

OCFEC May 22, 2025 Board Meeting

Glenn Johnson

Okay, so for those who don't know me, I'm Glenn Johnson. I'm the president of the Centennial Farm Foundation, and today I'm coming in here to donate another check to the fairgrounds for the money that we raised this year. So a week ago, last Friday, we had our fourth... we call it now a Charity Shoot. We bought the blood chute. So we changed the name to the charity. We had it out to Raahauge's out in Corona. We changed the format where we had more of a boarding kickoff with a significantly, I forgot riddle breakfast type of thing, but we had a full breakfast serves, and that was donated to the farm, all costs recovered by VG. So we really appreciate the donation to us. We had the number of people in this room with 1010. Was there at the event. Michele was there, and Michele was there. We had a lot more items this year than we did in the sign auction and the live auction wrapping things off. And so we did very well. We've also, as I mentioned a couple years ago, at this meeting, we started a new website and social media outreach that is turning out to be very profitable for us. We've had donations that come in through that. And so where, last year, we donated \$30,000 to the fairgrounds that came from the fund shoot this year I have a check for \$50,000 so over ever since the end of COVID and what this is our fourth charity shoot since the end of COVID the centennial farm Foundation has been able to donate in excess of \$150,000 to the bar. I have the check here for \$50,000 this may not be our last check of the year. It will be back again at another board meeting, donating some more money to to the farm. So for those who have not gone to the farm, it's the best thing of the fairgrounds say that, right? Yeah, here we are with some more money for everybody.

Nick Kovacevich

Now, we'll officially start the meeting. Good morning. Everyone. Nice to start on the back of that great donation. So I kicked us off on the right foot and noticed on this agenda any category may be considered for action is listed. Any item not so notice may not be considered items listed on this agenda may be considered any murder. Expression, Chairperson, the mission of the OCFEC is enhancing equitable community access to agriculture, entertainment, cultural and educational experiences. And Director Rubal-Cava Garcia is already standing, do you mind leading us in the pledge?

**Natalie
Rubalcava-Garcia**

Absolutely, right hand over your heart, ready begin.

Everyone

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with

liberty and justice for all.

Nick Kovacevich Great, and after that, we will do the roll call. Summer.

Summer Angus Chair Kovacevich?

Nick Kovacevich Here.

Summer Angus Vice Chair Bagneris?

Barbara Bagneris Here.

Summer Angus Director Pham?

Newton Pham Here.

Summer Angus Director La Belle? Director Rubal-Cava Garcia?

Natalie Here.

Rubalcava-Garcia

Summer Angus Director Ruiz? Director Bilezikjian?

Tanya Bilezikjian Here.

Summer Angus And Director Jackson?

Dimetria Jackson here.

Summer Angus Thank you.

Nick Kovacevich Now that we're gonna go ahead and do the minutes. So we have minutes from board being held April 24 we have minutes from the board meeting held May 7, and we also have minutes from the board meeting held May 12. If the directors have some questions or comments on these minutes.

Barbara Bagneris Chair, I move that we approve the minutes.

Nick Kovacevich We have a motion.

Tanya Bilezikjian Second.

Nick Kovacevich We have a motion, and a second. Summer.

Summer Angus Chair Kovacevich?

Nick Kovacevich Yes.

Summer Angus Vice Chair Bagneris?

Barbara Bagneris	Yes.
Summer Angus	Director Pham?
Newton Pham	Yes.
Summer Angus	Director Rubalcava Garcia?
Natalie Rubalcava-Garcia	Yes.
Summer Angus	Director Bilezikjian?
Tanya Bilezikjian	Yes.
Summer Angus	And Director Jackson?
Dimetria Jackson	Yes.
Summer Angus	Thank you.
Nick Kovacevich	<p>Okay, and then we will jump to item number six, which is the consent calendar. All matters listed under the Consent Calendar are operational matters, but our support has governing policies, implementation of which is delegated to the CEO. They will be enacted in one motion. There'll be no discussion of these items prior to the time the Board of Directors votes on the motion, unless members of the board, staff or public request specific items to be discussed separately and or removed from the section. Any members of the public who wishes to discuss Consent Calendar items should notify the chair of the board, time request and be recognized by invitation the chair to address the board. We do not have any comments specifically on the consent calendar from the public. Do we have any items that we'd like to remove?</p>
Michele Richards	<p>We do actually, let's start with under our standard agreements, contract number SA 120-25 ft and 121 25 YR. Those are contracts that are still in the works with the city of Costa Mesa. We're waiting on some additional information. It's for traffic management. One is for year round, the others for during the fair. So they'll bring those back when we have have the information complete. And then under rental agreements, R-090-25, you'll actually see that twice on the consent calendar, that was a clerical error. We repeated the number, so we are removing the second one, R 090- 25. The contract with synchronous. I'm sorry, with Retail Finance International Holdings, it's for a Club OC event during the fair with synchrony summer event. Then we'll bring that back as well with a new number, so we run plenty of time for both of those. Other than that, we're good to go.</p>

Barbara Bagneris	I move the Consent Calendar.
Nick Kovacevich	Motion.
Tanya Bilezikjian	Second.
Nick Kovacevich	Motion and second, Summer.
Summer Angus	Director Kovacevich?
Nick Kovacevich	Yes.
Summer Angus	Director Pham?
Newton Pham	Yes.
Summer Angus	Director Rubal-Cava Garcia?
Natalie Rubalcava-Garcia	Yes.
Summer Angus	Director Bilezikjian?
Tanya Bilezikjian	Yes.
Summer Angus	And Director Jackson?
Dimetria Jackson	Yes.
Summer Angus	Thank you.
Nick Kovacevich	Okay, great. Let's see. We'll go ahead and jump to the governance process. Agenda, Item Number 10 A, we will go ahead and do number 10 A, which is the proclamation, and I'll turn it over to the Community Affairs committee to lead us.
Natalie Rubalcava-Garcia	Thank you Chair Kovacevich, as everybody knows the community affairs committee is made up of myself and fearless Director Jackson, and we have the great honor of recognizing people who made an impact in Orange County. And today, we are grateful to be able to recommend Glen Tanaka for Asian, American Native, Hawaiian and Pacific Islander month so we can go ahead and bring... so before We give the presentation, we just want to share what Mr. Tanaka here has done in Orange County. So Glenn Tanaka was born in 1957 in Orange County to a family with a proud history of farming and agriculture, tracing back to Japan. Finishing high school early. Glenn majored in agricultural business at Cal Poly Pomona, also graduating early. After leaving college, Glenn expanded the family's Tanaka Farms operation in Orange County, growing mainly tomatoes and strawberries. He married his wife,

Shirley, and together they raised their son, Kenny, who continued to work in the family business. When Kenny's preschool class toured Tanaka Farms in the late 1980s when envisioned a future in agri-tourism, which is a big word, I had to read that multiple times. The agritourism is a thing in Orange County. Thank you. Land Development by the city of Irvine resulted in Tanaka Farms moving the family farm from Irvine Center Drive to strawberry Farms Road in 1998 where it remains today. Or there's also a really nice golf course. Tanaka farm celebrates the Hakari festival in the winter, the barnyard educational exhibit petting zoo, the chicken Club, which educates children about raising chickens, as well as school tours throughout the year. Tanaka Farms has been a wonderful partner with Centennial Farms in our agricultural education programs. Today, we thank Glenn and the Tanaka family for their commitment to the Orange County community. I'm going to go ahead and turn it over to Director Jackson so she can go ahead and present the proclamation.

