

FAIRGROUNDS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Held via Zoom Meeting Service

Wednesday, May 17, 2023 at 5:30 pm

AGENDA

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85292228693>

Meeting ID: 852 9222 8693

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Meeting Agenda Approval

April 19, 2023 Meeting Minutes Approval

Port Update

Fairgrounds Update

General Discussion

- Other/Roundtable

Old Business

New Business

- Fair Association Contract Status

Action Items

- Review current list of concerns/action items/top priorities to Commissioners
- Any formal correspondence to Port Commissioners
- Other

Fairgrounds Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes – May 17, 2023
5:30 pm Remote Zoom meeting

In attendance

Gary Gabelein	South Whidbey Historical Society, Chair
Angi Mozer	Port of South Whidbey – Executive Director
Michael Hastings	Fair Association
Gwendy Hastings	At-Large
Thomas Gill	City of Langley
Commissioner Bacon	Island County
Shannon Bly	Tenants

Not in attendance

Alex Foode	WWGA
Clayton Canfield	At-Large
Jaime Ruddell	4-H Coordinator
Amanda Ellis	Port of South Whidbey – Fairgrounds Director
David Stern	Port of South Whidbey – Fairgrounds Marketing and Events Host
Loretta Strothman Martin	Langley Chamber of Commerce

Meeting called to order at 5:30pm.

Agenda Approved: Approved

Minutes Approved:

Minutes from April 19, 2023 approved.

Port Update:

Angi gave a report on the current projects/status of the ongoing Port projects throughout the Port District. Fairgrounds projects through mid-May, and provided budget execution/graphs/projections through end of April 2023.

Funding/grant statuses: RCED grant project funding: no update. As reported last month funding is under discussion with Island County to move funds among the projects in order to take advantage of projects we believe we can complete by the end of the year. Strategy is to move as much funding as possible to Campground Improvements.

Restroom project: Completion date delayed to June 23. Project closeout with WSDA moved to June 30.

Proposed Fairgrounds Workforce Housing: No update- Angi is getting up to speed.

Water Leak on the Fairgrounds: Resolved.

Grandstand Demo: No update at this time.

Fairgrounds Update:

- 4-H is back in swing. Spring Show has been divided into multiple events which are ongoing.
- HOPE did a multi-day training seminar for new trainers.
- WWGA has returned.
- Outcast Theater has a show playing currently called Timely Twain
- Port has received some applicants through Indeed for the full time Maintenance position
- Whidbey Island Grown's lease has officially been executed and is working to receive WSDA permits
- The Fairgrounds experienced a total and unexpected power failure in the Burrier building. New conduit and infrastructure was run to restore power. Burrier is the source of WiFi for the row of buildings, so everyone was without WiFi and power for a couple of days
- Campgrounds have been striped. Still waiting for results from the electrical assessment of the campgrounds, being conducted by Windsor.
- At capacity for kitchen tenants

Roundtable:

Gwendy: No report.

Thomas: No report.

Melanie: Very interested in the contract with the Fair Association. This agreement was an agenda item during the County Board of Commissioner's regular meeting the day prior, and whether the Port is complying with the Interlocal agreement they have with the County.

Gary: Has heard that the Fair Advisory Committee is not important because it doesn't have a quorum. County Commissioner has resigned from the Committee, although Melanie is present today. Gary's main concern is why the Committee didn't have input to the tangled mess that is the Lease negotiations between the Port and the Fair Association. The Committee should have input; that is why it was formed. If a quorum is the issue, Gary would like those identified who are not attending and see if they can be more active on the Committee.

Melanie responded with apologies that she hasn't been in attendance and will continue attendance if it helps.

Angi reported on negotiations between the Port and the Fair Association. There has been one meeting in an attempt to negotiate the lease, and there was no outcome of that meeting. The Port has accepted the offer by WSU Extension/4-H to mediate the negotiations. A meeting is likely to be scheduled for Monday the 22nd to continue negotiations. The Port has been speaking internally about potential ways forward and Angi is hopeful that a resolution can be reached. The Port is very interested in getting a lease signed as soon as possible. The meeting will not be open to the public.

Melanie is grateful to hear that WSU Extension/4-H will mediate. Angi confirmed that the Fair Board has also accepted the offer of mediation.

Gary believes members of the Fair Advisory Committee should be able to attend the negotiations sessions. Amanda clarified that we don't know how the Fair Association would feel about Committee members attending negotiations. Michael provided that Carol Coble, Jason Kalk and either Megan Williams or Elise Gabelein will attend negotiations from the Fair Association. Michael just learned of the scheduled meeting on the 22nd and is not sure he can attend.

Gwendy mentioned the misinformation that has spread regarding the situation, and mentioned the Committee perhaps could play a part in making sure facts were provided rather than rumors.

Melanie asked Thomas if the City has any thoughts with regard to the Fair situation. Thomas replied that the matter is completely outside of the City's purview.

Margaret King, a community member attending the Committee meeting, asked if the Grange could attend the negotiations meeting scheduled for Monday, since they are specifically impacted by the closure of the Burrier building. Amanda offered to answer questions and encouraged Margaret to call her, since it seemed accurate information wasn't flowing. Margaret asked why is the lease being negotiated so late, given the Fair's annual nature? Angi acknowledged that it is a good question whether Committee members can attend negotiations, however lease negotiations are not typically matters for public discussion, and likely would not be constructive to the process. Gwendy asked for clarification regarding the Burrier building- Margaret relayed her understanding that space in Burrier would be denied to the Fair Association for use during the Fair. Amanda clarified that year round tenants' leases are structured for maximum flexibility around the Fair, either to be involved in the Fair or to sublease for the Fair and let others use their space. Angi circled back to the question of the late nature of the lease; that is a matter that has yet to be discussed with the Fair Association so rather than discuss these items with the public first, the Port is looking forward to discussing this matter with the Fair Association directly in a constructive conversation.

Old Business: Angi brought up the topic of the Bylaws, given a seemingly renewed commitment from the Committee members. Is the Committee interested in reinstating the Bylaws? Gwendy would like to review the Committee members- some listed members were not even aware that the Committee exists. If bylaws are reinstated, changes would have to be made that potentially resulted in less people being on the Committee which would be counterproductive.

Gary asked if anyone on the Committee has seen the draft Agreements between the Port and the Fair Association. Amanda responded that all Port documents can be requested as publicly viewable material. Angi clarified that it's possible that documents pertaining to real estate or legal matters may be excluded from public records requests, but please do not hesitate to request the documents from the Port Office and the request will be considered and handled appropriately.

New Business: None.

Next Meeting: Scheduled for June 21, 2023 at 5:30 pm (virtual)

Meeting adjourned (time of adjournment not recorded).