

The regular monthly meeting of the **Douglas County Fair Board Executive Committee** was held on **December 10, 2020** at 6:30 p.m., by phone conference, the Chairman, Dean Elliott, and the Secretary being present.

Executive Board Members present included:

Hayden Schmidt, Show Management Co-Chair
Dean Elliott, Chairman
Wes Jacobs, Treasurer
Phil Riesselman, Jr. Livestock Sale Chair
Craig Sloan , Rodeo Co-Chair
Pam Spradlin, Secretary
Lora Talbert, Entertainment Chair

Executive Board Members Absent were:

Scott Candelaria, Vice Chairman
Debbie Mills, Marketing Co-Chair

Chairman Dean Elliott opened the meeting stating the minutes of the November meeting would be brought to the January meeting for approval along with the December minutes.

Dean asks if there are issues at the Committee level to bring forward?

Livestock Sale Committee – Phil and Pat have been recommended for Chairs and will need final approval from Fair Board at the December meeting.
Guest Services is continuing to work on filling the Chair position.

Dean will send us the 2021 draft schedule.

Dates for 2021 Fair are August 5-8. These are ok per historical data.

Sponsorship is important this year and since Debbie is missing from the call we will discuss this in January. We need to come up with a program that all Directors can speak about.

Carnival

Wagner Carnival notified Synneva Tuesday, December 8th that our Fair dates conflict with Logan Fair and his carnival is not able to come on our designated Fair dates for 2021. They are available July 29 – Aug 1 and that does not work for us.

Do we get busy and find an alternative?

Consensus is YES because of 3 things:

Loss of Revenue

It's an added attraction that people look for – completes the package for Fair

Visibility – brings people to the Fair

Who is available and check their reputation

Discussion followed regarding planning Fair as a normal Fair. A vaccine could be available by June. We need to plan for not only a full, normal Fair but also one with full COVID restrictions and also a hybrid Fair.

Feast at the Fair

Andy Hough has reached out to plan the planting if we are going to move forward with this event.

Discussion that high ticket price excludes too many Fair goers.

Alternative plan was suggested for a western format, perhaps small bite sample alternative:

Chuck Wagon/Dutch Oven with cooking and judging

Other suggestions were old family heritage recipe type event or use local chefs

Consensus is YES – worth looking at

Saturday Night Concert Structure

Commissioners like the no risk contract we have been having with Scott Durland.

Discussion followed – ideas and thoughts:

There are costs being picked up in our Fair budget using this model:

ticket taking

clean up

loss of beer sales

security

no revenue from the concert

Advantage to using Scott Durland:

he has contacts with the entertainers

Grizzly Rose advertising

Having more people come to the fairgrounds is good for vendors and carnival

We do make revenue from the carnival
Boot Barn does concerts –check with them and others that do this
Don't shoot for the big name stars – more middle ground draw, less risk
Do concert Thursday night
Craig will talk to Bruff – he used to handle this
Entertainment Committee has had nothing to do with that big concert
If we wanted to do this on our own for 2021 – it's already late to start
Use Scott Durland but negotiate the contract so that Fair gets a portion of profit
We need to know what the contract is
Do more concerts – some on our own and some with Scott Durland
What is the status for alcohol now that Flying Horse is out of business?

Goal over time is to close the gap on our expenses vs revenue numbers

Staff worked on this, did a nice job and put a lot of thought into this, put together a power point presentation with the following suggestions:

Open Classes entry fee

Most recently had 1,500 entries with a pay out of around \$4,500
If charge is \$2 per entry estimate for fees collected would be \$3,000;
\$3 would bring in \$4,500; \$4 would bring in \$6,200
Could add a presenting sponsor \$2,500 and charge \$1 per entry

Discussion:

3 year plan for charging entry fee was recommended at the time Creative Arts moved to the Events Center. This has been discussed with Pat Salazar. Growth was about 11% after the move.

Be sure we discuss with Superintendents of Open Class and Ag & Flori

Consensus is a YES – look into this further

Market Place Fees

Historically Event Center brought in \$20,000, since inception of Marketplace it's been \$15,000
2021 suggestion is to find 6 non related Sponsors at \$2,500 each; have 40 10x10' spaces,
Commercial space would be \$300 - \$350, Artisan would be \$200-\$250

Discussion:

County has recognized the need for Commercial space

Numbers suggested are ok because of space needed by Open Class and possibly Discovery Ranch

Tim is agreeable to look at a close location for a petting zoo

Look at ways to draw people in and vendors too

Consensus is a YES – look into this further

Camping Fees

10\$ per day

Discussion:

Have heard 4-H sentiments about the outer road camping

How do we do camping for rodeo contestants?

Nice to have camping for both Rodeo and 4-H

Goodwill goes a long way. Camping is tough – we need space for parking, cowboys enjoyed the grass lot, 4-H is too far away

No charge previously

Camping is a huge benefit to 4-H families

Move 4-H camping back inside if they have to pay for it, be careful with charges to 4-H families so we don't lose them

There is a problem with 4-H camping inside – cars need to park outside

Back in the day – there was no camping at the Fairgrounds

Inside rim \$10, parking lot free

Contestant space inside the ring

Consensus is – look into this further

Charge for Parking

4,300 cars @ \$10 each = \$43,000

Discussion:

Did this in the 90's and it didn't go over well

It will be an expense if county has to collect the money

We have a new affiliation between Guest Services and Fair Foundation – possible help

Start with lessor amount \$2 to \$5

Arrangements need to be in place for Buyers and 4-H families

Consensus is a NO

Adjust Ticket Fees

Go to two tiers – Regular and Senior. \$25 and \$22 respectively

Discussion:

We are putting on a high quality rodeo – OK to raise ticket prices

Create a rock pile

If we raise the ticket price then we need to keep talented contestants coming

We are not promoting this as a World Class Rodeo, missing out on promotion?

Family Entertainment expense – needs to stay reasonable

Last year during COVID we had a true, knowledgeable, loud Rodeo crowd

Consensus is YES

General Admission charge Thursday and Sunday

Thursday \$8,000

Discussion:

Consensus is NO

Sunday \$20,000

Discussion:

If we don't have a sponsor then consensus is Yes – look at this further

There has been some discussion that Fair Foundation could sponsor this day
as The Philip Miller Day each year

Dean will send out the Power Point that staff created.

Seeds (ideas) planted, give this some thought. These are some ideas to kick around.

Open Director Spots

Commitment to 75% attendance and belong to 2 committees

Dean will be holding some conversations

Model of Associate Pool to consider for Director spots

Consensus is YES

Continue to encourage Associate Members to become Directors

Nominating Committee Plea Update

2 Directors have responded and volunteered

Need at least one more

Dean is working on getting the Director holes figured out

Wes requested that meeting notices need to go out in a more timely, 3-4 days ahead.

Hayden reported that he and Ben are reaching out and vetting judges. Worried about last minute COVID changes and we will also be competing with other Fairs this year. They came up with a schedule for judges that is full or COVID restricted

Dean has action items to follow up on from this meeting and will bring information back to us.

Dean reports that he has told Tim Hallmark that April/May is the latest timeframe to make decisions on Fair due to COVID. It is too hard to figure out at the last minute.

Dean appreciates everyone's input and candor. Thanks everyone and asks us all to think about the Carnival and the other action items. Next meeting is January 14th, 2021. Fair Board meets next week. Have a great night, and the best of holidays

The Meeting Adjourned at 8:20pm

Notes provided by:

Pam Spradlin, Secretary to the Douglas County Fair Board

December 21, 2020