

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY MEETING MINUTES
July 2, 2024

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. COMMENTS (for items not on this agenda):

None.

3. MINUTES: **COMMISSIONER MORDHORST MOVED, COMMISSIONER GORDON
SECONDED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF June 25, 2024**

MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE BOARD.

4. DOLLY PARTON IMAGINATION LIBRARY

Lisa Harnisch, Executive Director of the Marion Polk Education Hub, was here today to talk to the Board about the Dolly Parton Imagination Library and what that program has to offer to youth ages 0-5. Ms. Harnisch shared the backstory of the program and why this is important to Dolly Parton. Ms. Harnish stated that the average cost of providing one book a month for one year to a single child is approximately \$26 a year. Ms. Harnish shared which zip codes in our area qualify for this program and she shared information on how many books have been given to Polk County residents. Ms. Harnish stated that we have one community in Polk County which is the City of Dallas, that has not been able to participate in this program and she stated that they are \$7000.00 short of meeting those goals. Ms. Harnish stated that before they bring this program into a new area, they work to ensure that they have 3 years of funding. Commissioner Mordhorst wanted to clarify which communities in Polk County are a part of this program and Ms. Harnish answered his question. Commissioner Gordon stated that he thinks this is a fantastic program and appreciates all the work they have done. Commissioner Gordon asked if she saw anymore gaps in the Polk County area in regards to funding and Ms. Harnish answered his question. Commissioner Gordon stated that he would like to see some coordination with rural homelessness prevention and with those children who may not have a permanent address. Commissioner Pope asked about how do families sign up for this program and Ms. Harnish answered his question. Commissioner Pope asked how many local government agencies are investing in this program for Polk County and Ms. Harnish stated no one. Commissioner Pope asked about the outreach to the City of Dallas and she stated that they have not reached out to them yet, but they have been recently working with the Dallas Rotary. Commissioner Pope asked if there is an ability to see the list of the available books and Ms. Harnish stated that it is available online. Commissioner Mordhorst stated that he supports this program but has some concerns about us paying for the City of Dallas when we haven't paid for the other cities and he would like to see what the City of Dallas plans to do. Commissioner Pope stated that it sounds like they need to get some more information and data from them before they can make a decision.

5. POLK COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Tina Anderson, Polk County Fairgrounds Manager and Tim Ray, Fair Board Chairman, came before the Board to provide an update on the Polk County Fairgrounds. Mr. Ray stated that they wanted to talk with the Board and staff in regards to long term and strategic plans for the fairgrounds and they are wanting to find ways to get the fairgrounds to a more self-sustaining place. Mr. Ray shared some of their ideas for year around events that would help the fairgrounds be more profitable. Commissioner Pope asked about the timeline of when these discussions began and Ms.

Anderson answered his question. Ms. Anderson spoke about the 2020 fires and how involved the Polk County Fairgrounds was during that time in holding animals. Commissioner Pope stated that he has been a part of these meetings and he has seen some of the renderings and he believes it is time to bring this information to the public and we need to ask the community, “do they want to support this moving forward?” Commissioner Gordon stated that he has seen the drawings and he is curious about their business and staffing plans and he gave examples of things he would want to be answered. Ms. Anderson responded to his statements and concerns. Commissioner Gordon asked if they had a timeline and Mr. Ray answered his question. The Commissioners appreciate the work going into this and all the outreach with the community. Commissioner Mordhorst stated that he sees the need in our community and that he receives calls all the time from the public asking why can't they hold certain events at the fairgrounds and he supports this plan. Greg Hansen, Administrative Officer, provided his input on this project and stated that this project would probably cost around \$50-\$60 million price tag. He stated that in order to fund this project, Polk County would need to create a taxing district and he explained what that would entail and what that would cost the public. The Commissioners talked about the potential public outreach conversations and what they would like to see. Commissioner Pope asked the other Commissioners if they want the Fair Board to keep moving forward with this planning and they support moving forward but they don't want to rush this.

**COMMISSIONER MORDHORST MOVED, COMMISSIONER GORDON
SECONDED TO PROCEED WITH THE LONG RANGE PLAN, COST ANALYSIS &
POTENTIAL FAIR TAX DISTRICT FOR THE FAIR & EXPO CENTER.**

MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE BOARD.

6. NON-LISTED ITEMS - (Pursuant to ORS 192.640, the Board of Commissioners considered the below identified non-listed items.)
None.

Commissioner Pope adjourned the meeting at 10:20 a.m.

Minutes: Nicole Pineda
Approved: July 9, 2024