

COMMITTEE: Oneida County Fair Planning Team

PLACE: Curran Professional Building Room 104
315 S South Oneida Avenue, Rhinelander

DATE: Wednesday, August 25, 2010 **TIME:** 5:15 p.m.

Committee Members Present: Craig Mandli, Tina Werres, Cindy Eckardt, Jenny Zier, Nancy Gehrig, Freda Waalkens, Patricia Broukal, Lisa Kuczmariski, Bill Bell, Denise Rheume-Brand, Freda Waalkens, Theresa Seabloom and Melanie Ostermann.

Others Present: Mary Ann Huebner, Amanda Lawaniczak, Paige Mahner, Jim Winkler and Jim Lillis representing media.

Call to order and President's announcements: The meeting was called to order by President Craig Mandli at 5:25 p.m. The meeting has been properly noticed and the facility is handicap accessible.

No announcements were made.

Approve agenda for today's meeting. Denise Rheume-Brand made the motion to approve the agenda, with the order of agenda items at the discretion of the President. It was seconded by Freda Waalkens. All ayes. Motion passed.

Approve minutes of Aug 4,, 2010: Freda Waalkens made the motion to accept the minutes of the previous meeting with the addition of Theresa Seabloom and Denise Rheume-Brand as present.. It was seconded by Nancy Gehrig.. All ayes. Motion passed. Bill Bell abstained as not present at last meeting.

Contracts to approve. None.

Financial reports. The committee reviewed the report dated August 25, 2010 which showed the fair expenses that had been turned in, with a total of \$7,963.17 listed. It was noted that not all bills have been turned in from RSC, the coke bill was not included, and the payment to the security personnel was not included in the submission. The later two bills had been submitted for consideration. Denise Rheume-Brand made a motion to approve those submitted for payment as indicated on the current sheet. It was seconded by Nancy Gehrig. All ayes. Motion passed.

Team leader reports.

Exhibit Hall. Denise suggested that the exhibit hall language be changed to stress that the exhibit area is not only 4H, but includes open exhibits as well. She also stated that there should be 4H representation at the fair

meeting and encouraged Jim Winkler to participate in the fair planning committee meetings on a more regular basis. She also suggested that we all continue to improve communication links as that we work together. Denise was enthusiastic about the School displays during the fair and hoped that more people would be encouraged to participate that were not 4H.

Jim Winkler reported what was discussed at the 4H meeting and submitted written suggestions to assist us in our planning for next year. The committee reviewed many of the suggestions and will continue discussion on the same at a later date.

Set event date for 2011. Tina advised the committee the need to determine the date of the fair for next year. After a brief discussion Bill Bell made the motion to hold the fair the first weekend in August, same as this year, however the opening time on Friday would be changed to 10:00 am. The motion was seconded by Pat Broukal. All ayes. The vote carried.

Choose carnival. Once the date was set the committee discussed the various carnival options available. Usually the carnival is responsible for rides, the midway and food; however the negotiations will begin after the carnival is chosen. A discussion was held regarding the three carnivals who were available for the weekend we desired. Jenny Zier made the motion to approve A& P as next years carnival vendor and to pursue negotiations with them. The motion was seconded by Freda Waalkens. All ayes. Motion carried.

There was some discussion on contract negotiations and the most common way payment is made. For the previous two year the committee had to guarantee payment of \$10,000.00 to the carnival and had negotiated wristband profits. The first year we earned approximately \$3,000.00 profit. Not all figures are in, but it is believed to be around \$12 profit this year. If the committee decides to negotiate the "normal" way, a percentage of the profit is how payment is made. For example the fair would earn 20% of the first \$10,000 or \$2,000. If receipts were \$20,000, the fair would earn 25% or \$5,000.00. If proceeds were \$30,000, the fair would earn 30% or approximately \$9,000. This would require no work on our part. It may be possible to negotiate a presale wristband program as perks for sponsors. Further discussion regarding negotiations will continue at the next meeting.

More Team Leader Reports.

Vendors. Pat Broukal said the biggest problem was the electrical issue. The city and fair committee will need to work together to improve the fair grounds electrical needs. She said for the most part the vendors were happy with assigned locations. There was one vendor that did not like his location, and canceled after his arrival. He demanded a refund, and

harassed her several times on her phone. He was difficult to deal with because of language issues. Looking at the list of invoices to be paid she noted this vendor was getting his money back, so hopefully this issue was resolved. That particular vendor will not be invited back next year.

