

Gratiot County Fair for Youth
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 2, 2023
Bill & Grace Vanderbeek Conference Room

Members Present:

Chuck Efaw, Jason Lombard, Brent Skinner, Martha Stellow (online), Keegan Humm, Kent Humm, Clay Mills, Jack Butcher, Matt Jorae, Darcy Martyn, Adam Wood, Taylor Gager

Absent excused: Josh Hitsman

Guest: Laurie Gager, Stacey Woggons, Lindsay Giles-Austin, Larry Richards, Thomas Lombard, Jennifer Whitford, Carlson Eckelbarger, Angela, Matt & Ben Monroe, Nicole VanderPloeg, Angie Lake, Jaidyn Butcher, Jason Shilling and his Mom, Candace LeDuke, Jeffery Lombard, Becky Hirschman (online)

President Chuck Efaw called the meeting to order at 7 pm

Brent presented the secretary minutes. Darcy moved to accept the minutes as presented and Jason seconded. Motion carried.

Erin presented the treasurers minutes in Martha's absence. Brent moved to accept the financials as presented. Darcy seconded and the motion carried.

Fair Office Report –

Erin announced her resignation effective March 15, 2023. Erin is willing to help with the transition and during fair week if the board is open.

Record books will be finished and uploaded to the website before Erin has left.

Ribbons have been ordered and invoiced.

Erin is having award conversations with the various superintendents for their award choices.

All donations have been sent a written thank you.

The fair book is finished and uploaded to the website and posted on FB.

Public Comment –

- Exhibitor, Jason Schilling spoke about his involvement in the cat program and showed the board his cat backpack, and a poster all about his cat. His mother, Candace spoke as well and wanted the board to know how important that program is to Jason and how it has brought him out of his shell and helped him to be a better communicator with adults.
- Angie Lake from Something Special 4-H Club offered her club services to help with the flowerbeds. She has a large club and said they are always looking for some way to help out their community.
- There were several members present that spoke in support of the dairy program.
 - Laurie Gager, dairy superintendent was there so speak in support of every exhibitor. She brought the quote from our website to the board and challenged them to keep that in mind when discussing programs and activities. She had some ideas about how the dairy bucket sale could be improved and spoke about some options that could be used. Similar to Clinton County there could be a table for buyers to sign up for a dairy donation, or there could be a way for those donors to send in their donation earmarked for the dairy sale before the event. She shared that the dairy industry is changing but it is still very much a part of Gratiot County.
 - Nicole VanderPloeg also spoke in support of the dairy program. Her family is very involved with the dairy industry and her boys will be old enough to show here soon. She is here to help support this program and will do so however she can. She also spoke about the various ways that the sale could be done alternatively and suggested a table near the clerking table at the sale for the dairy kids to share their story and get people to donate there instead of the auction lot. She would like to see the program income be used to update the milking machines and other improvements for the dairy program.
 - Angela, Matt and Ben Munro were also here to share their experiences with the dairy program. The kids are actively involved in the dairy program and they want to see it continue.
 - Thomas Lombard was here to discuss the dairy program as well. He had points that spoke of support and

the frustration of kids not really working with their dairy animal and still being able to get a portion of the bucket proceeds.

4-H Council – Stacey reported that there are several workshops coming up for 4-H kids. Register online. Lots of options for Alternative Spring Break and they can be found online – website or Facebook.

Horse Developmental – Haven't met but they are working on judges for fair week.

Large Animal Committee – Haven't met.

Special Event Committee – Dinner Dance – went very well. We had more than 170 people in attendance and raised over \$16,000 with the silent and live auctions. Erin and Fortney are working on getting the 2024 date on the calendar with PINS. March 9, 2024 is the proposed date.

Small Animal Committee – Meeting March 21 at 7 pm

Building and Grounds – Jason emailed the report to the board and it will be included in the board minutes.

