



In the Matter Of:

OC COUNTY FAIR AND EVENT CENTER

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

December 17, 2020

Case No:

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32ND DISTRICT AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION
ORANGE COUNTY FAIR & EVENT CENTER
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2020
9:00 A.M.

Reported by:



Patricia Garrido

CSR No. 14364

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32ND DISTRICT AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION
ORANGE COUNTY FAIR & EVENT CENTER
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2020
9:00 A.M.

Meeting of the OCFEC Board of
Directors, stenographically reported by Patricia
Garrido, a Certified Shorthand Reporter for the State of
California, commencing at 9:00 a.m. and ending at
10:49 a.m., Thursday, December 17, 2020, Via Zoom.

APPEARANCES OF BOARD MEMBERS:

Doug La Belle, Vice Chair
Sandra Cervantes, Member
Robert Ruiz, Member
Barbara Bagneris, Member
Ashleigh Aitken, Member
Newton Pham, Member
Nick Kovacevich, Member

ALSO PRESENT:

Michele Richards, CEO
Ken Karns, Chief Operating Officer
Joan Hamill, Chief Business Development Officer
Summer Angus, Meeting Secretary Executive Assistant

1 APPEARANCE OF BOARD COUNSEL:

2 DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL
3 JOSHUA CAPLAN
4 600 West Broadway, Suite 1800
5 San Diego, California 92101-3375
6 Phone: 619-738-9000
7 Fax: 619-645-2271

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PUBLIC SPEAKERS:

Cindy Massaro
Kellie Avakian
Todd Martin
Reggie Mundekis
Lisa Sabo

1 32ND DISTRICT AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION
2 ORANGE COUNTY FAIR & EVENT CENTER
3 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
4 THURSDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2020
5 9:00 A.M.

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11 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: I have 9:00 o'clock.
12 This is Vice Chair Doug La Belle. I'd like to call the
13 meeting to order. Michele, would you lead the
14 introductory statement for me please?

15 CEO RICHARDS: Sure. All matters noticed on
16 this agenda in any category may be considered for action
17 as listed. Any item not so noticed may not be
18 considered. Items listed on this agenda may be
19 considered in any order at the discretion of the
20 chairperson.

21 The mission of the OC Fair & Event Center is
22 celebration of Orange County's communities, interest,
23 agriculture, and heritage with results justifying
24 resources expended.

25 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Thank you, Michele. At

1 this time I'd like to ask Ken Karns if he would lead us
2 in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3 COO KARNS: Thank you, Doug. That would be my
4 honor. If you could all please stand if you're able,
5 remove your hats if you're wearing any, and place your
6 right hand over your heart and begin.

7 (Pledge of Allegiance conducted.)

8 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Thank you, Ken. Summer,
9 can you please take the roll?

10 SECRETARY ANGUS: Yes. Vice Chair La Belle?

11 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Here.

12 SECRETARY ANGUS: Director Cervantes?

13 DIRECTOR CERVANTES: Here.

14 SECRETARY ANGUS: Director Ruiz? One more
15 time. Director Ruiz?

16 DIRECTOR RUIZ: Here. Here.

17 SECRETARY ANGUS: Director Bagneris?

18 DIRECTOR BAGNERIS: Here.

19 SECRETARY ANGUS: Director Aitken?

20 DIRECTOR AITKEN: Here.

21 SECRETARY ANGUS: Director Pham?

22 DIRECTOR PHAM: Here.

23 SECRETARY ANGUS: And Director Kovacevich?

24 Okay.

25 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Thank you, Summer. We

1 are now going to go into closed session. While the
2 Board is in closed session, Summer will compile or
3 organize a list of those who wish to speak under public
4 comments. And with that, we'll be going into closed
5 session.

6 (Closed session held from 9:03 a.m. until 9:25
7 a.m.)

8 CEO RICHARDS: Summer, we're coming back from
9 closed session.

10 SECRETARY ANGUS: Okay. Well -- we want to
11 give it just a minute for everybody to reconnect?

12 CEO RICHARDS: Yes. And if you want to, I'll
13 share my screen from here if you'd like.

14 SECRETARY ANGUS: Okay. It looks like we may
15 be just waiting for Vice Chair La Belle and Director
16 Aitken. Oh, no. I see her. She's there.

17 CEO RICHARDS: Summer, let me jump on the phone
18 and see if I can help Vice Chair La Belle.

19 SECRETARY ANGUS: Vice Chair La Belle, you're
20 going to have to unmute yourself.

21 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: I am now unmuted.

22 SECRETARY ANGUS: There you go.

23 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: All right. Summer, could
24 you take roll again, please?

25 SECRETARY ANGUS: Sure. Vice Chair La Belle?

1 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Here.

2 SECRETARY ANGUS: Director Cervantes?

3 DIRECTOR CERVANTES: Here.

4 SECRETARY ANGUS: Director Ruiz?

5 DIRECTOR RUIZ: Here.

6 SECRETARY ANGUS: Director Bagneris?

7 DIRECTOR BAGNERIS: Here.

8 SECRETARY ANGUS: Director Aitken?

9 DIRECTOR AITKEN: Here.

10 SECRETARY ANGUS: Director Pham?

11 DIRECTOR PHAM: Here.

12 SECRETARY ANGUS: And Director Kovacevich?

13 DIRECTOR KOVACEVICH: Here.

14 SECRETARY ANGUS: Thank you.

15 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: The Board received advice
16 of counsel on the closed session items listed on the
17 agenda, and we have nothing to report at this time.
18 Okay. I just wanted to mention that Item 10B on the
19 agenda will be carried over until the January meeting.
20 The Financial Monitoring and Audit committee will be
21 preparing -- or will be making report under the
22 governance portion of the agenda. With that, I'd like
23 to turn it over to CEO Richards for her operational
24 update.

25 CEO RICHARDS: Hello. Good morning, everybody,

1 and happy holidays. I have just a few things to report
2 on. Our landscaping department has been working with
3 Centennial Farm staff to bring 15 students from
4 Stanbridge University's Vet Tech program to perform
5 health exams on the berm goats and the donkeys and the
6 newly arrived lama who are taking care of the weed
7 abatement on the Pacific Amphitheater berm.

8 In March those students will be on-site to
9 examine the animals on the berm and at Centennial Farm
10 as part of their educational program. They will be
11 conducting routine health screenings, hoof trimmings,
12 and pregnancy checks. It's a great opportunity for the
13 animals to get some extra TLC and for the vet tech
14 students to practice some of the skills that they've
15 been learning in class.

16 For the second time this year the Orange County
17 Fair & Event Center's equestrian center was activated by
18 OC Animal Care as an emergency large animal evacuation
19 center during the recent Bond Fire. We housed 21 horses
20 during the emergency, happily all of them have been
21 safely returned home at this time.

22 So first came the announcement that the OC
23 Fair won the OC Register's People Choice award for the
24 best fair or festival in Orange County, then came
25 Parenting OC Magazine's Reader Choice award for 2020,

1 and last week we were thrilled to learn that we were
2 also voted the best fair and festival by the readers of
3 the Times OC. It's amazing that our fair fans continue
4 to support us even in a year when the OC Fair
5 was canceled.

6 Adding to that, each year the OC Fair enters
7 the Western Fair's Association achievement awards in
8 various categories. The Merrill Award, named after
9 Western Fair Associations founder Louis Merrill, is
10 given for, quote, those entries that clearly demonstrate
11 innovation, vision, and excellence, unquote. We also
12 learned last week that our entry from the community
13 support category has been nominated for this prestigious
14 Merrill Award.

15 OC Fair & Event Center was nominated for our
16 emergency food distribution in conjunction with Power of
17 One Foundation; for the COVID testing that we're doing
18 in partnership with the county; for our produce
19 donations from Centennial Farm going to the OC Food
20 Bank; and for matching 4-H and FFA livestock students
21 with potential buyers since the junior livestock auction
22 had to be canceled.

