



(Attachment #7)

**Western Montana Fair Commission - Meeting Minutes
June 19, 2007, 2 p.m.
Chamber of Commerce**

ATTENDANCE: Buck Smith, Fair Commission Chairman, Scot Meader, Fair Manager, Kim Latrielle, Fair Commission Member, Julie Gemar-Williams, Fair Commission Member, Charlie Deschamps, Fair Commission Member, Michelle Felde, Fair Commission Member, Kristen Bounds, Fair Commission Member, Betty Jo Johnson, Fair Commission Member, Toni Hinton, Fair Office. Not present: Eunice Misbe on vacation.

MINUTES: May Minutes were reviewed. Charlie made a motion to accept the minutes as presented and Betty Jo seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Although there were no formal minutes for the May Budget Meetings, Kim and Buck requested the following email dialogue between them be included in the official record.

Kim as you have stated below I do not recall suggesting that we call it even for the room charge and taxi. All receipts should be turned in to Eunice and listed on the post trip form. This form is used by Barbara Berens to audit the travel that has taken place. I would recommend to the commission that all County procedures be followed when traveling on County business.

I would like my response above included into the official minutes.

SM.

Kim - Thank you for your note and concerns. I will gladly and respectfully record this document. However, when I made my comments I mentioned the term "full disclosure". There is no doubt in my mind that you have NEVER and WILL NEVER be in receipt of ANY unauthorized funding for personal gain or benefit. Your financial dealings are honorable and you make every attempt to insure they stay that way. My statement only had to do with "full disclosure" - the term used regarding my brother playing in the band. I was stating that if the idea is to fully disclose any dealings with family, regardless of their possible financial gain, that it may be good for you to disclose to the board that your family will be using your room.

I will publicly state that at no time has there been ANY feelings from me that you have taken financial advantage of your position.

I am happy to discuss this and explain further if you like, and thank you for being so up-front and honest with me regarding your concerns on this issue.

Buck Smith

----- Original Message -----

From: [Kim Latrielle](mailto:Kim.Latrielle@westernmontanafair.com)

To: bettyjo@bresnan.net ; nac@bigsky.net ; [Scot Meader](mailto:Scot.Meador@westernmontanafair.com) ; [Eunice Misbe](mailto:Eunice.Misbe@westernmontanafair.com) ; [Gemar-Williams, Julie](mailto:Julie.Gemar-Williams@westernmontanafair.com) ; [Julie Gemar-Williams](mailto:Julie.Gemar-Williams@westernmontanafair.com) ; [Kristen Eberhart](mailto:Kristen.Eberhart@westernmontanafair.com) ; [Michelle Felde](mailto:Michelle.Felde@westernmontanafair.com) ; [Charlie Deschamps](mailto:Charlie.Deschamps@westernmontanafair.com) ;

[Charlie & Nancy Deschamps](mailto:hinoon@montana.com) ; hinoon@montana.com ; j-gemar@royalwest.com ;
kim@missoulachamber.com

Sent: Friday, July 13, 2007 9:56 AM

Subject: FACTUAL INFORMATION FOR OFFICIAL RECORDS

July 13, 2007

To: Buck Smith, Chair of the Board
Cc: Fair Commission (Board) and Fair Staff
From: Kim Latrielle, Fair Commission Board Member
Re: **Factual information submitted for the Official Record**

The Issue: **Due to a formal statement made by Chairman Buck Smith on May 30th, 2007 at our special budget meeting stating the use of County Dollars for personal benefit during our convention in Vegas with concerns of Kim's family staying in her room paid for by County dollars.**

Buck, First and foremost, I am very excited about where we are in our future planning and offer you my full commitment to give 100% on my assigned task force and the Western Montana Fair this year. I personally have one issue that I need to resolve before it's lost with all that will be occurring in the next few weeks, months and years and the transitioning of our manager.

Buck, I respectfully request that a copy of this following e-letter be placed in our official minutes and records of our fair meetings and if need be a copy provided to the County if questions arise due to perceived concerns on this issue. My immediate action is largely due to the statement Ann Mary made at our meeting regarding Scot's resignation. As you may recall she stated she planned to listen to all our Board meeting tapes that brought us to this point. I have no concerns about our taped meetings as I know we all were professional and on task to ensure a great fair and budget process – **however, the issue listed above is the one area that I want to make sure is clarified and corrected due to inaccuracies in the statement.** I feel it's important that I settle this now with our current Manager still working for the County, so he can attest to the below e-mails demonstrating my attempts to find out if I owe any dollars to the County. In addition, I have made follow up phone calls to the Fair Office only to find that there is no record of me personally using county dollars for my family staying in Vegas or having any outstanding debt that has not been paid. The "trade" that Scot referred to in his e-mail is outlined below so I will not repeat the history on that - I will send a check today for \$5.00 to include the difference I owe the County of \$2.00 + interest.