Dimetria Jackson

Okay, the proclamation resolution the Board of Directors of the 32nd District agricultural Association regarding Asian, American, Pacific Islander history month. Whereas the 32nd District agriculture Association's mission is to enhancing equitable community access to agriculture, entertainment, cultural and educational experiences. Whereas the district's vision is Orange County's town square, a safe place where the community gathers and finds value. And whereas the district recognizes the importance of honoring the month of May as Asian American Pacific Islander History Month. And whereas the district recognizes AAPI communities and their achievements in agriculture, the arts, literature, sciences, medicine, military service, businesses, entrepreneurship and whereas the district celebrates AAPI communities and their contributions to the rich, diverse culture and heritage of Orange County. And further resolved OC fair and Event Center reinforces the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion and nondiscrimination as core institutional values, and that safety is the underlying element to making any one person or community feel welcome in nearly any setting. Further resolve, there's a position of the OC fair and event center board of directors and staff to enforce the policy prohibiting discrimination of any person on the basis of race, ethnicity, nationality or sexual orientation, and to respond to all concerns according Now, therefore, the Board of Directors of the district hereby proclaims the month of May as Asian American Pacific Islander History Month at OC Fair and Events Center in honor of Asian American Pacific Islander month, 2025 the 32nd District agriculture Association honors Glen Tanaka, who continues his family's agricultural legacy. Through Tanaka Farms and his community supported agricultural program. We celebrated service to the community through a support of school field trips like at Centennial farm, where children and their families can learn

about where their food comes from and how it's grown.

Glen Tanaka

Thank you very much. I when I talk to people about I give my talks, talk about agriculture being a great tie amongst really, most of us have February roots in our history. So I used to talk about how Debbie and how she runs the Centennial Farms over there. We're in direct competition with what we do, but we actually provide totally different experiences. And really the amount of people that come through here come through the Centennial Farms, farms, that just shows that there's that knowledge that thirst through history, agriculture, history. So I appreciate the recognition that we do anything for free advertising.

Nick Kovacevich

Okay, thank you so much the wonderful people you guys find since perfect.

**Natalie
Rubalcava-Garcia**

This one had a great tie right into agricultural rates.

Nick Kovacevich

I see, I see why. I see why you made the extra effort to be here. We'll go ahead and take public comment here before we break before we break for closed session, and we do have a few public comments beforehand, I will read the statement which is public comments allowed on issues on the current agenda. However, no debate by the Board shall be permitted on such public comments and no action will be taken on such public comment items at this time as law requires formal public notice prior to the action on an agenda item. Speakers requested to submit a comment card to the meeting Secretary prior to start the meeting and limited to three minutes. Comments will be accepted on all other agenda items at the time each item is listed on the agenda. Speakers wishing to address the board items on the agenda requested to fill out and submit a comment card of the meeting Secretary identifying the agenda items on which you desire to address to the board. Speakers are limited to three minutes, so we do have a couple of public comments. First, we have Brent Bucha on Zoom.

Summer Angus

You're On zoom, you can start when you're ready.

Nick Kovacevich

Next, we have Omar here.

Omar Kurachi

Good afternoon. Sorry. I'm not really good at public speaking. I don't know how you guys do it, but I'm going to be the best I can. I got some notes written down exactly what I want to say real quickly. Thank you for this opportunity. I'm a member of democracy care. I brought a proposal with being for the 2025 fair, if not, perhaps it would be considered in the future. It's new and it's innovative. And also, I just want to say thank you for your time and leadership and letting vendors like myself be seen and heard. It's really valued and appreciated. There's

a community with tennis vendors, and I know Miss Richards is going to be leaving, I struggle forward with all of us. Thank you for your leadership over the years. Sincerely. Do mean that? Yeah, we don't. Thank you so much for your time, And I'll just pass this over too...

Nick Kovacevich

Okay, next we have a public comment from Macki Hamblin.

Macki Hamblin

Morning thank you for being here today. I just had a comment on the first Ranch day I got to go last week at the old equestrian center. And it was an interesting experience. I got to ride some stick horses. I got to look at a few horses. I got to look at some pin up boards with pictures on them. I got to see some stalls that were transformed into an exhibit with a little rope so you couldn't go in. And I got to see an example of an empty stall with more information pinned up on it. And I got to see some really cool, big horse statues. So I just found it really inspiring, and it really made me realize how unnecessary hands on interactive experiences really are. So I just wanted to give some advice and see that there's probably ways that we could enhance the fair by doing some similar things. It's like at the fair, we could just, you know, get rid of riding the Ferris wheel, and we could just have a rope around it, and then we could just look at the first and we could get rid of all the vendors and just put mannequins in there and have people walk by and see what it used to look like to be able to get a Slurpee or to get a hot dog. Same thing with fight nights. You know, you can bus people in instead of watching people fight and interact and interact with the crowd. They could probably just have pin there and then have people walk by and see what gloves used to look like and stuff like that same thing for car nights, you could probably get rid of the old people that used to bring the cars in and just like, hand out some little fake cars and give them to kids, and they probably get the same experience that we had at the ranch the other day. I. Uh, same thing for concerts. Who needs live music? We could just record it and then play it on the radio, right? So I just thought that could be some really helpful advice so that the ranch center, the model from the ranch, can be exhibited throughout the rest of the fair. So again, thank you. It was a really interesting experience. And see you next month.

Nick Kovacevich

Thank you there for the knee slapper there Macki that was great. Um, next Gibran Stout if you'd like to give three minutes.

Gibran Stout

Yeah, hilarious. I too went to ranch day and was amazed, but I finally got it. I get it, I get it. Director, you said there's a disconnect. I get it, our definition of robust programming is a million miles apart. So again, so thank you for that event, because it really brought it up from disparity in what our ideas of our best programming are. It was great seeing so many people there. It was really disappointing that it took you two and a half years to get the same number of people there that we would have their fully functioning Equestrian Center. Every single day, we would have hundreds of people come through and kids. So it was great to see

them there. It was sad and disappointing to see them sitting backwards on saddles, shaking at hay bale because they wanted it to move. And it was it was sad hearing the kids asking to ride horses when there was none. I was only there for the first half, so I don't know if there was riding demonstrations at the end. Was great seeing some of our troops there. It's great seeing the mounted police. I know we've had them in the past do some really cool interactive demonstrations, so I don't know if they did that later, but I get it. I got it. Ideas of robotic programming are clearly miles apart, so I understand that you wanted to run the Equestrian Center, and I think maybe you guys should just consider doing the roller coasters and the rides too, like forget hiring operators who are trained and experienced. Do it yourself. How'd your staff do it? I think you could save a lot of money and and you can follow the same model we found the equestrian center so so thank you.