23 The Merrill Award winner will be announced
24 during the virtual WFA convention on January 6th. The
25 California Department of Food and Agriculture announced

1 recently that it was seeking applications from state
2 employees who were interested in the vital work or
3 increasing diversity, equity, equality, inclusion, and
4 parity within the department.

5 I'm very proud to announce that Thane Coleman,
6 our guest experienced supervisor, and Ester Dusi, our
7 finance director, both applied to serve on the new
8 committee, and we learned last week that they have been
9 selected for this committee. And their service at the
10 state level will certainly help support the work of our
11 new community affairs committee. We're looking forward
12 to their contributions at that state level.

13 We also wanted to keep the Board and the public
14 in the loop regarding ongoing discussions in Sacramento
15 about alternative operating models for District Ag
16 Associations. During a general meeting of fair CEOs
17 CDFAs representatives and WFA members on December 10th,
18 specifically regarding COVID, the topic of alternative
19 operating models was raised. It was communicated that a
20 proposal for a joint powers authority model was shared
21 with California Ag secretary Karen Ross and her deputy
22 secretaries.

23 It was apparently positively received by
24 Secretary Ross, and she indicated that she would be
25 sharing it with Governor Newsom this week. I asked the

1 same question in this meeting that Director Aitken asked
2 in a previous call: What, if anything, is required of
3 us at the 32nd District Ag Association? The answer was
4 a very clear "Nothing." Participation in any JPA
5 approved by the state would be entirely optional.

6 And Director Aitken, I don't know if you have
7 anything that you wanted to add from the previous call
8 that we were on together?

9 DIRECTOR AITKEN: Yeah. I mean, I just want to
10 make it clear to our public as we go through this
11 process that they had three public workshops of the
12 network -- the network being the 77 fairgrounds in the
13 state of California. The call made up of fair CEOs,
14 members of the public, members of the Board of
15 Directors, and they, at the time, were indicating no
16 final decisions are going to be made. They're just
17 looking for input for fairs that do want to change their
18 model.

19 What is CEO Richards alluded to -- one of my
20 concerns was: If we do nothing, is a decision going to
21 be made for us? And they were very adamant that the
22 32nd DAA, if we choose, can remain in our current
23 structure. No change will be mandated by the state. So
24 I think that's really good for the model that we have
25 set up, and I just want to assuage any fears that our

1 local public may have that we will not be seeking to
2 change our structure in Orange County.

3 CEO RICHARDS: Okay. Our financials for the
4 month, ending November 30th, and I know the Financial
5 Monitoring Committee will have a little more of a
6 detailed report. But our -- our year-to-date revenue
7 ending the period of November 30th, as you can see was
8 47.3 million dollars unfavorable to budget. However, we
9 continue to do a great job of controlling our expenses.

10 We are 29.6 million dollars favorable to
11 budget. Overall, though, we are seeing a net deficit to
12 budget at this point of 17.7 million dollars. Our cash
13 on hand and investments, so our total cash and cash
14 equivalents at this point is 42.8 million. That's a 13
15 and a half million dollar decrease over the same period
16 last year or 24 percent decrease.

17 And as we have done every month since the
18 pandemic hit and will continue to do throughout 2021 is
19 to report what our -- our position is, our projected
20 position against budget by the end of the year and also
21 our projected cash position for the end of the year.
22 Our position has not changed since reported last month.
23 We're still projecting a 16.7 million dollar deficit to
24 budget.

25 That's actually about a 2.2 million dollar

1 improvement over our original estimate, way back in
2 April, when we projected an 18-and-a-half million dollar
3 deficit to budget, but we believe we'll come in about
4 16.7 million at this point. And then originally
5 reported we projected our cash position at the end of
6 2020 to be 38.3 million, but we -- due to our
7 reforecasting and some additional events that we've
8 reported as revenue as well as cost containment, we're
9 now projecting a 40.8 million dollar cash position by
10 the end of the year.

11 So I'd like to turn it over now to Joan Hamill
12 who will have a brief events report.

13 JOAN HAMILL: Thank you, Michele. Great.
14 Happy holidays. I want to say that we are so delighted
15 to announce that Winter Fest Night of Lights made it's
16 debut on December 10th. Originally scheduled to open a
17 week prior, the news just before Thanksgiving that the
18 state was going back into purple tier with the new
19 stay-at-home orders to include the nightly curfew put
20 the event on a temporary hold.

21 After much work and several Zoom meetings with
22 Orange County Health Care Agency, the promoter
23 persevered, retooled the event and the nightly closing
24 time and was able to make Night of Lights a reality. A
25 special thank you goes out to Costa Mesa Mayor Katrina

1 Foley for her support and always being a friend to the
2 OC Fair & Event Center as well as the event and the
3 promoter.

4 Mayor Foley and Fair CEO Richards opened the
5 event last week by flipping the switch to light up the
6 Christmas tree to have the event start officially. And
7 what a wonderful reimagined event Night of Light is.
8 It's a spectacular one mile meandering adventure through
9 a magical winter scenes and a multitude of holiday
10 lights.

11 Reviews on social media have been positive, and
12 we're proud to host the event at OC Fair. Tickets for
13 reserved time slots through January 10th, which are
14 selling out quickly, can be found at
15 nightoflightsoc.com. And our continuing events, Power
16 of One Emergency Food Assistance drive through -- drive
17 through distribution, the final one for the year is
18 Saturday the 19th, right here on the fairgrounds.

19 Centennial Farm and Heroes Hall courtyard are
20 both open in a limit capacity per health and safety
21 guidelines through Orange County Health Care Agency.
22 COVID-19 testing is ongoing, 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.,
23 Monday through Friday by appointment only. Visit 360
24 Clinic MD for details. I skipped over the Christmas
25 tree lot. Today -- or tomorrow, excuse me -- is the

1 final day to come to the OC Fair & Event Center to come
2 on-site to purchase your Christmas tree or your wreath.

3 And, lastly, the farmers market taking place
4 every Thursday, with the exception of December 24th and
5 31st. Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. So today is
6 the last day, last opportunity before the end of the
7 year to shop local until 2021. Moving on to -- moving
8 on to 2021. In February will be a wonderful event.

9 The Jurassic Quest Drive Thru. This is an established
10 event, originally a walk thru event. This very popular
11 Jurassic Quest experience has been reimaged to be a
12 drive-through event now to go with the times.

13 The new Jurassic Quest Drive Thru features over
14 70 life-like dinosaurs including T. Rex, Triceratops,
15 and more. These animatronic dinosaurs are displayed in
16 realistic scenes that allows guests to experience them
17 roaring and moving from their own vehicle, the
18 dinosaurs -- well maybe people inside the cars will be
19 roaring as well -- as they drive their way through the
20 tour guided by an engaging and informative digital
21 audio.

22 The experience lasts about an hour, and as
23 mentioned, guests stay in their vehicle the entire time.
24 Tickets start at 49 dollars per vehicle, and for more
25 information jurassicquest.com is the place to go. And

1 that concludes my report, and I'd like to wish everyone
2 happy holidays.

3 CEO RICHARDS: Thank you, Joan. I've got to
4 really hand it to our promoters who are doing such a
5 fabulous job of turning their -- their events that used
6 to be inside buildings into wonderful drive through
7 experience for our communities. So rest assured we'll
8 continue to have some great entertainment at the OC Fair
9 & Event Center. So that concludes my CEO update.

10 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Does any board member
11 have any questions of Michele or Joan? Okay.
12 If not, we'll move on to approval of the minutes from
13 the November 19th meeting. Is there a motion and a
14 second to approve the minutes?

15 DIRECTOR CERVANTES: This is Sandra. I so move
16 to approved the minutes.

17 DIRECTOR RUIZ: Second.

18 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Okay. Sandra moved to
19 approve. Robert second. Summer, can you call the --
20 can you call the roll please?

21 SECRETARY ANGUS: Vice Chair La Belle?

22 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Yes.

