

SAN JUAN COUNTY FAIR BOARD MINUTES

Parks and Fair Admin Conference Room, San Juan County Fairgrounds

December 8, 2023

Call in (audio only)

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Start 9:06AM (Teams wasn't working)

Attendance

Josephine Bangs, Barbara Bevens, Milene Henley, Jennifer Rigg, Kevin Roth, Rebecca Shanks, Terry Brown

Remote: Justin Platts, Lynette Cabrera

4-H: Jennifer Krembs

Guests: Leslie Neal and her father-in-law Tony Neal, Denice Kulseth, Town Administrator

Approval of Agenda

Approved

Approval of Minutes

Postponed full approval of the November minutes until they are rewritten to include the missing section of the Museum Letter about the placement of Community Stage.

Agenda – Community Stage discussion and if time allows add the on-going water discussion onto old business

Guests – Leslie Neal and father-in-law Tony Neal. Leslie and her husband Cain and their family are new to San Juan Island and reached out to Jennifer Krembs and got her children involved in 4-H. Finding out where the Neals can help over time. Their kids have chickens, maybe rabbits next year. Came from Katy, Texas, down near Houston. Leslie is self-employed as a woodworker and is very happy to be living in San Juan County.

PUBLIC COMMENT (Guests) Returning guests 2 mins, new 3 mins Public Comment Rules Comments may pertain to items on or off the agenda. Comments will be 2-3 minutes and at the discretion of the Board Chair. Comments will be heard but no response will be made at this time. Topics raised in Public Comments are not up for discussion. It is likely, however, that some concerns will be addressed within the regular Board meeting.

COUNCIL LIAISON MESSAGE by Christine Minney

After months of process including budget hearings for each department, Council will be adopting the 2024-2025 Biennial Budget at the Council meeting scheduled for December 12th. The same is also true for the 2024 Capital Improvement Plan, the 2025 Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) and the Six-Year CIP for 2024-2029. Prior to today, Council has approved the 6-year Transportation Improvement Plan and the annual construction plan for Public Works.

County Manager, Mike Thomas, is stepping down and away from his position in early spring. Council and staff have begun the search for his replacement and are in the very early stages with no update other than the search has begun. They are conducting a nationwide search with a head-hunting firm.

2024 Legislative priorities are currently being established and defined by the Council. The focus will be on Housing, Environment, and Transportation. They have engaged a lobbyist that works closely within

legislature to facilitate specific budgetary asks in these three areas. San Juan County joins Skagit, Island, and Whatcom counties in contracting with the lobbying firm that has had consistent success which in turn, has provided a significant return on the investment.

On October 31st, San Juan County celebrated its 150th anniversary of becoming a County (<https://engage.sanjuancountywa.gov/150th>). During the next year, there will be community-centered events to commemorate the occasion. One of the online opportunities that she highlighted was the Community Photo Album (<https://engage.sanjuancountywa.gov/150th/brainstormers/photo-album>) webpage. It is the place where people can upload their favorite photos and memories of San Juan County. The County is collecting and archiving photos that celebrate the people, places, and events that make San Juan County a special place to live. At the end of the year, the photos will be used to create an extra special mural for everyone to enjoy. Christine shared that as someone who has spent time volunteering a decent amount of time in the historical world of San Juan Island, she encouraged everyone to see the "photos of today" as relevant as photos from the past because one day, what we know as today will in fact, be historical. She urged folks to share all that they can.

Council recently celebrated employee service milestones at the annual all-staff recognition party. There are a few stand out accomplishments that she shared.

25 years of service - Mark Tompkins, Director of Health and Community Services and William Patterson who works within the Dept. of H&CS

30 years - Michelle Novak, Payroll Manager in the Auditor's office. An epic achievement!

4-H DIRECTOR'S REPORT by Jennifer Krembs

The numbers are looking healthy. 100+ and growing with a wonderful group of volunteers. She is looking forward to an inspiring year ahead.

