

The February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024 Leader's Council meeting was called to order by President Corry Arntzen at 5:36pm, held at the Fergus Co. Sherriff's Complex basement meeting room.

Pledges were led followed by introductions by those in attendance:

Yvette Hersel/Creative Critters; Gisele Yaeger/Christina Busy Bees; Corry Arntzen/ Christina Busy Bees; Hailey Gallagher/Creative Critters & Ambassadors; Cody Ream/Extension; Cassie Yeager/ Christina Busy Bees; Chris England/Extension; Allison Smith/Extension; Brittany Gervais/Heart of Judiths (online); Davey Storfa/Independent; Sonja Gregory/Independent.

Minutes from the November Annual Meeting were read and approved. (Hailey – M, Davey – 2<sup>nd</sup>).

In Correspondence a thank you card was red from Cody England for Scholarship monies received after completion of her first college semester.

Treasurer Gisele Yaeger reported total funds are \$132,181.37. There was additional verbal commentary about preferences on how future reports and accounts can be presented to Council; including a detailed report on Food Booth expenses for year to year tracking. The Treasurer's Report was approved (Hailey – M; Yvette – 2<sup>nd</sup>).

Committee Reports included:

County Ambassadors: Hailey reports applications for new abassadors are open. Traveling Farm April 1<sup>st</sup>, Farm Safety Day April 19<sup>th</sup>. Plans for pig kissing contest at 2024 Fair. The Toilety Drive had great participation with two big boxes. Winning clubs will receive ice cream party in coming months.

Livestock: Cody reports recent meeting deciding same judge, same ultrasound individual. A new scale has been donated and will be placed in the back area of the Pavilion during fair. Storage in small animal barn when not in use; and they'll be working to have it certified ahead of fair. Livestock Committee covers that expense. Committee will need to work on what type of pad to place for the scale. Joel Sewell will be taking over as Livestock Sale Superintendent (from Chris Miller). The Rate of Gain Contest had 8 individuals participate for kickoff.

Small Animal: Chris reported a workbook workshop will be held Saturday Feb. 3<sup>rd</sup> followed by committee meeting to discuss fair prizes. A generous donation from Merk Camp & Tiarks has allowed dog program to improve its agility course equipment.

Horse: Cody reported the requirements to move forward in project levels have been altered. i.e. you do not have to move up a level if you medallion at County level – State requirements may differ requiring automatic advancement with a medallion. A Horse Card system/requirement is being implemented. There was discussion on this topic.

Static: Corry reported committee met late January. There are 31 calendars left for sale and 3 cookbooks left for sale. Discussed lowering cost on calendar to get remaining items sold. Also talked about having future availability at Winter Fair and idea to sell through Marigold Market. Future fundraising idea of a "design a sticker" contest was shared with tentative March/spring launch for sales during the Fair.

Intent to Sell Forms for indoor auction will be available with May 1<sup>st</sup> deadline, with \$5 per item entry fee. Committee will keep 25 item max. for the sale, with requirements of blue ribbon & complete records at fair. Committee is hoping to host a static project roundtable in April for a variety of projects to work on their project books, records and exchange ideas informally in a group setting.

Food Booth: Yvette and Chris reported meeting and will work on a new overhead door for front of food booth. Initial estimates are \$2900 for door, with \$1280 in labor. These expenses are being brought to the Fair Board for consideration in covering cost of their building. Committee will purchase a smaller microwave that doesn't interfere with the breaker. All beef donations for the Farm to Table program for upcoming fair booth have been committed. Slight modifications to the schedule being made for start times and clean up day process.

State Council Position: Chris reported our county position remains vacant with representation to the State Council position. State level has yet to meet in a full capacity but interested parties should talk to Chris about possible fulfillment of this minimal, zoom meeting position.

Awards: Chris reported they'll be preparing to order new 1<sup>st</sup> place award cutouts from HCR. We'll continue using existing Rosette supply for 2<sup>nd</sup> and beyond placements until that supply dwindles.

Scholarship: Chris reported all 3 recipients from 2023 were paid; and all 3 were continuing their post-graduate education.

Colt Reisig Grant: Chris reported additional monies have been added to this grant fund. Applications will be available for livestock members to apply for monies to help offset their livestock project costs.

