

**MINUTES OF FAIR BOARD MEETING
OCTOBER 13, 1993**

FAIR BOARD

John Thomas
George Otten
Ken Leahy
Marla Warren

STAFF

Cal Wade
Patti Poe
Tom Cribbins

GUESTS

Jeanne Leeson
Connie Potter
Eric Apalategui

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by Chairman John Thomas.

CONSENT AGENDA

Wade explained that he will know more about budget projections for the year within the next two months. \$99,305 came in for the first quarter of hotel/motel which is more than projected.

MOTION: MOVED BY KEN LEAHY, SECONDED BY GEORGE OTTEN, TO ACCEPT THE CONSENT AGENDA. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

RODEO BOARD

Warren reported the rodeo committee wishes to make changes in the VIP seating in the arena. They would like to remove the Queen's box and replace it with bleachers to seat 500 with a tent off the back for VIP use. This would allow for more seating for sponsors and other invited guests. Different passes would also be given out to alleviate some of the problems with access to the VIP area. Plans are to have a sponsor help pay for the cost of the additional bleachers. Some electrical work would also be needed.

Leahy suggested getting additional information as to costs and layout of the bleachers at the next rodeo meeting. He has some plans for a new arena and would like to see if the VIP area could be incorporated into the plans. He does not like to see additional expense going into something that might be torn down in the near future.

The Queen's tryouts are set for November 20 at Windy Ridge. The suggestion was made at the rodeo meeting to host the sponsor thank you dinner and coronation dance at the same time and perhaps tying them into Family Fair.

Wade explained the need to do a Spring event that is profitable. Family Fair needs to grow and there might not be the space needed to do the dance and dinner during this time.

BOOSTERS

The Boosters are working on a membership drive. Leeson requested a list of projects that could be done by the Boosters. They would like to see something tangible for their money raising efforts. Wade would prefer they hold tight - the fairgrounds may need their help later in the year.

MARKETING

Poe reported the FairPlex was down 22% in use days for September but up 2% in attendance. This reflects bigger events booking at the FairPlex and shows September to be a very successful month. Portland Reign of Glass may be coming out for their show and a smaller glass show is definite. Poe thanked Jeanne Leeson for the sales leads.

The Floral Building has seen little activity. Most of the bookings are last minute. The posts are a definite problem. An engineer has completed preliminary drawings for the removal of most of the posts in the building. Two 6 x 6 posts in each row would be placed from a span a top the roof through the floor. At the November board meeting Wade is hoping to have costs of the construction.

MAINTENANCE

Cribbins gave this month's report for the maintenance staff. Electrical bids for rodeo and livestock campgrounds have been submitted. The work would entail putting in a 100 Amp panel by the livestock area and hookups for 10 units per campground. In addition water lines would be brought in by staff.

Maintenance work in September included vehicle maintenance, enlarging the shop compound with additional secured storage, graveling the road behind the rodeo arena to the shop, and repairing the Main Exhibit Building roof.

Earl Bemis is meeting with engineers and is expecting bids on the office annex work.

The maintenance staff is talking about rekeying the various locks on the premises to reduce the number of keys needed by staff.

RV SPACES - LIVESTOCK CAMPGROUND & RODEO

Sunset Electric submitted bids for the proposed work. If Sunset does the work the rodeo campground work would be \$2,915. This would include putting in a bigger service and providing outlets for hookups. Should maintenance staff do the work the cost would be \$1,350.

The 4-H/Livestock campground costs would be \$1085 if Sunset did they work or \$750 - \$800 if maintenance staff did the work in cooperation with Sunset. This would provide power for ten RV hookups during fair.

Dr. Barno, rodeo committee member, will be talking to the Fair Board about the rodeo campground work.

Additional flood lights are needed in the rodeo parking area. The rodeo campground electrical costs do include these plus a new 125Amp panel.

ARENA CONSTRUCTION

Leahy and Otten presented a proposal for a new arena. The proposed arena would be composed of a berm constructed from 300,000 cubic yards of dirt with concrete steps cut into the slopes. The steps would have benches with enough seating for 27,000 - 30,000 spectators. The arena floor measurements are 525' x 275' which would allow for a soccer and/or football field. The complete facility would cover 14.22 acres and be located in the existing arena, rodeo pasture, shop, and dog leg area.

The facility could be used year round. A Canadian Football League scout is coming out to talk to Leahy and Wade about the arena. If the Canadian Football League was to become involved they would prefer roofing the arena. Suggestions were made to approach local schools and the park district to determine their levels of interest in the proposed structure.