Thanks for clearing up this issue for me and ensuring that this will be added to our official records, if you have any further questions or concerns please don't hesitate to give me a call.

Respectfully,

Kim Latrielle

FYI: HISTORIC INVESTIGATION E-MAILS ON THIS SUBJECT:

Note: No response was received from Scot from my 6/25/07 e-mail so I am assuming there is no issue or debt owed after he visited with Eunice and Dale at the County.

Mon 6/25/2007 9:50 AM – Email response from Kim Latrielle to Scot Meader:

Good Morning Scot – Thanks for your reply on my e-mail, since I know Eunice is now back, I wanted to make sure that I clear up any perceptions that I owe the County dollars. I believe the trade you may be speaking of in your last correspondence to me is one that occurred two years ago where I owed \$22.00 extra on rooms and the County owed me \$20.00 for taxi

fare to meet with Dodge on our Rodeo contract. You suggested at that time we just call it even. Would you like me to mail you the \$2.00 and then we can settle this concern on the trade of expenses? I did speak to Eunice about this trade and in the future I committed to her on running all expenses and payments thru the office to avoid any confusion or perceptions.

Scot, if you could please verify if this is the trade you are speaking of so that I can close out my continual tracking of this issue I would greatly appreciate it. Setting the record straight is important to me – thanks Kim

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Note: Scot did say in addition to checking their books that he would also investigate Black MTN at the County to see if there were any records there. I assume that's been done and to date I have had nothing reported back to me.

From: Scot Meader [mailto:smeader@westernmontanafair.com]
Sent: Saturday, June 16, 2007 12:53 PM
To: Kim Latrielle
Cc: Eunice Misbe; buck smith
Subject: Letter of your payments

Kim, the only thing that came up was that you did a trade out on a payment some time ago. I do not have all the facts about this item at this time, but when Eunice returns I will research this item. Kim as far as I can see with out researching the possible trade out it appears you **do not owe** any money to the fair our Missoula County at this time.

Thanks
SM.

FINANCIALS: Financials were reviewed. Eunice renamed the columns at the top of the Black Mountain financials to reflect the information requested by the Board. New spreadsheet will begin with July financials. May Fling report will be provided when bills are paid. All rentals were very happy with the event. Scot will accompany the MFF Financial Report with a brief review of MFF. Julie made a motion to accept the financials and Kristen seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Julie and Betty Jo requested a copy of the final budget that went to the county. Eunice will resend the documents.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Harry Seibert, a resident of the Farviews area, reported that he heard lots of noise on the Monster Truck weekend and doesn't like the intrusion. He noted that he realizes the fair needs revenue, but doesn't care for the noise. Buck noted that issue will be addressed further along in the agenda.

Dave Fowlkes, Missoula County Sheriff's Department, reported that MFF went well, no major problems.

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Grandstand Inspection:** Above ground has been inspected. Will have underground inspection completed soon. No problems so far. Waiting on the sub contractor that is doing the digging.

- **Scot's contract and job description:** Michelle distributed copies of the proposed contract and the Fair Commission bylaws. Michelle asked if anyone had changes. Betty Jo recommended finalizing the document and filling in dates later. County makes all increases July 1 with the new fiscal year. Michelle recommended dating the Manager's contract in line with fiscal year. Scot noted that he is currently under a contract since the old one automatically rolls over. Kim noted she liked tying the Manager Contract to the fiscal year along with the budget. Kristen commented it was good to tie it to the fiscal year but recommended signing only a one-year contract. Julie has reviewed the wording, and it is in accordance with the new bylaws. Steve Johnson, director of Human Resources, has also reviewed the contract. Julie made a motion to approve wording, Michelle seconded. Negotiation of dates and terms will follow after approval of wording. Michelle noted that the job description should be attached to the contract. Michelle noted that the number of years needs to be determined and recommends only a one-year contract. Motion approved unanimously. Will follow up on negotiations. Michelle indicated that the wording stands and only dates and compensation will be negotiated. Scot expressed that he is not comfortable with this contract verbiage and it was not negotiated with him. In the the prior meeting Scot had with Michelle, Scot gave Michelle examples of what he would like inserted into the document, but there was no negotiation that day. Michelle indicated she believed they did negotiate that day and the wording has now been approved by Steve Johnson and is in line with the bylaws. Julie recommended Scot bring his concerns to the committee and any changes will be brought back to the full commission for approval.