23 SECRETARY ANGUS: Director Cervantes?

24 DIRECTOR CERVANTES: Yes.

25 SECRETARY ANGUS: Director Ruiz?

1 DIRECTOR RUIZ: Yes.

2 SECRETARY ANGUS: Director Aitken?

3 DIRECTOR AITKEN: Yes.

4 SECRETARY ANGUS: Director Bagneris?

5 DIRECTOR BAGNERIS: Yes.

6 SECRETARY ANGUS: Director Pham?

7 DIRECTOR PHAM: Yes.

8 SECRETARY ANGUS: And Director Kovacevich?

9 DIRECTOR KOVACEVICH: Yes.

10 SECRETARY ANGUS: Thank you.

11 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Thank you, Summer. Next
12 item is matters of public comment. Michele, would you
13 introduce the matters of public comment for me please?

14 CEO RICHARDS: I would be happy to. Public
15 comment is allowed on issues not on the current agenda.
16 However, no debate by the Board shall be permitted on
17 such public comments and no action will be taken on such
18 public comment items at this time, as law requires
19 formal public notice prior to any action on a docket
20 item.

21 Speakers are requested to sign in prior to the
22 start of the meeting and are limited to three minutes.
23 Comments will be accepted on agenda items during the
24 meeting. Speakers wishing to address the Board on items
25 on the agenda are requested to sign in prior to the

1 start of the meeting and identify the agenda items on
2 which you desire to address the Board. Speakers are
3 limited to three minutes.

4 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Summer, could you
5 announce the first three speakers, please.

6 SECRETARY ANGUS: Yes. We actually only have
7 four, so it's Cindy Massaro followed by Kellie Avakian,
8 Todd Martin, and Lisa Sabo. Cindy, when you're ready.

9 CINDY MASSARO: Yes. Good morning. Good
10 morning Orange County Fair Board. Thank you for your
11 service to our community and making our fairgrounds a
12 place of pride in our city, county, and state. I, too,
13 want to thank you for how you have adjusted and worked
14 events in different ways to try to make our fairgrounds
15 useful during this time of shutdown, so thank you and
16 good job on that.

17 Flying at the Orange County fairgrounds is our
18 United States of America national flag, our state of
19 California flag, and the Orange County fairgrounds flag.
20 Additionally, one other flag is also flown year-round,
21 the LGBTQ pride flag. This flag is being flown
22 year-round, not just during pride month.

23 Over a year ago, this board decided to fly this
24 one particular special interest flag to make people that
25 this flag represents feel included and welcome.

1 However, there are other groups that would also like to
2 be recognized and feel included and welcomed by having
3 their flags flown.

4 It seems right, fair, welcoming, and inclusive
5 to recognize these other groups' flags as well. If only
6 one single special interest flag is flown, other groups
7 will feel disenfranchised if their flags are not also
8 recognized. I am glad to hear that the community
9 affairs -- committee -- excuse me -- is planning on
10 taking up this flag issue, but I am concerned about how
11 long this could take given that the diversity committee
12 was formed and dissolved before accomplishing any
13 projects.

14 And six months has passed without even an
15 agenda item or discussion being held on this flag issue.
16 I am asking the Board to resolve this today. I know you
17 cannot take up issues and resolve them today, but my
18 resolution I'm asking for is for you to take up the
19 issue, put it on your agenda for next month, and resolve
20 to remove this one special interest flag until the
21 community affairs committee acts.

22 I look forward to a fair and equitable
23 resolution to fly other groups' flags for equal and fair
24 inclusion or simply removing any and all special
25 interests flags. Thank you.

1 SECRETARY ANGUS: Thank you, Cindy. Kellie
2 Avakian, when you're ready.

3 KELLIE AVAKIAN: Thank you. I agree with the
4 caller before me. I have noticed that there's an
5 American flag at the fairgrounds, there's the State of
6 California, and the LGBT flag. And we've been taking up
7 this issue for six months. I have kids who are highly
8 involved in the fairgrounds especially during the Fair,
9 Imaginology, like, every event possible. They're
10 involved with Future Farmers of America. I think the
11 fairgrounds should represent that.

12 My kids are involved with 4-H, the fairgrounds
13 should represent that. My kid, my oldest, was one of
14 the USA representatives to compete in a world
15 championship because she did the equestrian sport
16 vaulting at the fairgrounds. So she has a title from
17 USEF, which is United States Equestrian Federation and a
18 medal from FEI, which is the global horse flag, horse
19 symbol. So I really feel like you guys need to start
20 flying other flags, especially ones that represent our
21 community, especially ones that represent the
22 fairgrounds for the least of it.

23 My kids are also involved with sports and
24 highly involved in the community, so I feel like we need
25 to start having all the flags flown and not just the

1 particular LGBT one because I know we're a whole entire
2 family of inclusion, and I would like the resolution to
3 take this up on the agenda because six months has passed
4 and I, too, am concerned how long this is going to go
5 on. So when my kids hear me on the phone calls, month
6 after month after month sill not getting their flags put
7 up that represents them that have to do with the
8 fairgrounds, it's a little concerning to show them,
9 yeah, I guess nothing does get done in city council.
10 I'm not sure because this has been six of just a simple,
11 simple issue or resolution to this. Thank you.

12 SECRETARY ANGUS: Thank you, Kellie. Todd
13 Martin, when you're ready.

14 TODD MARTIN: Hello. Hi. Good morning. Thank
15 you guys for being here so early to hear us out. I know
16 this is kind of a busy time of year, and I know you guys
17 are carving into your free time, so I appreciate it. I
18 can definitely echo what was said by Cindy and Kellie,
19 in regards to -- for me I feel frustrated because I
20 don't feel included, you know, like we're supposed to -
21 this is supposed to be an inclusive kind of thing in
22 flying the flags.

23 And I, too, know of a number of different
24 organizations I know there's many religious
25 organizations throughout our city that would love to fly

1 a flag and very passionate about it, and I agree. And I
2 feel the same way. I would love to feel included in
3 that respect, and the fact that nothing has been done
4 as, you know, Cindy and Kellie said, and I agree it's
5 frustrating to see us bring this up over and over again
6 and not be addressed in any way, shape, or form.

7 And I'm wondering why. So if there is a true
8 spirit of inclusion here, that's what you guys are
9 shooting for, and I'd like to see that, with actions and
10 not just us showing up every month or so or whatever it
11 is to share our opinions, again, and ask for some kind
12 of action. So please consider this and put this on our
13 next meeting so we can discuss it and move forward.
14 Thank you very much.

15 SECRETARY ANGUS: Thank you, Todd. Lisa Sabo,
16 when you're ready.
17 Summer?

18 LISA SABO: Okay. Are you there?

19 SECRETARY ANGUS: Go ahead, Lisa.

20 LISA SABO: Okay. Well, thank you, everyone,
21 for taking my call. I want to read into the record a
22 letter that we put together from the Orange County
23 Fairgrounds Preservation Society.

24 Dear OC fairgrounds Board members, CEO, and the
25 fairgrounds staff, throughout the history of the Orange

1 County Fairgrounds Preservation Society, we have
2 consistently aspired to a open, gainful, sharing of
3 ideas with the OC EC's executive team, fair staff,
4 stakeholders, and most importantly the Orange County
5 fairgrounds community.

6 We all share the passion for this amazing
7 public treasure that has been a part of our lives for
8 decades. As 2020 ends, we collectively reflect on these
9 past many months. We would be remiss if we are not to
10 extend our most sincere gratitude for the ongoing
11 commitment to transparency and public participation
12 process in helping shape the future.

13 We are pleased with the choice of technology
14 used at the public meetings during the pandemic -- has
15 allowed public to participate in realtime. This high
16 standard exceeds what other agencies have adopted. It
17 is appreciated and provided an important connection for
18 the community. The OCFEC staff and fair board directors
19 are to be commended for their collaborative efforts in
20 working together towards enhance -- enhanced and more
21 rewarding community center for all.

22 Here is to an exciting and successful 2021.
23 Happy holidays from Lisa Sabo, the president of the
24 Orange County Fairgrounds Preservation Society and all
25 of the board members.

