

LINCOLN COUNTY
Fairgrounds Marketing & Usage Meeting
Monday, August 5, 6:30 p.m.
Lincoln County Service Center, Room 243
Merrill, Wisconsin 54452

NOTES

1. Call meeting to order

Art Lersch called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m. finding the following people in attendance: Dale Christiansen, Dick Stoeckmann, Graham Rankin, Karen Karow, Mike Meusching, Breigh Voight, Kortney Pike, Ray Bloomer, Pete Annis, Jeff Hetfeld, Bill Zeitz, and Gene Bebel.

2. Debrief July 16 County Board Grandstand & Expo Center Discussion

Bill Zeitz provided an overview of the discussion. He mentioned that various motions related to the grandstand and Expo Center were considered. The only one that passed directs the County Board to make a decision on grandstand related issues at its November 19, 2013 meeting. He indicated that this will give the Fairgrounds User Group more time to further develop its proposal. He also reminded the group that there was going to be a discussion during a special Public Property meeting after this evening's fairgrounds meeting about whether Public Property should develop an RFP for a berm system and if so how it should be worded.

3. Fairgrounds Updates

Dale Christiansen began the discussion by providing the group with an overview of this year's fair. He said that attendance was down due to a number of factors (no grandstand shows, hot weather the first two days, etc.) and that the financial numbers were still being compiled. He made the group aware that many fair patrons expressed frustration and anger about the current condition of the fairgrounds in general and specific buildings. He distributed a letter that the Fair Association intends to send to County Board supervisors and other stakeholders detailing some of the comments that were made by fair patrons to Fair Association members. Graham Rankin, Bill Zeitz, and Art Lersch provided the group with an overview of county insurance related discussions that took place at both the August Finance Committee and Administrative & Legislative Committee meetings. They mentioned that no action was taken pertaining to any of the insurance related issues listed on both of those committees' meeting agendas.

4. Expo Center Organization Business Plan

Pete Annis mentioned once again that he has had conversations with people in Marathon County who have expressed great interest in the Expo Center plan. He stated that these people have mentioned to him that they intend to make certain that an Expo Center type structure be built in Marathon County unless one is constructed in Lincoln County. He also mentioned that he will be working on a brochure that will help educate the public about the Expo Center management organization and building concepts. The entire group discussed possible options for it to partner with the County. Additional discussion took place about how other fairgrounds management entities throughout the state are organized and how well they function. Group members mentioned that no changes had recently been made to the business plan.

5. Expo Center Organization By-Laws

It was reported that no changes were recently made to the by-laws.

6. Discuss Volunteer Possibilities for Expo Center Organization Board

In general, group members agreed that the proposed 15 member board might be too large to begin with. They mentioned that some people have expressed interest being on the board but would not commit until the county makes definitive statements about the proposed Expo Center building and management organization.

7. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting is scheduled to take place Wednesday, August 21, 6:30 p.m., Lincoln County Service Center, Room 248.

8. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 7:30 p.m.

Notes respectfully submitted by Art Lersch, UW-Extension, Lincoln County.