CONTRACTS QND RENTALS: Dog Show will be moving in this weekend. RVs for the Dog Show are \$10 a night. High School Rodeo was a great event.

CHAIRPERSON REPORT: Buck noted that Rob Smith, his brother, was hired several years ago by Scot, and will be returning to work again this year. Rob made his application entirely independent from Buck.

- **RMAF LETTER:** Julie is working on the letter outlining the new fairgrounds.
- Met with Ann Mary Dussault regarding the change in the bylaws to show that the Fair Manager not the Fair Commission does the hiring and supervision of personnel on the grounds.

MANAGER'S REPORT:

- Scot attended the last Turf Club meeting. Buck was also present. Buck read the letter from the Turf Club asking the Fair Commission to consider bringing horse racing back, in light of the money now available from the State of Montana. Julie inquired if any of the bills deal with the issue of insurance since it was lack of adequate insurance that caused Missoula's decision not to race in 2007. Kim reiterated that the Fair Commission had a signed contract with the BCC that does not include horse racing in the future. It would not be that easy to place racing back on the table again.
- High School Rodeo rebuilt the calf chutes, added sand, and leveled the arena. The only feedback was the concession stand wasn't big enough so two will be used next year.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- **Rodeo:** Working on ads, TETWP is moving forward, having a golf tournament, having work days.
- **Entertainment:** Tuesday night moving along. *Need to Breathe* will be flying into Spokane at no expense to the fair. Still at \$30,000 and hoping to get an additional \$15,000. No news on Saturday night concert.
- **Fair Stage:** Julie has sent out an email regarding *Imagine*. Julie recapped the tentative schedule. Five different acts are booked. Will also be working with the radio stations. Funnbiz is sponsoring *Imagine*. They are bringing their own sound but will need lights. Here only on Friday. Will try to get some PSA's. Kristen asked for the content to be forwarded to her.
- **Long Range Plan:** Ginny will be sending all the changes that were agreed upon. Open House will be July 16 4-7 p.m. at the Fairgrounds.
- **Media and Marketing:** Kristen has a schedule and budget. Billboards are not on the schedule and budget. There are no good ones available. Michelle will look into First Security donating one of theirs. Betty Jo noted that there is a billboard for lease in the Bitterroot, and someone coming in from the Bitterroot, such as a deputy from the Sheriff's Department, could make note of the number to call. The sign is near Lolo Peak Landscaping. Billboards are \$800 a month each. Same theme will go through all advertising. Everything needs to be synergized. There will be a press release statewide three weeks prior to fair. Each day is covered. Some great promotions being planned. Will be interviewing some of the entertainment, Scot, etc. Kim noted that the Business Person's lunch should be included in the advertising also. Kim will look into the cost of placing a banner ad on the Chamber website.
- **4-H/Country Fair:** Campbell announced that Lisa Mills has been hired to Coordinate the Country Fair for 2007. Lisa noted she is excited to be back on board. Dale Clouse inquired of Charlie whether a decision had been made on the new door in the Llama Barn. Decided not to make any major changes since a large door would cut down on pen space.
- **Long Range Plan:** Kim distributed packets which included ideas for the renderings. Discussed hiring a marketing firm to advertise the plan. Kay Design put together some ideas using the theme "It's Time To Talk About ME". Buck was asked to see if budget money can legally be used. We can use money to promote items at the fair but not to promote a bond issue. Scot suggested using the money in the new fiscal year. The cash carries over anyway, and it is not necessary to spend the money before the fiscal ends. Cedar Products donated the use of a gazebo to be placed near the entrance. There will be arrows stenciled on the ground to point toward each major area. The company only wants 5 or 6 entry tickets for making the stencils. Mountain Line and bottled water companies will also be contacted. Scot noted that the Foundation funds are available also. Kristen noted that she likes the concept but not the logos. She recommended giving a couple more firms an opportunity to make a bid. The idea is Kim's, so there won't be a problem to take the idea to other firms. Julie made a recommendation that the task force move forward. Charlie suggested also using the building doors for posters.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Noise Issues:** There were a number of noise complaints after the Monster Truck Show. Ann Mary sent an email which was included in the packet. Everyone on Ann Mary's list will be contacted when there is an event that will cause significant noise. There were no complaints with the rodeo announcer this weekend. Also

discussed in the meeting with Ann Mary was to have the shows in the afternoon instead of the evening. Toni noted that this information is online, but Julie requested that notification be made by email. People cannot be expected to keep checking online for information. Harry Seibert noted that funding does not necessarily indicate whether noisy events should continue or not. It is time to look at whether the money is worth what an event is doing to other people. He noted he is home anyway during the day, but guessed it would be helpful to working people who want to enjoy their evening. The Fair Office should keep track of any complaints that come in. Each person will then be contacted.

