

FSMG Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday February 4, 2014--8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.  
Event Center Conference Room

Attendees: Sharon Crouch, Judie Stanton, Kelley Babcock, Rosemary Cooke, Mark McCauley, John Morrison, Heidi O'Hara

Meeting was called to order at 8:00 am. Mark turned the meeting over to John Morrison.

**John Morrison, Executive Director/Fair Manager/CEO:**

**Fair Preparations** -The new web page is close to being ready for its online debut. It is much more informative, attractive and professional appearing than the current site and has a mobile version that is superb. Exhibitor Guide inputs have been received from 4-H and all but three Open Class Departments. We are contacting those departments this week and hope to have the guide ready to upload on the web page by the end of February. Judie Stanton made an excellent suggestion that we begin a social media campaign to attract exhibitors in departments that have seen a decline in entries, for example sewing, needlecraft and spinning. An early campaign will allow those interested enough time to complete projects before the Fair. The Director of Marketing, Matt Ferris, will work with Judie to put together an aggressive social media plan.

**Liquor Control Board** – The Operating Plan we submitted to the Liquor Control Board for the 2014 Fair was approved on January 29, 2014. It allows walk around consumption in the Grandstands and a portion of the related service plaza where approximately 8 food booths operate. It is a smaller controlled area than we had last year and should allow us to significantly reduce the number of security personnel and alcohol monitors needed.

**Legislative Day** – The Washington State Fairs Association (WSFA) Legislative Day is this Thursday, February 6, 2014 in Olympia. The quarterly WSFA meeting will be the day prior and will focus on two pieces of legislation of interest to Fairs. The first is a new separate alcohol license tailored to Fairs to allow wineries and craft distilleries to operate a booth at the Fair and permit tasting and sale of their product for off-site consumption. WSFA supports this but sees the \$2,500 permit fee as prohibitive for all but the largest Fairs in the state. The second piece of legislation addresses the re-establishment of a centrally funded tourism initiative. While WSFA supports the concept, there are concerns about the potential for double taxation of dollars from vendors and carnivals and then from the Fair that receives a percentage of those funds. We intend to address that with our Representatives and Senators.

**FSMG Contract** – John presented several recommended changes to the current 10-year Site Management Contract between the County and the FSMG. The present contract will expire at the end of December of 2014. Many items that were unique in the original contract addressed actions needed to open the Exhibit Hall in 2005 and were

removed. Some reporting that has proven to be redundant was restructured to eliminate that redundancy while maintaining a flow of information needed to monitor progress and status of finances and programs. Some language that addresses personnel decisions were reworded to reflect that the Executive Director is now an FSMG employee and not a County employee, which was the case when the original contract was drafted and signed. John will send an electronic copy that incorporates all the changes and the recommendations of the FSMG Board to the FSMG Board members for their review and approval in preparation for submitting the contract to the County attorneys for their review.

### **Heidi O'Hara, Director of Sales and Events:**

#### **Booking Update:**

A recap of 2013 revenue was reviewed with the combined Event Center and Giesy Arena coming in at \$794,459 in combined revenue, up 17% from 2012 at \$599,733. The month of January was very busy at the Event Center with every weekend in the Exhibition Hall busy. The second weekend in January featured a new event, NW Cross Fit, held concurrently with the Clark County Wedding show in the adjacent hall. Both events were highlighted in the local media and made for a busy weekend. The Crossfit show was very happy with the event and turnout and has already requested their contract for the same weekend in 2015. The Palmer Wirfs Antique and Collectible Show had a good turnout as did the Northwest Drag Racing Association (NWDRA) swap meet the last weekend of the month. The arena was busy as well, with WAHSET, one of the larger horse shows, bringing in \$10,443 the weekend of January 24-26. New bookings within the month were Jurassic Quest, a dinosaur exhibit which will be open to the public on March 22-23, 2014. The show booked two halls and the estimated revenue is \$19,250. Scense 5K was added to the calendar on May 3, 2014 with an estimated revenue of \$10,500 for a one day event. It was noted that the WIAA Volleyball bid in November was lost to another region, however the NWAAC Volleyball tournament was still up for consideration for November 2014. The current annual revenue estimation for 2014 is tracking at \$625,311 for the Exhibition Hall and \$169,148 for the horse arena.

#### **Recap of Washington State Horse Expo:**

The Washington State Horse Expo has had excellent exposure with industry magazine covers and a very visible billboard in Jantzen Beach. Out of the area advertising in the Central Oregon (Bend), Seattle and Eastern Washington markets appears to have contributed to spikes in website interest from those areas. It was noted that participant revenue for the show was up considerably from the 2013 show. Vendor revenue has also exceeded last year's show with a strong likelihood of selling out of space. Two cash sponsors came onboard this year. Wilco Farm Stores purchased a sponsorship of \$1,000 for the right to pre-sell tickets in their stores. Wilco also cross-promoted the event to their extensive email database. Alan Webb came onboard with \$2,000 in sponsorship dollars for space on the show floor to showcase new Chevy trucks. It was

noted that as long as admission maintained, the 2014 show was tracking to have a higher profit margin than 2013.

**Next meeting;** The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 4<sup>th</sup> , 2014 at 8:00 AM in the Event Center Conference Room.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 am.