1 And I also just want to tell you my -- you --
2 for the board members and staff, sometimes -- this is on
3 the side -- you know, sometimes it seems like a
4 thankless job, but myself, I just have deep gratitude
5 and just heartfelt thankfulness for all the time you do,
6 and I get it for the board members it's a volunteer
7 position and through this time, in this last year of
8 pandemic, you've done an incredible job.

9 And, so thank you so much and then one last
10 little thing that I want to say is we had a little
11 problem with the fire in the canyons a few weeks ago.
12 And in the next month, we need to continue to work on
13 the fairgrounds, opening the great gates when people
14 come in the middle of the night to be rescued by the
15 fire.

16 But that's a big issue on the side, and Gibran
17 Stout has done a great job communicating, I think, with
18 Michele and the staff and coming up with a plan that
19 helps the evacuation side of the Orange County
20 fairgrounds to become better. And I want to be a part
21 of the solution, not a part of the problem. So when
22 there is a fire, we need to be able to let horses and
23 animals and livestock onto the property.

24 SECRETARY ANGUS: Okay. Thank you, Lisa.
25 That's time.

1 LISA SABO: Okay. Thank you.

2 SECRETARY ANGUS: That's all that I have for
3 public comment, unless there are any other speakers that
4 would like to speak.

5 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Thank you, Summer. With
6 no further speakers, that would conclude
7 public comments. At this time, we'll move on to the
8 consent calendar. Michele, would you please read the --
9 the overview of the consent calendar?

10 CEO RICHARDS: All matters listed under consent
11 calendar are operational matters about which the Board
12 has governing policies implementation of which is
13 delegated to the CEO. They will be enacted in one
14 motion. There will be no discussion of these items
15 prior to the time the Board of Directors votes on the
16 motion, unless members of the board, staff, or public
17 request specific items to be discussed separately and/or
18 removed from this section.

19 Any member of the public who wishes to discuss
20 consent calendar items should notify the Chair of the
21 Board at the time requested and be recognized by the
22 invitation of the Board to address the Board.

23 Vice Chair La Belle, staff does have -- would
24 like to clarify two items on the consent calendar, but
25 I'll stop to see if anyone else has any items that

1 they'd like to pull.

2 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Does the Board have any
3 items that they would like to pull from the consent
4 calendar? Okay. With that, Michele, why don't you go
5 through the two items that you wanted to speak with --
6 or speak to.

7 CEO RICHARDS: Sure. There are two items that
8 have been deleted from the agenda under standard
9 agreements SA-00621-SM that is the standard agreement
10 for the contractor who assists us with sound monitoring
11 and mitigation. That contact is a result of
12 a competitive FRP process, but there has been a protest
13 file on that RFP.

14 So as soon as we get a decision or further
15 direction from the Department of General Services who
16 will be reviewing that protest, we will leave that
17 standard agreement unauthorized, and we'll bring it back
18 to the Board at such time that a decision has been
19 rendered on that protest.

20 Under rental agreements, Item 9B, Rental
21 Agreement R-12520 was scratched from the consent
22 calendar. This is a very small and simple rental
23 agreement for a camping space in conjunction with the
24 Night of Lights. It's a camping space that a member of
25 the staff has -- has rented. Unfortunately, because of

1 the recent executive order from the Governor's office,
2 we learned that camping was not permitted, and so we
3 deleted that from the agenda.

4 However, the Orange County Health Care Agency
5 clarified and approved that one camping spot, so we
6 will bring that back on the agenda -- the consent
7 calendar for January for approval. And that's all we
8 have.

9 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Thank you, Michele. Are
10 there any members of the public that have items that
11 they would like to have pulled from the consent
12 calendar?

13 SECRETARY ANGUS: I don't have anybody that was
14 identified earlier, unless there's anybody now.

15 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Thank you, Summer. With
16 that, and with Michele's items that she is pulling, do
17 we have a motion to approve the consent calendar?

18 DIRECTOR CERVANTES: This is Sandra Cervantes.
19 I so move that we approve the consent calendar.

20 DIRECTOR AITKEN: I second.

21 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Okay. We have a motion
22 and a second. Summer, could you please call the roll?

23 SECRETARY ANGUS: Vice Chair La Belle?

24 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Yes.

25 SECRETARY ANGUS: Director Cervantes?

1 DIRECTOR CERVANTES: Yes.

2 SECRETARY ANGUS: Director Ruiz?

3 DIRECTOR RUIZ: Yes.

4 SECRETARY ANGUS: Director Bagneris?

5 DIRECTOR BAGNERIS: Yes.

6 SECRETARY ANGUS: Director Aitken?

7 DIRECTOR AITKEN: Yes.

8 SECRETARY ANGUS: Director Pham?

9 DIRECTOR PHAM: Yes.

10 SECRETARY ANGUS: And Director Kovacevich?

11 DIRECTOR KOVACEVICH: Yes.

12 SECRETARY ANGUS: Thank you.

13 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Thank you, Summer. Okay.

14 We'll now move on to the next portion of the agenda,
15 which would be the governance process. We do have
16 various committee reports. These are just advisory back
17 to the full board.

18 I would like to go ahead and start out with
19 the -- the Leadership Committee, the Chair, myself, and
20 Michele met yesterday with Rick Hansen, who is the
21 operator of the equestrian center and has been the
22 operator for a number of years. Purpose of that meeting
23 was to just begin a process of getting an update on what
24 is occurring at the equestrian center.

25 I would add at this point, as I've mentioned on

1 several occasions, and the Board has also, that the
2 equestrian center is a very important part of the Event
3 Center, and we are wanting to look towards doing what we
4 can to expand it -- it's outreach into the community.

5 Right now it is a -- essentially a boarding
6 facility that, you know, has various training activities
7 occurring onsite, all of which is good, but we're
8 wanting to, as a committee, to look at what we can do to
9 incorporate the equestrian center into the various
10 promotion -- or production things that we do as a Fair
11 and Events Center.

12 Mainly, Imaginology and the annual fair so that
13 we could expand and get as much community involvement in
14 terms of knowing what we have there, what the resources
15 there, and in that regard, we are going to move forward
16 with a modeling study, if you will, in terms of what the
17 various options are for the Board to ultimately
18 consider.

19 We are very fortunate in having an individual
20 that has extensive knowledge of the Orange County Fair &
21 Event Center operations and is also involved in
22 equestrian activities. I think he's familiar to all of
23 us and that would be Doug Lofstrom. Michele has reached
24 out to Doug to see if he would be willing to assist us
25 over the next several months in looking at various

1 modeling options the would be available to the Fair
2 board.

3 The committee intends to continue engaging with
4 Rick Hansen as well as other stakeholders, and our
5 objective is within the next three to four months to be
6 bringing back to the Board for policy direction various
7 options relative to the equestrian center.

8 And with that, that would conclude my comments.
9 I'd be happy to answer any questions and I'm sure
10 Michele would as well that the Board may have at this
11 time.

12 No questions? Okay. Let's move on to the
13 Financial Monitoring Committee. Newton or Barbara, any
14 comments that you would like to make at this point?

15 DIRECTOR PHAM: Yeah. So the committee's been
16 rejiggered to the Financial Monitoring and Audit
17 Committee at this point. We did review the financials
18 with staff last week. Overall, you know, I think the
19 sentiment is, you know, we -- we're tracking a budget
20 but actually it slightly improved, as Michele stated
21 earlier.

22 You know, the budget reforecast is indicating a
23 net deficit of 16.7 million by the end of this year
24 which is a, you know, 1.8 million dollar improvement
25 from the, you know, the prior reforecast in May. You

1 know, we're projecting cash balance at the end of the
2 year to be at 40.8 million. We also reviewed the 2019
3 draft audit. You know, overall results of the audit
4 were -- were positive. There was one recommendation for
5 an MDNA or management discussion analysis report, which
6 is typical and wasn't necessarily and historically been
7 done.

