

**MINUTES OF OCFEC BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
HELD SEPTEMBER 9, 2021**

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Rubalcava-Garcia called the meeting to order at 9:09 a.m.

2. MISSION STATEMENT

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by Director Sandra Cervantes. 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 and Director Kovacevich.

DIRECTORS ABSENT/EXCUSED: Director Pham

OTHERS PRESENT:

(Via Zoom): Michele Richards, OCFEC CEO; Joan Hamill, OCFEC Chief Business Development Officer; Jason Jacobsen, OCFEC Director of Planning & Presentation; Terry Moore, OCFEC Director of Communications; Summer Angus, OCFEC Executive Assistant; Stephen Sunseri, Office of the Attorney; Roy Englebrecht; Reggie Mundekis; Gibran Stout; Jeanine Robbins

Director Aitken joined the meeting after roll call.

5. MATTERS OF PUBLIC COMMENT

Roy Englebrecht, Fight Club OC promoter, requested the Board agendaize an item to vote on amending the current cannabis policy to allow event specific cannabis advertising at events, like Fight Club OC. He asserted there would be no signage outside the building, only during the Fight Club OC event, where flyers could be distributed and the sponsor could have a booth. He added that once the event was over all signage would be removed. He urged the Board to reconsider the current policy on the ban of cannabis and allow event specific cannabis advertising.

Jeanine Robbins, Paradise Cigars, reported that the OC Swap Meet vendor numbers are growing. She requested the Board agendaize a review of the current cannabis policy. She discussed her business has sold glass pipes at the OC Marketplace for years as well as the fair, and since the cannabis policy and post covid, she is no longer allowed to sell those items as the policy is now interpreting them as drug paraphernalia. She asserted now that cannabis is legal in the State of California, the Board should agendaize a review of the cannabis policy.

6. GOVERNANCE PROCESS

A. 3-Year Strategic Planning Workshop #1 to Include Discussions and Vote on Organizational Purpose, Vision, Mission and Values with Initial Goal Setting for OCFEC Programming

Chair Rubalcava-Garcia introduced the agenda item.

CEO Richards explained that strategic planning is a process and it has been a very long time since the organization has completed one. She outlined the following for the strategic plan process:

- Purpose: Lay the Foundation
 - Purpose, Vision, Mission, Values, Business model
- Programming: Strategic Direction
 - Annual OC Fair: 2022-2024
 - Year-Round Events Program
 - Educational Assets (Centennial Farm, Heroes Hall, Imaginology)
 - Foundations (Heroes Hall Veterans Foundation, Centennial Farm Foundation)
 - Equestrian Center
 - Community Support (Resiliency Center)
- Property: Strategic Direction
 - Infrastructure Study
 - Master Site Plan

CEO Richards explained the Board will set strategic direction for programming and the programming will drive the property. She discussed building the foundation as:

- Foundation – what is our purpose statement – this is a forever view (Purpose is why we exist, what drives us)
- Vision - “One day”
- Mission - “Today”
- Values - “Right now”

CEO Richards highlighted some items from the Board’s pre-work on what as an organization is mandated (of OCFEC), or what is the purpose of the OCFEC:

- Utilize the property year-round and serve as many constituents as possible
- Remain competitive for our business partners so we can expand and provide education and community opportunities
- Provide educational and entertainment programs for our guests
- Safety for all employees and attendees
- All community is welcome and we have programming that covers a wide range of interests
- We deliver value to our State and our community
- We govern our operations to maintain compliance with all applicable laws at the local, state and federal level
- Maintain a secure and stable operating budget for our future

- Our events must have substantial value and create meaningful experiences that are of interest to a target population
- Create meaningful relationships with our local families, enterprises, organizations and neighboring communities

The Board completed an exercise for “What is our Purpose.” They answered the following questions:

- Why does the OC Fair & Event Center exist?
- What is the reason the OC Fair & Event Center was created?
- What is the connection between what we do at OCFEC and the benefits we deliver to people’s lives?

The Board, working with partners, distilled what they wrote into a single sentence:

- Develop, support and implement programs that maximize educational opportunities
- Commitment to the community and ensure an open meeting or gathering space
- Creating equitable access to the community at large by providing agriculture, history, education, entertainment and cultural experiences

The Board discussed the statements.

The Board as a group created the following sentence for a draft purpose statement: Our purpose is: Creating equitable community access to agriculture, entertainment, cultural and educational experiences.

CEO Richards discussed the Board setting a vision statement our “one day,” described as:

- Our vision sets our sites on the future
- Our vision provides a clear, easily understood image of a better future
- Our vision defines where we are heading
- Our vision inspires us

She also gave examples of company vision statements and stated vision statements are forward looking.

