

**MINUTES OF OCFEC BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
HELD SEPTEMBER 23, 2021**

*The following Minutes are a summary of Board action and proceedings. For a full transcript please click on the link below or visit the ocfair.com website.*

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**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Rubalcava-Garcia called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m.

**2. MISSION STATEMENT**

**3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by Director Ashleigh Aitken. Roll call was taken by Summer Angus.

**4. DIRECTORS PRESENT (via Zoom):**

Chair Rubalcava-Garcia, Vice Chair La Belle, Director Cervantes, Director Ruiz, Director Bagneris, Director Aitken, Director Kovacevich and Director Rafiei.

**DIRECTORS ABSENT/EXCUSED:** Director Pham.

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

(Via Zoom): Michele Richards, OCFEC CEO; Ken Karns, OCFEC Chief Operating Officer; Joan Hamill, OCFEC Chief Business Development Officer; Jason Jacobsen, OCFEC Director of Planning & Presentation; Summer Angus, OCFEC Executive Assistant; Josh Caplan, Office of the Attorney General; Patricia Garrido, transcriptionist; Senator Dave Min; Ash Alvandi, Office of Senator Dave Min; Rose Ann Sharp; Ira Sharp; Niccolas; Julia Demlow; Susan Lew; Piper Benom; Gary Levy; Jim Cairns; William Ortiz; Pat; Charles Blek; Peter Stein; Mary Blek; Gibran Stout; Tiffany Cheuvront; Reggie Mundekis

Chair Rubalcava-Garcia introduced the newest OCFEC Board member, Melahat Rafiei.

Director Rafiei shared she looks forward to serving with her fellow Board members.

**5. MINUTES:**

**A. Board meeting held June 24, 2021**

Action Item

**ACTION:** Director Cervantes motioned and Director Ruiz seconded to approve the minutes from the Board meeting held June 24, 2021.

**MOTION CARRIED. AYES:** Chair Rubalcava-Garcia, Vice Chair La Belle, Director Cervantes, Director Ruiz, Director Bagneris,

**Director Aitken, Director Kovacevich and Director Rafiei. NAYES: None. ABSTENTIONS: None.**

## **6. MATTERS OF PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

## **7. CONSENT CALENDAR: (Policy 4.3.4)**

**A. Standard Agreements (New):** SA-007-21PA; SA-035-21GE; SA-037-21YR; SA-081-21HB; SA-088-21FT; SA-096-21HB; SA-100-21PA; SA-101-21GE; SA-103-21PA; SA-104-21HB; SA-105-21HB; SA-106-21HB; SA-107-21HB; SA-108-21BH; SA-109-21BH; SA-110-21BH; SA-111-21SP; SA-112-21PA; SA-113-21PA; SA-114-21PA; SA-115-21PA; SA-116-21PA; SA-117-21PA; SA-118-21PA; SA-119-21PA; SA-120-21PA; SA-122-21PA; SA-123-21PA; SA-124-21PA; SA-125-21PA; SA-126-21PA; SA-127-21PA; SA-128-21PA; SA-129-21PA; SA-130-21PA; SA-131-21PA; SA-132-21PA; SA-133-21PA; SA-134-21PA; SA-135-21PA; SA-136-21PA; SA-137-21PA; SA-138-21SP; SA-139-21SP; SA-140-21SP; SA-141-21SP; SA-142-21CF; SA-145-21CF; SA-146-21SP; SA-147-21SP; SA-149-21SP; SA-150-21SP; SA-151-21SP; SA-152-21PA; SA-153-21PA; SA-154-21SP

- i. Standard Agreement Amendments:** SA-014-21GE (Amend. #1); SA-017-21GE (Amend. #1); SA-034-21GE (Amend. #1); SA-092-21SP (Amend. #1); SA-146-21SP (Amend. #1)
- ii. Standard Agreement Amendments (Exercise Option):** SA-282-18CT (Amend. #1); SA-141-20-YR (Amend. #1)
- iii. Interagency Agreements:** R2170026

**B. Rental Agreements:** R-007-21; R-039-21; R-043-21; R-046-21; R-048-21; R-049-21; R-050-21; R-051-21; R-052-21; R-053-21; R-054-21; R-059-21; R-060-21; R-061-21; R-062-21; R-063-21; R-064-21; R-068-21; R-069-21; R-070-21; R-074-21