NEW BUSINESS

Board Conduct/Manners - Role of Guests

At the last meeting Barbara had to slap the table twice to get the attention of the Board members. She reiterated the need to be a bit more formal and not talk over one another. There are more people now so there's a need to refrain from having side conversations going on. Regarding the role of guests – it was suggested, and agreed upon, that guests should raise hands to be recognized and then speak.

Hiring update by Brandon

Two vacancies – the Events Coordinator position previously held by Carlene has been posted and there will be five interviews next Thursday, 12/14. The interview team will be: Barbara Beven, Brandon Cadwell, someone from HR, and Angelica Hadeen. He was hopeful that he'd get someone on board in January.

Shane's position is still on hold until the Union and County can have a meeting to discuss pay grade for that classification.

2024 Fair Board Openings & Officers

December wraps up this year's terms and opens the 2025-year ones.

Two seats expire at the end of December this year – Kevin Roth's (came into an existing term) and Lynnette's at-large one year seat. The County Clerk will get the notices out so applications from those interested can apply. Kevin and Lynnette can reapply for their seats.

There continue to be openings for the Lopez and Shaw seats. If those two positions are filled the at-large one isn't available to be filled. Applications can be reviewed three weeks after they're noticed. Brandon needs to double-check the timeframe.

Officers – Chair and Vice Chair selections should occur in the first business meeting of the year. Sub-committee sign ups and meetings discussion should take place then.

Lynnette's term is done but she is on the ribbon committee. Christy is also on the committee but isn't on the board. Board membership isn't required for the *ad hoc* committees that include: Board Awards, Superintendent Boxes, Ribbons, and the Scrapbook Committees.

Impacts of Thursday-Sunday scheduling for the 2024 Fair

Two big questions – 1. Are there alternative carnivals to keep our existing dates? Brandon has contacted two, but one only operates in BC. Davis isn't available in August. Rainier Amusements didn't get back to him. So, at the moment there isn't one available. The question was raised, "Does Skagit get priority from Paradise for the dates?" They are before SJC and they do one at a time, but likely they will get priority. Every six years Paradise has both SJC and Skagit on the same dates. SJ doesn't get the full carnival. 2. What did the Lopez folks say? Jennifer and Brandon met with Lopez Horse and Livestock and were surprised at the level of support. They understand the importance of carnival at Fair. They had some ideas. Might the horse group start a day early and then have something low-key on Sunday and leave early so they can get to work on Monday. Doesn't sound like Livestock would have a problem with a Thursday-Sunday fair. Still Life moving out earlier ... noon on Sunday perhaps? Brandon would like to have everyone stay until at least 2PM on Sunday so folks coming to the Fair on Sunday will have a full fair experience. It was asked that cutoff time for departures should coordinate with the published ferry schedule. If the Fair stays Wednesday-Saturday and might there be one day the carnival isn't there? Also opening pick up and drop off for the other islands ... not just 4-H. There was a reason why the Fair was set up for Wednesday to Saturday. It was brought up that carnival set up and break-down is too busy to do during Fair while folks and children are wandering on the grounds. Leaving early isn't a new notion or conversation. Looking at the ferry schedule will influence the time at which folks are allowed to start cleaning and clearing out stalls. Livestock could go home, and then come back to clean out stalls. Although, during 2022 folks did leave on time, but didn't return to clean out their stalls. What percent of animals aren't market – perhaps 50% or more, so it would be significant hit if folks took those animals' home. Perhaps 6PM on Sunday.

Horse to stop their program halfway thru Sat. and in the afternoon just hold exhibitions and demonstrations. Tricia's responsibility might stop after Open 4-H and then Sunday would be other programs. Perhaps allow for preparation prior to leaving that afternoon, but not allow actual departure until stated time.

Truck or Treat w/Elementary around end of October

It was initially a typo for Trunk or Treat, but Barbara talked about how the elementary school does a Touch-a-Truck event. Why not combine trick or treating with Truck Touch and make it an October event? Fire trucks, concrete trucks, bucket trucks, and agricultural trucks. Combine the existing event with a Halloween theme. Barbara to approach the School Board about this event. Wednesday is an early release day. Community neighbors have declined in recent years to fully participate in door-to-door trick or treating ... so what if it were a community event.