The Board completed an exercise to write a newspaper article, reporting on OCFEC three years from now (items presented):

Directors Aitken and Cervantes

Name the newspaper:

- The Pig Trough

Headlines:

- Music and Arts Festival Brings Together OC Kids
- 2024 Fair - Most Profitable in History
- Lady Gaga Closes Show with Third Sellout

- Last Brick Layed in Heroes Walk
 - Brick Honors OC's Last Living WWII Veteran
 - Heroes Hall Hosts Thousands at Day-long Picnic
- Farm Chop Fun
 - OC Chef Wins Organic Food Battle
 - Food Critics Rave About Creative Use of Centennial Farm
 - Youngest Contestant Former Student at OCFEC Food Kitchen

Directors Kovacevich, Ruiz and Chair Rubalcava-Garica
Name the newspaper:

- World's Best News

Headlines:

- Architectural Digest Set to Profile Project Recently Completed at the OC Fairgrounds
- Survey Shows All Orange County Residents attend the OC Fairgrounds at Least Once This Past Year
- Successful Summer Fair Sets Up 2024 to be Record Year for Local Business Vendor Participation at the Fairgrounds
- California Governor Visits OC Fair, Commends Leadership or Broad Cultural Representation Throughout 2024
- In Rare Move, PETA Officials Commend OC Fair for Stellar Treatment of Animals on Property

Vice Chair La Belle

Name the newspaper:

- Papa Doug's Daily Bruin and Dirt Bag Newsletter

Headlines:

- OC Fair and Event Center Has a Banner Year
- Yearly Revenues Reach an All-Time High
- Customer Say the Food, Entertainment, and Educational Exhibits at the OC Fair Were the Best Ever
- At Centennial Farm and Heroes Hall the Educational Opportunities Provided Were Fantastic
- Community Leadership Praises the Excellent Efforts of the OC Fair & Event Center to Provide Programs for their Constituents

Board completed an exercise in groups to draft a forward looking and inspirational vision statement; group statements presented:

- As we serve our constituents, be all that we can be
- Becoming the place where the community gathers and finds value
- Creating joy in a safe space for all OC families

The Board discussed the statements above to combine ideas into one draft vision statement:

- Orange County's town square the safe place where the community gathers and finds value

CEO Richards asked if the current mission statement is still relevant – the board discussed (The mission of OCFEC is...Celebration of Orange County's Communities, Interests, Agriculture and Heritage - with results justifying resources expended):

- Eliminating (with results justifying resources expended) in the current mission statement
- Changing the word celebration to serving, recognition, promoting or representing
- Purpose statement can serve as the mission statement
 - Create equitable community access to agriculture, history, entertainment, cultural and educational experiences
 - Revisit the purpose statement and incorporate California government code mandating the annual OC Fair

CEO Richards discussed the Board driving the process by drafting a strategic plan, then put the draft out to the stakeholders for feedback:

- The Board to decide when to seek feedback, how to seek feedback, what feedback they want from the stakeholders

CEO Richards asked if the current values still describes us or do any need to be changed, deleted or added. Some items the Board discussed:

- Add security to safety (safety and security having two different meanings to people)
- Revisiting the value descriptions/definitions due to them being too wordy – needs to be refined
 - Statements need to be more succinct
- Reminded to be respectful of each other and be stewards of the property
- Add equity to diversity and inclusion statement (only making this addition and revisiting the value statement at a later date)
- It being a different time when the original values were developed

CEO Richards discussed how other CEOs ran the property and what they focused on. She asserted that staff needs to be very clear on the Board's direction.

CEO Richards asked what is the right business model for the property and shared revenue percentage numbers from 2019.

The Board discussed what areas of emphasis they would like to see, item discussed:

- Priority for a successful fair
- Expanding year-round offerings / utilizing the Hangar and Pacific Amphitheatre
 - Wine and music festivals
- Imaginology becoming revenue generating / opportunity for growth

- Self-produced events
 - Creation of new events
 - Revenue sharing
 - Leveraging staff and focus on year-round events and self-produced events
- Large events like Barrette Jackson or Cirque du Soleil
- More revenues to go back to community programs

CEO Richards discussed what the Board should be thinking about to form a general strategic direction. She discussed:

- Attendance vs. profitability
 - Attendance is no longer a metric we will chase
 - Measure in guest experience

Gibran Stout asked for the Board's definition of the equitable.

Chair Rubalcava-Garcia read the value statement the Board added equitable to: We celebrate people from all backgrounds, experiences and identities. Because we are responsible not only for ourselves but also for others, we speak out against hatred and bigotry whenever and wherever we find them. We strive to maintain a welcoming community where everyone is treated with respect and dignity and can be proud of who they are.

No action taken.

7. BOARD OF DIRECTORS MATTERS OF INFORMATION

12. NEXT BOARD MEETING: SEPTEMBER 13 & 23, 2021

13. ADJOURNMENT MOTION TO ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned 11:58 a.m.


Natalie Rubalcava-Garcia, Chair


Michele Richards, Chief Executive Officer