



Board of Directors Agenda Report

MEETING DATE: SEPTEMBER 24, 2020 ITEM NUMBER: 10B

SUBJECT: 2021 OC Fair Planning Update

DATE: September 18, 2020

FROM: Michele Richards, CEO

PRESENTATION BY: Michele Richards, CEO

RECOMMENDATION

Information item only.

BACKGROUND

As staff begins the difficult task of planning for 2021, the primary challenge will be the uncertainty surrounding our ability to host the 2021 OC Fair – and if approved, what modifications will be necessary to ensure guest, employee and partner health and safety in accordance with the most current guidelines and directives.

While no one has a crystal ball to be able to predict where Orange County will be in July, 2021 with regard to reopening phases or tiers, **staff is planning now with the best data available and the most reasonable and conservative projections for the future.**

Our planning will be done with the knowledge that the end result is, and will continue to be, a moving target. Adjustments will be made throughout the year incorporating the most current information, updates and guidelines.

The overall 2021 budget will be developed to include an OC Fair based on the following general firm assumptions:

- The overall goal is to achieve a net contribution from the 2021 OC Fair of \$2 million.
- Additional seasonal staff and supplies will be needed to ensure the health and safety of all.
- Based on the current reopening tier in Orange County of 25% capacity for some indoor facilities, we're projecting the ability to host a 2021 OC Fair with 50% daily capacity compared to 2019 – 30,000 guests per day.
- With Board approval, the 2021 OC Fair will operate for 21 days beginning on Friday, July 16 and closing on Sunday, August 8, Mondays.
- We will sell date specific admission tickets to control capacity each day. Tickets will need to be purchased in advance.
- On-site parking will remain at \$10. The need for off-site lots will be re-evaluated.

- 2021 annual fair expenses will be cut by 50%, however some expense areas – like cleaning and sanitizing – will increase.
- Pacific Amphitheatre shows will be sold at 50% capacity. Using Ticketmaster’s new booking algorithm, we will be able to sell tickets in groups while maintaining social distancing.
- We will plan and budget for a reduction in our exhibits program.
- There will be no 8:30pm Main Mall show or pyrotechnics presentation.
- The Club OC area will be used for tables with umbrellas to create more distanced eating spaces for guests.
- We will not use the water fountain feature in Main Mall.
- Capacity for Hussong’s, Baja Blues and the Wine Courtyard will be reduced by 50%.

As staff moves through the budget planning process, the following will be analyzed for further consideration:

- Evaluate and possibly adjust ticket prices, with Board approval, to reflect a necessary reduction in programming but still get us to the goal of \$2 million net proceeds from the 2021 OC Fair. Consider a higher ticket price for Friday/Saturday/Sunday when demand is high, and a lower ticket price for Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday.
- Consider adjustments to hours of operation, with Board approval.
- Action Sports Arena will operate at 50% capacity and only feature programming that generates a net profit, i.e. Demolition Derby and Monster Trucks.
- Book acts in the Hangar to maximize revenue within a 50% attendance capacity, or move the Explorium to the Hangar with adjusted programming.
- Transition Plaza Pacifica Stage to host community entertainment only with 6-foot circles for social distancing of guests.
- Remove all other entertainment stages and repurpose the areas for appropriate programming or guest amenities.
- Evaluate the feasibility of all demonstration areas and other attractions such as Pig Races, Circus, Petting Zoo, Butterflies, Ceramics, Cow Milking, etc.
- Eliminate gate promotions that don’t allow for advance sales or capacity limitations, i.e. “Free ‘Til Three” on opening day. Evaluate all other promotional opportunities.
- Evaluate the ability to still operate the OCTA promotion if it won’t allow for advance sales or capacity limitations.
- Do not rent Davis School and move those operations to east of the Livestock area, just west of Gate 8 road.
- Do not rent Costa Mesa High School for overflow parking.
- Do not run parking shuttles; staff parking will be adjusted.
- Feature 50% of concessionaires from 2019 (varied selection).
- Close all indoor buildings with access to restrooms only. Relocate shopping program outdoors with a reduced format using Park Plaza, Country Meadows and Crafters Village.
- Do not install or operate Yellow Gate.
- Reduce use of the camping areas by 50% to allow for proper distancing.
- Implement a touchless cash handling system.
- Evaluate the business development area.

Staff will seek input from the Board on these initial considerations in order to finalize assumptions for the 2021 budget.