

**MINUTES OF OCFEC BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
HELD December 16, 2021**

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair La Belle called the meeting to order at 3:06 p.m.

2. MISSION STATEMENT

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by Director Nick Kovacevich. Roll call was taken by Summer Angus.

4. DIRECTORS PRESENT (via Zoom):

Chair La Belle, Vice Chair Pham, Director Rubalcava-Garcia, Director Cervantes, Director Bagneris, Director Aitken, Director Kovacevich and Director Rafiei.

Director Bagneris joined the meeting after roll call at 3:24 p.m.

DIRECTORS ABSENT/EXCUSED: Director Ruiz.

OTHERS PRESENT:

(Via Zoom): Michele Richards, OCFEC CEO; Ken Karns, OCFEC Chief Operating Officer; 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; Gibran Stout

5. MATTERS OF PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

6. GOVERNANCE PROCESS

A. 3-Year Strategic Planning Workshop #3 to Discuss Strategic Direction for OCFEC Programming

CEO Richards reiterated what Board accomplished from workshops one and two:

- The 32nd DAA's purposes under the CDFA Code:
 - to hold fairs, expositions and exhibitions in Orange County to exhibit the industries and industrial enterprises, resources, and products of every kind or nature of the state, with a view toward improving, exploiting, encouraging, and stimulating them; and
 - to construct, maintain, and operate recreational and cultural facilities of general public interest in Orange County
- Draft Vision Statement:
 - Orange County's town square – the safe place where the community gathers and finds value
- Draft Mission Statement:

- Creating equitable community access to agriculture, entertainment, cultural and educational experiences

CEO Richards discussed the plan for today's workshop; to develop strategic direction for year-round events program, educational assets and foundations, and community support efforts. She discussed the draft strategic direction the Board has decided upon for the following:

- Equestrian Center:
 - Strategic Direction #1 - Will serve as a true public asset to ensure greater access to a broader group of constituents throughout OC. It will be operated as a "best in breed" equine venue with the highest standards of care for boarded horses and animals in need of shelter during emergencies.
 - Strategic Direction #2: - OCFEC staff will operate the equestrian center, planning and executing programming to the maximum benefit of the public. The programming will be focused on equine education and entertainment for the public.
 - Strategic Direction #3 - Programming will be integrated into other OCFEC activities throughout the year including the annual OC Fair and Imaginology
 - Strategic Direction #4 - The business model for the equestrian center will balance the requirement to operate as a public benefit venue with the need to be financially sound.
- Annual OC Fair:
 - Strategic Direction #1 - The annual OC Fair will establish public/private partnerships designed to benefit and increase accessibility to lower income residents of OC so that all are provided a full fair experience.
 - Strategic Direction #2: - The annual OC Fair will create an opportunity each year for increased local business participation for merchants and concessionaires.
 - Strategic Direction #3 - Marketing and advertising plans will focus on promoting and highlighting free of charge programming at the annual OC Fair in order to become the #1 destination of choice for family activities each summer. The OC Fair will be "a place where you can break out with your family without breaking the bank."
 - Strategic Direction #4 - The OC Fair will be the #1 fair in the State of California and in the Top Five in the U.S. for providing an exceptional guest experience to include educational offerings, exhibits that highlight the community and activities that promote traditions and family connections.

CEO Richards reported income from year-round events from 2017-2022. She read statements submitted by the Board members from their pre-work, including the SWOT analysis.

The Board (working in partners) completed an exercise regarding where they would like to see the year-round events program by the year 2024. Board members were asked to:

- Develop 2-3 strategic goals for year-round events
- Write a statement for each goal that connects with the vision statement
 - Chair La Belle and Vice Chair Pham:
 - 13% of revenue generated by year-round events
 - Specific activity related to Centennial Farm and Heroes Hall – spring or fall event (same for the EQC)
 - Expanding activities for youth (like Imaginology type event) – program throughout the course of the year
 - Expand partnership with OC cities (example all cities picnic)
 - Expand Cities Days program to year-round
 - Partner with Angeles baseball team involved in activities throughout the year
 - Major type event like Barret Jackson (as in past years)
 - Youth orientated events / invest in youth
 - Highlight facilities
 - City/community events held at OCFEC
 - Directors Bagneris and Aitken:
 - Town square environment
 - Increase profitability - add more year-round events
 - Enhance self-produced events
 - Quarterly programing
 - Fall festival event
 - Cultural/heritage fairs/events (self-produced or third party event)
 - Capitalizing on community energy that already exists
 - Community events that are inclusive of Centennial Farm and/or Heroes Hall
 - Directors Cervantes and Kovacevich:
 - Expand the team for more self-produced events
 - “By curating and offering our own events, we can deliver the most relevant content and best unique experiences for Orange County’s constituents.”
 - Capitalize on opportunity of self-produced events
 - Engage business community - secure ten corporate events per year
 - “To be a well-known and frequently used venue for Orange County’s businesses and business leaders.”