- i. Rental Agreement Amendments:** R-034-21 (Amend. #1); R-009-21 (Amend. #3); R-060-21 (Amend. #1); R-074-21 (Amend. #1)

**C. Active Joint Powers Authority Agreements (New):** None

**D. Judging Agreements:** CA-013-21; CA-014-21; CA-015-21; CA-016-21; CA-017-22; CA-018-21; LS-033-21; LS-034-21

**E. Concession Rental Agreements:** 21571; 21572; 21573; 21574; 21575; 21576; 21578; 21579; 21580; 21581; 21518; 21519; 21520; 21521

**F. Platinum Rental Agreements:** 21731; 21732; 21737; 21735; 21729; 21704; 21733; 21736; 21710; 21738; 21719

**G. Commercial Rental Agreements:** 21029; 21047; 21054; 21056; 21060; 21068; 21081; 21103; 21119; 21135; 21146; 21152; 21153; 21154; 21155; 21156; 21157; 21158; 21159; 21160; 21161; 21162; 21163; 21164; 21165; 21166

**H. Supplier Rental Agreements:** 21661; 21662; 21663; 21664; 21665; 21666

**I. Correspondence:**  
Communications to the Board from members of public related to OCFEC business are identified below and included with the Board materials (available on the OCFEC website). Note that this agenda item includes only those communication(s) that were sent to the entire Board and CEO before the publication of this month's agenda. *The deadline for correspondence to be included on the October agenda is October 15, 2021.*

- i. 09/08/2021 - Email from Reggie Mundekis regarding 09/13/2021 Board meeting agenda item 6A and 6B regarding SB264 and Gun Shows
- ii. 09/13/2021 – Letter from Senator Dave Min regarding 09/13/2021 Board meeting agenda item 6A and 6B regarding SB264 and Gun Shows

**J. CDFA Correspondence:**

Communications to the Board from the California Department of Food & Agriculture Division of Fairs & Expositions regarding relevant topics at Fairs and Expositions.

- i. 08/24/2021 CDFA Update: Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Outbreak in California

*-End of Consent Calendar-*

CEO Richards highlighted the following agreements form the Consent Calendar:

- Standard Agreement SA-037-21YR, Sound Monitoring
- Standard Agreement SA-088-21FT, fair employee shuttle
- Standard Agreement SA-134-21PA, Hank Williams Jr. concert
- Rental Agreement R-050-21, August Crossroads of the West Gun Show

**ACTION:** Director Ruiz motioned and Director Cervantes seconded to review and approve the Consent Calendar. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**AYES:** Chair Rubalcava-Garcia, Vice Chair La Belle, Director Cervantes, Director Ruiz, Director Bagneris, Director Aitken, Director Kovacevich and Director Rafiei. **NAYES:** None.

**ABSTENTIONS: None.**

**8. GOVERNANCE PROCESS**

**E. Discuss and Vote on Communication to the Governor's Office  
Regarding Economic Impact of SB264 on OC Fair & Event Center  
Action Item**

CEO Richards explained the item was tabled from the September 13<sup>th</sup> Board meeting. She further explained from the notes of that meeting, the letter to the governor regarding SB264 was redrafted to capture the perspectives of the Board members (redrafted letter posted with the Board materials). She stated the Board of Directors is continuing the discussion on the communication to the governor's office regarding the economic impact of SB264 on the OC Fair & Event Center (OCFEC).

Chair Rubalcava-Garcia stated the Board creates policy that governs the direction for staff at OCFEC. She confirmed with Counsel that the Board has legislative, as well as qualified immunity for any actions taken on behalf of the OCFEC, this would include any communications sent to the governor for why the Board might be opposing legislation that only impacts the 32<sup>nd</sup> DAA and not the other DAAs in the state. She added the Board has the ability to review any contracts as requested by these promoters to consider hosting these events next year since that legislation has not been signed into law yet.

Senator Min spoke as the author of SB264 and gave background on the genesis of the bill and his personal experience in wanting to introduce the bill. He provided his perspective on wanting to eliminate gun shows on California state property and his position that the Board, as gubernatorial appointees, should support SB264 as backed by him and other elected representatives and not approve future gun show rental contracts.

