

Southwestern Fair Commission, Inc.
Annual Meeting Minutes
January 30, 2025

The Meeting of the Board of Directors/Members of the Southwestern Fair Commission, Inc. (SWFC), a nonprofit corporation, was duly called and held at the Pima County Fairground's Green Room on Thursday, January 30, 2025.

Directors Present: Garrett Ham, President; Judy Patrick, Secretary; Jim Murphy, Director; Marian LaLonde, Director; Sheena Conner, Director and Marvin Selke, Emeritus Member.

Staff Present: Jon Baker, SWFC Executive Director; Julia Casillas, SWFC Operations Manager; Courtney Danloe, SWFC Chief Financial Officer; Launa Rabago, SWFC Marketing Manager; Amilia Gruber, SWFC Vendor Coordinator and John Osterhout, SWFC Maintenance Manager.

Others in Attendance: Joey Schwanz, Pima County's Operations Program Manager and Zach Levin, Levin and Sons.

Call to Order: Garrett Ham called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m. followed by the pledge of allegiance.

a. **Roll Call:** Mark Cowley, Treasurer; Absent.

b. **Call to the Public:** None

Jim Murphy moved to go into an Executive Session on items 5 e. and f.
Alan Levin seconded the motion. The Board went into the Executive Session at 9:35 a.m.
Judy Patrick moved to go out of the Executive Session. Alan Levin seconded the motion. The Board came out of the Executive Session at 11:00 a.m.

5. NEW BUSINESS:

e. **Discussion and possible action regarding 401K plan. This agenda item relates to employee compensation and benefits and may be discussed in the executive session pursuant to A.R.S. Sec. 38-431.03 (A)(1).** Marian LaLonde moved to adopt the Resolutions of the Members of the SWFC regarding the SWFC 401(k) Profit Sharing Plan with the amended correction reflecting that they are signed by Garrett Ham on behalf of the Board. Sheena Conner seconded the motion. The motion passed.

f. **Discussion and possible action regarding performance and wage review of the Executive Director. This agenda item relates to employee compensation and benefits and may be discussed in the executive session pursuant to A.R.S. Sec. 38-431.03 (A)(1).** Marian LaLonde moved to authorize Garrett Ham, as directed by the Board, to proceed with the actions discussed in the Executive Session. Judy Patrick seconded the motion. The motion passed.

2. STAFF REPORTS:

a. Executive Director

i. Goals and Update

Jon Baker shared his updated PowerPoint presentation outlining his eight goals. He stated that all goals have been implemented and will continue to be carried out throughout the year, with some already executed and completed.

ii. Pima County Fair 2025

Jon Baker provided a brief update on the Pima County Fair and mentioned that staff are actively preparing for the Fair, which will take place from April 17-27, 2025. He highlighted the progress on vendor applications and complimented Amilia Gruber, the Vendor Coordinator, for doing an excellent job. Launa Rabago will announce the concert lineup in two weeks.

Sheena Conner shared that she recently visited the state prison and spoke with the Warden who expressed interest in meeting with Jon concerning the possibility of hiring inmates for the Fair.

iii. Interim Events

Jon Baker noted that the new year has had an interesting start, as the Gem and Jam Festival and the Sherry Cervi Youth Championship were not booked this year. However, several new events, including the Extreme Millions Barrel Race, Crown B Ranch Barrel Race, and multiple smaller RV rallies, have filled those dates. He also mentioned that the Gem and Jam Festival is scheduled to return in 2026, and plans are in place to secure dates for returning events.

iv. Projects

Jon Baker was thrilled to announce that all lights will be replaced with LED lighting, which will not only eliminate the need to rent light towers but also reduce the electricity bill. Meanwhile, Borderland Construction is currently laying asphalt for the expansion of the Kiddieland Carnival Lot, ensuring it will be ready for the Fair.

b. C.F.O.

i. Financial Report

Courtney Danloe reviewed the Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2024, and provided a brief overview of the Profit and Loss Statement. She noted that, aside from a few exceptions related to events that didn't return for this year, the budget is on track in preparation for the upcoming Pima County Fair.

Break in 11:33 a.m.

Break out 11:43 a.m.

3. **CONSENT AGENDA:**

- a. **Discussion and possible action regarding the minutes of the 10/24/2024 Regular Meeting.** Judy Patrick moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Jim Murphy seconded the motion. The motion carried.

4. **OLD BUSINESS:**

- a. **Discussion and possible action regarding the Master Plan.** Jon Baker reviewed the priorities that staff recommended to match the Master Plan that was displayed to the Board. He also discussed getting architectural designs for the major priorities to present to the Board in the future.
Judy Patrick moved to approve the general concept of the Master Plan, and Alan Levin seconded the motion. The motion passed.

5. **NEW BUSINESS:**

- a. **Discussion and possible action regarding employee productivity.**
Garrett Ham highlighted a comparison of the employee productivity for years 2022, 2023, and 2024, noting that the 2023 results were the better. He shared that this was still impressive to review year after year.
- b. **Discussion and possible action regarding IAFE Update.** Garret Ham mentioned that he attended the Board Governance session at the International Association of Fairs and Expositions (IAFE) Convention. He mentioned that there is currently no spending limit for Executive Staff and expressed interest in seeing how other fairs handle this, with the possibility of implementing a spending limit and a Board policy manual.
He also congratulated Marvin Selke on receiving the Heritage Award and Julia Casillas on her graduation from the Institute of Fair Management. It was also noted that the Pima County Fair, through work by Julia Casillas, Launa Rabago and other staff members, won three awards in Convention Contests at IAFE and another at the Western Fairs Association meeting.
- c. **Discussion and possible action regarding the IAFE Economic Impact and Fair Study.** Jon Baker mentioned that he met with the new IAFE director, David Grindle, who will be launching an Economic Impact Study through IAFE. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the economic consequences of the Fair, including its effects on local employment, income generation and overall economic growth. There is no cost to participate. This study aims to provide valuable insights that can help in making informed decisions to enhance the Fair's positive impact on the community.
- d. **Discussion and possible action regarding Fair Safety.** Jon Baker mentioned that security will be heightened for the 2025 Pima County Fair. This will include additional security guards, walk-through metal detectors, bag checks and additional cameras in key areas of the Fairgrounds.

6. **ANNUAL AGENDA:**

- a. **Discussion and possible action regarding electing new officers of the Southwestern Fair Commission, Inc.** Marian LaLonde moved to reelect the current officers of the

Southwestern Fair Commission nominating Garrett Ham to be President, Judy Patrick to be Secretary, and Mark Cowley to be Treasurer. All were elected by unanimous vote.

7. **CLOSING MATTERS:**

a. **Announcements:** None

b. **Adjournment:** Judy Patrick moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:54 p.m. Alan Levin seconded the motion. The motion carried. A meeting of the Pima County Fair Commission was conducted following the SWFC meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Judy Patrick
SWFC Secretary