
From: Regina Mundekis
Sent: Friday, September 6, 2024 2:51 PM
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Subject: Equestrian Center Holdouts Are Granted Privileges No One Else Has

Dear Board and CEO,

The Board approved moving forward with The Ranch program to create Centennial Farm-type programming to teach students about horses. Other activities at The Ranch will include veterinary tech training, equine assisted therapy, hands-on equine exhibits, mental health gardening, programs for veterans, free horse shows, and the Ranch After School Program, among other activities to serve the public.

The plan was to allow private boarding and training on a space-available basis to peacefully co-exist alongside private equestrian activities. Peaceful co-existence requires cooperation and maturity on the part of all parties involved because things need to be shared, opinions respected, and mutual cooperation take place. Each party gives to get. This is a lesson which starts with toddlers and reinforced in kindergarten with the class toys and books.

Equestrians do not share the vision and beliefs which are creating The Ranch program. Some of the equestrian beliefs are (not an exhaustive list):

- The equestrian center is theirs to use as they see fit.
- They cannot be evicted.
- They don't have to change stalls when asked to do so.
- Contract terms and prices must be what the equestrian dictate them to be.
- They can stay as long as they want to and do not need to sign a contract to do so.
- A contract signed by only one party is a valid and binding contract.
- Only equestrians who are in the clique know how to run the equestrian center and anyone else is too stupid to figure it out.
- The rest of us are there to do what we are told to do by the equestrians including subsidizing their horse hobby. We need to learn our place and stay there.
- A lack of boarding space caused in our county gives a mandate for a clique of horse owners to have a permanent place at our Fairgrounds. Much like herpes, once you have horses, you cannot get rid of them.

As a State owned and operated fair, gifts of public funds are prohibited. The Board had a discussion about finding ways to allow the lower income members of our community to attend and enjoy the OC Fair by providing them with tickets and food vouchers. While State law allows distribution of free fair admission tickets under specific circumstances, the prohibition against gifts of public funds prevents the OC Fair from distributing food vouchers to lower income members of our community. Yet somehow we are supposed to allow persons who live in five bedroom houses with four bathrooms and three garages in the bay to use Fairgrounds facilities at less than what it costs to maintain and provide services because those individuals own horses. Should we buy horses for the lower income persons so that we can give them food vouchers for the OC Fair?

Boarding at the Fairgrounds must be tied to performing work for the Fairgrounds. There are dairy cows at Centennial Farm but no one is allowed to keep their dairy herd on the property. A flock of chickens resides to teach about raising poultry but no individual keeps their flock on the property. The same must apply to horses.

We cannot allow the actions of a few entitled people who misuse public property to put public safety and public programming jeopardy. Our priority needs to be taking any and all actions to maintain public safety while we implement our new public programming model.

Thank you for your interest in this matter,

Reggie Mundekis