Old Business --

MAFE Convention –

Kent gave some insight into his session at MAFE – we need to be sure we are helping volunteers succeed, check in with them, provide them with shade and water, send thank you or express our thanks while they are here helping. He suggested exploring the idea of an app or text share that we could use for all exhibitors and families to send out information or alerts as needed. He also told about another fair that has QR codes around the fair that can be scanned for schedules or other information for the fair. Another tidbit he heard was an option to use a sticker as a "prize" instead of a ribbon. He also told about another fair that has one board member meet with the superintendent in each barn each morning to check in and see if they need any assistance or have any issues. Kent also talked about an option to have superintendents be on a three year term and then they have to reapply for their position.

Brent said one of his sessions talked about having their building and ground people in a specific colored shirt all week so people could distinguish them. Radios for constant contact, along with phones but radios are simpler. He said he heard that one fair closes all gates and exits once they know a child is missing. On the campsite side he said backflow preventers are not necessary and the DEQ requires 2 foot around every camper, all around not just the sides.

Chuck said he heard about the radios as well and thought that might be a good idea. He also suggested that we do active shooter training every couple of years due to the fact that the board changes.

Erin spoke about board member relationships with donors. She sat in one session and they discussed the fact that donors are more willing to give larger gifts if they know and have a relationship with a board member and know what's happening at the fair on a regular basis.

Rodeo – Contract is signed and Kent is the chair of the committee. We have \$7750 in donations as of March 2. The goal is \$20,000.00. Kent and his committee will be hand delivering some letters and others will be mailed in the next week. Costs will be approximately \$15,000 with banners, advertising and such with an additional \$5,000 in other expenses.

Food booth: Jason is continuing to speak with the food vendor from last year. Willies Weiney Wagon and hoping to secure their help during fair week, the issue is that not all of them will be here and the mother cannot do it on her own. Jason will contact Sue Apple to see if she would be willing to help them.

Appreciation Awards: begin thinking about who we would like to nominate. One business and one individual. **Erin will email the list of previous winners.** Please email Chuck with nominations.

Fair board barn duties for pre-fair, during fair and post-fair.

Each board member will be assigned a barn to be the go to person for the week.

Horse Barn – Martha Stellow

Swine Barn – Kent and Keegan Humm

Exhibit A & B – Darcy Martyn

Dairy Feeder Barn – Matt Jorae

Small Animal – Clay Mills

Dairy/Goat – Jack Butcher

Sheep Barn – Brent Skinner

Floater – Chuck, Jason

Road Sign Auction: Erin will email Joe Sherwood to make sure he is willing to host the auction on his platform this year. Starting bids should be \$50.00, minimum increments need to be \$10, and ending times need to be staggered longer as well. The online auction will run from April 17-23. Brent moved to accept these terms and Darcy seconded. Motion carried.

Advertising – tabled to next month to get more input from other stations.

Winter Storage: April 15. Please arrive by 8 am. Jack – skid steer, Brent – telehandler, Clay – skid steer, Kent – telehandler, Becky & Matt, Martha & Steve, Thomas Lombard, Jason, Chuck, Darcy
Erin will get the chair of the committee the emails for contacting each person storing here.

Dairy bucket discussion on how to make the auction more efficient.

Options....sponsorships/donations made at a table near clerking table at sale with buyer/bidder number so that all entries can be made by the end of the sale and those contributors can be acknowledged.

Laurie asked for this to be tabled so that she and Nicole could bring some options back in April, Brent moved to table it but the motion was never seconded. Kent moved to go forward with the form at the buyer table and was seconded by Jason. More discussion and then the motion was voted on and motion carried.

Nicole does have more options for next year and will propose those at another board meeting.

Brent moved to go to closed session. Kent Seconded. Motion carried.

Board went into closed session.

Darcy moved to go back into open session. Darcy moved to adjourn and Jason seconded. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

The next meeting will be April 6, 2023 at 7 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Brent Skinner
GCFY Secretary