

Fairgrounds Task Force
Monday, May 16, 2022 - 8:30 pm

Roy Holzer - Chairman

Chairman Holzer called this Fairgrounds Task Force to order at 8:30 with the following in attendance: Robin DeLoria, Roy Holzer, Jim Monty, Matt Stanley, Ike Tyler, Meg Wood (8:55), Mark Wright, Jim Dougan, Mike Mascarenas and Holly Aquino. Charlie Harrington was absent.

Also Present: Dina Garvey, Holly Aquino, Becky Provost, Dennie Westover, Scott Christian (8:35) and Alice Halloran (9:01).

HOLZER: Holly, why don't we start with your report.

AQUINO: So, the first page is always the updated version of the calendar of events that are happening, so far, as we know them. Not a lot new to mention, just ongoing paperwork. It seems to be a lot of paperwork whenever anybody wants to do it and Becky knows with insurance and everything. I think Dan Manning probably hates me, because I was trying to get a hold of him constantly, about insurance requirements and waivers and things like that. So, it's kind of one of the growing pains that we've been talking about, as more activity goes on at the fairgrounds, more of these situations, just come up and I felt sorry for Dan, last month.

So, a couple of things going on at the fairgrounds, so the barrel racing group as put a lot of work into the horse ring and also cleaning the bathrooms, so that they are ready to go after them. So, a lot of volunteer time, some of their own money, as well. They've gotten other people to donate some things, working with an excavating company to sift the sand; which is important for barrel racing, not so much for the 4H group, but for barrel racing, when you've got little kids going at a fast speed, if they fall off a horse they don't want to hit a rock. So, they sifted that sand to be a little bit finer.

And the Fair had their swap meet and craft fair on April 30th. Becky, you agree that it was a success for you?

PROVOST: Huge

AQUINO: Yeah, yeah, so that was really good. Roy was there, made an appearance.

HOLZER: Yeah, my wife actually one of the 30 day, I don't know what she won, but her name was on your page. So, it was worth the trip, apparently.

AQUINO: So, a lot of activity. Right now, it's mostly the horse shows that are really picking up. They had their first one, the first weekend of May. They're next one is this coming weekend and there's like 5 weekends total that they'll be out there.

And then, we put a dumpster out there, as well. So, the barrel racing group, they will be, pretty much in charge of maintaining that, in terms of making sure that it's tarped, properly, but, it can also be used for the fair, as well, so it's like 2 birds, 1 stone, to take care of that situation.

HOLZER: So, did we address, like the access to that area, at all or what? I know we were going to ask Dan Manning for an opinion.

AQUINO: So, I mean, I've gone back through a lot, because this discussion has come up previously and I was reading through a lot of minutes from like 2011 and 2016 and I think we can basically do whatever we want, but we have to make a decision, in terms, because it's not really a county park. You know, we don't have county park and rec staff to maintain it as if it was a park.

DOUGAN: Can I interrupt for a sec?

AQUINO: Yeah, absolutely.

DOUGAN: So, Roy knows what you're talking about, Holly, because you guys have discussed it. We've discussed it already, but everybody else in the room doesn't know.

AQUINO: Right, the backstory.

DOUGAN: So, it's the horse arena. So, we rent the horse arena for certain events, but there are others, locals, I guess, who are fairly close by, who utilize the fairground and the horse arena with their horses, but during the day, at times and so that's the conversation, you know, you're renting it to some, this group has invested some, because we rent it as is, but, they've invested some to make the sand better for, specifically for they're doing.

AQUINO: Fixing boards.

DOUGAN: So, how do we handle others that are using that same space without renting? Is it a public space? It is just how to handle it?

AQUINO: Previously...

HOLZER: So, the individual that rented it, we had them fill out the normal County rental forms?

AQUINO: Yes

HOLZER: Insurance?

AQUINO: Yes, absolutely. The situation was, previously there were no locks on the gates there, so people could just come over with their horses and use it whenever they wanted and this has been going on for years and now there's a lock on the gate and so people are upset that there is a lock on the gate, you know. Previously, as people do go in there, too, we can't police what

happens there, but you know, people do drink while they're doing those things and there were, quite often, beer cans and liquor bottles left all around the ring, as well.

HOLZER: Okay

MONTY: For those that don't rent, and come in and use it, do they fill out any paperwork?

AQUINO: No, because there's no security.

MONTY: To me, it's bottom line, they fill it out or they don't use it. Whether they pay for it or not, they fill it out and they agree to maintain no alcohol, because we are a public location, there shouldn't be alcohol. I mean we're putting ourselves at great liability.

DOUGAN: Let me just, let me just make a few other parallel. I don't disagree, but let me make a few other parallels. People come and walk the track, you know.

MONTY: But, they're not usually drinking.

DOUGAN: I don't know, but so, it's not quite the same, but it's similar.

HOLZER: Well, I think there's a difference riding a horse versus walking.

MONTY: Maybe we should have a sign in, if you're coming over to walk the track then you sign in.

AQUINO: So, that is another situation that we should probably talk about, because there are no rules and regulations that are posted there.

MONTY: So, we get rules and regulations.

AQUINO: Exactly and there are county parks that have horse rings that are opened in the public and based on what Dan Manning has said, previously, through other notes that I have read, any county park, it's kind of like a hiking trail, that it's your own risk when you're doing that. Our concern or my concern is that, you know, the horse group as put a lot time and effort into maintaining the ring and then if we allow the general public to come in, they're the ones that are going to have to continue to maintain it and that's kind of not fair to them. If it was opened as a county park, with posted rules and regulations, I would to think we need staff to oversee that and to maintain whatever happens when the public's there, but we're not setup that way.

MONTY: My big concern is the liability aspect. I mean that's a lawsuit waiting to happen.

HOLZER: Well, it's a double standard, if we ask some to sign the forms.

TYLER: Well, even if you sign the forms, you're going to get a lawsuit, Jim.

MONTY: Yeah, I know that.

TYLER: It's like those forms that they use to play basketball over here at the gym.

MONTY: I understand, but again I agree with Holly, that as far as, if you've got people renting it to use it and they're taking care of business and these other people are coming in and not taking care of business, it shouldn't fall back to us to take care of their business.

HOLZER: Do we have any...

MONTY: And it definitely shouldn't fall back to the people that are renting it.

