events, both weekends and weekday. Arena rentals are also keeping them busy. We block the arenas in the morning to make sure we can keep good footing. The team rotates through so no one has to do it daily.

Trying to game plan the waterline repair on Midway. There are two places in the line that have been broken through. It's a 3-inch line. It's important to get it repaired. We are looking at early spring to get it done, as soon as the ground thaws. We do need the waterline, and if we can do it early enough, it shouldn't cause much interruption.

We had the two interviews in January for the open position. Neither person fit well. We then reworked the title and description. It is now Facility Operations & Events Assistant. We made it a bit more exciting and accurate. We would like to find a good fit. Deines tries to take on the event setup to allow the rest of the team to do their jobs, but we are all good about helping each other as needed.

Frank has been taking in the equipment, especially equipment that is used heavy in the summer, and get them serviced so they will be good to go for the busy season. Chris has been working a lot on the campground, especially frozen pipes. It requires digging out under the concrete to get heat under. Chris does it without complaint and gets kudos.

Major Maintenance: walls are ordered for the Cafeteria and will hopefully come in and be installed in the next few months. The Crows Nest is installed. There were some issues with the stairs. Meeting with Ryan they were able to correct that. The lead ups to the bucking shoots are installed and will be able to be used. The area will be really nice. Short Power is about halfway done installing the fans in Pepsi Equine. It will be a game changer for horse shows. They are controlled by a digital controller with more fine tuning. That should be finished in the next few weeks.

On Saturday night, we did have a water pipe burst in Fort Reno. Denies caught it early on, he was able to get the water up from the floors. We lost some ceiling tiles and drywall, but overall, it wasn't as catastrophic as it could have been.

VIII. - FUNDRAISING & REVENUE GENERATION REPORT – Rindy West, Raiser Consulting West presented. West thanked the board for how they have spread the word and supported the campaign.

On Annual gifts—mailing went out in November, \$5305 was collected with an average gift being \$300. Board gifts have been coming in, West thanks everyone for showing that support.

Donor database: it is working well, we have some good processes. We are working on getting thank you letters out within a week.

We are tracking donors and working on retention. We do this via phone calls and touches. We have a list of 120 major donors, \$5000 or more, and working on building those relationships.

Endowment Auction: we did meet. We want to increase the dollars coming in for that. They will not count for the match, but we did count 2023's amount. They would like to add a gun to the auction.

Case Study was handed out. We had a team effort to pull in all the info for this document. We highlighted the current goal for the match, but also 10 million in 10 years. We lined out some giving clubs to have listed for perpetuity.

The next Steering Committee meeting will be on the fairgrounds.

Each member is a primary lead on five contacts and a secondary on five.

In the past five days, \$75000 in two asks! We also had the governor and first lady have given a generous gift. In the next month, we hope to have \$200,000 roll in. We have 3 prospects that may give \$100,000 or more.

Golf Tournament, May 31st. We would love to have everyone there. The Blue & Green Challenge is live, we have one club that has already done \$2000. We expect about \$10000 total from that challenge.

Would like an "all donor" activity like ice cream sandwiches or something fun to thank donors at State Fair as a celebration.

On grants—for most of the major ones, we need the 5013c status. We don't have it yet, but everything is filed. As soon as the 5013c is up, we have some groups like Daniel's Fund that will give. We hope to have this by July. Game and Fish will do a Commissioner's License once we have the 5013c.

One of the key factors is sharing those stories about why people are giving.

We have had a lot of donor on the “in kind” side to help us.

West handed out a spreadsheet with statistics. \$183,000 as of this week.

Berger suggested Platte Valley Bank. West confirmed they are on the list for Major Donors. West encouraged everyone to share those leads. West said we are going for those we already have the relationships with since we are in a time crunch. Berger asked if the Steering Committee would share their list. West said they could share just names.

Conkle wanted to clarify, right now, the fund lives in Pool A, which is a high-yield. There is legislation that would require \$5 million to stay. We want to assure them that if they bring us up to that 5million we will keep trying to grow the fund. We won't get extra money, we would just get topped off.

We've had conversations with several departments, donations are not taxable. We are finding in IRS code that we are a “qualified organization” 170c with the IRS, but we need a government letter stating that. In most states, it's just the receipt, not a letter. Most states don't do charitable donations outside a 501c3. We will keep working on getting that letter. We will continue to make sure we handle ourselves above board. It is cleaner when it's a non-profit.

IX. - EXHIBITS DEPARTMENT REPORT – Sara Doyle

Doyle reported that she's been working on the Premium Book, which has required quite an overhaul. She has been establishing better contact with the Open Livestock show superintendents, which has been very well received. Many have never been contacted before about what goes in the book. This year, all open beef except the Maine Anjou (which is a very small show, only open to youth) will be run through ShoWorks—this means WSF will take the entries (as opposed to the breed association) and fee, and then will pay the associations after fair. Hereford, Angus and Longhorns are very excited to have this option, and it will increase the data that WSF has on our open show participation.

If anyone would like to see the book, there is a mock-up available. The final order is not quite set, but this shows the direction.

We are still recruiting new superintendents for Open Culinary, Crafted Arts, Visual Arts, and Fiber Arts departments. For Youth Livestock, we are in need of a coordinator for Youth Beef. For Open Livestock, we are looking for an Open Sheep coordinator.

X. - 2024 COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. State Fair – Director Miyamoto

Miyamoto reported on the two meetings they have had.

Talked about breaking things into smaller packages so you could have multiple providers (not all of security, but elements of security). We talked about trying to contract out

specific deliverables so that the staff going out and being the face will be good and positive interactions. Conkle explained this would give us more strings attached, even it is the same contractors. The two that are big are admissions and grandstand security. This could open up smaller groups to fill those. Miyamoto explained we haven't had a lot of penalty in the contracts in the past, but they can be used.

