

**MINUTES OF OCFEC BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
HELD APRIL 23, 2026**

The following Minutes are a summary of Board action and proceedings. For a full transcript please click on the link below or visit the ocfair.com website.

https://s3.us-west-1.amazonaws.com/ocfair.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/19092316/26_04_April_Transcript.pdf

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Bagneris, called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m.

1. MISSION STATEMENT

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by Director Nick Kovacevich. Roll call was taken by meeting secretary, Summer Angus.

3. DIRECTORS PRESENT:

Chair Bagneris, Director Kovacevich, Director La Belle, Director Rubalcava-Garcia, Director Bilezikjian, Director Jackson and Director Sanchez Cannady.

Director Rubalcava-Garcia joined the meeting at 9:38 a.m.

DIRECTORS ABSENT/EXCUSED: Vice Chair Ruiz and Director Pham.

OTHERS PRESENT:

James Canfield, OCFEC Chief Executive Officer; Melissa Au-Yeung, OCFEC Chief Administrative Officer; Michele Capps, OCFEC Chief Business Development Officer; Michael Searle, OCFEC Chief Operating Officer; Jason Jacobsen, OCFEC Production & Planning Director; Summer Angus, OCFEC Executive Assistant; Josh Caplan, Office of the Attorney General; Reginald Joseph, transcriptionist; Rima Nashashibi; Nancy D; Reggie Mundekis

4. PRESENTATIONS:

**A. Presentation of Arab American Heritage Month Proclamation by
Community Affairs Committee
Information Item**

Director Jackson, on behalf of Community Affairs Committee, presented the Arab American Heritage Month proclamation honoring Rima Nashashibi, Founder and President of Global Hope 365.

Rima Nashashibi accepted the proclamation on behalf of survivors whose voices often go unheard and shared that Global Hope 365 is dedicated to protecting children, supporting women, and promoting human dignity. She highlighted the growing issue of human trafficking in Orange County, noting that minors now represent 50% of trafficking victims largely due to sextortion, and emphasized the organization's efforts to educate youth through outreach at schools, colleges, and universities. Ms. Nashashibi also thanked community partners, law enforcement, and elected officials for their collaboration in helping keep Orange County safe.

5. MINUTES:

A. Board meeting held March 26, 2026

Action Item

ACTION: Director La Belle motioned and Director Kovacevich seconded to approve the Minutes from Board meeting held March 26, 2026. **MOTION CARRIED. AYES: Chair Bagneris, Director Kovacevich, Director La Belle, Director Rubalcava-Garcia, Director Jackson and Director Sanchez Cannady. NAYES: None. ABSTENTIONS: Director Bilezikjian**

7. MATTERS OF PUBLIC COMMENT

Nancy D. shared her appreciation for working as a seasonal usher at the OC Fair following the loss of her husband and her previous employment during the COVID-19 pandemic. She stated that after four years of employment at OCFEC, she was informed she could no longer work due to her status as a CalPERS retiree (following an audit), and expressed concern and confusion for the reasoning.

8. CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. Standard Agreements:** SA-101-26FTIO; SA-110-26AS; SA-111-26PA; SA-112-26PA; SA-113-26PA; SA-114-26PA; SA-115-26GE; SA-116-26GE; SA-117-26GE; SA-118-26SP; SA-119-26SP; SA-120-26SP; SA-121-26SP; SA-122-26SP; SA-123-26SP; SA-123-26SP; SA-124-26PA; SA-125-26PA; SA-126-26PA; SA-127-26PA; SA-128-26PA; SA-129-26PA; SA-130-26YR; SA-131-26FTYR; SA-132-26FTYR; SA-133-26FTYR; SA-136-26SP; SA-137-26FT
- i. Standard Agreement Amendments:** SA-123-25YR (Amend. #1); SA-061-26SP (Amend. #1); SA-081-26SP (Amend. #1); SA-107-26SP (Amend. #1)
- ii. Standard Agreement Amendments (Exercise Option):** SA-142-25SP (Amend. #1)
- B. Rental Agreements:** R-007-26; R-010-26; R-026-26; R-072-26; R-073-26; R-080-26; R-086-26; R-087-26; R-090-26; 26 IO-FE 58; 26 IO-FE 59; RE-EQC017-26; RA-EQC018-26
- i. Rental Agreement Amendments:** R-001-26 (Amend. #1)
- C. Commercial Rental Agreements:** 26014; 26021; 26022; 26036; 26061; 26062; 26063; 26064; 26065; 26066; 26067; 26068; 26071; 26072; 26073; 26074; 26076; 26077; 26078; 26080; 26081; 26082; 26083; 26084; 26085; 26086; 26087; 26089; 26091; 26092; 26093; 26094; 26095; 26097; 26098; 26099; 26100; 26101; 26142; 26102; 26104; 26105; 26106; 26107; 26108; 26109; 26110; 26111; 26113; 26114; 26115; 26116; 26118; 26119; 26121; 26122; 26123; 26125; 26127; 26128; 26130; 26131; 26132; 26133; 26134; 26135; 26136; 26137; 26139; 26140; 26141; 26143; 26144; 26145; 26146; 26147;