HOLZER: Do we have any signs there that says, use of these facilities is at your own risk, for like the walkers and stuff?

AQUINO: No, no

HOLZER: I know for like our bike track in Wilmington, our insurance company wants us to plaster that. Even then, no matter what we have, if we're getting sued, we're getting sued.

AQUINO: Again, because that is a park that is opened in the public, where this is a fairgrounds, which is technically, even though it's owned by the County, a public entity. It's a rental facility, it's not open as a park, but it kind of is.

HOLZER: So, my gut feeling on this and I could be wrong and certainly anyone else can interject, but my gut feeling is to get some kind of handle on it, whoever's using it for the horses should have to, you know, register and maybe sign the waiver, especially since we have a group that's renting the facilities, right now.

AQUINO: Right

HOLZER: So, there's some kind of accountability. So, the lock on the gate isn't necessarily a bad thing, that's just me though.

PROVOST: Are the locals the ones that are still in like, Moreen's group and whatnot?

AQUINO: Some of them are, but the point is, if you open it up to the public then you're opening it up to everyone. If it was just one or two individuals that we know, then that's sort of a one on one, you know, basis. You know, right now, I think Moreen wants to know, also and people in her group, can they use it outside of the rented time or not? And if we're going to make people rent it out, they need to do the application, give us their insurance and pay a rental fee and that is too burdensome for the people who are using it, that just want to go in, in like the evening while it's still light and run their horse around the ring for an hour.

HOLZER: Do you know how many people we're talking about?

AQUINO: So, there's probably about, at least, 2 that we know of, that do it on a regular basis.

HOLZER: So, if they do it on a regular basis and it's only 2 people, would it be that cumbersome for them to go through that process, just to cover us?

AQUINO: For all year long?

HOLZER: Well, just have a handle on it, because otherwise we have a double standard here.

AQUINO: Right

HOLZER: So, if we're going to do it for one, we need do it for all.

AQUINO: Oh, we can absolutely do it for all, it's just that I don't think those people would do it.

HOLZER: Well, then they don't use the facility.

AQUINO: Okay

PROVOST: Are those two, I'm pretty sure they're both part of Moreen's group. Can they be considered on Moreen's?

HOLZER: That would be a question...

PROVOST: Because, they have insurance through their group.

HOLZER: That would be a question for Dan.

AQUINO: Yeah, because the insurance specifically has the dates that it's rented. So, if they're going to do it all year long, you're going to have to cover your insurance for the entire year, like a blanket permit. Kind of what we're doing with Cornell this year, it's a new thing that we're doing with them, but they still have to come to us to say, is it available.

HOLZER: Right now, I don't think that's necessarily a bad thing. I wouldn't mind sort of like the State and the County looked at over by North Hudson, the horse trails, down the road, maybe we should have more of that, at your own risk stuff, but the actual, like ring and stuff, I think we, right now, anyways, I think we need to control it. So, the easiest way, since we're only talking about a couple of people, so to see if they can be on the insurance, get you the necessary requirements, that are in place, right now, otherwise we're just reinventing the wheel. The biggest thing is, I want to see the same standards for whoever's using it.

TYLER: It should be a conversation with the insurance company, ask them what they want.

HOLZER: Yeah, yeah.

STANLEY: I was going to say that, it's County owned, right?

HOLZER: Yeah

STANLEY: So, we have insurance there?

TYLER: Right

HOLZER: Well, we require, like people that rent the facility to give us an insurance policy.

STANLEY: But, sure, if somebody's not renting the facility and wanted to use it the facility, there's still insurance there?

TYLER: Correct

HOLZER: Oh, yeah, like the walkers.

STANLEY: Like a town park.

HOLZER: But, we should still probably look at, getting off track here, but we should still look at, like even for the walkers, use of the facilities are at your own risk.

TYLER: Something that, the verbiage should be through the insurance company, exactly.

HOLZER: I agree, someone smarter than me on it.

AQUINO: But, in order to take care of the situation with the horse ring, in order to do what you're saying here, is that Moreen's group is going to have to resubmit their permit application to cover the entire season that we're open for renting and her insurance company is going to have to cover every single date to cover these two other people? Is the only way?

HOLZER: Then they do it. Then they do it right now and then we, as you get more people, I just think that's...

TYLER: That should be run by the insurance company also.

AQUINO: Oh, absolutely.

TYLER: I mean who's to say that if somebody goes over there and they must assume at their own risk on a horse, maybe an insurance company says, no, it's a park or it's a county owned facility.

I don't know what the insurance company's going to say, but before I do anything in the Town of Westport, the insurance company and lawyer are the first two people that I call.

HOLZER: And you already talked to Dan about this; right?

AQUINO: Yeah, so he's aware of it, he did actually want to sit down and discuss it, face to face, I was hoping he'd be here.

HOLZER: So, you're going to have a meeting with Dan on this?

AQUINO: Well, yes, I'll definitely get, since we know this is the route we want to go, I'll sit down him and come up with a way to get it done and the verbiage.

HOLZER: And it won't, you know, building upon what Ike just said, let's definitely run it by...

DOUGAN: We'll engage the insurance company.

TYLER: I would say they have to be a major player in this. It shouldn't be what we make up, it should be what they.

HOLZER: It's a combination.

AQUINO: Right, it's both.

HOLZER: It's a combination of both.

PROVOST: Well, see the problem that we had ran into with the insurance stuff, is your rules and regulations on the bottom says that you can get a waiver, there was no wavier.

AQUINO: Well, we did get it, finally.

PROVOST: Yeah, finally we got a waiver, but it's like, okay.

AQUINO: So, the way, to go back to this situation with the craft fair, the rules and regulations have not changed, but it is sort of the first time we're making people adhere to them.

PROVOST: Right

AQUINO: So, it's kind of an educational learning curve for everybody. Whenever an event goes into the fairgrounds, so Ag Society had the craft fair, Ag Society gave us an insurance policy naming the County as additionally insurance. That was totally fine, but all of the vendors are supposed to give us insurance, as well and I think there was a misconception that your insurance company would cover your vendors that don't have insurance, but then their insurance company said, no, that's not the case. So, we said anybody who is not a real business, like mom and pop,

crochet at home, you're having a vendor, Dan said, that we can do a waiver. Dan was extremely busy, he was in litigation, I think at the time, so it took a while to get the waiver. We finally got the waiver and anybody who said they could not get insurance, signed the waiver. I think every single vendor signed the waiver. So, there were businesses there that were actual business, who should have had insurance and did not give us a copy and they signed a waiver. So, 37 waivers got signed, out of like 40 vendors and even the people who did provide an insurance certificate, they were not endorsed properly, so a huge learning curve there.