Chair Rubalcava-Garcia asserted that if an item is legal in the State of California, the Board is viewpoint neutral on the topic. She also stated for the record that there were inaccuracies in the Senator's statement. She added "family friendly" is not something for the Board to determine, that there are different types of families who choose different types of activities.

Rose Ann Sharp, founder of Never Again CA, shared she has attended Crossroads of the West Guns Shows and attended virtual OCFEC Board meetings. She questioned why the Board, who are appointed by the governor, thinks it is good business to send a letter to the governor when he has already signed a similar bill banning the sale of firearms and ammunitions at the Del Mar Fairgrounds. She also questioned why the Board wants to challenge the legislation of elected Senator Min when the business of the Board is to represent all citizens

who enjoy the Orange County fairgrounds. She shared her opinion that sending the letter sends a signal that the sale of firearms is valued over the lives of Americans.

Ira Sharp, co-founder of Never Again CA, discussed the amendment of the SB264 being narrowed to only the 32<sup>nd</sup> DAA and it being similar to a draft bill that was previously narrowed regarding the 22<sup>nd</sup> DAA, asserting is the way the assembly works. He criticized comments made by the Board Chair and asserted the Board should not oppose the bill.

Niccolas spoke in support of sending a letter to the governor asking to veto SB264. He discussed educational and cultural impact to Southern California by taking away the gun shows.

Julia Demlow criticized the letter presented asserting, the appropriations committee and the assembly are responsible for looking at the economic impacts of the bill to the fairgrounds. She discussed the economic impact the state incurs from gun violence. She shared she is confident in staff's ability to recoup revenues with exciting events the whole community can enjoy. She discussed the precedents of other bills banning gun shows on other state property - at San Diego County Fair and at the Cow Palace.

Susan Lew criticized comments made regarding taking gun shows away takes away from safety education and argued there are other avenues for firearm safety and education. She urged the Board to reconsider sending the letter regarding the bill that was passed by the state legislature and introduced by an elected official with wide community support. She asserted the Board should care more about public safety than finances.

Piper Benom spoke in support of banning gun shows at the fairgrounds and asserted the loss of revenue is not critical to OCFEC. She suggested OCFEC develop a strategic plan to replace lost revenues as the Del Mar fairgrounds did. She stated Senator Min was elected by Orange County voters based on his promise to introduce this legislation. She urged the Board to follow the spirit of SB264 which passed through the legislature, and she spoke in opposition of approving the 2022 gun shows.

Gary Levy spoke in support of the Board sending the letter to the governor stating they support gun shows in California and reject SB264. He argued lies have been promulgated about gun shows. He criticized comments made by previous speakers who oppose gun shows. He discussed other non-firearm small business vendors that participate in gun shows. He argued the Board is supposed to promulgate communities and culture, asserting gun shows/gun show attendees are part of the community and culture of Orange County.

William Ortiz spoke in support of the Board sending the letter to the governor to veto the bill. He asserted the gun shows are safe and do not pose a danger to the community. He shared his opinion that the bill attacks law-abiding citizens and legal activities protected by the Constitution. He urged the Board to support the community who enjoy sportsmanship or firearm-related events.

Pat Burton discussed the term "family friendly" as subjective, that he considers the gun shows to be perfectly family friendly events for his family. He criticized Senator Min for deciding gun shows are not family friendly for all families. He argued that the history with the gun shows is consistent with the mission of the OCFEC. He criticized comments made by Senator Min and previous speakers stating inaccuracies and unsubstantiated facts. He urged the Board to continue to contract with the gun shows for those who view them as family-friendly events.

Charles Blek, Brady Orange County, stated he offered testimony at the public safety committees of the state senate and assembly in support of SB264. He discussed the cost of guns and gun violence to the State of California and asked why the state should promote and facilitate the sale of guns. He asserted the fairgrounds should never again host any gun shows.

Director Ruiz questioned comments made about the majority of the people in Senator Min's district wanting a ban on gun shows and asked if there was a poll taken of his constituents and what the results of that poll were. Director Ruiz discussed the term "family friendly" as being subjective. He spoke in support of the letter to the governor and expressed his disappointment with the process the bill went through and the bill not being applicable to all DAAs. He reported he contacted Senator Min prior to the bill being approved to request a delay in the bill regarding the economic impact to OCFEC, but did not hear back from the Senator.