26148; 26149; 26150; 26152; 26153; 26156; 26157; 26158; 26159; 26161;
26162; 26163; 26164; 26165; 26166; 26167

D. Concession Rental Agreements: 26515; 26516; 26517; 26549; 26550; 26551;
26553; 26554; 26555; 26556; 26558; 26559; 26560; 26561; 26562; 26563;
26564; 26565; 26566; 26567; 26568; 26570; 26571; 26572; 26573; 26574;
26575; 26576; 26577; 26578

E. Platinum Rental Agreements: 26703; 26708; 26717; 26718; 26721; 26722;
26723; 26725; 26726; 26727; 26729; 26730

F. Active Joint Powers Authority Agreement Amendments: 032-25-888576
(Amend #2)

G. Judging Agreements: HA-001-26; HA-002-26; HA-003-26; HA-004-26; HA-
005-26; HA-006-26; HA-007-26; HA-008-26; HA-009-26; HA-010-26; HA-011-26;
HA-012-26; HA-013-26; HA-014-26; HA-015-26; HA-016-26; A-017-26; HA-018-
26; HA-019-26; HA-020-26; HA-021-26; HA-022-26; HA-023-26; HA-024-26; HA-
025-26

H. Correspondence:

Communications to the Board from members of the public related to OCFEC business are identified below and included with the Board materials (available on the OCFEC website). Note that this agenda item includes only those communication(s) that were sent to the entire Board and CEO before the publication of this month's agenda. The deadline for correspondence to be included on the May agenda is May 15, 2026.

i. None.

I. CDFA Correspondence:

Communications to the Board from the California Department of Food & Agriculture Division of Fairs & Expositions regarding relevant topics at Fairs and Expositions.

i. None.

– End of Consent Calendar –

ACTION: Director Bilezikjian motioned and Director Rubalcava-Garcia seconded to approve the Consent Calendar. **MOTION CARRIED. AYES: Chair Bagneris, Director Kovacevich, Director La Belle, Director Rubalcava-Garcia, Director Bilezikjian, Director Jackson and Director Sanchez Cannady. NAYES: None. ABSTENTIONS: None.**

9. CLOSED SESSION (Closed to the Public)

The Board adjourned to closed session at 9:48 a.m. and returned at 10:05 a.m.

Items to report: None.

10. CEO'S OPERATIONAL ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES

CEO Canfield reported the following:

- Update on Pacific Amphitheatre improvement projects, including restroom renovations, exterior painting, landscaping, pavement repairs, concession stand upgrades, and modernization of artist dressing rooms.
- Staff is evaluating the potential future purchase of production and performance equipment currently being rented for venue operations.
- Additional Master Site Plan projects and phased capital improvements will be presented to the Board at a future meeting.
- New entertainment announcements in the Pacific Amphitheatre, The Hangar and Action Sports Arena.
- CEO Canfield and staff attended the IAFE Management Conference focused on organizational change, facility evolution, event growth, branding, communication, and operational strategy.

Board and staff discussed the following:

- The possibility of purchasing performance equipment rather than continuing to rent equipment annually.
- Improvements to artist and backstage areas would positively impact artist experience and event marketing.
- Request that the Board receive entertainment announcements prior to public release.

11. GOVERNANCE PROCESS

A. Annual Consideration and Vote on the Number of Discounted Fair Admission Tickets and Parking Passes to Allocate to Centennial Farm Foundation Board Members

Action Item

CEO Canfield presented the staff report and recommendation of providing the Centennial Farm Foundation Board members the following: one (1) complimentary fair admission pass per day of the 2026 OC Fair and one (1) F-Lot parking pass for each active Centennial Farm Foundation Board member, and authorize each active Board member to purchase up to fifteen (15) general admission tickets at a cost of \$2 each.