Back Porch. Theresa Seabloom reported that she has heard favorable reports regarding her area in spite of the problems with the historical complex regarding water and food issues. The people liked the bands. They seemed to enjoy the music. There was one lady who was upset because there was not a dance floor. It is important next year not to schedule anything the first hour of the fair, as many people have not worked their way to the back porch area, and although Bill Jamerson was ready and willing to speak, he had no audience because he was scheduled the same time the fair opened. It was a lesson learned.

The back porch area had inadvertently been left off the Xeroxed map, and many people didn't realize this area existed because signage was not visible. It is necessary that better signage be in place next year.

Also suggested was relocating the back porch area to an area near the tennis courts. This will require some electrical upgrading to be done, but should simplify many of the concerns regarding the historic complex. The historic complex area was unwilling to compromise on many of their rules and this created several problems for the back porch area. There were a few instances where children had to call parents by telephone to be readmitted into the area. Many people were frustrated because they had to dispose of drink and/or food before they were allowed to enter the area. The museum staff refused to remain open to be compatible with the fair, and was concerned with restroom usage, and generally did not want to participate as part of the fair. Moving the back porch area will alleviate many of the problems that were encountered this year.

Volunteers. Nancy Gehrig gave a favorable report regarding her volunteers. She has several people who have approached her to assist in the handicap shuttle. Nancy read a letter from Patty Fitzgerald advising the fair committee that she could not continue with the program next year. It will be necessary for Nancy to have more help in signing up volunteers, but she anticipates many of the people will return to volunteer as most of the people were enthusiastic and positive about their experiences. She has a few suggestions to improve the volunteer flow, and this will be implemented where possible. More discussion to follow at another meeting; however she recommends that the fair office have an additional person assigned to relieve Melanie, or to give announcements.

Animal Alley/Arena. Cindy Eckardt said her area needed more time for set up. She also said there needed to be more parking signs, more "no

smoking” signs and “no alcohol: signs posted. There also needs to be more signage for events. She heard very favorable comments about the animals and people seemed to enjoy the events. It was really ironic and neat that Pat Dineen’s dog Libby won the Pat Dineen Memorial Doxie Race. Some changes could be made regarding set up for events, but this can be discussed as they do further planning for next year’s fair.

Fairest of the Fair. Amanda Lawaniczak reported paddles were sold all three days the Fairest of the Fair was present. She earned \$480. for the program. Recently Nellie Wich and Amanda attended the Wisconsin State Fair, and there is a planning meeting in the future. She is hopeful the scholarship will grow from the current \$250 figure, and Tina said her area has a budget of \$1,000, which will also be discussed. Amanda said she believes more volunteers working on behalf of the Fairest of the Fair would be helpful as her staff is limited.

Wristbands. Lisa Kuczarski said she preferred to defer her report until it is determined whether or not wristbands will be sold next year. She was hindered by the sewage issues the city has been dealing with, but feels that the wristband program has the potential to earn money.

Family Land. Bill Bell reported there are some layout issues that need to be worked out, but for the most part the Family Land area was successful. Many families utilized the area. Bill believes the infant changing station would be better utilized if there was more signage.

The blow up jumping area was very popular. There was one major injury , as an eight year old child experienced a spinal fracture with a leg. This is still being investigated.

Some of his people backed out of the dunk tank event as they had other training commitments that day, but the dunk tank was successful in spite of the back outs. The school that loaned them the tank was happy as well, because they gave them a free will donation of \$100 for the use of the tank.

The little stage in family land was not really utilized as it was only used by Zach Hext. The rest of the performers choose to walk among the people and this seemed to be well received. It was suggested that next year the tent be used as the staging area, and perhaps eliminating the stage. More discussion on this will follow at a later meeting.

The playground had a lot of use. There was some complaining about the generator interfering with the community band, but anticipate a different set up next year.

There needs to be some improvement on announcements of what is happening in various areas of the fair ground. There seemed to be difficulty hearing many of the announcements that were made. Tina said There are speakers available to be placed around the park and she hoped that both the city and Tom Swearingen could work together to solve that problem. This will also require some electrical upgrading as well.

Bill said there needs to be more signage as there is a city ordinance stating that no smoking is to go on near children and many of the carnival employees threatened to walk off when they brought the ordinance to their attention. He suggested including the ordinance in the contract when negotiations are made. Family Land is located close to the carnival area, and with little children around it is important to enforce the No Smoking directive.