Extension: An anonymous \$2000 donation was made to 4H, allocated to assisting in camp costs to assist youth in camp participation. Currently there are 13 clubs, 2 Independent families in our county program (Heart of the Judiths is a newly formed club).

In Old Business the following was discussed:

Project Workbook Evaluation Committee - Chris reported the Project Workbook Evaluation Committee is working to determine a date to meet to discuss the existing requirement of project activity books.

Independent Member Policy Proposal - Corry reported she is working to appoint a committee to evaluate the proposed Independent Member policies submitted to the Extension Office. Hoping to have continued discussion so a formal decision can be in play for the Oct. 1 2024 new 4H Year.

Vacant Extension Agent Position - Cody shared there is continuing interviews for potential Extension Agent position to replace the role Sara Bock held. There are 3 applicants and continued interviews happening in early February.

In New Business the following was discussed:

2024 scholarship offering from Leaders Council - Discussion around existing fund balance, estimated senior participation, and future fund balance management took place. There was a motion to annually

cap each scholarship application award amount at \$1,000 (Yvette); motion 2<sup>nd</sup> (Hailey). House divided vote: 6 Yes, 1 No.

Hailey moved to allow a maximum of \$2,000 be available from Memorial Funds for the Scholarship Committee to use in awarding the 2024 Scholarships; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Gisele. Discussion ensued and Hailey made a motion to amend original motion, striking \$2,000 and inserting "50% of total Memorial Fund account." Yvette 2<sup>nd</sup> and Amendment passed. Amended motion voted and passed, reading "Scholarship Committee may award up to 50% total Memorial Fund amount for 2024 year." Applications will be updated and be available from Extension Office. Due date is typically in April so at next Leaders' Council meeting a Scholarship Award Committee will be designated. Sonja volunteered to sit on this committee.

Bank of the Rockies intent to offer 'project' scholarships to large animal members announced. More information will become available as details are finalized.

Board Games request for Camps - Allison asked Leaders' Council for funds to purchase board games for use with camps and traveling events. It was moved and 2<sup>nd</sup> to approve \$100 for Allison to purchase games (Yvette – M; Hailey – 2<sup>nd</sup>).

Endowment - Chris informed Leaders' Council that an original offering of funds to our 4H program from an estate/family have fallen through. However, there is an estimated \$8,000 in savings bonds for Leaders Council. There has been initial discussion about moving those monies; or future monies; into an endowment type account to secure a longer-term financial plan for our county program. Chris has applied with Central MT Foundation to allow our group to create an Endowment Account with Central Montana Foundation. There was discussion as to what both interest earnings and fees would be, as well as access to available funds. Additionally it was asked that the group look into the Montana 4H State Foundation as investment option as well. Chris will coordinate to see if both Central MT Foundation and MT 4H Foundation can present their program offering to our group at the next Leader's Council meeting. Yvette moved to table a decision on monetary allotment to an endowment until there is additional educational and information provided to our group at next meeting. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Gisele and motion passed.

Fundraising – Chris updated the Winter Fair concessions were successful, with approximate profit of \$1,720. Donations assisted in keeping expense down (\$500 donation from Town & Country for supplies, Phillips family with meat, multiple families with chili). We ran out of food due to turn out by spectators. This profit is equivalent to what was made in prior year's splitting proceeds from Chokecherry Jam. Discussion indicates continuing this for next Winter Fair.

Valentines Cakes – 5 min. per club due to Extension Office by Feb. 13<sup>th</sup>. Need help delivering on the 14<sup>th</sup> and open to additional items outside of just cakes/cupcakes.

Greytek Calendars – Moved and 2<sup>nd</sup> to reduce the sales price from \$15 to \$10 to move these (Hailey – M; Yvette – 2<sup>nd</sup>). Next year Extension Office will reduce the quantity originally ordered.

The following Announcements were made:

- Reminder that club meeting minutes should be turned into the Extension Office
- Reminder that radio spots can be pre-recorded
- Reminder for Club articles to be included in the Spotlight Section of the 4H Newsletter
- The next meeting will be March 21<sup>st</sup>, 5:30pm Sherriff's Complex with zoom link option

The meeting was adjourned at 7:31pm (Hailey – M; Yvette -2<sup>nd</sup>).

Meeting minutes taken by Vice President Sonja Gregory