- Establishing OCFEC as a venue where business and corporations have their events
- bring awareness to all the offerings at OCFEC
- Directors Rubalcava-Garcia and Rafiei:
 - Events at OCFEC be more inclusive and represent the diversity in Orange County
 - OCFEC be the place for more cultural events (events related to Juneteenth, Pride Parade, Cinco de Mayo, Dia de Los Muertos, Tet Festival, etc.)
 - Create opportunities for small, local businesses in the community to connect with a robust work force in Orange County
 - Cannabis events – trade show
 - Job fairs – opportunities for local workforce

CEO Richards discussed OCFEC educational assets, Centennial Farm and Heroes Hall. She read statements submitted by the Board members from their pre-work regarding educational assets and foundations.

The Board (working in partners) completed an exercise regarding where they see Centennial Farm and Heroes Hall by the year 2024. Board members were asked to:

- Develop 2-3 strategic goals for Centennial Farm and 2-3 goals for Heroes Hall
- Write a statement for each goal that connects with the vision statement
 - Directors Bagneris and Aitken:
 - Defining a connection and relationship between the Board and the foundations
 - Exploring deliverables that make sense
 - Working with the legislative committee to enable public entities and/or public officials to hold official events at OCFEC's educational assets for free or reduced cost
 - Exploring community events like farm days or fall festivals, bringing more to OCFEC's educational assets
 - Directors Rubalcava-Garcia and Rafiei:
 - Leverage foundations' donations to:
 - Make more accessible to youth
 - Work with school districts to make Centennial Farm and/or the Equestrian Center an educational destination for students to learn

more about agriculture, health and wellness

- Food education
- Incorporate mental health and wellness - introduce equine therapy
- Monthly tours at Heroes Hall for students
 - Have a veteran or active Military person on site to help teach
 - Use foundation to offset some of the costs to get students to the facility
- Directors Cervantes and Kovacevich:
 - Centennial Farm
 - Create more educational content and educational events around producing and eating healthy agricultural foods
 - Education around home agricultural technologies (example vertical farming)
 - More content and opportunity
 - Create partnership to provide fresh produce to local restaurants creating more exposure/possible revenue
 - Farm to table events
 - Heroes Hall
 - Create the premier annual Veterans Day event in Orange County to be centered at Heroes Hall
 - To connect Orange County's youth with the Orange County veteran community through event activities and education
 - Share stories
 - Pen pal program
- Chair La Belle and Vice Chair Pham:
 - Work with the school system to leverage Centennial Farm and Heroes Hall for educational opportunities spanning all age groups
 - Direct outreach to school to find opportunities (field trips)
 - Leverage credit earning opportunities
 - Having the community understand the underlying contributions that Centennial Farm and Heroes Hall represent
 - Highlight how agriculture and defense contribute significantly - how food gets to the table and understanding sacrifices for freedom

Gibran Stout asked for a specific definition for “public programming,” if they are public/community events or solely events that are free or fee based. She asked for clarification and definition of “public programming,” “community events,” and “public events.”

CEO Richards discussed OC FEC related to community support/resiliency center.

The Board (working in partners) completed an exercise regarding where they see Community Support by the year 2024. Board members were asked to:

- Develop 2-3 strategic goals for Community Support
- Write a statement for each goal that connects with the vision statement
 - Directors Cervantes and Kovacevich:
 - To create a robust media campaign that showcases OC FEC’s commitment to the community and its charitable contributions (open up for future opportunities)
 - To galvanize stakeholders to complement our efforts in supporting the community
 - Creating awareness to influence and hopefully garner additional support
 - Chair La Belle and Vice Chair Pham:
 - Make sure staff has the resources, in terms of equipment, facilities and staff resources, needed when the property is called upon in an emergency
 - Directors Rubalcava-Garcia and Rafiei:
 - Elevate the work the fairgrounds did during the pandemic
 - Serve as the place where people can get food (during an emergency)
 - Utilizing the property for natural disaster relief
 - Engaging youth
 - Leveraging the fairgrounds and bring in schools/students to engage with the sheriff’s department/fire department
 - Property used as a training facility for agencies for emergency training
 - Directors Bageneris and Aitken
 - Work with legislators to change government code allowing free or reduced costs to use the property for local non-profits/public officials
 - Evaluate and exhaust grant opportunities

CEO Richard assigned the Board homework, and posed this question, “Does OCFEC have the right property/facilities in the right places to execute on the Board’s strategic ideas?” She asked the Board to think about that question and review the infrastructure study and the draft master site plan summaries for the January Board meeting.

CEO Richard reported OCFEC has several emergency agreements for use of the property:

- Bioterrorism decontamination center
- CalOES to serve as a major mass emergency reception center
- OC Animal care to house large animals in an emergency

7. BOARD OF DIRECTORS MATTERS OF INFORMATION

Chair La Belle shared his hopes for the strategic planning process to be concluded by February.

12. NEXT BOARD MEETING: DECEMBER 16, 2021

13. ADJOURNMENT MOTION TO ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned 5:11 p.m.

Doug La Belle, Chair

Michele Richards, Chief Executive Officer