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Judith Basin County
Extension Office

Judith Basin County Fair Board Meeting Minutes

January 20th, 2026 JB Co. Courthouse - Stanford, MT

Call to order at 5:31 pm by Fair Board President Janet Wertheimer, also present were Fair Board members Powell Becker, Brenda McCray, Billie Jo Holzer, Don Hajenga, Chad Waltz, Bruce Neumann and Sidney Stratton. Guests present were Erlonna Erickson, Nicole Hedstrom, Samantha Allen, and Karen Hickey.

Minutes were approved by Billie Jo and a second was given by Powell.

No Treasurers report given.

No public comments were offered.

Old Business

Fairground Improvements:

- Committee members will watch for available refrigerators suitable for the food booth. Sidney will contact Tim Mauws to inquire if he is aware of any options.
- The water pipe to the wash racks, which broke last year and was only partially repaired, will need to be fully replaced with new PVC piping prior to this year's fair. Tim Mauws will be contacted regarding the possibility of completing this repair.
- Repairs are needed in the men's bathrooms, as one urinal is currently broken and unusable. Due to the design of the existing system, the entire urinal system will need to be replaced rather than a single unit. Jim Shepherd previously expressed concerns about replacing only one urinal when the water line to the food booth was repaired last year.

Stampede Club MOU agreement for Little White Schoolhouse:

- The Stampede Club signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the county for use of the Little White Schoolhouse for club meetings. Use of the building will be free of charge. The Stampede Club will be responsible for repairing the roof, repainting the building, and hiring an electrician to install an electrical system. The county will cover the cost of

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electricity. Any individuals or groups wishing to use the Little White Schoolhouse must contact the Stampede Club in advance.

New Business

Add-on Discussion for Livestock Sale:

- Erlonna Erickson (Utica Sapphires 4-H Leader) opened the floor to discuss the potential implementation of an add-on option for the county sale. She noted that some 4-H parents support add-ons, particularly for beef members, who often only break even despite sale proceeds. Add-ons would also allow businesses or individuals who may not have the funds to purchase an animal—or multiple animals—to contribute financially to specific members while receiving tax-exempt benefits. Nicole Hedstrom, a member of the 4-H Council, would work with Dawnita on the process, acknowledging that it would require significant management.
- Samantha Allen added that add-ons would allow family members or friends who live out of state and cannot attend the sale in person to financially support their children or grandchildren. Samantha also offered to assist with management of the add-on process if needed.
- Erlonna Erickson spoke on behalf of Bryan Frank, who was unable to attend, and stated that he is in favor of add-ons and would like to see them implemented as part of the county sale.
- Billie Jo commented that add-ons could benefit members who typically receive lower net returns, such as beef exhibitors, who often only break even due to higher costs compared to swine or sheep exhibitors.
- Karen asked how long the add-on option would be available. It was discussed that add-ons could potentially be open for a short period before and after the sale. This discussion was tabled until the next meeting on March 2. Sidney will consult with Dawnita on how the process might work, and a finalized plan will be discussed at the next meeting. If approved, Sidney will formally present the proposal to the 4-H Council at their March meeting.

2026 Fair Schedule Overview:

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- The Friday schedule was revised, moving the sale time up by one hour as recommended last fall. The sheep show will now begin at 8:30 a.m. (previously 8:00 a.m.), followed by the goat show at 9:45 a.m. Round Robins will begin at 11:30 a.m. in the following order: small animal, large animal, and adult. The pet parade will start at 1:30 p.m. The buyer dinner will now begin at 3:30 p.m. instead of 5:00 p.m. and will run for an additional 30 minutes, concluding at the start of the sale at 5:00 p.m.
- Billie Jo recommended moving the barn dance to Friday evening following the sale and relocating it away from the barns to the exhibit (Archery) building.

2026 Fair Premium Amounts for Ribbons and Placings:

- Sidney reviewed the premium amounts awarded on a point-based system for each fair division (Open Class, School Class, and 4-H projects). Points are assigned based on ribbon color for each entry. For example, in 4-H animal projects: white ribbons receive 1 point, red ribbons 2 points, blue ribbons 3 points, and a call-back to a championship drive (market or showmanship) receives 4 points. Grand Champions receive an additional 2 points, and Reserve Grand Champions receive an additional 1 point. It was agreed to keep the point values the same for the 2026 fair.
- The committee also discussed the possibility of separating premium funds for 4-H indoor exhibit (static) projects from 4-H animal projects, as they are currently combined. To encourage increased participation in indoor exhibit projects, it was agreed that static projects should receive higher premium amounts than animal projects, since animal exhibitors also receive proceeds from the livestock sale. Sidney will separate the premium amounts for static projects and animal projects for the 2026 fair.

New Fairground Facilities – Committee Members:

- Toward the end of 2024, Sidney was informed of the growing need to improve the fairground barns and facilities, as exhibitor participation continues to increase each year. Since then, she has been working to form a committee to lead efforts in securing financial support and community

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involvement to advance this project. Sidney applied for the STRAND Ranch Foundation Grant on behalf of the Judith Basin 4-H Council and was awarded $15,000 as a startup fund to begin planning for new facilities. Proposed improvements include new beef and swine barns, as well as the potential construction of an indoor exhibit building to accommodate small animals, indoor exhibit projects, and other community uses. Sidney is seeking additional committee members to assist with this effort. Current committee members include Tim Mauws, Kirstie Fiedler, and Lindsay Schmitt. Billie Jo Holzer and Brenda McCray also volunteered to assist, and Tom Scalese was suggested as a potential member due to his engineering background.

- Sidney will conduct further research regarding how funds should be managed, as she was informed that the 4-H Center may retain a percentage of the 4-H Council's savings. She will explore options and logistics related to fund handling. Billie Jo suggested the possibility of using a separate entity for financial management.

Next Fair Board meeting date set for Monday **March 2nd @ 5:30pm.**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:51 pm by Bruce, 2nd by Powell.

Minutes prepared by Sidney Stratton, Ext. Agent

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