Nick Kovacevich

Thank you. That concludes public comment. We're going to go ahead and break for closed session, and we'll be there. Thank you.

Brent

Hey, folks, oh, darn it. Hey, folks, this is Brent Bushnell here. I don't know if I'm too late. I got out of the session there, but my name is Brent Bushnell. I'm an entrepreneur and an attraction maker in Los Angeles. I've been building attractions for 20 years now, had a half a city block Amusement Park in downtown LA, and we're very interested in bringing our attractions to the to the OC county fair. We were just at the LA County Fair. We've been working with Omar Qureshi in that capacity, and we would love your consideration to be able to join in this year with a brand new attraction that I just had on Shark Tank. It's really incredible mixed reality using a very novel approach that we developed, and it's really quite magical. We'd love to be able to share more information with You.

Nick Kovacevich

Thank you. Okay, appreciate that. We will now break for closed session.

Nick Kovacevich

We are back from closed session. We consider the advise of council, and you have nothing to report. So we'll jump back into the agenda, and that takes us to number nine agenda, number nine, which is the CEO operational announcements and updates. Yeah, I'll turn it over to Michele Richards.

Michele Richards

Our State Civil Service employees and year round part time employees are required to complete a course each year in emergency preparedness employees gathered over the last couple of weeks as safety and security Director Nick, wave back there, Nick covered subjects such as emergency evacuation, active shooter response, fire extinguisher use and how to call for help. This course is provided annually as part of everybody every employee's mandatory training, and the team is thrilled that our new replacement diesel forklift has arrived meeting all AQMD

standards. So as as we're replacing our equipment, we're making sure that everything is AQMD.

Barbara Bagneris It's not even Christmas,

Michele Richards and it's not even Christmas. It's not easy, right? The Heroes Hall speaker series continues to attract more and more guests. The April 30 event, co hosted by the heroes Hall veterans Foundation, had to be held in Plaza Pacifica Lobby because so many reserved seats to attend. So it's become very popular on hand to receive a special proclamation from Fifth District OC supervisor Katrina Foley or Bobby McDonald and Nick Berardino from Hero's Hall veterans Foundation, and you see them pictured there with our E director Johanna Stenson. So it was nice to have everybody there for that event. Samantha Sanford is a theater educator in the Irvine Unified School District, working with students across the district's five high schools. The Pacific amphitheater will be partnering with Samantha and her students this summer to provide an educational extension opportunity for them to observe load in sound checks and other technical aspects of the Pacific amphitheater summer concert series, followed by Q and A sessions with the professionals. The goal of the program is to help students expand their understanding of professional workflows and to explore career pathways in live entertainment and technical production, just another example of our community education partnerships at OC fair and Event Center. We are down to detail work on the administration building expansion project. Did a run through with some folks from Sacramento and from CCA yesterday. Ken, thank you for setting that up, including... being installed, doors being hung, and ceiling treatments going in. So and those ceiling treatments are so cool. So this huge open work area that would be so echoing in any normal situation, but if you look at the ceiling treatment, all of that absorbs the sound, so it's going to be a great work environment for our employees. Okay. 56 days and counting. The Livestock tent is up, the sky ride towers are going up, and the new reader boards are being installed and tested at main gate.

Michele Richards Just a few signs that the 2025 OC fair is getting closer and closer and closer, but we'll be ready for sure. And it was a big day for the OC fair and Events Center staff and community as we open the ranch for our first discovery day. So you heard one version I'm going to tell you about the other version, the truth. In an inaugural public event last Wednesday, teachers, students and parents numbered 439 with an additional 80 plus partners and staff who posted a morning all of our voices, first among some, Mayor John Stevens and Mayor Pro Tem. If you look in the upper left hand corner, that's Mayor Stevens in the black jacket and Mayor Pro Tem Manuel Chavez. To my right, they join me in a brief ribbon cutting and introduction and local toe district director for assembly member,

Cottie Petri Norris, was also there to tour the event and the facility. John Storbeck, General Manager of Knott's Berry Farm, was there with his team to see the opening of the exhibits, with knots contributions. The exhibits. teaches visitors about horse food, housing and grooming, and about how horses have been used throughout California's history. Take a look at the bottom middle photo, six members of the Orange County Sheriff's Mounted Unit interacted with the guests and spoke about how horses are used to keep the community safe, and members of the Calguard mounted unit were on hand with some of their horses to teach visitors how horses are used in the military. We have great participation from the ranch trainers, including walk into it and see equestrian our newest trainer, who were both thrilled to be part of the public programming. There were interactive exhibits about chickens and rabbits, honey bees, gardening, large animal evacuations and more. And we'd like to share a little video with you to give you a sense of the fun and excitement in the day you. I just have to publicly acknowledge Evy Young and Teresa Dayton. Okay, so is a phenomenal day, and the first of many to come, right, yes, did you want to say anything? Evy Theresa?

Evy Young

So we're excited to host another one in the fall, and we're continuing to plan and see how we can make improvements and bring in our partners and welcome more students.

Michele Richards

So thank you all. Congratulations to everyone. Exactly.

Nick Kovacevich

I especially love to hear that there's new trainer, yes, on the grounds, and that means there's lessons that are going to be going up, riding lessons, yes, on actual horses. Unbelievable. So we're getting to where we said we would get obviously. Are we done? Is the work done? No, of course? So glad to see some the progress, though, I think, thank the team, really, for the effort on this is it was great. We see it in live and right. I wish I could have been I was out of town.

Michele Richards

A wonderful article in the LA Times daily pilot, one of the teachers who brought her class was interviewed by the reporter, and she said, best field trip she had ever done. So that was...

**Natalie
Rubalcava-Garcia**

Let me just mention. So I know we have have had some negative comments about the ranch, but I have to say it does seem to be serving the intention that we had behind I'm looking at more publicly accessible to everybody. So I have to just great job executing it was really fun. The little stick figure horses. However, seeing it, those kids interacting the way that they were together, I think that you couldn't have asked for anything more. I think the vision was definitely...

Nick Kovacevich

And it's the beauty of what we're doing here, right? Is the dual product strategy, because obviously, if you want to bring in 500 kids, those are

types of activities that you can do, right? But those kids can get engaged, and they can come back on other occasions to dive deeper. You know, do lessons get more involved with the actual horses in a smaller group setting, right? And we have the ability to do that. We've got the ability for private folks to board and and trainers to come and run their business, you know, with private lessons. I mean, it's all there. We've made we've integrated it so well.

**Natalie
Rubalcava-Garcia**

Yeah, and we just face it was not publicly accessible before. There's going to be so many more kids who are exposed to not only the ranch but also the Orange County Fair and Event Center. So I think that is the purpose for the transition that we regardless. We can't make everybody happy. Change is very difficult, but I think in five years, we're going to look back and it was one of the best decisions this board probably has made.

