

## Fair panel eyes new beef barn

By Lydia Statz, Union staff writer | Posted: Friday, June 6, 2014 8:46 am

JEFFERSON — Jefferson County Fair Park might be looking at a new building in the future as fundraisers help to update the park's aging infrastructure.

A private group of individuals, organized to help support the local 4-H beef livestock program, recently approached Fair Park director Dave Diestler to inquire about fundraising to erect a new beef building.

The current open-air shelter erected in 1977 is no longer adequate for the event's needs. In addition, the 50-foot-wide building sometimes raises safety concerns when it is packed with cattle and people, leaving little room to maneuver.

The beef committee, as the group of supporters is called, is investigating various options to create additional space at the fairgrounds. Although more study will be needed before plans are finalized, they might include constructing a second building near the current structure, or locating the new, larger building elsewhere in the park.

However the structure shapes up, Fair Park officials say they would like the new building to be fully enclosed to be available for year-round use.

The additional square footage might provide the venue with an additional benefit, as well. Currently, the grounds only hold 292 permanent horse stalls, but Fair Park regularly brings in horse shows with up to 380 horses, necessitating the setup of temporary stalls in various buildings.

An additional enclosed building might alleviate some of the space problems, and allow for horse shows to grow in the future.

The county's Fair Park Committee heard about the project Thursday before formal fundraising begins, as a county policy requires donations over \$5,000 to be formally approved by a Jefferson County Board of Supervisors vote.

Fundraising hasn't officially begun, though individual donations, as well as possible sponsorships, are being considered to cover the costs.

The Fair Park Committee gave the green light for fundraising to move forward and the beef committee to continue investigating options for a new building. The county board will have to give its formal approval of the project at a future meeting.

For more information on the project, contact the Jefferson County Fair Park Office at (920) 674-7148.