Dave Fowlkes: The decibel level regulation must be observed regardless of the time of day.

Discussed taking into consideration all events alongside the budget and consider going to the BCC for help. There may be ways to abate noise also.

- **Missoula Maulers Percentage:** Will start hockey games this fall. Would like to have a beer concession. Scot informed them there is a standard 17% percentage for concessions. The only other non-fair beer concession is with Rhino's and it is 25%. Cory, from the rink, has met with Hal Luttschwager and Mike Sehestedt regarding who can accept the payment and which entity owns the liability. Discussed if the payment could go directly to the county. All staff should be trained. Needs to be insurance. Julie said security is also a concern. Dave Fowlkes noted there should be at least two security on board for each event. Maulers would like the percentage reduced because they are making a significant investment in the fair property. They are investing \$300,000 plus \$150,000 in the building. Maulers is leasing from MAYHA and MAYHA is contracted to the fairgrounds. Dave suggested checking with Billings—the Exchange Club sells the beer there at all events.. They will be renting about 350 ice hours. About \$60,000 will go to MAYHA and \$15,000 will come to the Fair. Scot recommended doing the beer at 10% because of the significant investment being made by the Maulers for building enhancements, \$60,000 paid into hockey, and the peripheral gain. Charlie made a motion to stick with the 17%. Cannot vote today. Kristen suggested negotiating on other end for less to make up for the 17%. This item will be an action item at next meeting. Kim recommended looking for another way to accomplish the same end. Scot noted that the Rockfest paid a flat fee. There should be a tangible comparison of the options presented for next meeting. MAYHA should present a proposal since they are the one obligated to pay the fair the 17%. Cory needs the final answer by August 15. A committee should be formed including Cory, Scot, Betty Jo, Charlie, and MAYHA. During the fair the hockey participants will be handled like 4-H kids and receive free gate entry. Parent and spectators will pay for gate entry. There will be afternoon and evening skates and some exhibitions. Julie requested a schedule to include with marketing and on the website.
- **Special presentations in the arena:** Bob Dischener would like to come into the arena with his Pink Pig Demo Car and make a presentation of his TETWP check on Thursday. Buck is concerned this could start a precedent. Ike should be consulted. Bob has raised thousands for cancer. Discussed giving a spot on the front side to display the car for just Thursday. If one worthy cause is allowed to come to the arena, many more worthy causes will want to. Scot noted that we make exceptions for one or two groups a year. For example Community Hospital

and St. Patrick's give away water even though we don't allow give aways on items that are already being sold by concessions. But Community Hospital and St. Patrick's have been allowed to do this because they are healthcare providers. The reason "Pink" is allowed is because it is an official part of the PRCA sanctioned event. The allowance is not for everyone but is an official part of PRCA Wrangler Rodeo. Buck suggested letting Bob park his car on the front side this year only since the board was not able to give the Rodeo Committee so much of what they requested this year. Julie recommended supporting Scot's recommendation and re-evaluate for next year.

- **Walk around date:** Discussed how long it takes. Decided on June 28 at 3:30 p.m.
- **Possible Circus rental after MFF:** Shriners would like to move from Field House to the Fairgrounds the second weekend of June 2008. Week after Monster Trucks, June 7th and 8th. Third weekend is High School Rodeo and fourth weekend is the Dog Show. Monster trucks are tentative in the books, but there is no contract at this time. Shriners want to have the circus before the kids are out of school, otherwise they lose them once out of school. Preliminary \$5,000 for two days. Kim suggested this might impact May Fair Fling. Could this event be included in May Fling? Betty Jo commented that we have to think about what conflicts with our other events. Kids are free and adults are free. Would they decide to go to the circus instead of MFF? What is the definition of competition according to the carnival contract? We may go from a 12 month center to an 8 month center with dates before and after MFF and WMF being held. Task force will look at this issue, MFF, lifestyle expo, Monster Trucks, circus, etc. Shriners would like to know in thirty days. They are booking 1 ½ years out. Betty Jo would like to know what they were paying at the U. We cannot command the price the U got, because we are only renting an arena. Will discuss further next meeting. Kim recapped that we won't make any agreement right now, we are just getting facts and the decision will come back to the board.
- **Insurance visit from Hal Luttschwager** and the state risk retention group company representative. They visited the Fairgrounds and found a number of things to repair in the grandstand, walkways, backs, wooden structure, temp lighting, etc. Beer garden canopy welding structure must be inspected before canopy put up. Remove TV shelves. Potholes need to be fixed as well as uneven walkways. End of rubber mats in rink must be taped down. New bleacher doesn't meet code—needs something to keep kids from falling through and a cover on the tongue. How much will we try to do now and how much will we try to mediate? Julie recommended deferring to Scot's recommendation. Scot will meet with Hal again. Charlie questioned what happens if we make an effort and not complete all the work. The letter indicates they want a response in 90 days of our plan. Kim noted we have an agreement with the commissioners not to put a lot of money in the facility since it may not be here anymore. Scot will bring a plan to next meeting.
- **Letter from Royal West Amusements, Reed Williams:** Mr. Williams believes he should have been better supported at the MFF. Betty Jo recommends writing a letter to assure him that we are going to have a MFF next year and have \$32,000 earmarked in the budget for this event. She recommends we let him know we want him and don't want him to make other plans. We also get the most money from him. The 2008 MFF will be the best ever. The event before MFF was the Lifestyle Expo and after MFF was Monster Trucks. Scot noted he found Mr. Williams' letter disturbing. The Lifestyle Expo people didn't want their event again

