

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY MEETING MINUTES
September 7, 2021

1. At 9:00 a.m., Commissioner Pope declared the Tuesday meeting of the Polk County Board of Commissioners in session and led the Board and attending audience in the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioner Gordon and Commissioner Mordhorst were present.
2. **MINUTES:** **COMMISSIONER MORDHORST MOVED, COMMISSIONER GORDON SECONDED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF AUGUST 31, 2021**

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. COVID UPDATE

Jacqui Umstead, Public Health Administrator, reviewed the handout that she provided the Board with the COVID case rates and other data for Oregon and Polk County. Ms. Umstead also review the hospitalization rates for Salem Health. Dallas Retirement Village has had an increase in cases, with a total of 42. 17 of those cases are residents, 20 are staff and 1 other. Capitol Manor has a total of 6 cases. Independence Health & Rehab have 9 cases. Ms. Umstead reviewed the number of doses that have been given daily in Polk County and in Oregon overall.

Brandon Schmidgall, West Valley Hospital Administrator, reviewed the number of admissions current admitted for Covid and how many are on ventilators. Mr. Schmidgall also noted that 85% of the Covid patients have been unvaccinated. The hospital is still have difficulties discharging patients who do not need to be hospitalized due to a lack of space in skilled nursing facilities. He stated that if there were space the hospital would currently be able to discharge 40 patients. Commissioner Pope expressed his support for vaccines and their efficacy but also noted that he does not support vaccine mandates and believes it should be a personal choice. Mr. Schmidgall spoke about testing and stated that there has been an uptick in testing and they do not have a supply shortage at this time and employees that have symptoms or suspect symptoms can get tested anytime for free. Commissioner Pope pointed out that if the unvaccinated can contract and spread the virus also why would they not be testing everybody and asked if there has been any conversation about this with health care professionals. There has not been discussion of testing everybody as far as Mr. Schmidgall is aware.

4. FAIRGROUNDS UPDATE

Tina Andersen, Fairgrounds Director, and Tim Ray, Fair Board member, present the Board with an annual update. Mr. Ray informed the Board that the County Fair was a success even though it had to be downsized due to Covid. Attendance was affected by the high temperatures and the mask requirements and was down by 30%. They were not able to fill 7 open positions for Fair workers. The youth livestock auction had a 56% increase in their revenue and also an increase in sponsorship even though participation was down. The only vendor's booths they had this year were food and two of them had to cancel. They had a water slide at the fair this year which was a big hit because of the heat. The fair admission was lowered this year in order to limit attendance to the rodeo. They did receive some negative feedback on that choice and feel it was a lesson learned. They will have a fair recap meeting on September 9, 2021.

For the year 2020-2021 there were 361 events with 37,712 people in attendance at the Fairgrounds. The fundraisers held that same year raise \$436,988 which will be reinvested into Polk County. There were 47 days of evacuated animals and people on the grounds and over 300 animals and 75 families staying on the grounds for 6 weeks. They had approximately 2,300 people volunteering during those days and took in donations of approximately \$350,000. Events are returning slowly and some of them have been scaled down. Several have moved the event to 2022, which is almost completely booked. Storage is open and almost full already. The Fee for storage was increased to \$14.00 a foot. Capitol City Exchange is no providing concessions for the fairgrounds. The main building has had multiple upgrades including the ceiling, lighting and sound. The restrooms in building C are open and almost complete. They still offer overnight camping and it has been a good revenue stream, especially during shutdowns.

Fiscally the Fairgrounds struggled during Covid with the restrictions. During the state budget session they added \$33,000 to the \$53,000 they normally get and also set aside 10 million Capital project funding for fairgrounds.

5. NON-LISTED ITEMS - (Pursuant to ORS 192.640, the Board of Commissioners considered the below identified non-listed items.)

Commissioner Pope adjourned the meeting at 10:18 a.m.

Minutes: Ciera Atha
Approved: September 14, 2021