DOUGAN: So, yeah, we're, I mean it's, we keep using the word growing pains, but as you know, you brought somebody on, that their job is the fairgrounds and as we tackle all these things and the way, we try and still work with the people that have used the fairgrounds the most in the past, but at the same time put in certain rules, here as we go. So, this is what we're, you know, it's growing pains that we keep coming across and a lot of the events that we're having are these really small ones and twos things and so asking vendors for all the insurance is difficult, but at the same time, to use Mr. Monty's word of liability, it's a tough place to put the County in for those things, as well. So, I don't know if we have an answer, we're just, today's meeting, we're talking more about our growing pains.

TYLER; I don't think we need to reinvent the wheel. There are other fairgrounds that are doing this and what are they doing?

DOUGAN: They're all run by an Ag Society.

MONTY: Ag Society

DOUGAN: They're not run by a county.

TYLER: All of them?

DOUGAN: All of them.

WESTOVER: That's not true.

DOUGAN: Okay, well, our local ones are.

AQUINO: Well, Clinton County owns, the ones in the surrounding area, here, yes.

CHRISTIAN: Clinton County is, part of their grounds are owned by the Ag Society, part is owned...

DOUGAN: But, the rest of it's leased by the Ag Society the rest of the year.

AQUINO: They run and operate it.

CHRISTIAN: Can I make a couple of comments on this?

DOUGAN: Sure

CHRISTIAN: 30 years' experience, I'm not trying to talk to anybody, you know, I know that I don't know everything, because I don't, but I've been through this procedure and probably everybody knows that at the end of the year, I'm done with the fair, but I would like to see it continue and I think the County's done a tremendous amount of work on the grounds and I think we're at the finish line here and we need to work out a few small things. I was the past President of the New York State Association of Fairs, I've visited all 52 fairs in the State, some during the fair, some not during the fair and our grounds are tremendous. The County's put a ton of money in there, going back 25 years ago or 20 years ago. We started with the grandstand. We redid the campground, the campground bathroom, 200-amp service in the middle of the track, buried. New Egglefield building, new bacon burger building, new bathroom, handicapped bathroom. The Fair built the sugarhouse. We got a \$100,000.00 member item grant from Stafford to do Floral Hall.

TYLER: Tear down some old buildings.

CHRISTIAN: We tore down some old buildings, the County built a new show ring, built a new cattle ring. We put all new electrical in where the old carnival area was. All new water system, things people can't see. The facility is there, everything is good, I mean it's top notch, you go to some of these fairgrounds and they're still using little shacks for bathrooms and got their own septic system, we're on the town septic system now, town water. Leaps and bounds have been made with the power. So, with all that being said, going back to the craft fair with the insurance, number one thing with fairs, people sue at fairs is trips and falls. We're in a litigation, right now, the County is for 3 or 4 years ago, somebody tripped and fell.

HOLZER: At the fairgrounds?

CHRISTIAN: Yes, at the fairgrounds. So, and that's not just our fairgrounds, that's every fairgrounds. So, when you say every vendor needs insurance, you know, when somebody's in Floral Hall, during fair or not during fair, selling something craft that they made at home, there's a very slim chance that anybody is going to hold that vendor liable for anything. I can see food vendors when somebody might get sick, something with a mechanical ride or somebody selling bigger goods, but I mean to be honest there's going to be a slim chance that, you know, somebody that's making mittens or making signs is really going to get sued, because what are they going to do to the public?

HOLZER: A lot of times all this liability stuff, like Ike says, get ahold of the insurance company, it is generated from the insurance company. I'll just give you a quick example of this. We have a fishing derby, up at Whiteface Memorial Highway and this year, ORDA has a team of lawyers handling their liability issues. They wanted three different types of insurance policies and one of the coordinators, get this, to have sexual harassment certificate training, for a fishing derby that serves like 20 kids. So, as a result the Fish and Game Club pulled out of it. But, this is an example of the way we're coming as a society, is the insurance company makes all these

recommendations to organizations and the County and municipalities. That's where it's getting crazy, right now, Scott.

CHRISTIAN: And I know that and everybody in this room knows if something happens at the fairgrounds, the County's getting sued.

HOLZER: We all are, we all are.

CHRISTIAN: They aren't going after the Fair that's got \$20,000.00.

TYLER: They're going to sue the County, they're going to sue the Town, they're going to sue everybody they can.

PROVOST: People are sue happy.

AQUINO: And Scott, I don't think anybody disagrees with what you're saying. I mean it is burdensome. It really is, but we can't just say, okay, well, we just won't do that. We have to go by what our County Attorney says and what the insurance company says and it stinks, but.

CHRISTIAN: And just to say that everybody's getting insured, Orange County, everybody knows where Orange County is. Orange County Fair, last year, somebody got hurt in a carnival ride and they hired a lawyer from New York City and they actually put a lawsuit against New York State Association of Fairs, which has nothing to do with it. They're just a member of ours. They googled it, New York State Fairs and that came up first, so they put us on the lawsuit, as well, so we had to get a lawyer, you know.

MONTY: I think, in respect to what you said, Scott, you're right. The County has done a lot to upgrade to where we are. We need to do more, which we're trying to do, but it's the aspect of people coming in and using things without permission, without notice and just covering ourselves. I mean, I know if somebody comes to me and tells me my sidewalk's bad, they've given me prior notice, I fill out a prior notice form. That way I have it documented that, if the next person comes in a day later and says, look, I tripped and broke my ankle. Well, look, there's a prior notice form, we filled it out, my highway guys are working on it. Not that it's going to exonerate me from being sued, but it's going to look more favorable on the fact that I have been notified of it and I'm doing my due diligence and I think that's all we're trying to do with the insurance is do the due diligence and I think, going back, you know, 15 minutes ago, when we were talking about the 2 people from Moreen's group that use the horse ring, what happens if they're not part of the horse group? Because, Moreen's group isn't going to want to cover, if I decided I wanted to buy 2 horses and bring them down there, if I'm not part of the group.

HOLZER: Well, regardless I'd like to find a way.