Action Items: developing a list of wants and needs for food sales near show rings, to smartly reword contracts to compel contractors to respond well to needs at the fair.

Break at 12:21

12:33 FFA presentation

12:56 Resume

B. Ad Hoc Endowment Auction – Director Price

Berger shared that the committee met. They nailed down the items for 2024. They will add a ringside for the Champion of Champions show. Price heard back on the gates—it would be about \$150 per panel, maybe 1 panel per door, \$50 for wheel.

C. Facilities – Director Bridges

Bridges reported. Major Maintenance evaluation will happen in May or June. Projects would be starting after July 1. We don't know the final amount we get, it is based on square footage. The two major projects, 1 being plumbing. They have put together and overall look at how to update it all to get ahead of the curve. Also looking at the campground. We aren't sure if it's going to be all lower sites or site by site. If it ends up having to be a major undertaking—is the campground where we want it, are we better to relocate it now instead of fixing the current location. Also looking at landscaping, especially some low maintenance options. A lot of little things like fixing roofs and such. Conkle added that we do have a contractor for plumbing for Laramie and Bridger, the main concern is lead time on supplies and getting the contract finalized. We want to get it done by 2024 fair, but we also need a backup plan just in case.

D. Finance/Budget – General Manager Conkle for Director Barks

Conkle shared that the reports were handed out. Brought specific attention to the Fairtime and non-Fairtime Revenue Procedures. This could be impacted by SF014, so we don't want action today, but would like to review it and be ready to take action at the next meeting. A few points of note, we are at the end of a biennium, and costs have skyrocketed. We did initiate a ___ to access enough to get us through the end. Having these procedures in place will give us best practices that will help ensure stability.

1. 0801 Executive Summary
2. 0801 State Fair Budget FYTD through January
3. 0850 State Fair Board Budget FYTD through January
4. 0803 Non-Fair Budget FYTD through January
5. Proposed Fairtime Revenue Handling Procedures
6. Proposed Non-Fairtime Revenue Handling Procedures

E. Personnel/Rules – Director Boner

Boner reported. The committee has been busy. They revamped the Assistant Manager position into the Partnership & Events Coordinator. It was narrowed down to four, and had interviews. Picked the top two for finals, only one interviewed. We liked the candidate. We have made the offer and are waiting on his acceptance. Conkle expressed thanks to the committee for their efforts over the last few months. Conkle shared a bit about the interview process. Boner reminded that we revamped the operations position description as well, and hope to get it filled soon.

F. Marketing/Promotion/Planning Events – Director Shoher

Director Shoher reported. Met this morning. Discussed best use of time and resources. Summary: between now and April 16, they will meet again to determine mission statement, Jill Tregemba offered to guide the facilitation of the mission statement. They feel we can best elevate in content and storytelling. We will identify our gaps. We will look at how to best support both fair and the endowment, and how to sustain year-round. Shoher thanked the WSF team for all the info they brought to the table and how much they accomplish with such a small team.

G. Youth Show Committee – Director Berger

Berger shared that we have had 3 meetings since September. We looked at the Superintendent's requests. Billy Wood asked if we can go to dehorned rule. It will take effect in 2025 to give heads up. Whitney asked for some changes to her schedule—we can move time but not days. We are keeping it as it was due to other shows. Champion of Champions will move to 6 from 4pm. We had several discussions on weight cards. Beef is not ready, sheep is open, so the committee recommended we do cards for sheep in 2024. Woods doesn't feel they need it for goats, so not doing it for goats this year.

We did a survey to educators and advisors on entries. The results were what we expected. We will be going back to a form, using google forms. This will run through Sara's position. This will help the Exhibitor's Office fill those orders faster. We did remove the qualifier from the youth horse show, so any 4-H or FFA youth who has shown in their fair can enter. We will also have a limited time for educators/advisors to pick up credentials.

H. Sponsorship Ad Hoc Committee – Director Tregemba

Tregemba reported. They have met a few times, looking at how we are serving our partners. There has been a lot of discussion. We are looking at how to streamline the process to make it more efficient and isn't dependent on staffing levels. We are looking at using a software to help with deliverables, and also standardizing sponsorship packages. Conkle shared that we will be using Eventny for sponsors and vendor management. We can track deliverables and streamline communications for trigger dates and auto generate to keep everyone on the same page and on time. We are working on defining actual activation. We want it to be equitable and trackable, and setting clear expectations. WE are working on ETS approval. We hope to be able to actively use it by April.

Broda asked if this is the same as Endowment database? No, because donors can't get anything in return. Whereas sponsors we can and should be reinvesting in them.

XI.- OLD BUSINESS

None presented.

XII.- NEW BUSINESS

If anyone has ideas on how to advertise the Endowment Auction, please share.

Conkle asked JD to share about rules about lobbying. You can speak on your personal behalf, but if speaking as a board member, don't lobby, just share factual info.

Boner shared the volunteer days are scheduled for May 18, June 15 and July 27, 9 am to 3pm with lunch. We will also, with a separate group, tear down the old stage and enhance the VIP area.

Conkle shared that most events on grounds do hard alcohol and malt. We have only done malt for fair in Conkle's time. We have partners that would like to come on board, but need their projects able to be presented on grounds. Conkle wants the pulse of the board before she pursues. Berger asked if it has any issues with the alcohol contract—no. It only changes the product offerings. Discussion ensued. Suggestion was made that it be limited to grandstand events to limit exposure to young exhibitors. Conkle will see what the two potential sponsors might bring to the table and keep the board posted.

West reminded the board that she would like to do a donor appreciation, even just a little something.

XIII.- ADJOURN 1:44

*Note: this draft agenda is subject to revision and all times listed are tentative and are subject to change.