

FSMG Meeting Minutes
Tuesday March 4, 2014 - 8:00 - 8:50 AM
Event Center Conference Room

Members Present: Mark McCauley, Sharon Crouch, Judie Stanton, Kelley Babcock

Staff Present: John Morrison, Heidi O'Hara

Guests: Laura Pedersen

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

John Morrison, Executive Director/Fair Manager/CEO:

Fair Preparations –Fair preparations are continuing without any problems. With the Washington State Horse Expo completed, the entire staff is focused on items needed to ensure a successful Fair. Contracts are being sent out for signature. There are no areas of concern.

Personnel Change – Holly van Nood, our Event Sales Coordinator, has given notice to terminate her employment. She has found an opportunity to pursue a sales position with a company in Portland. Her last day with us was Friday February 28, 2014. Given the nature of her position and the fact that there will not be another internally produced non-Fair event until the Holiday Gift Fair in November, we will postpone pursuing a replacement until after the Fair. This will give us an opportunity to review the job description and modify it to better meet the needs of the event side and the Fair side of our operation.

Legislative Day – John traveled to Olympia on February 27, 2014 to testify for the Washington State Fairs Association (WSFA) on the re-establishment of a centrally funded tourism initiative. He testified that while WSFA supports the concept, there are concerns about the potential for double taxation of dollars – a tax on our vendors and carnivals and then from the Fair itself when we receive a percentage of those funds. The Senate Trade and Economic Development Committee was sensitive to the double taxation potential and assured the WSFA that Fairs will be consulted during the process that determines the mechanism for assessing the tourism fee and the rate structure.

WSFA – John will be attending the Rocky Mountain Association of Fairs (RMAF) Board meeting on March 10, 2014. There is a proposal to hold a joint WSFA/RMAF convention in 2016 in Spokane. The two organizations have quite different formats and agendas for their conventions so this meeting is to explore the possibilities and whether the two can be combined into one for that year. Each year the RMAF rotates its convention site to one of its member states and in 2016 it was to be Idaho's turn. They thought the possibility of a joint convention in Spokane would be a mutually beneficial option to explore.

Heidi O'Hara, Director of Sales and Events:

Booking Update:

Though the Event Center only had only two events in the Exhibit Hall in February, the internally produced Washington State Horse Expo was the big news. The show exceeded the 2013 profit of \$38,832 and came in at a profit of \$51,054. Attendance and parking were up significantly as was the participant revenue of those who pay to ride with the clinicians. Vendor revenue increased slightly. Two new sponsors came on board, Alan Webb at \$2,000 and Wilco at \$1,000. Wilco also sold tickets to the show at their 8 area stores selling \$2,592 or 230 tickets. Several expenses were down considerably from 2013, including Hollywood Lights and Tradeshow Supply House down around approximately \$1,000 each due to the elimination of the entertainment stage. Clinician expenses were down from \$16K in 2013 to \$11K in 2014. The show had lots of positive feedback and was a success overall with increased attendance and decreased expenses contributing to the 25% overall increase over the 2013 show. Additionally in February, the Fair Court Coronation contributed \$3,000 to the Event Center revenue. In the arena there was one weekend cancellation by the Winter Woolies due to the snow/ice storm the first weekend in February. The WASHET show came in at \$12,896, an improvement over its estimated \$10,430 revenue projection. The financial tracking of January through February events had the Event Center at \$112,594 in revenue and the Giesy Arena at \$37,667.

The booking report for the remainder of the year showed solid confirmations in March with every weekend having Exhibit Hall bookings including several multiple weekend shows such as Vega Boy's Gymnastics and The Spirit Cheer group (both new shows), MMA Fight Night and the NRA Banquet. Also, the confirmation of the Jurassic Quest event on the Mar 22-23 weekend will contribute to what should be a strong revenue month in March. Other confirmations during the month were Sense 5K run in May and several holds for corporate meeting events including Junior Achievement of OR & SW Washington in June and Bonneville BPA in October. BTM Barrel Racing filled in a cancelled weekend in June in the Giesy Arena, leaving just two open weekends available for the remainder of the year. The Exhibition Hall is currently tracking at \$637,461 for 2014 with the arena at \$172,168.

The Fair concert line up was announced with 5 concerts back in the Grandstand running from opening Friday through Tuesday. The line-up included (3) classic rock acts and (2) country acts.

Next meeting; The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 1st, 2014 at 8:00 AM in the Event Center Conference Room.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 AM.