Barbara Bagneris

We can look at it now. Yeah, and these were age-appropriate activities. There wasn't 500 horses running around.

Tanya Bilezikjian

Yeah, we have to talk about safety, right? With 500 people, you can't help them, writing and petting horses and interacting with horses. Young, Young children are there too. So this was the best thing for them

Michele Richards

I think, the board had a vision, and, you know, led by Michele and the exhibits and educational team, the Ag Programs team, and Evie and Teresa just made it happen. And every department was involved, every department in coming together to make that vision a reality. So I'm so extremely proud of the staff. I was actually asked by one of the storytellers before, who said, You must be so proud. And I said, Yes, I am actually very, very proud of this team.

Nick Kovacevich

Yeah, I'll say, you know, it's hard, it's hard sometimes to see the vision. We did get a lot of negative I mean, even press right. And I think, you know, we have a good article. That's because they, they saw it themselves. Listen, when we told the vision right, they couldn't see it right. When it shows up, they can see it right. So maybe good opportunity to get some of the other press back in that couldn't see the vision. You know, maybe a year ago. Maybe they do now, right that it's here and they could hopefully spread the word. Very good, awesome. All right, well, let's keep it going. And you know, we've got a lot of good things happening, but big one is the fair so if you've got to go over now, governance process, agenda item number 10 B, the staff presentation of the layout and the operational changes planned for this upcoming 2025 fair.

Michele Richards

So everybody loves the big kickoff we do in June, right? But there's so much that we wanted to do a little sneak peek today, so I'm going to turn

it over to Ken, who leads our fair planning activities throughout the year, and he's going to brief us all on some fun things in store.

Ken Karns

Well, thank you, and yes, similar to the last year, not the big rah rah, it's just some operational changes and maybe just a little little teaser with our appetite, Western favorites Association, this is time the Western Fairs Association. May is designated as California fairgrounds Appreciation Month. So this is timely, and on that, there's also a bill going through up north that may make that absolutely official. So that's happening, all right, so a few little items through six new food stands for from Orange County, 25 new food menu items and an expanded \$5 taste of fairs selections. In La Cantina. We're expanding that footprint and adding a new patio area and tied to food we are building and will deploy two additional free chilled water dispensers. So that will be a total of six locations, 18 folks, all in total, with new, improved dispensers. So we're having to stand there waving our hands in front of dispensers that aren't working. So we're looking forward to that rise. We have two brand new material rides on Midway this year. It's an additional ferris wheel, really cool looking, and the tallest portable sky flyer tower. Who wants to go on that?

Nick Kovacevich

As long as its been safety check.

Ken Karns

Entertainment. The promenade stage, we will be upgrading two new LEDs. If you recall, last year we did that beautiful new screen in livestock. We're going to take some of that same idea and technology and in the promenade, where a lot of you are your awards for us improving that whole production. The courtyard and the Pacific amphitheater lobby will have new sound systems that will be playing OC fair radio. The action sports arena will feature a new motorized mayhem. And the Plaza Pacific stage will host new experiential entertainment. The Hangar, we will host five performances that have never been here before, and in the Pacific Amphitheater, 13 performances that have never been here before. I will has a new sound system and TV monitors, so when there isn't a band playing, we'll still have some atmosphere and entertainment in happening around the grounds, the entrances will have new fun features. S and a yellow gate and the surrounding area that will be revamped so we'll be able to host the OCTA bus drop off and pick up right on the property. Huntington Beach building will have a reimaged feature exhibit. Stay tuned. And lastly, safety and security. Last year, we invested and built a new unified command area. The OC Sheriff's Department were just starting to work on some of their new technology, which they gave us a preview of. The OC Sheriff's Department have now completed a \$150 million high tech unified command center in Tuskegee. We were able to get a behind the

scenes tour of that state-of-the-art facility. People are coming from all over the world. This is truly state of the art. We are looking into how we will integrate our tech and our security surveillance systems with theirs for some amazing improvements to response and communication. Sorry. Little teaser for the fair. Look forward to the rah rah in June.

- Dimetria Jackson** Another question, will the vegan vendor be returning?
- Ken Karns** So the the vegan stand itself, the one in question, OVG Juan and his team that will be in that same location. It did really well. Last year. We were very happy, and so they will be back.
- Dimetria Jackson** My daughter asked to go get some food there, so I told I'll check. That makes me happy.
- Michele Richards** You got it. So we'll have the clean scene next month, right? Wanted to give a little sneak peek of some of the great thank you for that.
- Nick Kovacevich** And we have any other comment from the board on this information item. Do have a public comment so Reggie, 3 minutes.
- Reggie Mundekis** I saw something about hiring on the post, and my question is, what is the youngest that they can apply to work at the fair, and what kind of jobs are available? Because people are going to start asking me, Can my kid work here?
- Michele Richards** Thank you, Melissa you want to answer that?
- Melissa Au-Yeung** We hire as young as 16 with a work permit. The jobs are helping with parking, some are with maintenance, those kinds of things.
- Nick Kovacevich** All right, comment on this. So we'll go ahead and move on, but keep the momentum going. So we've got 10 C, the annual State of the OC fair and Event Center address.
- Michele Richards** Sure I'm going to stand over here and give this address, if I could, so I can see the screen. 2022-2024 Strategic Plan Board of Directors included an initiative for the CEO to provide and the public being state of the OC fair and Event Center presentation each year. It's been a year since my last presentation, so I'm here to discuss that. So today I'm going to review a few key aspects of our overall business and provide you all with the report of how we're doing. So let's start off with some general business metrics. So just like these kids at the ranch after school program, as they're planting their gardens, our business continues to grow as well. We added 25 new events in 2024 two more than the prior year, and so far we've got seven new events in 2025 those are events that have never been at the OC fair Event Center before. Our sales team from

tandem, added 11 new sponsors to the 2024 OC Fair and Imaginology. And so far, they've signed eight new sponsors to this year's event. We continue to focus on mining, new business partners from Orange County. We featured 13 new merchants at the Fair last year, all were from California, six of them from Orange County. The five new concessionaires that we added in 2023 all returned to last year's fair. One was local from Orange County, and three were from California. Last year's Pacific amphitheater concert series generated over 193,000 tickets sold with five sold out shows generating over 5.2 million. Dollars in net profit for the venue. And we completed 60 capital projects in 2024, this year, there are 51 projects scheduled. So far, the team has completed 14 of those projects.