8 You know, the committee did make the
9 recommendation that we should incorporate this, but just
10 trying to get a sense of what the check list will be at
11 this point in time whether we want to, you know,
12 integrate into this current, you know, 2019 audit or do
13 it on a go-forward basis. And that concludes my report.

14 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Thank you, Newton.
15 Ashleigh, do you have any comments on behalf of the
16 Facilities Committee at this time?

17 DIRECTOR AITKEN: I think Chair Ruiz is going
18 to give an update on our meeting.

19 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Very good.

20 DIRECTOR RUIZ: Hi. Good morning. Yeah we had
21 a really good meeting last week and we discussed some of
22 the state contract policy codes that we are going to
23 adopt and introduce to the Board next month. We believe
24 this language that is to the State of California will
25 work for us here at the fairgrounds and it'll work for

1 any contractor who's going to be bidding work on our
2 site.

3 Again, it was a very productive meeting, and we
4 hope to introduce that language in the meeting in
5 January and hopefully, you know, wrap that up in -- in
6 January. Again, I want to thank Director Aitken for
7 being there as part of that meeting and looking forward
8 to the meeting in January to get this done.

9 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Thank you, Robert. In
10 terms of the Governance Committee, Sandra, do you have
11 any comments at this time?

12 DIRECTOR CERVANTES: Not at this time. Thank
13 you.

14 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Thank you, Sandra. The
15 Community Fairs Committee. Nick? Any -- any update
16 that you would like to provide at this time?

17 DIRECTOR KOVACEVICH: Actually, I'll let
18 Director Ruiz go first, and I'll follow up after that.

19 DIRECTOR RUIZ: Sure.

20 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Okay.

21 DIRECTOR RUIZ: Sure. Thank you, Nick. Thank
22 you, Nick. Yeah. We met on December the 4th with the
23 staff, and we had, again, another great meeting. And we
24 talked about gathering input from the -- the initiatives
25 that we want to take on. And so what we are going to do

1 is we're going to conduct a survey of the general public
2 regarding what issues they want to bring to this
3 committee.

4 What we did is we -- we checked around the idea
5 of -- of getting the public involved, being more
6 transparent. And so we wanted to -- we want to conduct
7 a public Zoom meetings starting January, hopefully
8 January 20th at 4:00 p.m. We're going to be announcing
9 that. That will generate more from input from the
10 general public.

11 One of the issues that we do plan to take on is
12 the flag issue. We're finally going to do that, but we
13 want to get input, more input, from the public when we
14 start having this public meeting in January. We want to
15 discuss other issues as well, and some of the other
16 topics that we discuss that we plan to address would be
17 having to lead this place, address this property.

18 First, the flags. We're going to discuss that
19 come January. We also discussed diversity, equality,
20 inclusion at the -- at the fairgrounds. One that would
21 include special cultural days, like cultural exhibits,
22 food offerings, and things of that nature, and
23 entertainment as well. Interest by the public has been
24 great, and as so, we plan to include them as part of our
25 committee meetings, as well as district employees.

1 So we hope to have a lot of public input in
2 this because, again, we do want to address very
3 important issues. We don't want to keep kicking the can
4 of flag thing, you know, down the road. We want to take
5 on that, and we plan on doing that starting the new
6 year.

7 So having said that, I look forward to the
8 meeting coming in January, the public meeting. It
9 should be very informative, and I hope -- we hope to get
10 a lot of input from the public as well. Director
11 Kovacevich, unless you have something else to add?

12 DIRECTOR KOVACEVICH: No. I think you did a
13 great job of explaining the events. I hope everybody
14 understands that there's challenges with, you know,
15 sometimes process flow, we experienced that with the
16 original formation of the committee, and, you know, that
17 kind of caused the delay.

18 So I hope everyone understands that the Board
19 and the committee is committed to addressing these
20 important issues in a timely fashion. We were delayed,
21 but it feels good to now be on the right track. If you
22 do want to share additional input on these issues, such
23 as the flag issue, you'll be seeing a survey coming, as
24 Director Ruiz mentioned, and we would really appreciate
25 everyone's insight in completing that survey.

1 And then also, further discussion at the public
2 meeting, as Director Ruiz mentioned, on January 20th.
3 Again, we would welcome your input. And then after
4 gathering that input from a broad base of the public and
5 also the staff, at that point we'll be able to take the
6 action that everybody is looking for. So, again, there
7 are other important issues outside the flag. I think
8 we're going to be addressing those too. So a lot going
9 to happen in the new year. Hope everybody is ready.
10 And Director Ruiz and myself are certainly excited to
11 push this along, so thank you.

12 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Thank you, Nick and
13 Robert. The Heroes Hall Veterans Foundation Board,
14 Sandra and I are the Board's liaisons to the foundation.
15 Just a quick update, as I mentioned at the last meeting,
16 Sandy Stone has been retained by the Veterans Foundation
17 to assist with fundraising efforts for us to again
18 generate revenues that can come back into the Heroes
19 Hall Veteran Museum for operating purposes and
20 programming.

21 Nick Berardino, the president of the foundation
22 has been very active in moving forward with a
23 fundraising activity. I think probably most of you or
24 all of you have received information on the activities
25 underway. We are also in the process of doing some

1 modifications to our website to, you know, enhance our
2 ability to merge data bases together and to basically
3 expand our outreach.

4 I want to give a special thanks to Michele,
5 Joan, and Carole for their assistance with Sandy Stone
6 and Kathy Yach, in terms of helping to coordinate
7 getting the word out to as many individuals as we can.
8 I also wanted to indicate that I'm pleased to report
9 that the foundation board will be making a
10 recommendation to us at the January board meeting for an
11 additional appointment to the Heroes Hall Veterans
12 Foundation the individual is currently being interviewed
13 and discussed by the foundation, and I think we're going
14 to have a recommendation for the January board meeting.

15 With that, I have nothing further on that item.
16 And also, Sandra would you like to add anything in
17 additional in that area?

18 DIRECTOR CERVANTES: No -- not at this time.
19 Thank you so much.

20 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Thank you, Sandra. Okay.
21 That would conclude the governance process. We'll now
22 move --

23 SECRETARY ANGUS: I'm sorry, Vice Chair La
24 Belle. We do have two public speakers for this item for
25 the committee reports. Reggie Mundekis, followed by

1 Cindy Massaro. Reggie, when you're ready.

2 REGGIE MUNDEKIS: Hi. Good morning. This is
3 Reggie Mundekis. I'd just like to thank you for the new
4 committee structure and clarification of committee
5 expectations. I think this will be a great improvement
6 going forward.

7 I'd also like to thank the leadership committee
8 for their work on the equestrian center issues. The
9 Southern California area is seeing a change in the
10 number and types of equestrian centers where equestrian
11 activity is becoming less accessible to many people and
12 certain groups, such as Western riding and the Hispanic
13 riding groups being left out of the picture.

14 So I appreciate the work to do surveys and
15 market research to find out what is viable going forward
16 and how to build a better equestrian center. I
17 appreciate the work of the Community Affairs Committee
18 in doing a survey of the existing customers and looking
19 to include more of our diversity community in the OC
20 Fair both, in terms of entertainment, displays, and
21 food.

22 I was curious to find out if you're doing
23 outreach to the chambers of commerce and the different
24 ethnic neighborhoods, like little Saigon and little
25 Arabia to get input from those groups as far as what

1 they would like to participate in both, during the fair
2 and year-round.

3 And then I'm finding this whole kerfuffle over
4 the rainbow flag just very amusing. I'm -- I'm finding
5 it really difficult how a flag that represents many,
6 many people of all kinds and represents a group which
7 has stood up for the rights of everyone all of a sudden
8 is being seen as disenfranchisement of people and with
9 that I would like to point out what that rainbow flag
10 means to me.