ACTION: Director La Belle motioned and Director Kovacevich seconded to approve the allocation of one (1) complimentary fair admission pass per day of the 2026 OC Fair and one (1) F-Lot parking pass for each active Centennial Farm Foundation Board member, and authorize the opportunity for each active Board member to purchase up to fifteen (15) general admission tickets at a cost of \$2 each. **MOTION AYES:** Chair Bagneris, Director Kovacevich, Director La Belle, Director Rubalcava-Garcia, Director Bilezikjian, Director Jackson and Director Sanchez Cannady. **NAYES:** None. **ABSTENTIONS:** None.

B. Board Discussion and Vote on Appointment of Alternate Member Entity Representative to Serve on the California Construction Authority (CCA) Board of Directors

Action Item

CEO Canfield presented a staff report and recommendation to approve the appointment of COO Michael Searle as the alternate representative on the CCA Board of Directors.

ACTION: Director Rubalcava-Garcia motioned and Director Jackson seconded to approve the appointment of Chief Operating Officer Michael Searle as the alternate representative to the California Construction Authority (CCA) Board of Directors, serving in the absence of the District's appointed representative, CEO James Canfield. **MOTION CARRIED. AYES: Chair Bagneris, Director Kovacevich, Director La Belle, Director Rubalcava-Garcia, Director Bilezikjian, Director Jackson and Director Sanchez Cannady. NAYES: None. ABSTENTIONS: None.**

C. Review and Consideration of Adjustment to Board-Delegated Authority for Automatic Staff Write-Off of Uncollectible Debt

Action

CEO Canfield asked the Board to discuss the level of staff's delegated authority for automatic write-off of uncollectible debt (the Board's discretionary limit is five-hundred dollars).

Board and staff discussion ensued, items discussed:

- Board members spoke in support of increasing staff write-off authority while maintaining transparency and oversight.
- Support for increasing the threshold provided write-offs continue to be reported to the Board.
- Standard collection efforts would still occur prior to any write-off action.
- Request for additional information regarding the current finance policy and debt collection process, noting the importance of documenting procedures for audit purposes.
 - CEO Canfield outlined existing collection efforts, including internal outreach, collection agencies, and state collection processes before debts are deemed uncollectable.
- Support for delegating authority to staff provided the Board or Audit Committee continues to receive reports on write-offs and collection procedures.
- Request that the Board receive information regarding the collections process.
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ACTION: Director La Belle motioned and Director Kovacevich seconded to approve staff to automatically write off uncollectable debts up to \$500 with reporting back to the Board through the Board Finance and Audit Committee and that the Board receive information regarding the full collections process.

MOTION CARRIED. AYES: Chair Bagneris, Director Kovacevich, Director La Belle, Director Rubalcava-Garcia, Director Bilezikjian, Director Jackson and Director Sanchez Cannady. NAYES: None. ABSTENTIONS: None.

D. Staff Recap of Imaginology 2026

Information Item

Michele Capps, OCFEC Chief Business Development Officer presented highlights from the 2026 Imaginology event.

Reggie Mundekis shared positive community feedback regarding the Imaginology event after distributing event information and encouraging neighborhood families to attend. She described Imaginology as a successful hands-on educational event that helps engage children away from screens. She also provided historical context on the evolution of the program from an agricultural and science-focused event into the current Imaginology format and expressed support for continuing the current two-day event model, noting challenges previously associated with school field trip participation.

Board and staff discussed the 2026 Imaginology even; items discussed:

- Board members praised the success and educational value of the Imaginology event and commended staff for their work.
- Discussion included the possibility of reintroducing a third day focused on school field trips, though staff noted logistical and school participation challenges.
- Directors shared positive observations about high attendance, strong engagement, and interactive activities throughout the event.
- Board members encouraged expanded promotion and post-event publicity highlighting attendance, community impact, and event success, including use of Board member social media channels.

E. Committee / Ad Hoc Committee / Liaison Report

Information Item

To assure compliance with the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act, Committee reports are only for the purpose of the Committee chair, Ad Hoc Committee members or Liaison to provide a verbal update. Should the Board want to discuss any Committee work item not already on the agenda; those would need to be agendized for a future Board meeting.