MONTY: Well, I agree.

HOLZER: Whether they're part of Moreen's group or if they're just people from all over the county that want to use it.

AQUINO: See the thing is, I think if, you know, word can get around that it is open to the public and maybe there are people that just assumed it wasn't, but now they know it is and now they could start to come. I don't know, but you do open up that possibility.

MONTY: I know that we have a tremendous group that comes down from St. Lawrence County, twice a month to ride the horses at Thrall.

MASCARENAS: So, when you guys talk about lock, are you talking about the actual ring is locked or the gates that we installed?

AQUINO: The gates in the ring, just the ring. Anybody can still get through the fairgrounds, just the ring is locked, so you can't put your horse in there.

DOUGAN: And even, any of the gates that are on the road, even if those are locked, the way that they were just barriers that were installed in other places; which were just 6x6 posts, and so somebody can still ride a horse or walk through all those other areas.

MASCARENAS: Sure, sure

DOUGAN: So, it's just, to try and balance both situations, we're asking for a little bit of help in creating some kind of policy and you're right, the signs would help us, we're also going to get sued anyhow, but we're still, we're trying to make this Committee aware that we need to have some kind of policy, because it's, it can be black and white, it can be, if you don't have a permit and you don't have this insurance, we can say no to everything, I guess or it can be white that it's a free for all.

HOLZER: So, as soon as you meet with Dan and find out the insurance...

TYLER: I would, the insurance is the main thing.

HOLZER: Let's do those two-fold, together and go from there. I think that's the easiest way to, or the most realistic.

TYLER: We don't know what we need there or don't need there, the insurance company does, though.

MONTY: Our insurance is from NYMIR?

MASCARENAS: Yeah

HOLZER: And believe me, they come up with a lot of extra stuff.

MONTY: Yeah

DOUGAN: So, another topic, if we're ready to move on, is we did, it was kind of last minute, just before your event, that we did, finally, get the DOH permit. Some of that is the startup of water and cold temperatures that we still had and trying to start everything up is a little bit of a balancing act, but we do have the permit to operate the fairgrounds with, I guess, it's still that list, I don't know that anything's been added.

AQUINO: No, not beyond the 24th.

DOUGAN: We may have to amend that permit. The one thing that we don't have permitted, right now, is the campground; okay? The campground, prior to Covid, maybe Dennie knows how many years exactly, there were a couple of gentlemen who rented the campground, and who basically keep the campground, kind of held that permit going; okay? And so, since we have nobody out there to really manage the campground, we don't have a permit for the campground, right now. When the Fair comes, I know the Fair's going to want to use that campground, so we'll work with them to get that permit issued for that, how many days.

HOLZER: How many people do you usually have use the campground?

DOUGAN: It's full.

WESTOVER: It's full

HOLZER: It's full and how many sites is it, Dennie?

AQUINO: It's like 13.

WESTOVER: I want to say 15 sites and we're allowed 30 campers. You can double them.

HOLZER: When you guys did that before, when you had the two guys doing it, what kind of arrangement was that?

AQUINO: I think that was through the County.

DOUGAN: It was through the County, it was our lease.

WESTOVER: It was through the County.

MASCARENAS: They had a contract.

DOUGAN: They had a contract, they leased it.

MASCARENAS: We bid it out.

HOLZER: Were they the only one that was interested? Because, I was talking to Jim the other day about this. I think it would cool to revisit that, as a possibility, to get private enterprise in there to the campground and see if we can get something going in there, again.

MASCARENAS: Yeah, we bid it out. They had it every week, except for the two weeks, I think, prior to the Fair.

HOLZER: I assume they didn't make any money, financially, I guess.

WESTOVER: They did alright, I guess.

AQUINO: And our lease agreement was like, the amount they paid us was extremely small.

MASCARENAS: Yeah

HOLZER: Okay

TYLER: Well, they did a lot of work there, too.

MASCARENAS: Yeah

TYLER: That was in the contract. They worked there, they put the building up, they did a lot of stuff.

HOLZER: How complicated is us doing the campground thing?

DOUGAN: I think we can put it out to bid, sure, why not?

MASCARENAS: It's been done, really, we did it before, so we have it.

TYLER: Jim, what about the sewer dump there, is that just still wide open, anybody can come in and use it?

DOUGAN: It's still wide open, right now.

TYLER: We got to fix that.

DOUGAN: I mean it's still there. It's not policed.

HOLZER: What do you mean, wide open?

TYLER: Well, I have just witnessed in the past, people pulling in there with their campers, dumping for free, instead of going to a campsite where they have to pay.

HOLZER: Oh, okay.

MASCARENAS: Yeah, that was a pretty regular occurrence.

HOLZER: Like a dump station?

DOUGAN: Yeah, it's a dump station. It's not policed.

TYLER: Yeah, but I know some people that who own the campgrounds will tell people to do it at the fairgrounds, because it's free.

HOLZER: Is there any way that we can charge for it?

TYLER: You got to have somebody, I mean...

MASCARENAS: You got to know about it.

DOUGAN: You would have to have somebody there.

TYLER: I think it needs a lock of some sort on there and then just open it when we have somebody there using it.

DOUGAN: Yeah, we probably could put some kind of lock on it.

HOLZER: Well, let's do that right away.

DOUGAN: We can do that right away, absolutely.

TYLER: You're making people from Westport pay for people from Connecticut or Long Island sewer.

AQUINO: Right.

TYLER: I'm not really big on that.

HOLZER: Well, you don't know what they're dumping in there.
So, getting back to the campground leasing, were there any pitfalls to it when we were doing that?
Is there any reason we wouldn't want to do it again? I mean...

AQUINO: The only caveat is the month of August has to be reserved for the Fair.

HOLZER: So, we write it into the contract.

MASCARENAS: Yeah, that's what we did.

TYLER: There's some nice campsites there and there's some nice views.

HOLZER: There's some awesome views, because the last year, when I was hanging at Dennie's beer tent, he pointed out, that if we like cut a bunch of trees it would open up a pretty good view of Lake Champlain.

AQUINO: It really is the only spot from the fairgrounds that you can see part of the lake.

MONTY: Is the brewery staying open?

TYLER: Oh yeah, new ownership.

MASCARENAS: I mean it does put eyes there for us.

DOUGAN: Exactly

MASCARENAS: In a way that we don't have now.