Leahy will call the county about a permit for fill dirt and what is required to stock pile the dirt. He suggests charging contractors \$2.50 - \$3.00 a yard to dump the dirt at the FairPlex. This money should be placed in a special account and used when the time comes to move the dirt and shape the new arena facility.

This new proposal may change some of the Master Plan but the board should still proceed with the Master Plan's renewal for the ordinance. The arena could be put in as an individual change now or at a later date. Wade will contact Jerry Draggoo to get his input as to the best way to proceed before meeting with the county commissioners.

The proposed light rail station entry to the FairPlex still needs to be addressed. An entrance needs to be shown that will satisfy the fact that the board is aware that the entry is needed.

MOTION: MOVED BY MARLA WARREN, SECONDED BY KEN LEAHY, TO HAVE WADE CONTACT DRAGGOO TO INCLUDE THE PROPOSED ARENA ON THE MASTER PLAN. UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

WORKSHOP DATE

February 11, 1994 with February 18 as an alternate date were selected as the workshop dates. The workshop will be held at the Hallmark.

BINGO

The Fair Board had earlier approved the decision to do a Friday night owl session at Sunset Bingo. The FairPlex has run the Friday night session for the past four months. The intent was to earn start up money for a bingo night at the FairPlex and to train the manager to run the FairPlex Bingo.

A net total of \$6,601 was earned during the four months. Rent paid to Sunset Bingo totaled \$8,400 for the same period.

Poe has researched costs of equipment to have Tuesday night bingo in the Cloverleaf Building. New equipment would cost \$23,750. One year old equipment found at Portland Meadows would cost no more than \$16,925. Poe is negotiating for a lower cost. The cost in both proposals includes new electronic air cleaners. Poe and members of the maintenance staff have seen the set up at Portland Meadows. Maintenance does not feel it would be a problem to use the equipment in the Cloverleaf Building.

Assuming the Tuesday night bingo does as well as the Friday night bingo, the equipment would be paid off in four months.

MOTION: MOVED BY GEORGE OTTEN TO PROCEED ONE NIGHT A WEEK WITH POE TO WORK ON THE LOWEST PERCENTAGE POSSIBLE (65 - 70%) TO PURCHASE THE EQUIPMENT.

DISCUSSION: Concern was expressed as to why Portland Meadows went out of business. Poe explained the bingo games were changed often at Portland Meadows plus Meadows canceled games during horse races, concerts, and other events. Bingo players like consistency both in times and games.

The FairPlex would have the only Tuesday night game in the area.

THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY KEN LEAHY. QUESTION CALLED. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

JENSEN CASE

Jensen's attorney has asked for a summary judgment on the case. Wade has questions for Dan Olson regarding policy and administrative decision making. Wade might come back to the fair board and ask the board to review his description with regard to interpreting policies set by the fair board.

RODEO BOARD APPOINTMENT

Rocky Williams would like to be reappointed for the rodeo board.

MOTION: MOVED BY MARLA WARREN, SECONDED BY KEN LEAHY, TO REAPPOINT ROCKY TO THE RODEO BOARD FOR A THREE YEAR TERM.

After a brief discussion regarding William's health, the question was called for.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

FAIR ENTERTAINMENT

The 1993 fair did not do well financially. Wade will begin looking for the 1994 big name line up in November when he travels to the International Fairs Convention. Wade is assuming the fair board wants to continue with the big name entertainment and a decent cash carry forward will be on hand at the end of the fiscal year.

Ed Dougherty who books the entertainment for the fair is suggesting the fair charge for entertainment. State Fair has for the past three years. Dougherty suggests starting with one evening to charge for a major entertainer in the \$45,000 - \$50,000 range. To do this the fair would have to place a stage and floor seating in the grandstand/arena for the one night.

Wade also sees the need to consider charging for the Friday and Saturday rodeo performances. Many of the complaints received at the office concern lack of seating at the rodeo. Wade believes people would be willing to pay \$3 - \$5 to insure a seat during the rodeo.

Leahy concurred that the fair must become more profitable. Discussion followed whether to charge enough just to break even or to make a profit. General consensus was to go for a profit. The fair would enter into a strong presale program and promotion for the major talent night. The public would need to be aware of the extra charges well in advance of the fair.

Warren would prefer to wait a year before charging for the rodeo.

Wade asked the board to think about the idea and discuss it further in November. He would like some direction from the board prior to the International Fairs Convention at the end of November.

**MOTION: MOVED BY MARLA WARREN, SECONDED BY KEN LEAHY, TO
ADJOURN THE MEETING. MEETING ADJOURNED AT 6:30 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Oxendine
Secretary