Director Cervantes discussed the safety of the gun shows. She also discussed the term "family friendly" as being subjective to the opinions of individuals. She spoke in support of the letter to the governor.

Director Rafiei asserted that as a business the Board needs to consider the moral implications of the gun shows on the communities. She reported there was polling completed on this issue and offered to forward it to Director Ruiz. She discussed there are ways to recoup revenue loss with other events and gave an example of an economically successful cannabis convention. She spoke in opposition of sending the letter to the governor.

Director Aitken echoed Director Rafiei's sentiments and spoke in opposition of the motion to send a letter to the governor. She

discussed the Board going through the strategic planning process where there were topics discussed like the ability to make more money with self-produced events; bringing in culturally relevant, diverse events as opposed to renting the property to other promoters where OCFEC cannot control the content. She disagrees with the letter with regard to not being able to replace the loss of income if there were no longer gun shows. She shared she does not think it is the role of the OCFEC Board to inform the governor on a topic he consistently has supported. She agreed the Board should not be the arbiter of what is and what is not "family friendly." She discussed making the decision about being consistent with OCFEC values. She stated she will not be supporting writing the governor to overturn legislation that has been voted on and approved by both the District's state senator and assembly member.

Chair Rubalcava-Garcia asserted it is the Board's fiduciary duty to send the letter to at least get the loss on record for budget issues. She discussed the ban does not provide any comprehensive change to gun control. She spoke in support of sending the letter to the governor as drafted to have the economic impact to the 32<sup>nd</sup> DAA on record. She agreed there are other revenue generating opportunities out there as discussed by Director Rafiei.

Director Kovacevich spoke in opposition of sending the letter stating his opinion that he does not see the merit in it or the fruits that the letter would yield. He stated that OCFEC is in a good financial position, even with the loss of revenue and does not see the letter resulting in recouping funds. He discussed wanting to have the governor's support when the Board may need it in the future.

Vice Chair La Belle agreed with Director Rafiei that the governor is aware of the economic issues that the 32<sup>nd</sup> DAA will be facing. He stated his concerns that the bill only applies to the 32<sup>nd</sup> DAA but that the legislature has spoken.

**ACTION:** Chair Rubalcava-Garcia motioned and Director Cervantes seconded to send a letter to the governor's office regarding the economic impact of SB264 on OC Fair & Event Center. **MOTION FAILS.** **AYES:** Chair Rubalcava-Garcia, Director Cervantes and Director Ruiz. **NAYES:** Vice Chair La Belle, Director Bagneris, Director Aitken, Director Kovacevich and Director Rafiei. **ABSTENTIONS:** None.

Chair Rubalcava-Garcia left the meeting.

**F. Discuss and Vote on Whether or Not to Approve 2022 Rental Agreements with Crossroads of the West Gun Show to Exclude Sale of Firearm Precursor Parts**

Action Item

CEO Richards explained the bill (SB264) has an exemption that excludes any rental agreements that are in place prior to the bill's effective date of January 1, 2022. She further explained that the Crossroads of the West Gun Shows promoter approached staff on whether or not the Board would consider preapproving its rental agreements for 2022 (January, March, June, August and November). She stated the promoter has offered to consider eliminating those firearm precursor part ("ghost guns") exhibitors from its 2022 shows, if approved.

Rose Anne Sharp spoke in opposition of preapproving contracts with Crossroads of the West Gun Shows stating she opposes the Board's efforts to circumvent the intent of SB264. She criticized the promoter and shared she is appalled that the Board would consider any contract that would not restrict the sales of "ghost guns".

Julia Demlow spoke in opposition of preapproving the 2022 gun shows and agreed with the previous speaker's remarks. She shared her concerns regarding setting a precedent of preapproving contracts a year in advance.

Susan Lew shared her opinion that there are too many guns in circulation in the country. She stated Senator Min was elected specifically for his position on guns. She spoke in support of banning gun shows on publicly funded fairgrounds and urged the Board not to approve the 2022 gun shows.

Peter Stein spoke in opposition of the Board preapproving the 2022 gun shows. He criticized it would intentionally circumvent the bill that was passed. He asserted the community supports the bill. He shared he is skeptical of the consideration to eliminate the sale of "ghost guns" and asserted the elimination should be part of the contract, not a consideration.