in MFF because it didn't work well when they tried that weekend. LE is a free event and they want to just rent a building. We tried Monster Trucks on MFF and that didn't work well. They didn't want to come back on Memorial weekend. Vendors got angry due to lack of traffic for several years at MFF and many left early. Some even stopped their checks. We did have events and several rentals this year at MFF. If we are going to ask for 8 million we can't tie up 4 months without revenue. Scot noted he is constantly reminded that his job, benefits and COLA hinge on managing the budget, but May Fair Fling is it not a good event. Kalispell didn't have a lot of events when the carnival was there nor do they block their dates before and after the carnival. Scot is also checking the policy for Hamilton. The committee will have to make a decision on how many days to hold so the office staff knows what can be booked. Julie inquired if there had been a meeting with Reed to discuss why we did what we did for MFF. Julie stated she did not know about the letter Reed wrote. Julie also stated this was a one-time-only occurrence in history to have five straight days of rain in Missoula. She believes the communication has broken down. Scot indicated he didn't receive his letter until the day after the board did. Kim recommended Scot meet with Reed and let him know what was behind his decisions. Reed may think May Fling was scaled back because we don't want him, when actually people don't want to come. Kim noted that she herself wasn't committed to this last MFF. Kristen recommended responding in writing since that is how Reed communicated and it doesn't matter what Kalispell or Hamilton does. Only this venue matters. Reed didn't feel like he was supported. There were other things that could have been done to enhance May Fling. We need to either own MFF or not. Buck noted that Scot's point is: Kalispell and Hamilton had less going on than we did when the carnival was there, but they didn't get a letter like Scot received. Should the Forest Service be blocked from renting right after the Fair? Should the ice rink be blocked? Betty Jo noted Reed does a lot for us that isn't in the \$2,800 or so that we get for the weekend and that's important. Buck recommended addressing Reed's letter immediately, generically, and offer to arrange a meeting soon. Buck agrees with intangibles that Reed's business brings to us. His letter is not saying that he is angry, only that enough was not done at MFF. Kim noted that if it doesn't work we can't continue it, but we need to give it a good effort this year. We can bring in car shows, Rock n Roll days, an Outdoor Drive-in or other events to be part of MFF. Scot formally the minutes reflect that if the event doesn't pan out, it shouldn't be a reflection on the staff or him and that MFF is on shaky ground going in.

FAIR COMMISSION COMMENTS:

Kristen:

Michelle: Can we lift the gazebo? Just need to know how heavy. May need extenders. Can have signage on the gazebo to show who donated the use of it. Will have it moved into the VIP lot on Friday and it will be placed after the trucks are through entering.

BJ: Do we have a list of who has reader boards? Maybe people will put the Fair and MFF on them. Nate Longecher has replaced Doug Kikkert.

Julie: Tickets are \$180 to the IAFE Convention in Las Vegas, so it is time to make the reservations. Pre-assigned seats are \$11 and \$6 to check bags. CTA will make presentation to the commissioners, but will BCC entertain questions? Presentation will be in the public meeting.

Kim: What about the formula for Reed's advertising partnership to share with Dale and Ann Mary? Scot will make a copy of the contract and send it to them clarifying the scenarios on the 20,000 partnership and reducing the gross vs. not doing so. We have come along way, but she indicated she feels a real uneasiness today coming from Scot and hopes he can "get his arms around it and deal with it".

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business a motion was made by Kristen to adjourn, Michelle seconded, and motion was carried unanimously.

Submitted by,
Eunice Misbe and Toni Hinton