Gazebo. Jenny said that she was not able to attend the fair as much as she hoped, but she believed it went ok in her area. Many of the people did not realize how to use the lock on the inside, so this will need to be pointed out to volunteers next year. Tina advised the committee that Trigs Floral has offered to decorate the gazebo next year.

Farmer's Market. Freda was pleased to announce there were no complaints from any of the participants of the Farmer's Market. The generator worked well and many of the people sold out. The only people who didn't show up were the board members, but every one who did were very happy with their location and were positive in their remarks. The moving traffic on the street had not been a problem for them.

Beer Garden. Bill Bell reported the Beer Garden had been very successful. The only request he heard was that they wanted to be moved closer to the Main Tent. It was often difficult to hear the music and they felt it was possible to make more sales if they were a little closer. Further discussion on this will follow at another meeting.

Soda and Ice Vending. Tina reported this was a learning lesson and was something not to be repeated. It generated a loss of about \$600 and next year it would be wise to let the vendors sell their own. There were many complaints from vendors because they were forced to purchase from the fair. Next year the fair committee needs to rent a small electric plug in freezer and provide bags of ice and water for volunteers, but leave the selling of product to individual vendors.

Fair Office. In response to Nancy Gehrig stating that there needed to be wo people in the fair office, Melanie indicated it would be helpful and something to consider. it would help if the team leader made announcements for an area, rather than to rely on one person to do it..

Melanie also suggested the trailer be set up the first day, instead of late in the second day. Many of the problems were the result of Pat Dineen's sudden death. Melanie strongly suggested that deadlines be made two weeks earlier than they had been this year. There would still be unavoidable changes, or adjustments, but by moving up deadlines two weeks it might ease many of the problems that occurred. It will be helpful to have more written plans as well.. There needs to be more communication with each team leader prior to the last couple of days, so tweaking is done before a problem occurs, not while a problem occurs. By having written and specific goals, it is hoped we can prevent gaps when sudden a sudden illness or loss occurs. Many fine people stepped up to help when Pat died, and when Tom became ill, but had many more things been written down, we might have avoided some of the problems that were encountered. This will be further discussed as the fair committee plans for next years fair.

Future meeting date. Several people on the committee are attending the leadership meeting when the normal September meeting is usually held. Oct 6, is the date of the Fair District meeting hosted in Rhinelander. After much discussion it was decided the next fair planning meeting will be held **Wednesday, October 13. at 5:15 p.m.** It will start with a brief business meeting and approval of invoices will be primary. **At 6: 00 p.m. it will become a planning session that is open to the public,** and led by either Dan Kuzlik or Sally. A survey will be tabulated and the results will help guide the direction of the public session.

Public comment. Melanie read several suggestions from an individual who was unable to attend tonight's meeting. Many of her suggestions were already mentioned, however this person suggested more specific advertising a week prior to the fair, announcing events and programs so people more aware of what is planned to occur. This included entertainment schedules as well as various demonstrations and exhibits at least one week prior to the fair opening. Another suggestion was to hold a thank you event for adults, 4H volunteers, and other volunteers involved with set up and take down. It would provide them an opportunity to get to know each other a little better.

Tina read a thank you from Bill Jamerson, as well as a thank you from Jan Leschke and the Community Band. Both had positive comments regarding the fair. Both were pleased to participate.

Jim Lillis advised the committee that sales did an extreme jump during wristband hours. He encouraged the committee to utilize wristbands as it seemed to draw more people to vendors in between rides. He said Friday seemed to be a very slow day for most of the vendors and he attributed it to wristbands not being on sale. It was suggested that maybe wristbands should be sold for three hours every day, instead of taking one day and not doing any sales.

Bill Bell commented that many people were upset to learn Pete the Pony man was not part of the wristband program. Tina explained he was a private vendor, and not part of the carnival. Many favorable comments were heard about the Timber Show.

Tom was not present to make a report on the Main Stage. Tina said it was well received, but she had also her people comment they wished the Beer Garden was closer. The back stage area could use some more picnic tables in the area. At one point we moved some tables from the food vendor area, which upset the food vendors, so this will need some more discussion. Tom is still recovering and it is hoped he will be able to continue to participate in the fair planning.

Items to be included on the next agenda.

Approve expenses for payment.

Meeting to turn into planning session with public after business conducted.

Adjournment. Jenny Zier made the motion to adjourn. Freda Waalkens seconded the motion.

All ayes. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by, Melanie Ostermann, Fair Secretary.