Mary Blek shared she became involved in gun violence prevention following the death of her son. She reiterated the strong support of the community not to have gun shows. She asserted there is a clear linkage between firearm sales and gun violence; and as a taxpayer, does not want the promotion/facilitation of sales of firearms, ammunition and "ghost gun" kits at the Orange County Fairgrounds.

Charles Blek spoke in support of his wife's comments stated above.

Gibran Stout asserted as long as a business and their activities are in accordance with state and local laws, it is wrong for Sacramento to tell the Board which contracts they can and cannot do business with. She stated in the current economy it is not good business to turn away any legal business. She urged the Board to approve the 2022 gun shows.

Piper Benom asserted preapproving the 2022 gun show contracts would be a bold political statement in direct contrast to the community the Board serves. She stated the gun shows are more than a source of revenue that they have an impact on society. She urged the Board not to allow any more gun shows at the fairgrounds.

William Ortiz spoke in support of allowing the gun shows to continue at the OC Fair. He shared that he has been a gun show attendee and shared that they are as safe as any other public event. He asserted that not approving the 2022 gun shows would go against a community of legal gun owners and the legal activities that are protected by the U.S. constitution.

Tiffany Cheuvront, representative of Crossroads of the West and the California Rifle and Pistol Association, discussed some of the meeting's public speakers being from San Diego, where they persuaded the San Diego County Fair Board to ban gun shows there that ended in a loss in federal court where the fairgrounds had to pay the fees. She argued that there is more than an economic cost at stake, that there could be potential legal costs to consider. She asserted that none of the statistics used as arguments (by other public speakers) have anything to do with Crossroads of the West Gun Shows. She discussed the high security of the gun shows and stated no criminal activity in Orange County has been linked to the gun shows at OCFEC. She urged the Board to approve the contracts.

Niccolas spoke in support of the Board approving the 2022 gun shows. He discussed the income generated from the 2022 shows will tide the fairgrounds over to the next budget year until the revenue can be replaced.

Jeanine Robbins discussed the gun show being composed of small businesses that are trying to recover from the pandemic and it not being easy to make up income lost. She spoke in support of approving the 2022 gun show contracts, that the small business owners need time to reevaluate their businesses. She discussed a previous comment of possible cannabis events replacing the revenues from the gun shows and how the Board has voted against any kind of cannabis events at OCFEC.

Pat Burton urged the Board to preapprove the 2022 gun show contracts. He discussed protecting the rights of law-abiding people. He encouraged the Board to take advantage of the exemption in the bill to preapprove the contracts so when the law is challenged, people have the right to attend the event.

Board discussion ensued, items discussed:

- The issue not being support for the governor vs support for guns
  - The Board supports the governor

- The issue being the financial impact to the 32<sup>nd</sup> DAA
- Revenue lost will not be replaced overnight
- The term “family friendly” being subjective to the individual
- Sympathy for the loss of those to gun violence
- Economic arguments are important
- Change being difficult but sometimes change is the right thing to do

Director Aitken discussed the journey on how the Board changed policy for the fairgrounds to be a non-smoking fairgrounds.

Director Rafiei spoke in opposition of approving the 2022 gun show contracts, that approving the contracts would be a hyper-political move to fast-forward something that clearly would not move forward otherwise.

Counsel stated the term “ghost guns” is not a legal term but refers to “firearm precursor parts” and answered for Vice Chair La Belle that he does believe that there is state legislation that may take place in a few years regarding firearm precursor part.

Directors Bagneris and Kovacevich spoke in support of waiting to see the outcome of the bill, if the governor signs the bill or not.

**ACTION:** Director Aitken motioned and Director Bagneris seconded to table the item until January 2022. **MOTION CARRIED. AYES:** Vice Chair La Belle, Director Cervantes, Director Bagneris, Director Aitken, Director Kovacevich and Director Rafiei. **NAYES:** Director Ruiz. **ABSTENTIONS:** None.

The meeting adjourned for a recess at 11:12 a.m. and reconvened at 11:20 a.m.