Michele Richards 26 are active, and 10 are pending. And the first project of our Master Site Plan, the administration building is nearing completion. It's been a busy year, for sure, but it's also been a financially successful year. We continue to build on our solid financial foundation. To date, we have \$50.3 million in cash and cash equivalents. That's a 4.8% year over year increase. Our controlled attendance model for the fair continues to pay off with incredible net proceeds from last year's fair, \$26.7 million that's a 17% year over year increase. At the end of April for the first time, sorry, for the first third of 2025, we are currently \$927,000 favorable to budget. And when we take four months of actuals for this year and add that to eight months of budgeted numbers, the result is a year end projection of \$6.2 million in net proceeds our financial outlook is indeed strong. It's what sustains us in tough times and provides the funding for our future growth and expansion of our community event programs like Centennial farm, hero's Hall and now the ranch. A key initiative last year, which will carry over into our new five year strategic plan is to continue to innovate and use technology to improve our processes and the guest experience. On the customer side, we've made some nice upgrades on our website to enhance the guest experience, including adding a chat bot, and making it easier and faster for our guests to purchase tickets. We're currently installing new reader boards on our corners and at main gate so customers never miss up to date information about what's happening at the OC Fair and Events Center. We're reaching our guests where they are and through enhanced digital marketing and learning more about their needs and preferences through advanced analytics, we're also continuing to innovate on the operation side to enhance and protect the state's assets.

Michele Richards Cyber security is a priority. Through ongoing network monitoring and employee training. We're improving our risk guest safety and security is of the utmost importance, so we've continued to work with our law enforcement and first responder partners to improve our Security Command Center Operations and equipment. And as previously shared,

the technology upgrades we're building into our administration building and other capital projects will ensure our team has the advanced tools they need to achieve. With an eye on protecting the environment, we are actively making improvements to our organic waste handling, meeting standards with new equipment, and continuing our successful recycling efforts. In addition to contributing to the success of the OC fair and Events Center, our employees also serve in professional capacities out in the community, representing the organization in groups like Girl Scouts of Orange County, California, Construction Authority, Orange County Sports Commission, travel, Costa, Mesa, OC Business Council, the International Facility Management Association, International Association of venue managers, child health and others. Our board members are making a difference again this year, as they have for the past four years, helping distribute over 5,000 free, fair admission tickets to the neediest in our community. Imaginology was a huge success this year, celebrating a 10% year over year increase in attendance for kids, parents and families came to learn, discover and have fun, and Centennial farm is thriving, hosting over 3,400 more visitors this school year than last year. We offered 19 Farm and Garden classes, most selling out within hours. Our wonderful docents at Centennial farm contributed 6,486 volunteer hours to provide tours to school kids and host our guests during Imaginology and the OC Fair. Hero's Hall saw a huge increase in visitors this past year, welcoming 13,307 guests just since the beginning of the year.

Michele Richards

That's up 66% over last year. Our Veterans Day event last November attracted 800 participants anxious to show their respect to our veterans. That was a 60% year over year increase. We introduced two new exhibits since last year and expanded or developed new partnerships with the OC Society, the young marines, Cal Guard museum command and surrounding high schools. And last but certainly not least is our latest Community Give Back Program, the, The Ranch, as you saw from the video recap, the ranch was completely booked out for our inaugural discovery day. Just tell someone that you work at the OC fair or serve on the board of directors, and they'll tell you what this organization means to the community. The OC Fair remains the only fair in California with over 1 million in attendance, and that is despite our controlled attendance model. There are over 2,000 fairs in North America, we ranked number 11, moving up two spots since last year. But as we've said many times at this table, it's no longer just about attendance. It's about safety, the guest experience, managing our resources and being a good neighbor. Our leadership within the fair industry was solid before but has continued to expand as our staff serves and key leadership roles with Western Fairs Association and the International Association of fairs and expositions, on industry committees and as trainers And workshop facilitators. At the Western Affairs Association annual

convention held in Reno, Nevada in January, we were honored with 20 Achievement Awards. The International Association for fairs and expositions recognized with us with two achievement awards. And we're very proud to have received a People's Choice Award for the OC register readers for 2025. Here are just some of the industry and California State committees and boards that we serve on. Now let's take a look at the future. In March, the Board of Directors completed a process to develop a five-year strategic plan. The plan was based on four important organizational pillars, innovation. So you heard about our latest and future plans for enhancements, upgrades and improvements. We're committed to bringing the best to our guests, our community and our organization stewardship. We're taking care of the state's assets, responsibly managing finances, and ensuring facilities meet the growing needs of the organization, operational excellence.

Michele Richards

We're committed to making it easier to do business with us by identifying key processes and initiating improvements. And last but not least is the visitor experience. We're learning more about what our guests want, so we can offer new and innovative programming while still honoring Orange County Fair and event Center's history and heritage. All this means responsible growth, financial stability and service to our mission, three principles that will form the foundation for our future. And with the five year strategic plan in place, an approved 2025 budget and a Master Site Plan in progress, our direction is clear. We know where we're going, and we have the resources and commitment to get there. Now, we couldn't do it without an active and engaged board of directors who take stewardship of this property and fiduciary oversight of this organization very seriously. They are a diverse group of experts in a variety of fields, including business, finance, government, the law, labor and engineering. With eight members, our board has a combined experience of over 60 years serving the OC, fair and Events Center. You all volunteer your time on five committees, leadership, finance, facilities, governance and Community Affairs. You are ambassadors for the organization in the community. You bring your expertise and knowledge to the table, helping to guide the organization's vision and accomplish our mission. You attend our year-round events and activities in order to develop the knowledge to make sound decisions.

Michele Richards

And I know love the OC fair. We're continuing to invest in our team. In the last year, and with the hard work from our HR team, we filled 24 key positions within the organization, and we're proud to offer promotions to eight deserving individuals. We continue to. We offer ongoing supervisory training. And in fact, last year for the fair, our HR Department hired 1,260 people in just four months to work the OC Fair. We offer training in supervisory skills, emergency preparedness, workforce harassment prevention, workplace safety and cyber security.

We were able to certify a lot of employees last year on safe equipment operation, and so far this year, we've certified an additional 12 employees on elevated lifts, 20 on forklifts and 17 on the safe operation of carts. And just like this family who have to try to figure out how to fit all those teddy bears in the car for the ride home, we too still have some challenges. With talk of consumer pressures, tariffs and layoffs. We're considering some economic headwinds as they may impact our budget, and we'll make adjustments where we can. We've had a number of key retirements since this time last year, and attracting key talent will continue to be challenging, and we're very good at managing expenses to achieve our budget goals, but that's prices and for goods and materials continue to rise, we will be challenged by needing to manage those shifts.

Michele Richards Most notably has been a significant increase in the cost of headline talent for the Pacific amphitheater and the rising cost of facilities, supplies and materials. We're utilizing some great tools to understand our guest preferences, but staying ahead of the curve will continue to be a challenge. And of course, parking and storage remain a significant challenge. And transitioning to a new CEO, however positive that may be, will take everyone pulling together to ensure the transition is as smooth as possible. And I have no doubt everyone will rise to be a challenge. So three years ago, in 2022 we asked people to describe the state of the OC Fair and Events Center in one word, and this is what they came up with now that was coming out of the pandemic. So you can see that a lot of those words resonated. Then again, in 2023 we asked the same question, and here's what our everyone came up with. Last year, we showed a video to show what our guests had to say about the state of the OC fair and Events Center. This year, we decided to focus on the theme of this year's fair. Find your happy. We asked each department at the MC fair and Event Center to tell us where they find they're happy at the OC Fair. And here's what they said. So the entertainment team finds they're happy on stage at the Pacific amphitheater, after all the performances are booked, including at the hangar and the action sports arena. And it looks like the safety and security team find they're happy on Mondays, when the fair is stars and the guests are gone.