11 It means that we are recognizing the many
12 people who are members of the LGBTQ community who have
13 suffered over the years. Among those is Lonnie Frisbee
14 who helped to found Calvary Chapel and the Venue Church
15 movement and was pushed out when he came out of the
16 closet and has been written out of the history of it.
17 And if you want to learn more about it there's a great
18 documentary on Am- -- on Prime about Lonnie Frisbee.
19 It's the same documentary that aired on (indiscernable)
20 for a number of years.

21 So just remember that when I see that flag, I
22 think of Lonnie Frisbee and the way he was treated by
23 Calvary Chapel and the venue of churches and others. So
24 thank you.

25 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Thank you, Reggie.

1 SECRETARY ANGUS: Cindy, when you're ready.

2 CINDY MASSARO: Yes. Thank you so much. I
3 really want to thank Director Bagneris who initially
4 brought up and voted against this flag being flown over
5 a year ago, and I want to thank Directors Kovacevich and
6 Ruiz for their commitment on taking up this issue both
7 on the Diversity Committee and now on this new
8 committee.

9 And so I want to thank you all for doing that.
10 I really look forward to a resolution. And I'm grateful
11 for the entire Board hearing us and taking up what is
12 important to us. Thank you.

13 SECRETARY ANGUS: Thank you. Vice Chair La
14 Belle, that's it for public comment.

15 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Thank you, Summer. Just
16 to remind everyone that Item 10B, as Newton indicated,
17 is going to be carried over until the January board
18 meeting. With that, we'll move on to Item 10C, and I'll
19 turn it over to -- it's an information item, and I'll
20 turn it over to Michele Richards.

21 CEO RICHARDS: Thank you so much, Doug. As we
22 have done for the last several months, we want to keep
23 the public and the Board apprised of our Fair planning
24 activities for 2021. As we've mentioned before, it's a
25 very fluid process. One that we are staying in very

1 close contact with the Orange County Health Care Agency
2 emerging directives from the state level, and as you all
3 know, an ever-changing landscape out there.

4 So it's a challenge, but we're determined to
5 bring something special about the Fair, whatever that
6 looks like to the community in 2021. Let me start by
7 summarizing the latest meeting that we had with Dr.
8 Clayton Chau, who is the public health officer for
9 Orange County. We met with Dr. Chau and another member
10 of his staff last Friday, December 11th.

11 Dr. Chau indicated that the goal now is for the
12 Orange County community to reach a 60 to 75 percent
13 immunity level in order for the Fair to take place or
14 for mass gatherings to return. And this is a bit of a
15 revised number. Originally, it was a 65 to 80 percent
16 immunity. But that's now been revised to 60 to 75
17 percent.

18 Dr. Chau believes that by late March we should
19 know if the county is trending in the right direction,
20 and that's going to be very helpful to the staff and the
21 Board as a point of when we might be able to make that
22 decision about whether we can move forward with the
23 modified fair. We were also encouraged to learn from
24 Dr. Chau based on the information he has regarding the
25 vaccine distribution that by late spring, early

1 summer -- so he's saying by, you know, the May, very
2 early June timeframe, everyone in Orange County will be
3 able to get the vaccine.

4 So that was quite encouraging. He also asked
5 for our help, and we most definitely agreed to help get
6 the wording out in the market to encourage people to get
7 the vaccine. So the Orange County Health Care Agency
8 will be launching an information campaign and the OC
9 Fair will do its part to help get that word out.

10 A few more interesting bits of information
11 regarding our planning, our 2021 Fair admission prices,
12 our team is recommending that that price remain the
13 same, that there be no ticket increase. However, the OC
14 Fair will be absorbing the fees for those advanced
15 online orders so that the customer, even though we are
16 insisting on advanced ticket sales only online for
17 health and safety reasons, the customer will not have to
18 pay those fees.

19 The OC Fair will absorb that and that way we
20 can have ticket prices remain the same. This is a
21 recommendation that we're going to bring back to the
22 Board for approval in January. We are setting hours and
23 days, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday will be
24 considered our weekdays. We're suggesting being open
25 from 11:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. and then our weekends will

1 consist of Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

2 And in our research, we've determined that
3 Friday actually has as high a demand for attendance as
4 Saturday and Sunday. So we'll lump that into a weekend,
5 10:00 a.m. to midnight. Our Fair Planning Committee is
6 developing a go/no-go date recommendation for the Board
7 so we'll be able to report on that in an upcoming board
8 meeting so that everybody will understand the timing on
9 when a decision will need to be made.

10 The staff is also dual-track planning for
11 pivoting from a modified fair if those numbers don't --
12 are not tending where we need them to be by March that
13 will be able to move from a modified Fair to a
14 vehicle-based fair experience in the event that the
15 in-person fair cannot be helped and that vehicle-base
16 fair experience would look something like a very kicked
17 up version of the Fair Food Drive Thru.

18 So there'll be lots of opportunities for people
19 to enjoy Fair food, but there'll be components that
20 include entertainment, exhibits, animals, et cetera, for
21 people to enjoy. So rest assured there will be
22 something from the OC Fair this summer. And, of course,
23 we are continuing to work with RCS on ride lists and
24 layouts and Dr. Chau and his staff are heavily involved
25 in that, in advising us on what would work and what

1 wouldn't work.

2 And then, of course, we're continuing regular
3 meetings with Spectra having discussions on the food and
4 beverage elements. One thing that we have made a
5 decision on, and this is in consultation with Dr. Chau,
6 is that walking around the Fair with, you know, as
7 people are eating and drinking and needing to take off a
8 mask for that purpose is not doable. And so we would
9 create food and beverage gardens, seating areas large
10 seating areas where people can sit and eat and they
11 won't be meandering through the Fair with their mask off
12 while they're enjoying their food.

13 So just a few updates that we have, and, of
14 course, we'll continue to keep the Board and public
15 apprised as we go along this journey. I'm happy to take
16 any questions that the Board might have.

17 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Are there any questions
18 from Board members? Summer, are there any public
19 comments from the audience?

20 SECRETARY ANGUS: No. We don't have any for
21 this item.

22 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Okay. I have just a
23 couple of comments. I know we're all very hopeful and
24 optimistic that the vaccines that are on the market and
25 the ones that are coming to market very soon are going

1 to have a significant impact on the -- reducing the
2 COVID-19 pandemic.

3 One of the things that I think we should be
4 looking at kind of is plan C, if you will, and I am very
5 comfortable with what Michele has outlined in terms of
6 the Fair in the summer at it's normal time or the
7 virtual drive through. I think as we get later in the
8 year based upon the things that I read and hear, you
9 know, by September, October, you know, obviously there
10 are going to be more individuals that have been
11 vaccinated, and the COVID-19 situation is going to be
12 reduced, hopefully, accordingly.

13 I think plan C might be looking at a fair in
14 late September, early to mid-October. And I guess I
15 would ask Michele, is that something that is even
16 feasible relative to the other operations that are going
17 on out there? And if so, what should we be looking at
18 to move forward with that as a third backup?

19 CEO RICHARDS: Certainly an option, and a good
20 option as well, Doug. It does take a ton more
21 coordination as, you know, there are other fairs and the
22 routing of the carnival, and, you know, our food
23 concessionaires and merchants, but it's certainly
24 doable, you know, if we get to that point in March and
25 it doesn't look like we're trending in the right

1 direction that we could, you know, we could recommend
2 alternative dates.

3 We've already spoken with RCS about that
4 possibility. We've thrown it out to the other larger
5 fairs in Southern California so we're not stepping all
6 over each other, but it's definitely a viable option,
7 and one that, you know, we'll -- we'll continue to -- to
8 consider as we move along in our planning.

9 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Very good. And in that
10 regard, I don't think we should spend a lot of time
11 right now doing that, but perhaps, Dan and Lisa could be
12 looking at options. I know we've moved a number of the
13 performers in the Pac Amp have agreed or indicated that
14 they would be willing to certainly perform in the
15 Pacific Amphitheater in the summer months.

16 Maybe we could begin looking at what options
17 might be available there and in The Hanger for later on
18 in the year should that prove to be the most viable way
19 to go. So I'll just -- that would conclude my comments.
20 Are there any other thoughts the Board or the public
21 might have at this point in time?