**A. Update and Discussion on the Development of CAFE (California Authority for Fairs & Expositions) Joint Powers Authority Initiative**  
Information Item

CEO Richards presented the staff report discussing a framework is being developed for a joint exercise of powers agreement to establish a California authority for fairgrounds and expositions. She stated the primary source of the authority would be to develop and provide service programs and central administration that would represent the common interests of the member fairs. She explained each member fair could form a local nonprofit organization that would maintain the fairgrounds, manage its current programs, including the annual fair. She added current Board DAA members could serve on the local nonprofit board and DAA employees could choose to maintain their status as California civil service employees or potentially become

employees of the local nonprofit. She stated a draft proposal is pending that she will bring back to the Board upon release.

Reggie Mundekis asked if CAFE replace the current fairs and expositions branch in CDFA. She also stated with the transition of fair management and operations to nonprofits, the current and future pension obligations and retiree health care costs must also be transferred to the nonprofit. She asserted not doing so will privatize profits and socialize the cost.

CEO Richards answered for Director Aitken that at this point it remains completely voluntary to join the proposed CAFE JPA.

Vice Chair La Belle shared hopes for a process that would help streamline the Board's ability to do their job as stewards of OCFEC and stated he would not support anything that adds another layer of bureaucracy.

**B. Presentation on Hispanic Heritage Month**  
Information Item

CEO Richards made a presentation of Hispanic Heritage Month.

Director Cervantes shared a memory from childhood that as an immigrant, wherein she helped translate and negotiate the purchase of her parents first home and learned how important it is to be a homeowner. She thanked the Chair and the committee for the presentation and celebrating and learning from each other.

Director Ruiz share some family history and thanked staff for a great job on the presentation.

**C. 2021 OC Fair Wrap-Up Presentation**  
Information Item

CEO Richards presented highlights from the 2021 OC Fair.

Board members congratulated staff for all their hard work.

**D. Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair Nominating Committee**  
Information Item

Vice Chair La Belle reported that in consultation with Chair Rubalcava-Garcia, Directors Bagneris and Aitken are appointed to the nominating committee.

**G. Committee / Ad Hoc Committee / Liaison Report**  
Information Item

To assure compliance with the Bagley-Keene Act, Committee reports are only for the purpose of the Committee chair, Ad Hoc Committee members or Liaison to provide a verbal update. Should the Board want to discuss any Committee work item not already on the agenda; those would need to be agendized for a future Board meeting.

- i. Leadership Committee (Chair Rubalcava-Garcia, Committee Chair; Vice Chair La Belle)
- ii. Financial Monitoring and Audit Committee (Director Pham, Committee Chair; Director Bagneris)
- iii. Facilities Committee (Director Aitken, Committee Chair; Director Ruiz)
- iv. Governance Committee (Director Cervantes, Committee Chair; Chair Rubalcava-Garcia)
- v. Community Affairs Committee (Director Kovacevich, Committee Chair; Director Ruiz)
- vi. Centennial Farm Foundation Liaison (Director Cervantes)
- vii. Heroes Hall Veterans Foundation Liaison (Vice Chair La Belle, Director Cervantes)

Vice Chair La Belle, on behalf of the Leadership Committee, reported:

- Chair and Vice Chair attended pre and mid-fair security meetings (pursuant to board policy)

Director Bagneris, on behalf of the Financial Monitoring and Audit Committee, reported:

- The committee met on September 17th
  - On the successful numbers from the OC Fair and forecasting projected 2021 year-end proceeds of \$25.5M (originally projected \$11.8M loss in the 2021 budget)
  - The 2020 financial audit is currently under way
  - Next meeting Oct 22, 2021

Director Aitken, on behalf of the Facilities Committee, reported:

- The committee met with the current EQC operator on September 15th
  - The committee requested to agendize for the next meeting an item for Board consideration to enter into a year-long contract with the current EQC operator while the Board is going through the strategic planning process (current contract/LOU is month-to-month)

Director Ruiz, on behalf of the Community Affairs Committee, reported:

- The committee is championing putting something on grounds that would celebrate diversity and the rich history of Orange County
  - A survey was put out during fair time
  - Three hundred people participated in the survey - results are pending

Joan Hamill, on behalf of the Centennial Farm Foundation, reported:

- The foundation met on September 16<sup>th</sup>
- Agenda items included future fundraising and seeking new board members

Vice Chair La Belle, on behalf of the Heroes Hall Veterans Foundation, reported:

- The committee met on September 20<sup>th</sup>
  - Discussed fundraising options
    - Letters to be sent out to business organizations with municipal and government contacts to generate donations from those organizations
  - Foundation Chair Berardino indicated his support of the OCFEC Board pursuing legislation for non-profits and will help by preparing a communication for the legislation process

Reggie Mundekis spoke regarding the EQC, she asserted the one year LOU needs updated legal language that gives the Board the opportunity to make smarter decisions; and that LOU needs to be followed up by an RFP within that one-year time frame. She requested a detailed report on the repairs that have been made to the EQC at operator expense. She added the infrastructure report indicated multiple areas that needed repair and the LOU requires operator to pay for those repairs. She asked (regarding the Heroes Hall Veterans Foundation report) for a summary on what is being addressed with the legislature regard to the nonprofit issue.

Gibran Stout thanked staff for including the EQC in the 2021 OC Fair and looks forward to future collaboration. She discussed a busy summer of activities at the EQC and the EQC being at capacity with a growing waiting list. She invited everyone to come to their annual Halloween costume contest on October 23<sup>rd</sup>, also extending an invitation to any Board and/or staff to be a judge at the contest. She reported that a group of EQC users are doing their own strategic planning and would like to share their work with the facilities committee. She formally requested a study session or a meeting with the facilities committee in advance of the strategic plan drafting, to share their input.

CEO Richards reported OCFEC is seeking to amend legislation to allow OCFEC to provide use of the property for free or at a discount to community groups and nonprofits - to amend government code to allow the local fair boards to make decisions regarding those discounts or fee waivers.

Vice Chair La Belle stated the Board is going to have to make a determination (through the strategic planning process) what operation model the EQC will ultimately have and then an RFP will follow. He stated the strategic plan document will be a draft document with plenty of opportunity for input from all stakeholders.

## **9. CLOSED SESSION:**

The meeting adjourned to closed session at 12:21 p.m. and reconvened at 1:09 p.m.

Matters to report out of closed session: None.

Directors Kovacevich and Rafiei left the meeting before the Board reconvened.

## **10. CEO'S OPERATIONAL UPDATE**

Michele Richards, OCFEC CEO, reported the following:

- OCFEC Executive team were joined by Costa Mesa Mayor Pro Tem Andrea Marr and Costa Mesa Police Department Vic Bakkila for two pre-fair neighborhood meetings to talk about the impacts to the neighborhoods regarding minimizing traffic, noise and trash
- CEO Richards appointed to the advisory council for CalPoly San Luis Obispo's College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Science to advise on the university's fairs and expositions management program
- Strategic planning session was held on September 9<sup>th</sup>
- Chair Rubalcava-Garcia and CEO Richards participated in a ribbon cutting ceremony for the OC Swap Meet to welcome thirteen new merchants
- OCFEC received the 2021 Readers' Choice Award for best fair/festival by OC Parenting Magazine
  - Kids guide named Centennial Farm as one of the top family outings in L.A. and Orange County
- The 2022 OCFEC budget process has been launched
- A budget study session will be scheduled for early November and the budget will be presented to the full Board at the November Board meeting.

CEO Richards presented the August 2021 financial statements and upcoming events.

## **11. NEXT BOARD MEETING: AUGUST 26, 2021**

Director Bagneris reported she attended the post fair employee picnic and congratulated CEO Richards on her 20<sup>th</sup> fair. She welcomed Director Rafiei.

Director Aitken congratulated CEO Richards and staff on an amazing fair and welcomed the new Board member Rafiei.

Director Cervantes echoed comments made by her fellow Board members. She acknowledged all the hard work by staff and congratulated new Board member Rafiei.

Director Ruiz echoed previous comments and shared that he is proud of the great success of the fair especially when at the beginning of the year it was unsure if there would be a fair.

Vice Chair La Belle shared his excitement for the \$18M increase from the fair being far beyond what was anticipated. He congratulated the Board and staff for all the hard work that made the 2021 OC Fair happen. He also congratulated new Board member Rafiei. In consideration of alternative revenue streams he asked staff to do whatever they can to entice the Barret-Jackson event back to OCFEC.

**12. ADJOURNMENT MOTION TO ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 1:20 p.m.



Doug La Belle, Vice Chair



Michele Richards, Chief Executive Officer