

**LINCOLN COUNTY**  
**Fairgrounds Marketing & Usage Meeting**  
**Wednesday, May 1, 2013, 6:30 p.m.**  
**Lincoln County Service Center, County Board Room**  
**Merrill, Wisconsin 54452**

**NOTES**

1. Call meeting to order

Art Lersch called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. finding the following people in attendance: Graham Rankin, Bill Zeitz, David Fox, R. Schleif, Gene Bebel, Karen Karow, Mike Meusching, Pete Annis, Dale Christensen, Dick Stoeckman, Tim Gruling, Kortney Pike, Jim Dalber, Hannah Fermanich, Ray Bloomer, Kurt Braun, Brad Becker, Mark Duley, Cameo Roets, Diane Burke, and Bryan Bloch.

2. Overview of Fairgrounds Discussion at April 16 County Board Meeting

Bill Zeitz and Dave Fox discussed the grandstand RFP resolution that was debated and passed 10-7 by the County Board on April 16. Discussion followed on whether or not the User Group wanted to continue to move forward with the Expo Center proposal. There was agreement that the group should request that it be allowed to make a presentation in front of the County Board at either its May or June meeting, preferably June.

3. Overview of Fairgrounds Discussion at April 22 Public Property Committee Meeting

Bill Zeitz mentioned that the motion brought forward to the committee requesting that the County Board delay a vote on grandstand proposals until July was incorrectly summarized in the previous meeting minutes. He said that he would be requesting a change to the committee minutes at its next meeting.

4. Fairgrounds/Grandstand Updates

Dale Christiansen reiterated that the state fair manager is willing to help the User Group refine its business plan, by-laws etc. He indicated that he would talk further with that individual.

5. Expo Center Updates

When asked whether Agra Industries still intended to put money and time into the planning of the Expo Center considering the April County Board vote to move forward with the grandstand RFP, Tim Gruling stated yes. Discussion followed about how much additional time Agra would need to provide cost estimates for a berm type structure (presumably the first phase of an Expo Center). During the April 3 User Group meeting, Mr. Gruling thought such estimates could be completed by early May. At this meeting, he said that he would need a little more time but not much. Discussion took place about attempting to have the grandstand RFP resolution placed on the next County Board agenda again with the intent to delay moving forward with it until July. Pete Annis reported that the Merrill Chamber Board formally endorsed the Expo Center concept and that the Tomahawk Chamber is in favor of the project.

6. User Group; Discussion on Next Steps

There was discussion on whether it was a good idea to ask the state fair manager to come to a County Board meeting to talk about how volunteer fairgrounds management organizations partner with County Boards. Randy Scholz mentioned that he would continue to attempt to clarify exactly what are the allowable uses for the insurance dollars. Motion was made by Gene Bebel and seconded by Bill Zeitz requesting that Randy ask County Board Chair to allow grandstand RFP resolution to be reconsidered along with an Expo Center presentation at the June County Board meeting. Vote was 18-0 in favor. Group members discussed the feasibility of holding a Town Hall type meeting in Merrill to inform the public about the Expo Center Organization and building proposals. They discussed how important it would be to insert the first phase construction estimates from Agra into any Town Hall presentation.

7. Next Meeting Date (if applicable)

The next meeting was scheduled for May 6, 2013, 6:30 p.m., Lincoln County Service Center, County Board Room. The group stated that the purpose of the meeting would be to plan a Merrill Expo Center Town Hall session.

8. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 8:26 p.m.