Co-produce with the elementary school. Rope in agriculture trucks, with a harvest celebration, pumpkin carving, costume contest, community involvement but not to be held on Halloween.

Milene was concerned kids might become distracted from the coolness of the trucks by candy and it might take away from the STEM aspects of the Touch-a-Truck. Adding candy might change the behavior of the kids.

Hot dogs are a big draw.

Kevin – trucks and people are a great combination. The trucks are involved in Easter.

Josephine – bucket truck rides a huge attraction.

The County Haunted Courthouse tours had a quiz.

Lynnette – add a quiz to it and successful completion of the quiz might earn some candy.

Barbara will talk to Holly at the school and report back.

Results of Island Artisans event

Successful. There was a small mix-up, and the keys didn't work so Brandon came in along with Mike and Gabe to open the doors for them. Traffic seemed good and steady on both days. Kevin reported he experienced about the same traffic as years past. Turnout was a good number of folks. Being a juried show, it had high quality works.

The Winter Holiday Flea Market report from Brandon was that Saturday was busy with 40 or so booths. Feels like at times it can be slow. Sunday was slow for the first 90 minutes ... poor weather and church may have had something to do with it. The Artisans Show has narrower aisles so it may have felt more crowded. In the past it just Saturdays. Perhaps moving it back to just Saturday rather than Saturday and Sunday. Most were in favor of a two-day invite. Add Alchemy Arts, music, food, Santa, self-paint Christmas ornaments, and other activities. Jenn R probably wouldn't be interested in a two-day event. Barbara suggested perhaps allow some folks to be there for just one day. In planning the set-up to allow one day folks in one area to account for the second day not looking sparse with booths missing.

Results of Superintendent meeting

It was sparsely attended. 10 or 12 people and a lot of similar post-Fair comments as were shared both by the Board and the Parks & Fair staff. Brandon recorded the meeting and hasn't had a time to transcribe it. As a Fair Board member, you're always invited to attend those.

OLD BUSINESS:

No carny trucks, Brandon to speak with Ashley about possibly parking trucks on the Market Place lot.

Community Stage – programming placement. No grounds placements decisions have been made. Brandon said those are usually made in March and he wants to talk with Kevin and Andy about what the Historical Society has planned. It was suggested that a sticky note board be used on a to scale map of the fairground to help design the layout. That's what has been done in the past. March might too late for the Historical folks for their planning of events. They'd like to know if the Community Stage is going to be where it's been in the past. It's mostly the noise level in the cabin that's distracting and makes it difficult to hear. If the cabin is the focal point of the fair they'd like it to be quieter around and in the cabin. Jen Rigg shared that traditionally that area was where the Green Village was "stuck" in a dead zone. But with the Grey Top Inn gone ... the Green Village back there or the Ag Tent might be quieter. Lynnette suggested a Past Meets Future theme to tie the two together. This is where we came from and this is where we're going. It was suggested that it could be a well-rounded corner of the fair with a huge range of island life. Past, Present, and Future. The Ag Tent is a draw and folks tend to spill out of the Ag tent ... but leaning toward the historical piece might tie it together well. That area is large and has held multiple things there in the past. Or use the Community Tent as part of the Ag Tent. Old tractor, new tractor.

Need to get going on the artwork for the fair by March at the latest. A Century of Growing 100 Years at Home. Want to bring back Fair Royalty – based on perhaps ticket sales ...whoever sells the most tickets are crowned Fair Royalty.

Update on Water and the Town. Christine – there's no update. Been working at the staff level currently. County Manager's office is working to reply by the 15th. Denice's view is it's the Fair's illegal use of Town water. Barbara would like to get a statement from the Fair and Fair Board. Would be nice to have talking points for board members in case they are asked.

Barbara won't be at the Jan meeting. *Pro tem* Chair or Vice Chair for Jan meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next Fair Board Meeting

Friday, January 12, 2024

ADJOURN 10:12AM

Respectfully submitted by,

~ Carmel Rubin