HOLZER: Yeah

MASCARENAS: There's always somebody that's running the campground facility, they're there, at least.

HOLZER: So, would we need a full resolution from the Board to make this?

MASCARENAS: We can put it out without a resolution, to award we would have to get a resolution.

DOUGAN: I can ask, we can ask, today.

HOLZER: Okay

DOUGAN: If you want it.

HOLZER: It would be interesting to see what would come out of it. Does anyone have any issues with that? And how about the Fair?

WESTOVER: That's a good idea.

STANLEY: Would there, in the future, would this, if the County ran the campground, would that help offset, like a full, part-time person out there to help take care of the fairgrounds?

AQUINO: No, you wouldn't make enough money and to keep it open, the permit, according to the Department of Health, requires that a person be there when it's occupied. So, that's the biggest thing and with any campground, you've got to make sure people are hooked up to the sewer properly, so there's no spillage. You've got to make sure you're maintaining trash. You've got to clean the restrooms.

MASCARENAS: Yeah, it's not a campground, like you think, as a traditional campground. It's a campground set up for the Fair, really.

HOLZER: What was the time period for the old lease you guys had?

MASCARENAS: We had a normal.

DOUGAN: I think it was 3 years.

HOLZER: 3 to 5 years?

MASCARENAS: I think it was renewable.

HOLZER: Okay

DOUGAN: And it might of even, because they did do some work, as Ike had said, I think it was, it was set up as an original 3 or 5-year term, because they were doing some investment.

HOLZER: Well, I know if I was, as a business person, looking at it, I would want more than a 3-year agreement.

DOUGAN: Then, as I recall, there was a renewal for 2 or 3 years.

AQUINO: I think you cannot lease anything more than 5 years at a time.

HOLZER: Okay and entrance to it?

DOUGAN: Was next to Nutrition.

MASCARENAS: Yup

HOLZER: Okay, so one thing that I wanted to revisit and you and I have talked about this before. I think I have asked you what your zoning rules where, but we need some kind of better signage out there. When you arrive there, people arrive there, it should say, we've arrived. I know you guys have a plywood sign.

TYLER: I have people questioning that all the time.

HOLZER: An electronic sign, maybe?

TYLER: It could be possible.

HOLZER: So, how would we go about, like if Holly and I wanted to attend your Planning Board meeting and get permission, how would we do that?

TYLER: The first step would be to see George Hanier and get the requirements for it. Then you would know if you need to go to the Planning Board. You might not even need to go to the Planning Board.

AQUINO: It is all specified in your land use code.

TYLER: I'm sure it is.

HOLZER: But, the whole idea, when Jim, originally, when we first started the whole Fair Committee, it would be nice to have an electronic sign out there where we could put special messages.

MONTY: I think, wasn't it a few years ago, you guys wanted to put in and it was shut down?

TYLER: No, we just had a few negative comments on it, we didn't shut it down, did we, Jim?

DOUGAN: No, well, we talked about it at one point and we did some work. We even put some cost estimates together. At one point it was something that we talked about using the fairground money, but you guys had other projects. It was mixed in there a little bit and it kind of petered out, I think after that. There's been some work on some other electrical upgrades and stuff like that, first, but, we got a cost estimate.

HOLZER: But, whether it comes from fairground money or not. I think it's important enough that it's fine to look at and it's important to preview all these policies and stuff, but I think we need a couple things that we can physically point to, like a new sign, dressing up the entrance, the curb appeal and saying, okay, we're really making some...

DOUGAN: We got a cost estimate, at least, from a vendor; okay? And Holly had, a month or two ago, a meeting or two ago, had provided a copy of Westport's zoning law.

HOLZER: So, we would probably have to talk to them about a variance?

AQUINO: Yeah

DOUGAN: We would have to get a variance.

AQUINO: Yeah, definitely.

TYLER: George would walk you through that.

HOLZER: Because, Holly, you and I could go to their meeting and make our case.

DOUGAN: Yup

HOLZER: On behalf of the County or I'll do it myself.

AQUINO: Yeah, you got to keep in mind, it is, I believe, designated a historic district and what kind of a sign is it? I think you need to find out exactly what type of sign you're asking a variance for.

TYLER: Yeah, there's some work that you've got to do, before you go there.

HOLZER: Yeah

TYLER: And I'm not saying that it's something that can happen. I'm just saying, just do what you've got to do and if you can, you can, if you can't, you can't.

DOUGAN: Let me schedule a meeting with George; okay? And see how much more information he would need then what we've got. We've got some colored renderings and stuff that are just general.

HOLZER: Are you going to organize the meeting and then let me know?

DOUGAN: Yeah, yeah.

TYLER: Jim, just give George a call and he can answer all those questions for you.

DOUGAN: Yup, yup and then we'll know what to submit.

WESTOVER: Wouldn't that be a good use for ROOST money? Promoting tourism.

HOLZER: Well, I think we can find the money somewhere, because I think we can make the case to the Board of Supervisors that it's important enough. We need something that's going to say, you know, we need a visual accomplishment that people can look at. A new sign, dressing up the entrance, the curb appeal, in my opinion, Dennie, as a business person, is really important and even though the plywood sign may have worked back in the day, we just need something else. And I love the idea Jim had with message board, because if we put different messages there, it's all the more reason, as people are going by to look at what's on it today, you know.

PROVOST: And to see what's going on at the grounds.

HOLZER: Right and it might be revenue, because if you wanted to say, happy birthday, Ike, you pay \$10.00 to have your message go out there, you know or something like that. We need revenue out there to do other stuff. Okay, so we'll set up that meeting then.

DOUGAN: Okay. I would like to bring up, back in November, before weather got cold, we were going to make another site visit with this Committee, if you think that's a good idea, again?

HOLZER: I do

DOUGAN: I think we're back to good weather, we're a couple months before the Fair, itself and maybe.

HOLZER: Why don't we just do it at our next month's meeting. We'll pick another day, because this is usually a pretty busy day for us, pick another day, that will be our meeting for June. We'll do it right over to the fairgrounds.

AQUINO: And at the next meeting I would like to discuss winter storage, because that will be upon us quicker than we know, to come up with some real rules and regulations for that, because right now, it's been mostly just verbal reservations, nobody signs anything, people are supposed to have their boats by April 30th, but most people aren't even back from Florida or wherever they are by that time. So, right now, we still have quite a few boats out there.

