

Carolyn Beaver



August 6, 2024

VIA E-Mail

Ms. Michele Richards, CEO
Orange County Fairgrounds & Event Center
88 Fair Drive
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

Dear Michele:

You have now prevented horses boarded at the Equestrian Center operated by the Orange County Fairgrounds from receiving adequate exercise for 6 days. As you know, you instructed staff to lock all facilities normally available for exercise due to the lack of signed boarding contracts from a majority of boarders. While we are allowed to walk our horses on the hard surfaces surrounding the arenas, that is not sufficient exercise for large animals, who require the ability to also trot and canter daily on surfaces with adequate footing to get sufficient exercise. These actions have resulted in a rider hitting her head on a pole today, and another has fallen off. How many more “accidents” will it take before you recognize the safety issues you are creating?

We have sent you information from a veterinarian, Dr. Fertig, and the statement from Supervisor Katrina Foley warning you to not endanger the horses’ welfare during this time that we have requested meetings to discuss our concerns. Assembly Member Diane Dixon has also issued a statement urging the parties to meet and negotiate a balanced agreement. Regardless of our respective positions, you must stop actions that penalize defenseless animals. Please open the arenas NOW while the parties work to resolve their differences.

As stated by many of the boarders, we would like to schedule a meeting with you to discuss our valid concerns with the contract you have presented for us to sign. We would be happy to meet this week, or next Monday August 12. Alternatively, we can wait until after the Fair is over, as long as we are able to properly exercise and care for our horses.

Sincerely,



Carolyn Beaver
Equestrian, CPA (inactive) and independent board director

cc: Board of Directors
The Equestrian Center Task Force