Michele Richards And as you would expect, the exhibits and Education Department finds they're happy with the exhibits, and they do it so well. The Food Safety Department finds they're happy in hot food, cold food, people eating food, laughing and having a good time at the number one OC fair. And where does the tech team find they're happy? Well, on Zoom, online, on screen, and anywhere the equipment works. Communications finds they're happy in the faces of fair goers, because they bring us joy. And where else would the centennial farm operations and administration teams find their happy other than right there at Centennial Farm. The

human resources department can say you're tired, or congratulations on your new job, or welcome or hand an employee their paycheck. That's where they find they're happy. And while we know the contracts and purchasing team loves the Centennial Farm, they also find they're happy and making sure the public's money is well spent. Parking and traffic, the first team to greet our guests find they're happy at the gates with smiles service and the fair spirit.

- Michele Richards** And you wouldn't expect anything else from the Guest Relations team than to find they're happy by helping guests with their smiling faces. The accounting team finds they're happy by being surrounded by happy people with detailed minds and at the bank event operations finds they're happy with lemonade, farm animals, hanger concerts and carnival rides. Clearly. You they're happy. Can be found at the annual OC Fair. Bunnies, bunnies, and more buddies at Centennial farm, is where the marketing team finds their happy. And I like seeing this. The planning and production team finds they're happy helping others. And how about this? Maintenance operations crew after hours, they find they're happy at concerts, at the motorhome madness, demolition derby and at the petting zoo. And just like this brand new little piglet at Centennial farm, the executive team finds they're happy honoring the past and growing the future. So you ask, what is the state of OC Fair and Events Center? Will we say, it's happy.
- Nick Kovacevich** Thank you CEO Richards our phenomenal speaker address and relax board meeting.
- Michele Richards** I think I'm leaving things in good shape.
- Nick Kovacevich** Yeah, I see. We have no public comment on this does the board have any other comment on this?
- Barbara Bagneris** Excellent presentation. I'm happy.
- Michele Richards** It represents a lot of work by a lot of good people.
- Nick Kovacevich** Okay, great. So we've got now just 10D, which is the committee reports. And we do have committee reports for four committees. The first is the leadership committee, and I can read the report from the Leadership Committee. Click in here. All right, so the Committee met on May 7 to plan the agenda for this year a May board of directors meeting. The next meeting will be on June 11 to plan for a meeting before we take a break. And as everyone knows, the committee is continuing to lead the search for the CEO. We are very lucky that we have the fair in such good shape, and we're lucky that we have Michele Richards to help with the transition, even though she'll be on leave, she submitted to that so, always continuing to work on that front. And that concludes the report for the

leadership committee. Next, I'll turn it over to Director Pham to tell us about the financial monitoring audit committee report.

Newton Pham

Sure we met on May 19 to review the eight home financials. Revenue came in at 1.36 million, which is unfavorable to budget, but as primarily because our budgets constructed as previously explained, and then the ongoing transition taking place at The Ranch. Expenses were 3.08 million, which is favorable, which offsets the earlier discussion and year to date, net proceeds are favored by almost a million bucks cash and investments. It's 50 million nice and healthy. And in addition, it's discussing the financials. We briefly discussed credit card processing fee. Is related to Event Rentals and shared recommendations for potential offsets to go to board approval at a meeting. Our next meeting will be on June 23.

Nick Kovacevich

Thank you. Any comments on that? All right, we'll move to the Facilities Committee if we could have Director Bilezikjian.

Tanya Bilezikjian

Thank you. So we met on...and we talked about the update on the capex projects that are ongoing. Are we still at 26 active and 13 complete. All right, good stuff, moving our way through the list. Got an update on the Master Site Plan, and I'm sure Ken will have some photos for us in a moment for that. Very excited to see the finished product. It feels like our groundbreaking was so long ago. Business. All year on phase two, phase two of the Master Site Plan. So took a tour through the Master Site Plan, just to kind of reacquaint ourselves with what's coming up and what we can look forward to. And just as a side comment, I would really love to take the Master Site Plan and just walk the facility. That meant something that takes time to do that, but I've never, ever did so great. That'd be wonderful. We got some information on the CCA executive officer, there'll be an interim person in the position, and we will be hosting a meeting with the CCA board on site and give them a tour of the Admin Building. Thank you. We got an update already on The Ranch Community Center, and we will be meeting again on June 4th.

Ken Karns

Okay, yeah, we do have a few photos. So... arriving again. Ceiling treatments are going in, finished painting going on. Ceiling treatments going up watching partitions are going in and tile work is done. Might be one of the most important rooms we have. There's a large cabinet work going in all over our some of our finance areas for Carnival works going in there. That's the outside of the new staff kitchen area, carpentry work moving forward, doors being hung, countertops going in. That's that's the inside looking out from the new B and E area. Doors getting installed, windows all being done. Hopefully, by next month, I might be able to have a couple of photos of some solar panels. Maybe next month,

if there's time at the board meeting, we'll do another time lapse snippet, yes, so we'll try to have that by great that's...

Barbara Bagneris Just quick question. So when the when this is all done, that used to be the RV area, is RV area coming back there or we're permanently moving somewhere else.

Ken Karns So expansion of the building did take up some RV space. There will be a canopy and space and a driveway at the back of the building, and then we can gravel start. So we've lost some. We've done relocating, but we're going to get when the construction is done, we'll get back as much as we can. But yes, we last year we had to accommodate as the construction when we're done, like that actually be a little easier, because we're getting a few back.

Barbara Bagneris Thank you.

Nick Kovacevich Okay, any other questions? Thank you. All right, we will now move to the Community Affairs Committee. Director Jackson, you could give the report.

Dimetria Jackson Sure yes. So committee met and we discussed potential recipients for the Asian, American Native, Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. And as you saw today, we delivered the proclamation to Glenn Tanaka of Tanaka Farms in Irvine. I was great. I'm glad he was able to come here and bring his son as well. Someone's here. We should recognize him during the presentation, but yes, he was here too to support his dad. During the meeting. We updated committee the plans for we are OC it's a cultural celebration that will happen on Sunday, August 17, the last day of the fair and we're also working on a youth poetry competition. Remember, a couple years ago we did a art competition, so we're doing a youth poetry competition this year. Nice, and we're already getting submission. So we want to be able to, you know, honor the youth as well as all of the previously given proclamations to in the community.

Nick Kovacevich Right? Yeah. I mean, that's my only request for the committee, that you work with staff to get that dinner in place for the...

Dimetria Jackson Yeah, recipients of the proclamations over the past year, so, oh, anyway, we've given two. I love for them all to come back to be honored recipients.