HOLZER: We do, right now?

AQUINO: Oh, yeah. So, it's really difficult to rent the fairgrounds, the whole facility when there are boats taking up spaces.

HOLZER: Gotcha

AQUINO: But, I have a feeling, if we make it by April 30th, people are not going to rent, because they know they're not going to be back. So, it's kind of a...

MASCARENAS: Are they paying the additional?

AQUINO: No.

HOLZER: That's one of the reasons we raised the rate last year, is we didn't want to compete with private enterprise on being a storage facility.

MASCARENAS: Right, but our rental is through April 30th, not through May 30th.

AQUINO: Right

HOLZER: So, we should probably contact them.

AQUINO: Right, but people are not going to expect that at this point. So, if we make those rules now, so that next year and I do, I think I have the contact information for most people who are out there. I just don't know who owns which boat, but to contact them and say, this is how it's going to work next year and you need to sign this and be okay with these terms and conditions before you bring your boat out there.

MASCARENAS: The May rental, in my opinion, and we'll get into that next time, I don't want to take, should be higher.

AQUINO: But, then we come into the part where it's like, how do I confirm if somebody wants, if 4H wants to use their own dairy ring and there's boat in there in May and they've got an activity.

MONTY: Make them move them, get them out.

DOUGAN: Again, growing pains, let me use those words, again, okay? So, right now I have a good plan, instead of springing it on people who were already renting, per se, from Lynn, before Holly got here, the old way; okay? Now that we're trying to get more events sooner in the year and all these things, so we're going to have these rules up, get them to the renters; okay? My engineering staff has already taken the buildings and we're starting to segment space, so that when these come in, she can actually say, you're going in space A12 or whatever it might be.

HOLZER: To control it a little bit.

DOUGAN: And people who, if they come to us ahead of time, say, well, I'm not going to be able to get out there until May, we might be able to put it in a spot that we don't rent; okay? And charge them for it.

HOLZER: Makes sense.

DOUGAN: But, but, this Committee just needs to be aware of it, that, again, it's another one of those...

TYLER: And the thing that they sign, Jim, if they're not out by April 30th...

AQUINO: They don't sign anything, right now.

TYLER: Then you tell them what's going to happen, if they don't.

DOUGAN: Exactly, but that hasn't been done in the past and I don't want to spring it on anybody, unfairly, who's used to using it.

TYLER: Agree.

MONTY: Unfortunately, it's the County way, unaccountability. It's the County way, we don't hold anybody accountable. And I think, getting back to that letter, I agree, it should generically go out to everybody that's on our rental list and not just boat owners, just generically send it out to everybody.

AQUINO: Which, by the way, we did not have a rental list until recently, so now we do.

MONTY: But, again, growing pains. But, it would be a suggestion, instead of trying to specifically pick up who's boat is what, we just send it to everybody who has rented space.

DOUGAN: We've done a couple of things, even this last month, like all the bathrooms. We changed out all the locks to passage lock sets; okay? Because, Scott had some keys, didn't have other keys and so we changed them all out to passage lock sets and then we put a little, just a little latch and a key, which is basically the same key as the gates, so that when it comes to Ag Society, you guys, itself, okay, now you just take that lock off and you're not struggling for 50 different keys. We're trying to do a few other efficiency things, too, here. It's hard, all these small events and somebody coming out and wanting it on Saturday and Sunday, you know, if by chance somebody walked by on Friday night, a door we unlocked and they happened to turn the thumb latch, then, now, the next day the bathroom's not open. So, we're, it's just more growing pains as we're still trying to have access, until we get to the point that it makes sense to have somebody out there, full time or part time, all summer long.

HOLZER: Okay, thank you. Alright, that's it for this one, guys. Thank you.

WESTOVER: So, do we get a chance to ask our questions?

HOLZER: Well, certainly, Dennie.

WESTOVER: We've going to be getting a new office, probably a larger Amish shed and we wanted to discuss with this Committee on where to put it, if they had any choices or wanted to hear our choices on places to put it, because, as you know, we lost the Cornell, the office space in the Cornell Building and then we moved the Fair Office into the Treasurer's Office, so therefore we have no Treasurer's Office. We've used the camper, one year and last year we used Scott's shop.

DOUGAN: Yup

WESTOVER: And we wanted our own lockable Treasurer's Office space.

DOUGAN: Okay

HOLZER: How big is the building?

WESTOVER: We're thinking 12x20, 12x18, something.

HOLZER: What's the normal procedure when we allow a building to go out there?

DOUGAN: Couldn't tell you.

MASCARENAS: We show up and it's there.

DOUGAN: So, this is a great first step, that we're going to talk about it. So, I don't know if you want to wait until this next walk through?

WESTOVER: We can add that into the walk through and give you our ideas of where would work best for us.

DOUGAN: Yup, are you going to try and bring power to it, I would assume?

HOLZER: I would think they would want it.

WESTOVER: Yeah

AQUINO: Is it the type of building where you put it down, but you could also move it at some point, if you needed to?

WESTOVER: Yeah, it's going to be an Amish shed, so I don't see why not.

AQUINO: So, that gives you a little bit more flexibility.

HOLZER: Right, but it also depends what kind of power needs they're going to have and the equipment that's going to be in there and stuff like that.

WESTOVER: Yeah, it wouldn't require a bunch of power, you know, maybe enough for air conditioning to run, would be the biggest thing.

HOLZER: What would you have for a restroom, just have a port-a-john outside the building, like you have them through the fair?

WESTOVER: There's no restroom now.

PROVOST: In our current one.

HOLZER: Okay, so you're walking anyways. I don't have a problem with a building going out there. We'll just coordinate it.

DOUGAN: We'll just coordinate it, yup.

AQUINO: What's that little white building that's out there, now, that says, Fair Office on it?

WESTOVER: That's the Treasurer's.

PROVOST: That's the Treasurer's Office.

WESTOVER: That was the Treasurer's Office.

AQUINO: So, is it going to be used for anything?

CHRISTIAN: Yeah

WESTOVER: Yeah, we'll still have it for an office for the Fair Office or put the Treasurer back in there.

AQUINO: Okay

DOUGAN: So, you don't think you'll need Scott's maintenance area, this year, if you get that?

CHRISTIAN: No, we're not going to.

DOUGAN: Okay, that didn't work out?

