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Title: 11:00 AM *2022 Arapahoe County Fair Summary

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To: Board of County Commissioners

Through: Shannon Carter, Director, Open Spaces

Prepared By:
Matt Bixenman, Fairgrounds Site Manager, Open Spaces

Presenter: Matt Bixenman, Fairgrounds Site Manager, Open Spaces

Subject:
11:00 AM *2022 Arapahoe County Fair Summary

Purpose and Request:

The purpose of this session is for County staff to review and summarize the 2022 Arapahoe County Fair held on July 28- July 31, 2022.

Background and Discussion: The Arapahoe County Fair is an opportunity to showcase the Fairgrounds Event Center and Park, exhibit 4-H youth projects, sponsor a family-oriented event and to provide a gathering place for County residents. The theme for the 2022 Fair was “*Bring on the Fun*”. Armband sales for the event totaled 27,144.

The 2022 Fair had the following goals:

- Improve on the 2021 Fair layout, visitor wayfinding and increase visitor engagement and space of the north lawn activities and associated food vendors.
- Increased level of customer satisfaction.
- Improve event emergency management operations through cooperative training and pre-event planning.
- Maximize ticket sales through integrated marketing campaign.
- Maximize capacity through effective parking and traffic plans.

Open Space and Fairgrounds: Open Space and Fairgrounds staff work collaboratively to support the following components of the Fair:

Pre-Fair Operations:

- Fairgrounds & Extension staff supported 4-H Campground registration and load-in logistics
- Cooperative Fair Emergency Exercise tabletop with key stakeholders
- 4-H events and show logistics started one week prior to Fair
- Covered arena flipped from 4-H horse show to Fair layout in 48 hours
- Parking lots and traffic management plans and supporting maps
- New event layout implementation
- IT infrastructure improvements for ticketing operations at new ticket booth

Event Operations:

- Improved operational plans for managing entertainment, event logistics, public safety, and staff schedules
- Addition resources for supporting event layout, customer satisfaction, customer experience, and safety
- Refresh with new food vendors, main stage entertainers, and interactive entertainment
- Signage and wayfinding improvements

Communication Services: The Communication Services Team is responsible for the marketing, advertising and public relations activities associated with the Arapahoe County Fair. The Communications Team strives to build awareness of the Arapahoe County Fair, to increase attendance and to help ensure the Fair meets its cost recovery goals.

The Communication Services team manages and coordinates:

- Marketing and advertising
- Public sector event engagement and sponsorship
- Event public relations, media relations, and crisis communications
- Youth engagement in 4-H programs and events
- Develop the post event marketing and advertising summary report
- Boots Not Suits Dinner (in coordination with the events team in Open Spaces)
- Printing all materials and working with Open Spaces staff to produce event signage

Fair Marketing and Advertising Strategy and Highlights:

- News releases
- Calendar listings
- Social Media Posts
- Digital ads
- Banners around town (main street Littleton)
- Radio
- Live and taped TV appearances highlighting the Fair, 4-H and Craft Brew Fest.

4H, Open Class and Livestock Sale: The Family Consumer Sciences and General entries totaled 167 exhibits. Public Competitions entries came in at 554 entries. In 2022, the 4-H livestock and small animal entries were 319. The 2022 Livestock Sale totaled \$296,034.35.

Volunteer Connections: The County minimizes Fair expenses through the support of Volunteer Connections, within the Arapahoe County Community Resources Department. Volunteer Connections Coordinator, Daniella Villarreal recruits and manages the general Fair volunteers. Those who volunteer specifically for 4-H and Open Class Programming are given work assignments and supervised by CSU Extension staff.

For the 2022 Fair, the number of volunteer hours for the event totaled 4767 hours. This resulted in a total added value of \$142,772 towards the 2022 Arapahoe County Fair.

Fair Kick Off Dinner: The 2022 Fair Kick Off Dinner was held on the evening of Thursday, July 28th and was planned/implemented by Fairgrounds and Communication Services staff. The event had 385 attendees.

Pours on the Plains (Craft Brew Event): The 2022 Pours on the Plains was held on the evening of Friday, July 29th and was planned/implemented by Fairgrounds Events Team. The event had 438 attendees.

Revenue & Expenses: The Fair's core revenue is generated from gate admission, liquor sales, sponsorship dollars and carnival revenues. The gate admission of \$20 was split 60 percent to the County and 40 percent to the carnival provider. A gate fee was charged to all fairgoers over 36" tall. The gate / wristband fee included both general admission and carnival rides. The County offered pre-sale and online gate ticket options which enhance the overall gate revenue despite a \$2.50 convenience fee per ticket purchased.

Fairgrounds staff under the direction of the Fair Executive Team worked with numerous new entertainment and equipment vendors to minimize event costs for the 2022 Fair. As of September 15th, the County's financial system is showing year to date actuals of \$800,234.48 in revenue and \$843,522.30 in expenditures for the event. The year-to-date actuals have not been completely finalized for the event and are subject to change as there are pending invoices.

Fiscal Impact: The numbers included in this document and the associated presentation will reflect only the revenues and expenditures related to the Fair recorded within the Fair Fund. They exclude any transfers from the General Fund, Fairgrounds venue rental revenues and reimbursements from the General Fund for employee tickets.

Alternatives: N/A

Alignment with Strategic Plan:

- ☒ Be fiscally sustainable
- ☐ Provide essential and mandated service
- ☒ Be community focused

Staff Recommendation: N/A

Concurrence: The Arapahoe County Fair Planning Committee supported the development of the 4-H statistics.