Nick Kovacevich Tell them to bring anyone they think should be considered in the future.

Dimetria Jackson Yeah, sounds great, yeah. And our next meeting is to be determined.

Michele Richards And in the spirit of committee, a Happy Memorial Day.

- Barbara Bagneris** I just want to go back to just make a comment about the new there's Affairs Committee, because you guys have really elevated what we've tried to do at least the 10 years I've been here, and you set this a new standard for us. And I'm just so thankful how well you and Natalie work together to make sure that we have all of this every month. And so thank you, and you have set the standard impression about that.
- Dimetria Jackson** Yes, we work well together and also with staff. Just saying that. Thank you, Barbara, for recognizing the committee and work we've done. And she said, we've elevated the community affairs on the committee.
- Barbara Bagneris** You may have the same place over the next chair.
- Dimetria Jackson** And, you know, as you said before one of the meetings prior, I said we, you know, welcome your input, like if you know somebody, or even if it's not within the next maybe it's time next year, just give us a name. We'll create a master list, and we'll, you know, reach out to people, and just as nice to have a couple of names, three names, maybe five names, just we just have. So if there's somebody that you know, you recognize, or you meet along the way, please provide that information to us, as well as the community. Anyone knows anybody within the community, please send me the information.
- Barbara Bagneris** Expert, resolution, reader now, I want to make a comment about this whole process is a member was said previously that, you know, you don't see the reports. It's so nice to have them right there on the agenda. Click on it and there's the report out. So thank you to you staff that for making sure that we always have that That's right.
- Michele Richards** Those always get posted the Monday before the board meeting, so they're available to the public as well.
- Nick Kovacevich** Memorial Day coming up. Yeah, right. Okay. Well, we'll move on to Agenda Item Number 11, which is the upcoming events preview. I'll turn this one over to Michele Capps.
- Michele Capps** So we're going to start off this weekend with Scottish fest. It's a fantastic way to explore the culture of the Scott Scots and salts. So it's all things kilts and bagpipes and plaid out there. So there's going to be food and competition and music and dancing and I'm sorry, it's Saturday and Sunday only. The following weekend, we have six to six Night Market coming back one of my favorite food festivals. It's kind of a night market of vendors and food, and the promoter has done a great job of pulling together local artisans and very he's very entrepreneur driven, and just wanted to be able to give an opportunity to all of these vendors out there. So they're going to be here for two weekends. And those are three day weekends, a Friday, Saturday, Sunday, May 30 through June, 1

and then again the following weekend, the sixth through the eighth, the weekend after that, I'm sorry, also happening the same weekend may 31 June 1 is Repticon. So all things snakes and lizards and you need to stock up on your feeder animals. This is where you go. You. The 31st busy day. Here is also the job fair that was previously brought up. So no, if you have some teens that need some jobs, if you have neighbors that want the coolest summer job around at the number one fair, send them on down. And then that takes us to Speedway, June 14 and the 21st. Sliding back into Costa Mesa. They have been here. They are just a staple in this community. And so they're back for two more Saturday night races and then Thursday, June 19, OC Fight Club, coming back for the best things happening on Thursday nights, happening on Thursdays as well. Every Thursday is our farmers market, and our goodwill truck is here taking donations. And we have Discovery Center, Discovery farm. So June 2 is another discovery day. You heard Michele report out that we've had 48,000 kids visiting.

Michele Capps

So we're going to be adding to that number on June 2. That is the last one of the season before we take a break for there and wait till the kids come back in session for school. She said our team has done an amazing job, amazing with all of the discovery days. And so we're so excited to be able to add on the ranch discovery day as well. But so one more over at Centennial farm. And then here's Hall. You're going to wrap it up with yours. Hall, we have the speaker series continuing on, May 31 June 7 and June 14. Johanna has done a great job, and you saw that 66% increase in attendance. I have to attribute it to the speaker series as well. She's just done a phenomenal job pulling together guest speakers, and the one happening on the 31st is beyond the battlefield, navigating the journey of veterans with PTSD. It will be the speaker will be David Brody, who's a documentary filmmaker. He befriended a Vietnam vet, all volunteering for Meals on Wheels. The veteran suffered from PTSD and rarely left his home in an effort to confront the trauma of war and find healing. Bucha collaborated on a film called The volunteer, which documents the journey of Bruce Nakashima as he searches for and reconnects with the fellow Army Ranger, a good friend who saved his life in Vietnam. So that sounds like it's going to be really good session. And so she's the team has been moving those around based on our RSVP list. I think this one is going to be one of the higher attendance one. So it will be in Pacific amphitheater, lobby, a couple of screens, and we will be viewing the that film as well, right? So that wraps up. Any special events coming up.

Nick Kovacevich

Any final comments from the board? Okay, go ahead and take the Board of Directors matters of information. I'll go ahead and start with Vice Chair Bagneris. If you're open to it, give us your insight today, and we'll go around the room.

Barbara Bagneris It was glad to see Mr. Tanaka. How many times I heard Tanaka forum tonight? There's really a face that goes with that? So thank you for honoring him with that award, and good to see you in his son. Thank you. Staff, as always, executive staff, you guys do a phenomenal job, and just looking forward to the fair. The Sneak Peek is great, but I want to see that real deal. And because I went to the LA fair, like I said, on Mother's Day, first time ever doing that by myself, too, but I ate way too much. So many new foods from our standard vendors are there. And so I think we have a great, great fair. Something else I was going to say in that, but also okay, it may come back and it may not, but also always glad to have Josh here. I really do appreciate him, his consultation and his advice and his knowledge and keeps us in line. I really, really, really thank you for that, and I wish everybody Happy Memorial Day. I get Monday off and Friday off next week. That means three days I'm going to be working super fast to get everything done. So everybody enjoy your time. And yeah, see you next month.

Nick Kovacevich Great. Thank you, Director Pham?

Newton Pham Yeah. Been actually hearing that Michele's last board meeting. It's a little bit different, you know. But I think you know that that address kind of really sums up your tenure. You know, as CEO of fair, what great of a job you've done. And with that, I'll wish everyone a happy Memorial Day.

Nick Kovacevich Thank you, Director Bilezikjian.

Tanya Bilezikjian I got to attend your retirement event, and it was when I were there, and it was so wonderful to see how many people you've touched, and how many community members came to pay tribute and and just how many friends and family were there as well. It was, it was, it was just great to see you among all of them, and how touched they all were to be there with you. Mean, a lot to a lot of people, it was just really, really nice to see you so you again for everything. I can't believe, can't believe, this is it for you. I don't like it. Okay. Had a couple more things, but I had to get that. There is competition coming for us. The main park in Irvine announced some very ambitious plans for events and attractions year round. OC five is opening in a year events, attractions, year round concerts. OC five is doing something that's, I don't know if you've been on the 57 freeway lately, but that parking lot is going to at all times for everybody. So they're going to get people in the door because there's no barrier because of parking. We need to be looking at everything that we can do to make sure that we aren't only I go in the summertime to the fair, and then I forget about the OC fair facility, and I know you're working on that, I know we're working on that. I want to acknowledge everything that is happening, but we also have to recognize that the

landscape is changing in Orange County, and people have limited dollars, and so many places and times they're willing to spend them. So we remember that we coming at us, and I'm, we're up for it. I'm absolutely confident that we can do this. That is going to be an exciting you know, lots of things are changing, and it's going to be challenging and exciting. Oh, and then lastly, just I got to attend the food preservation event. I saw your wife there, and it was slowly to see her. And it was just, it's, I love being there. I love being there so much. Everybody was happy to be there, sleeping away, just happy. Just everything about that facility and just facility. I just I adore it, and it's more of those, more of everything.