WESTOVER: It was a little difficult with people coming and going.

CHRISTIAN: We're trying to get somewhere to keep people, you know, when you've got \$20,000.00, it's too accessible.

HOLZER: That makes sense.

WESTOVER: The ice maker, where do we stand with the ice machine, because we really need an ice maker this year, because one of our vendors that's coming, that was part of the agreement, that we made with them, is that we would supply the ice for him.

DOUGAN: Okay

WESTOVER: And plus...

PROVOST: Other people buy it.

WESTOVER: Other people buy it and we had such problems, we couldn't even get ice last year. They weren't making our deliveries to us when they were supposed to and there was just, the mobile station in Westport and the little local stores around, they didn't have any either.

DOUGAN: We let you use an ice maker that we had leftover. The Nutrition Program had a fairly new ice maker they bought, just before the moved, we put a new ice maker in there and then we let you use one, until ours broke down. We left it at the fairgrounds and when ours broke down at DPW, we moved it out and put it over here. So, I've never planned to buy a new ice maker for anybody. The ice maker is only necessary during the Fair, so I'm not sure why I'm...

HOLZER: How much is a new ice maker?

WESTOVER: We've discussed this ice maker before. I thought that there was one in the plans that they were going to try and get us one back.

AQUINO: I saw that it was mentioned in the minutes for one of the meetings for the Ag Society, but I don't think it came before us.

PROVOST: I bought one for our fire department, it was \$5,000.00.

MONTY: You're definitely going to need a commercial one.

HOLZER: Would we have a need for an ice maker for other events out there, Holly?

AQUINO: Not what's currently on the calendar.

DOUGAN: Maybe in the future, but what's currently on the calendar, no.

HOLZER: So, if they don't have an ice maker for this year's Fair, how are we going to coordinate trying to assist them with like getting some freezers out there for bags of ice, ahead of time and stuff? Because, we did give you some ice from the Nutrition.

PROVOST: The Nutrition Center.

HOLZER: Because, I remember us, my going out there and having an 11th hour need.

WESTOVER: Well, this is what I was told, I was told that that was kind of a partial, it was a partial deal. We bought a commercial ice maker and then the compressor burned up on it or something, but then the County had one, so they took, we took parts off of theirs and we made one between the entities. The one that was in there, so for a while, we thought it was our ice maker, correct, Scott? Am I speaking out of turn?

CHRISTIAN: We thought it was ours.

WESTOVER: You know, we thought it was.

HOLZER: Are you guys in a position where we could split the cost of a new ice maker? It's \$5,000.00, I'm not saying the County, because everything I tell you has to be approved by 17 others.

CHRISTIAN: So, if we could get some help with a grant, we got \$10,000.00 Covid Relief and I know that, sitting there, we talked about it. We just don't have anybody on our Fair that has the time to every time we get into the Gateways and we get it all figured it out, by the time, we get kicked out.

HOLZER: Are you talking about the bigger grants?

CHRISTIAN: No, it's a \$10,000.00 Covid Relief Grant.

HOLZER: Who from your group could we get to be your rep to Community Resources, if we're able to set something up? Because, that would be a perfect use of your \$10,000.00, instead of giving it back.

CHRISTIAN: Well, I've talked to somebody about it, but I don't want to say until they definitely say they'll do it.

HOLZER: And as soon as you know, you email both Holly and myself, maybe we can move that along. Because, to leave that money on the table to give up that money, it's crazy not to utilize it and that could take care of buying the ice maker.

CHRISTIAN: Right, for sure.

MONTY: You might want to research where you would get an ice maker and how long it would take to get one, too.

CHRISTIAN: Yeah

MONTY: Because, right now moving into this heat that we've already had, they'll be going fast.

PROVOST: Yeah, it took me 6 weeks to get the one that we just got.

HOLZER: Could you check on the availability, well we won't know until the money, but could you check on the availability of it?

PROVOST: Oh, yeah.

DOUGAN: That's something that's usually under State Contract and there's a big discount on kitchen equipment when it's under State Contract. The Nutrition Building, most of the equipment

was on like a 52% discount; okay? When we bought all that, so we can work, I can work, I'll ask Linda Wolf to help a little bit. I can ask her to find that, also and see what both availability and the timing through State Contract.

WESTOVER: So, therefore the County would have to purchase it?

DOUGAN: Probably the County would have to purchase it, at that rate. I'm not telling you we are. That's not my decision to make, but I can research it.

CHRISTIAN: Right, so with that being said, when we had Community Resources help us before, when they'd call down and say they were from Essex County and blah, blah, blah.

HOLZER: Yeah

CHRISTIAN: The Ag Markets, oh, it's the Fair's grant and whatever. Well, administration, has changed where we deal with Ag Markets. It's Kelly Young, now, which was in the Horse Breeders Association, before and she was on our last district meeting and she is very understandable about different situations. I think she's going to be a lot, they're going to be a lot easier to work with. She actually did a handout of a checklist and stuff where we couldn't get before, you have to be registered in the Gateway before they talked to you and if you don't know how to do it, you don't know how to do it. So, I think we have a better shot at doing it and I think \$10,000.00 is a more number where, not a \$100,000.00, you know what I mean? So, it's more, we can doable, you know, if we had to pay and wait for our money we could, do you know what I mean? I just don't know how we're going to get money back to the County.

HOLZER: Let's do this, let's see how much a new machine would cost and maybe it's something that we can coordinate a cooperative type deal, to just get the ice machine.

CHRISTIAN: Right

HOLZER: So, let's try that.

MONTY: So, if it was an issue, can't Community Resources be the administrator of that grant?

HOLZER: Not under, no.

MASCARENAS: No

HOLZER: So, under the big grant they got, they were a huge pain in the neck, the State.

MASCARENAS: Local governments weren't eligible. They were granted directly to the 501c3.

HOLZER: Yeah

MONTY: Gotcha

MASCARENAS: So, being a volunteer group, it's difficult; right? To put in the time, whenever Community Resources would contact Ag and Markets on that, they just wouldn't work with them, because they weren't a representative of that agency.

HOLZER: Well, some of the bureaucracy of that stuff is complicated for us, so I can't imagine being a volunteer trying to figure it out.

AQUINO: But, there may be other organizations that can help you with grant writing, like try the Cloudsplitter Foundation, because I think they have people that would kind of help walk you through it.