- i. **Leadership Committee** (Chair Bagneris, Committee Chair; Vice Chair Ruiz)
- ii. **Financial Monitoring and Audit Committee** (Director Pham, Committee Chair; Director Bilezikjian)
- iii. **Facilities Committee** (Director Bilezikjian, Committee Chair; Director Kovacevich)

- iv. **Community Affairs Committee** (Director Rubalcava-Garcia & Director Jackson, Committee Co-Chairs)
- v. **Governance Committee** (Director Kovacevich; Director Sanchez Cannady)
- vi. **Entertainment Task Force** (Director La Belle, Committee Chair; Director Jackson)

Chair Bagneris, on behalf of the Leadership Committee, reported:

- Committee met on April 8 to plan the April agenda
- Next meeting is scheduled for May 13

Director Bilezikjian, on behalf of the Financial Monitoring and Audit Committee, reported:

- The Committee met on April 20 and discussed:
 - The March financial reports (financial reports presented)
 - The Committee was updated on the status of the 2025 Audit; auditors scheduled to be onsite the end of April
 - Next meeting is scheduled for the end of May

Chair Bagneris announced that Vice Chair Ruiz will join the Facilities Committee, replacing Director Kovacevich.

Director Bilezikjian on behalf of the Facilities Committee, reported:

- Committee met on April 1
 - Update on CapX projects: 48 active
 - Master Site Plan Phase Two (Campground restrooms/showers): CCA confirms contractor to start after the fair
 - CCA process update: improving operations, developing best practices, improve performance.
 - Discussion on deferred projects and closeouts (like admin building)
 - Pacific Amphitheatre projects update (CEO Canfield reported on earlier)
 - Closeout final punch list on admin building will happen later in the month
 - Next meeting scheduled for May 7

CEO Canfield stated that staff and the Facilities Committee are reviewing and updating CCA project management processes to provide greater OCFEC oversight and control, noting that while CCA continues to provide important support related to state procedures and compliance, staff is working to return the process to a more locally managed and collaborative model aligned with OCFEC's operational needs.

Director La Belle discussed change orders and the importance of OCFEC, not CCA approving them.

Director Jackson and Rubalcava-Garcia, on behalf of the Community Affairs Committee, reported:

- The Committee met via text and email to determine the Arab American Heritage proclamation recipient.

- Shared ideas to expand beyond the proclamations for community engagement, like the art and poetry contests done in the past.

Director Kovacevich, on behalf of the Governance Committee, reported:

- Committee met on March 27 and April 20 to review and discuss potential updates to the Board Governance Policy Manual.
- Staff and legal counsel are reviewing minor adjustments to come back to the Board for consideration.

Director La Belle, on behalf of the Entertainment Task Force, reported:

- The Committee met on April 21
- Committee continues to look at entertainment center concept using 12-15 acres; staff and committee to meet with RCS and OVG for input and suggestions in May or June.
- Incorporating different entertainment options in The Hangar.
- Looking at expanding year-round entertainment opportunities.
- Committee continues to brainstorm ideas

Reggie Mundekis expressed support for expanding off-season entertainment programming at the fairgrounds, including themed movie nights and nostalgic events such as roller-skating nights. She encouraged creating limited-time, immersive experiences with entertainment and social media elements to increase community interest and attendance. She cautioned against developing permanent amusement-style attractions that could compete with or diminish attendance at the annual fair.

Discussion ensued; items discussed:

- Exploring new seasonal and short-term entertainment concepts, including roller skating, roller derby, themed experiences, and decade-themed events.
- Staff noted interest in developing attractions that could complement existing events while minimizing long-term capital and operational costs.
- Concerns regarding the declining quality and public perception of Winter Fest and emphasized maintaining high-quality standards for promoter-produced events.
- Board members discussed the possibility of increased collaboration or hybrid partnerships with promoters to improve event quality, marketing, and financial alignment.
- Directors also discussed balancing self-produced events with promoter-operated events while ensuring financial sustainability and community appeal.

12. UPCOMING EVENTS PREVIEW

Michele Capps, Chief Business Development Officer, gave an update on upcoming events at OC FEC.

Board members discussed The Ranch Community Center and suggested following up on previous news articles, updating them on TRCC's programs and competitive rates.

Director La Belle suggested working with promoters to donate show tickets to nonprofits.

13. BOARD OF DIRECTORS MATTERS OF INFORMATION

Board members made concluding comments:

- Board members thanked staff for their continued work and successful execution of Imaginology and other year-round events.
- Directors expressed excitement about upcoming entertainment programming, community events, and continued fairgrounds activation opportunities.
- Board members discussed community engagement opportunities, including recognition of astronaut Victor Glover and expanded outreach efforts.
- Directors shared support for enhancing marketing, partnerships, and community-focused programming at the fairgrounds.
- Suggestion of revisiting Board cannabis policy given the new Federal rescheduling of cannabis.
- Appreciation for staff collaboration, innovation, and preparation leading into fair season.

14. NEXT BOARD MEETING: MAY 28, 2026

15. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:54 a.m.

Barbara Bagneris, Board Chair

James Canfield, Chief Executive Officer