Nick Kovacevich

And I get to try the jam. Alright, Director Jackson.

Dimetria Jackson

Good meeting. I was lovely to meet Mr. Tanaka today and his son. Glad we were able to send a proclamation to another member of our community. Enjoy doing this work and look forward to doing more. Clearly, looking forward to the fair. My daughter's birthday is Saturday, the 24th and since birthday, yeah, it's on the eighth. So we're trying to figure out plans and celebrations. Probably going to do some birthday parties at the fair. Kelly's already wants to go see the Taylor Swift and Billie Eilish concert. So that's, she's like, she's got a whole plan. So we didn't have that option available. So, so we're excited. So it was a great meeting. I really enjoyed the presentation. I'm sad. I'm happy for all the work that you've done and the leadership that you've you know had, and you've done impact. You've been the only CEO I've known. So I don't have a basis of comparison to you, but other people, or, you know, the agricultural district, but I can't compare you to other CEOs I work with in the private sector. So and you're top notch. Just want to say that to you, and it's going to be tough, you know, not having you here, not seeing you when I look to that side and you're not in that seat or that scene was very soon, but I just want to we all appreciate you, and I'm glad you were able to share all that you've done. I know it makes it tough for anybody those shoes they have to fill, but I just want to say once again that, you know, it's been an honor to work with you, and I love what you brought to this organization and the impact and legacy that you're going to spend so just wanted to say that and well. That much said, Thanks, Michele.

**Natalie
Rubalcava-Garcia**

Yeah, I will just also recognize the fact that Michele came on during a time of great turmoil from Orange County Fair and Events Center, and you led us through a lot unanticipated setbacks you were you came up with some really innovative ideas, including the first ever virtual fair to do. And I just think that it was great that during your tenure, we got COVID, We came out of COVID, we implemented a lot of things that people thought were scary, you brought on. I think the one of the most

genius things that you did with the board was cap off the attendance. Because I know when I first started on this board, that was a point of great. I guess they like to talk about how many people were bringing in, how competitive it was, but the experience wasn't great for the people who were here, so we've seen great results from that, not only from the profit side of things, but just from the guest experience. So grateful for not only your leadership, but also your friendship. I think I've grown under you as well, because you just bring a lot to the table. So it's going to be very sad to see you go, but I know you won't be gone for long. You'll come back.

Michele Richards No, I told the staff, the next time you see me walking through the fair, I'll have a beer in one hand and a corn dog in the other.

Natalie Rubalcava-Garcia My kids love you. So yeah. Thank you very much for all that you do, and you have a great team who supported you, and you've been able to hear your steadfast like you've been able to overcome a lot of negativity...

Nick Kovacevich Yeah, and I bring it back to I caught her off guard. I called her first this time, so I gotta get by all words.

Barbara Bagneris Forget again, because how could I forget to not say something about you as our CEO, I was at the event as well, and it was wonderful, and you probably needed both of those boxes of tissues when her her daughters came on video and gave her tribute. But the place was packed the love, you could just let it in the room. Kim did an excellent job moderating that activity, and it just, we're going to miss you. But you have done so much you have you can take this with you, right, all the things that you were able during the past 23 years, but as CEO, like Director Rubal-Cava Garcia, said, You brought us through a very difficult time, and you set us straight, and the next person coming in actually has it much better than it would have been. And so you're going to be around. We appreciate that. We'll go enjoy life. Go enjoy life and enjoy your family, and I know we'll see you, and I want to see you with the beer in one hand enjoying. So thank you, really grateful, and we will miss you.

Nick Kovacevich Yeah, and you know, I'll start by saying Happy Memorial Day to everyone. I think, you know, there's still conflicts going around, around the world. There's still soldiers, you know, putting on the line for us, and that's what it's really about this weekend. So I'll remember that, and hopefully we can get to continue to get to better places as we evolve as humanity. It's vital. So don't have any NBA news because our California teams are gone. If there's anything to report on the hockey, but I think, yeah, nothing good there. But that was a crazy game last night. So the Nicks face yourselves, we've got some, got some great things coming up. I'm excited to get get out to fair. And of course, you know Michele

that state of the pussy fair is just, I mean, it's fitting that you were able to deliver that. You have the you have the data to back up the success that we've had under your tenure. You know, I came on the board right during COVID. I didn't know anyone really well. Obviously, I didn't know you well, but, you know, it's hard. You're on Zoom, and you did a great job of getting me up to speed, getting me integrated, preparing me for leadership role. And as I was able to move into leadership role, you know, I was able to build a better relationship with you, which has been fantastic. And now I'm working over two. To continue our relationship in a new fashion, and I was excited to hear that, you know, the day after you take believe we're going to a nice a little bit more, you know. So just excited for the future. I'm excited for your future, and I do believe you'll, you'll continue to be a good part of the fair in a different capacity. And most importantly, for the fair, you have set us up for future success new heights. And hopefully, when you're tuning into the state of the fair address next year and in future years, you're going to be impressed with with what your successors been able to do. So part of the leadership committee is we've been, you know, leading the charge on finding the successor. And it's just great that so so many people want this role. So many people want to lead this organization. It's not hard. I mean, it's not easy. We've seen she Yeah, people are you have gone well, and then they're ready to do it. I think you've, you've showed by example that, you know, even though it's challenging, you know, you can find success and it's rewarding. So thank you for everything, and we will, as a board, sure that we continue the momentum. All right, and that concludes our matters of information. We do have another board meeting...

Dimetria Jackson

Just want to know Michele. Wanted to say anything.

Michele Richards

No, I'll cry. Just gratitude to all of you. I was so enjoyed working with you, getting to know you, your families, having fun with the fair. It's been such a joy, and it has been hard and sometimes challenging, but extremely rewarding. And this the next CEO is inheriting an amazing team of people. And when you've got a board like this and a staff like that, this is what happens, you know the state what you saw in the state of the fair. So I look forward to making public comment once in a while for each of you. And did you? I saw you today, I hope that you'll remember me when it's continuing the tradition, but this one, I think that's it all so much everyone. It's been a great ride, and I just can't wait to see what everyone does. I'm so excited.

Nick Kovacevich

I think it's fitting that we announced the next board meeting June 26 This is Michele's last board meeting. So before we adjourn, one last round of applause for Michele.