22 DIRECTOR CERVANTES: This is Sandra Cervantes.
23 And I just wanted to make a quick comment. Obviously,
24 with change there's always some amount of resistance.
25 One of the largest obstacles that I might see is that

1 now, if you're on a plane and you wear your mask, but if
2 you're drinking something or eating something that they
3 give you, you take your mask off. So the specific
4 assigned areas for eating might need a lot of viability
5 and exposure with a lot of time in advance in order for
6 that to take place with the appropriate distancing but
7 very, very doable.

8 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Thank you, Sandra. If
9 there are no further comments, we'll move on to Item D,
10 and that's a presentation by the CEO in terms of the
11 budget letter for this year. Michele?

12 CEO RICHARDS: The Board suggested this last
13 year. We completed a budget summary letter and wanted
14 to continue that with this year. The -- the budget
15 summary letter is a narrative, if you will, about the
16 budget. So for those that maybe are not as comfortable
17 reading detailed financial reports, this kind of puts in
18 words what the budget is all about for 2021. So we have
19 posted this, you know, copies are available for the
20 Board, obviously, and then we posted the letter for the
21 public as well.

22 The letter starts off with some operational
23 highlights from 2020. That's kind of an interesting
24 read, given all the challenges that we had going into
25 this year. And then a narrative about the 2021 budget,

1 an overview of how it was built and specifically the
2 assumptions that staff used to create the budget.

3 There's also a -- a statement that just as soon
4 as the Board approved the budget in last month's
5 meeting, and we know when the calendar flips over to
6 January and that budget goes into effect that we will
7 likely need to reforecast just as soon as the new year
8 begins due to the ever-changing environment that we're
9 currently operating in.

10 So I know I said it before, but I want to
11 recommit that every month we will provide the Board with
12 a reforecast of the budget as things are changing as
13 we're able to come online with more and more events,
14 generate more revenue, and then, of course, our efforts
15 in controlling costs as well. And that way we'll be
16 able to track all along the way how we're doing against
17 budget.

18 The letter also includes an overview of our
19 plan for our capital and major projects, and as you
20 know, the list has greatly been reduced from previous
21 years as we control costs and then try to focus on those
22 items that are related to health and safety and security
23 of the property. There is a spreadsheet that details
24 the budget by department, if anyone's interested in
25 that.

1 And then just a summary where I certainly want
2 to thank the staff that did an excellent job of
3 preparing this budget under quite extraordinary
4 circumstances, certainly to the Board of Directors and
5 especially to the Financial Monitoring Committee for
6 your constant support, your advice, your guidance.

7 And then also, to the public, we very much
8 appreciate the public's involvement in the process of
9 operating the OC Fair and also your thoughtful feedback
10 throughout the year and your positive comments to us
11 during the budget study session. So as Doug said this
12 is an information item, but that letter is available to
13 anyone who's interested in getting a little overview of
14 the 2021 budget.

15 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Thank you, Michele.
16 Summer, are there any public comments on this item?

17 SECRETARY ANGUS: We have none.

18 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Thank you. Any -- any
19 Board comments regarding the letter prepared by the CEO?
20 I would just say that it's outstanding. I've, you
21 know -- I find it very, very informative to be able to
22 look back at words relating to the dollars and the
23 budget, and I think it's a very useful document in terms
24 of reminding all of us, the Board and the public, of
25 what the budget process is, what it includes, what the

1 challenges are.

2 So I would extend my compliments to Michele and
3 the staff for an excellent job in that regard. Okay.
4 Next item is Item E on the agenda. Relative to the RFP
5 process, I would turn that over to CEO Richards for her
6 report, and it is an action item.

7 CEO RICHARDS: It is an action item. So
8 previously the Board had requested that all RFPs in the
9 year be reviewed and approved by one of the board
10 committees, the one most appropriate to whatever the
11 topic happens to be. So review of that RFP before it's
12 released. Staff is requesting that the Board reconsider
13 this procedure and determine whether or not that
14 procedure is still needed for the list of RFPs for 2021.

15 There are certain RFPs for which the staff will
16 request the Board's review and approval because of the
17 importance of that -- that service or the complexity of
18 that service to our operations or the financial impact
19 to the organization. But if you look at this list of
20 anticipated RFPs for 2021, they are highly operational.

21 We want to be certainly conscientious of the
22 Board's time, knowing that you're all working people,
23 you know, and see if you're open for discussion on
24 which, if any, RFPs the Board committees would like to
25 be involved in. The one we absolutely want Board

1 involvement in the RFP process is the carnival.

2 Again, because of its financial impact, because
3 of the complexity of that RFP. But as you can see, the
4 others are very operational. So I'd like to maybe open
5 that up for discussion and input by the Board.

6 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Are there any public
7 comments relative to this item?

8 SECRETARY ANGUS: No, there are not.

9 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Okay. Board members, any
10 comments relative to what is being proposed by Michele?

11 DIRECTOR AITKEN: This is Director Aitken. I
12 really appreciate you bringing these to the forefront.
13 I think it's important not just for the Board, but for
14 the public to kind of be exposed to the process, not
15 everybody -- some people are very familiar with RFPs,
16 some people aren't. So especially with our larger ones,
17 just kind of explaining the process, not just to the
18 Board but to the public, I think is really helpful. So
19 I really appreciate you bringing this forward in such an
20 organized fashion.

21 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Thank you, Ashleigh.
22 Nick, did you have a comment?

23 DIRECTOR KOVACEVICH: No. I just -- go ahead.

24 DIRECTOR RUIZ: I did.

25 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Robert. I'm sorry.

1 DIRECTOR RUIZ: Yeah. Director Ruiz. I would
2 agree with Michele's presentation and her
3 recommendation, I think carnival is huge and we should
4 be involved, you know, we are all busy. I know I
5 probably wouldn't have the time to be involved in that.
6 I trust, you know, Michele and staff would do the right
7 and responsible thing, but I'm going to agree with that.
8 I think carnival is pretty huge if you could have
9 someone of the board involved with that, that would be
10 great. So I -- I would agree with Michele's
11 recommendation.

12 DIRECTOR CERVANTES: Hi. This is Sandra
13 Cervantes. First, I have a question about how many RFPs
14 are we talking about, give or take for the year? And if
15 we're not looking at a huge amount, I would rather see
16 some form of consistency. And if the approval needs to
17 take place then let's be consistent and all of them get
18 approved. If there's a million RFPs throughout the
19 entire year then obviously it's a different story, but
20 I'd love to see consistency.

21 All the Board deciding and the public having
22 the information of, you know, what's important and
23 what's not important because sometimes what's important
24 and what's not important is a perceived interpretation
25 of who's interpreting that information.

1 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Thank you, Sandra. A
2 couple of thoughts along that line. First of all, with
3 this being presented to the Board as a part of the
4 budget review process, first through the Financial
5 Monitoring and Audit Committee and then ultimately to
6 the full board, we're made clearly aware of the RFP as
7 staff is proposing to move forward with.

8 I think through that process, if an individual
9 board member has a specific area that they would like to
10 focus on, you know, we would have the opportunity to do
11 that through the budget process. I sort of see it as
12 kind of a two-fold process. We have operational issues.
13 I personally would have no desire in being involved in
14 the golf cart rental process.

15 And, you know, it's an operational issue that I
16 think staff is very -- clearly, very, more capable of
17 doing. We obviously have the opportunity before they
18 start the process when this is presented to us in the
19 budget and at the end of the process when we consider it
20 as an action item on the agenda.

21 There are other areas that are policy related
22 that are kind of more big picture sort of things, and
23 obviously the carnival RFP is certainly one of those the
24 entertainment RFP that Ashleigh and I participated in.
25 There are other things that will be coming forward that

1 are more policy related. I guess another good example
2 is the governance process and going through that RFP.

