

Can 'Best of the Best' Lasso More Funds?

Written by By Tom Hartsock Sun Correspondent
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Organizer Promises improvements

The results of the “Best of the Best” Timed Event Rodeo 2015 were presented to the City Council on Sept. 8. General Services Director, Rick Snider and Chief Financial Officer Patty Holland did the honors. The 2015 rodeo drew approximately 133 entries in seven events and lost almost \$65,000 in the second year of operation, designed to alleviate and/or replace the loss of the National Junior High Rodeo Finals, which the city had hosted for nine years.

The projected budget for 2016 shows a hopeful revenue loss of just over \$40,000 and the final accounting could be even better.

These expectations are brighter based on the new contract signed by Walt Eddy for management and promotion of the event. A bonus clause in that contract will benefit Eddy and the city both as revenue will increase substantially if the conditions are exceeded.

A change in advertising from print media to Internet for the next year could be a major factor in the 2016 results.

Entry fees are a vital factor in revenue for this event, with the City claiming \$50 from each one. The total for 2015 was almost \$90,000 and if double the number of entries are received for 2016, the deficit will quickly be erased even with Eddy receiving an additional \$5,000 in bonus money.

Doubters should realize that the NJHRF is a national organization with thousands of members and Eddy is trying to get those riders and ropers unable to qualify for that event, or without the

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resources, to travel to the new location to accept the hospitality of Gallup and the competition offered here.

It was never intended to replace the former event dollar for dollar or even rider for rider.

Gate sales were slim - \$5,500 for 2015 – but revised plans for more local spectators should increase that total substantially and concession sales will increase as well. Even a minimum priced ticket could result in five or six times that amount being spent on concessions.

Sponsorships by local businesses is projected to increase to \$32,000 and that figure could go much higher with some of the same tenacity used by the Gallup Lions Club, Wild Thing, or the Balloon Rally.

There are only seven events in this program: Breakaway Roping; Goat Tying; Barrel Racing; and Pole Bending for the female participants. And for the males, the events are Calf Roping, Heading, and Heeling. The last two may be co-ed.

There is also one additional event, team roping for a contestant and a parent, and a determination will be made at a later date to have an "All Around Award" for the cowboy or cowgirl that earns the most points.