CHRISTIAN: It's non-competitive. So, it's not really the grant writing part, it's just to do the paperwork.

MONTY: It's the administrating the Grant Gateway, which is a nightmare.

CHRISTIAN: Because, it seems like anytime we get there and then, oh, our Workman's Comp, so you have to restart it and nobody uploads those forms in a timely matter.

HOLZER: So, Dennie, do you have anything else?

WESTOVER: Yeah, we're basically running out of inside space. So, we also wanted to ask permission about, possibly, in the Egglefield's building, where the two garage doors are, if possibly, if need be, about building some temporary walls between those. So, that would be more inside, sellable space. We wanted to get the County's permission.

HOLZER: So, how do we normally work that?

AQUINO: Can we park boats in there, if you do that or no?

WESTOVER: Well, it could hinder you or it could help you, really. You know, because they do have the doors on them.

AQUINO: I have seen, because right now they're kind of parked this way and I have seen photos where they are parked this way, depends on the size of the boats. We have some really big ones in there that fit nicely, but they wouldn't fit the other way around.

WESTOVER: Well, if they became a permanent wall in there, basically, maybe, what you could do is somebody that had a classic car. You know, it could become lockable.

AQUINO: They use the dairy barn, now, for that. We only have 2 classic cars that get parked out there.

WESTOVER: Well, you used to be a lot fuller, until you took all your space with the County buses and that's a fact.

CHRISTIAN: It was designed to put a wall there, when it was built.

HOLZER: So, what would be the normal procedure, Jim, for allowing a wall through there?

DOUGAN: We would take a look at it, at a plan or something and this Committee would say aye or nay. I mean, last year, you guys built the washing station up by one of the horse barns, so basically came to this Committee, this Committee said, okay, you know and then basically that's what's that it would be.

HOLZER: Before I say either way, just mine, when we do walk through, you can basically show me.

WESTOVER: It could benefit the County, as well.

CHRISTIAN: Yeah, it should just be a portable wall.

WESTOVER: It could be portable or it could be, you know, something to divide that up, so the County could, you know, you would be renting your own space. Maybe you could charge more for square foot for it or something like that.

PROVOST: Our boat raffle that we just did, they want, we did it with the Fish and Game League and they want to do improvements down in the conservation area and they gave me a list of what they would like to do. The money that we raised is not going to cover all of this. So, we may get some sponsorship or whatever. But, they want to fix a roof on one of the buildings. They would like to put, like, a cement walkway around the outside for the handicapped to go to all the buildings and I know there's like a handicapped ramp on the buildings and whatnot, so I'm not sure if we're allowed to do that and then something about they want to fix the fish tank building; which I don't even know what that is. So, we would help them with the money that we raised to try and fix all of these things, if it's okay to fix them.

AQUINO: I assume the fish tank building is that one...

PROVOST: It's kind of open.

AQUINO: They're mostly lean-tos.

PROVOST: Yeah

AQUINO: But, there's one that's actually enclosed and it has this wooden thing that looks like a wooden fish tank, but it's very dilapidated. So, I'm not sure that's what that is or not.

PROVOST: I mean the most expensive things are going to be the walkway and the roof of the building, because that building leaks and we raised them \$1,500.00 to get started.

HOLZER: That'll get you a bundle of shingles.

PROVOST: Yeah, so needless to say, but apparently they have some money that they can put in, as well, but they're limited, as well, that's why we raised the money to help improve that area.

HOLZER: So, in the past do you getting a written plan from people like that and then?

DOUGAN: We should have some kind of a plan. For something like that, it sounds, even if it's a scope of work, probably is fine, a sketch and we can work with that. Regarding the conservation area, Holly's been trying to get a key from people that have the conservation area.

PROVOST: That would be George Tefoe, Jr.,

AQUINO: Yeah, he said he would get me a key.

DOUGAN: She's called, she's called and she's called.

PROVOST: I'll get it.

AQUINO: Okay

DOUGAN: And so, you know, are they our buildings? I'm assuming they're our buildings.

PROVOST: They're on the grounds.

HOLZER: Yeah

DOUGAN: So.

AQUINO: We should have access.

HOLZER: If you don't get a key, just change the lock then.

DOUGAN: Okay, it's just.

HOLZER: So, just one final thing, anytime you want to like, to make sure I'm prepared for the meetings, just jot me an email, text me.

PROVOST: You got it.

HOLZER: Saying you want to talk about A, B, and C, just so I'm a little bit more heads up on stuff, because I wasn't aware that you wanted to talk about the ice machine and all of that. Which I don't have a problem with it, I would just like to be a little better prepared.

PROVOST: So, I mean, because there's other improvements that need to be. I mean the State Police Building looks like it's going to fall off a brick, because that's all that's holding it up is a cement brick and I brought it to the State Police's attention, last year. So, they're aware that that building is not really safe.

HOLZER: Were they the ones maintaining it before?

PROVOST: No idea.

HOLZER: Okay

AQUINO: And also do you have plans for Sire Stakes money, because don't you every year, you reinvest that into something?

CHRISTIAN: Yeah, we're going to do a, I've talked to Jim about it, a lean-to to park the manure bin in, because it has to be covered.

DOUGAN: We talked about this before. Some kind of coverage, at one point we talked about.

CHRISTIAN: It's going to be similar to a wash rack.

DOUGAN: We talked about a concrete pad, slab and then that. But, we should finalize that, but that's what we talked about, yup. That way you can keep it covered.

CHRISTIAN: That's what I've asked for the money for.

AQUINO: So, next meeting, next month, I think we were scheduled for Tuesday, June 20th, because the 19th is a holiday.

HOLZER: We're going to kick it a day or two beyond that.

AQUINO: That week, hopefully?

HOLZER: I want, kind of, just to be, that's our morning, not trying to do like 3 other committee meetings.

AQUINO: Right

WESTOVER: So, you don't have a date picked?

HOLZER: We'll pick one, Holly and I and we'll make sure you're aware.

PROVOST: Along with the walk through?

HOLZER: That's what we're going to do, it will be the meeting and the walk through down there.

**AS THERE WAS NO FURTHER DISCUSSION, THIS FAIRGROUNDS TASK FORCE WAS
ADJOURNED AT 9:27 AM.**

Respectively Submitted,

Dina Garvey, Deputy Clerk
Board of Supervisors