3 So I think if we can focus on the big picture
4 stuff, the policy issues, not only dollar amounts, but
5 things that have a significant potential impact
6 regardless of the dollar amount in terms of board
7 policy. Those would be the kind of things that I think
8 should come before us, and the other items, I think I
9 was one of the several board members that suggested that
10 we be apprised of these. And, you know, I'm very
11 comfortable with separating out the operation from the
12 policy areas.

13 And then obviously, an individual board member
14 who may have a particular interest or desire in a given
15 area, certainly has the opportunity to engage with the
16 CEO and staff to get comfortable with whatever that RFP
17 is.

18 (Multiple speakers at once.)

19 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Yes.

20 DIRECTOR BAGNERIS: Yes, Director La Belle.

21 This is Director Bagneris. I would agree wholeheartedly
22 with what you just stated, also Director Aitken, Ruiz.
23 I believe that these RPs, we do have opportunity to make
24 input as we go along. So let's just deal with the ones
25 that have the most impact that we might want to review

1 separately. So I would agree with what you just stated.

2 DIRECTOR CERVANTES: Well this is Sandra
3 Cervantes, and I so move that we move forward and
4 approve.

5 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Is there a second?

6 DIRECTOR AITKEN: This is Ashleigh. Second.

7 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Okay. The motion then
8 would be to move forward with the recommendation from
9 the CEO that operational issues be handled by staff, big
10 picture policy issues be addressed by the Board and if
11 there's a specific area that an individual board member
12 is interested in, they can obviously reach out to the
13 CEO for -- for input and guidance. Is that the essence
14 of the motion? Everybody good with that?

15 DIRECTOR BAGNERIS: Yes, I am.

16 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Okay. Summer, if we're
17 ready -- Summer, can you take roll please?

18 SECRETARY ANGUS: Vice Chair La Belle?

19 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Yes.

20 SECRETARY ANGUS: Director Cervantes?

21 DIRECTOR CERVANTES: Yes.

22 SECRETARY ANGUS: Director Ruiz?

23 DIRECTOR RUIZ: Yes.

24 SECRETARY ANGUS: Director Bagneris?

25 DIRECTOR BAGNERIS: Yes.

1 SECRETARY ANGUS: Director Aitken?

2 DIRECTOR AITKEN: Yes.

3 SECRETARY ANGUS: Director Pham?

4 DIRECTOR PHAM: Yes.

5 SECRETARY ANGUS: And Director Kovacevich?

6 DIRECTOR KOVACEVICH: Yes.

7 SECRETARY ANGUS: Thank you.

8 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Well, that brings us to
9 the end of the agenda, and at this point in time, I'd
10 like to afford each of the directors the opportunity to
11 make any final comments. And following that, we will
12 adjourn to our January 28th board meeting. Let's start
13 with Director Aitken, any comments?

14 DIRECTOR AITKEN: Thank you so much. Just
15 wanted to wish everybody a happy holiday season, and
16 stay safe. I can't wait for this year to be over. I
17 think that our staff has done such an amazing job as
18 have my fellow board members in being able to pivot,
19 being able to navigate, being able to really just be
20 creative. I've been so impressed with everybody on this
21 board, and then the staff for all their hard work and
22 really just dedication to this amazing endeavor that
23 we're all a part of, so with that, thank you. And happy
24 holidays everyone.

25 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Thank you, Ashleigh.

1 Director Bagneris?

2 DIRECTOR BAGNERIS: Yes. I would just like to
3 wish everybody a Happy Hanukkah, Merry Christmas, Feliz
4 Navidad, Kwanzaa, whatever you celebrate. Have an
5 enjoyable and safe holiday. I would like to also thank
6 the staff, all of the staff at the fairgrounds. This
7 has been one heck of a year, and we're going to have to
8 carry it into next year, unfortunately.

9 I wish that at midnight on December 31st this
10 would just all disappear, but we know that we have a
11 little more time to go with this but there is light at
12 the end of the tunnel. So just thank you for those that
13 had to work from home or come in and out of the office,
14 we really, really appreciate all that you do. And I
15 want to wish my fellow board members a happy holidays as
16 well, and this comment about the new committee
17 structure, it was long overdue. I love the structure,
18 and I think we're going to get great benefit from having
19 the streamline process. So thank you, everybody. Enjoy
20 your holidays. Be safe.

21 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Thank you, Barbara.
22 Director Cervantes?

23 DIRECTOR CERVANTES: Yes. Happy holidays to
24 all. Merry Christmas, and a special thanks to all of
25 the staff. Everybody has worked so hard into adding a

1 lot of extra joy to people's lives in a time that has
2 really been a trying year for all. And thank you to all
3 of the board members. And, again, Happy New Year as
4 well. Buh-bye.

5 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Thank you, Sandra.
6 Director Kovacevich?

7 DIRECTOR KOVACEVICH: Yeah. I just want to
8 echo everyone's comments. Happy holidays. I look
9 forward to seeing everyone next year. 2021 was a very
10 difficult year, and I think not -- we can't say enough
11 about the way that the staff was able to navigate the
12 numbers, you know, the budget that they were able to
13 make despite the challenges is impressive.

14 Obviously the Board did play their part in
15 navigating a challenging year. I mean, it feels really
16 good to come to the end of the year with a light at the
17 end of the tunnel, the vaccines recently hitting
18 California. And we know next year will be challenging
19 but not quite as challenging as this year, and I have
20 every bit of confidence in the staff and the Board's
21 ability to maximize our opportunity in 2021.

22 So thank you guys for the hard work this year.
23 Look forward to the momentum that we seem to be having
24 going into 2021. And like I said, happy holidays, and
25 stay safe everyone.

1 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Thanks Nick. Director
2 Pham?

3 DIRECTOR PHAM: Yeah. I just wanted to echo
4 everyone else's sentiments. Wish everyone happy
5 holidays and looking forward to seeing everyone next
6 year. Thanks.

7 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Thank you Newton.
8 Director Ruiz?

9 DIRECTOR RUIZ: Yes. Hi. I just wanted to say
10 same thing as everyone else. I wanted to thank Michele
11 and staff for a job well done throughout this year and
12 wanted to wish everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy
13 Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, I hope I didn't leave anybody out.

14 And please wear your mask. We had some
15 infections here at the office. It put one of them in
16 the hospital. We didn't think he was going to make it,
17 but thank God he's at home now with an oxygen tank. And
18 please take this seriously. This pandemic is very
19 serious, and I just urge everyone to wear your mask and
20 hope to see everyone in 2021. Take care, and God bless
21 everyone. Thank you.

22 VICE CHAIR LA BELLE: Thank you, Robert. I
23 will just ditto everyone's comments. And, Robert, I
24 very much appreciate your outreach and reminding
25 everybody to wear a mask, social distance. Stay safe.

1 I know I've been under house arrest for 10 months and
2 just want to get out so bad, but I also want everybody
3 to be safe, and that's what we need to do to turn this
4 thing around.

5 Again, happy holidays to everyone. I want to
6 ditto the comments relative to Michele and staff. This
7 has been a tremendously challenging time for our staff
8 and staffs everywhere. And I want to thank them for all
9 their hard work, thank the Board for all of your hard
10 work. And let's -- let's make sure that 2021 is a
11 better year. So with that, if there are no further
12 comments, I will adjourn the board meeting until January
13 28th, 2021.

14 (Whereupon, the OCFEC Board of Directors
15 Meeting was hereby adjourned at 10:49 a.m.)

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CERTIFICATE
OF
CERTIFIED SHORTHAND REPORTER
* * * *

The undersigned Certified Shorthand Reporter of the State of California does hereby certify:

That the foregoing Proceeding was taken before me at the time and place therein set forth.

That the statements made at the time of the Proceeding were recorded stenographically by me and were thereafter transcribed, said transcript being a true and correct copy of the proceedings thereof.

In witness whereof, I have subscribed my name, this date: 12/27/2020

Patricia Garrido

Patricia Garrido, CSR No. 14364

OC COUNTY FAIR AND EVENT CENTER
Board of Directors Meeting on 12/17/2020

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