

# Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Ventura County Fairgrounds  
31st District Agricultural Association - 10 W. Harbor Blvd. - Ventura, CA 93001 - (805) 648-3376  
Website: venturacountyfair.org Contact: Barbara Quaid, CEO

Tuesday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022 at 9:00 a.m.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/4834214737?pwd=d0FrRzVFQUIUNG9OeUxFM0FuUG5qQT09>

Join Via the phone:

1-720-707-2699

Meeting ID: 483 421 4737

Passcode: 575554

This virtual board meeting is called in accordance with Governor Gavin Newsom's proclaiming a State of Emergency to exist on March 4, 2020 as a result of the threat of COVID-19 and the March 12, 2020 Executive Order N-25-20. Board of Directors and staff of the California Department of Food and Agriculture may attend this meeting telephonically without notice of or access to their teleconference location. Members of the public may attend the meeting and provide comment at the meeting location noticed above. Any item not so noticed on this agenda will not be considered or discussed.

## I. Call to Order

### Roll Call

### Declaration of Recusal or Conflict of Interest

The meeting convened at 9:05 a.m. and called to order by President Lacayo.

**Directors present:** President, Leah Lacayo, Vice President, Armando Lopez, Michael Bradbury, Leslie Cornejo, M. Cecilia Cuevas, Daniel Long and Shanté Morgan-Carter.

**Staff present:** Barbara Quaid, CEO, James Lockwood, Publicity and Marketing Manager, Jason Amelio, Sales Manager, Cristian Yopez, Accounting Dept., Shannon Patrick, Exhibits Supervisor, Jennifer McGuire, Large Livestock Superintendent and Heidi Ortiz, Executive Assistant.

**Guests Present:** Sarah Pelle, Fairs & Expositions; Carissa Hickman, Katelyn Hickman, Bill Hickman, Kathie Moore, Megan Hook, Janet Eckhouse, Scott Toland, Dawn NLN and Carla Alvara.

There were no conflicts of interest with any of the Board members that were present.

## II. Pledge of Allegiance

Director Morgan-Carter led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **III. Welcome and Introductions of Guests and Staff**

Invitation for the public to introduce themselves (not mandatory)

### **IV. Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda**

In accordance with State law, the Board will not comment or otherwise consider Public Comment matters until and unless such items have been properly noticed for a future meeting.

Bill Hickman – explained he is with the Surfrider Foundation and spoke about the plastic pollution from the Ventura County Fair fireworks.

### **V. CEO Report**

- It was asked at the last meeting what our protocol was going to be to implement COVID at fairtime and she addressed it with saying all the protocols set forth by the County of Ventura and the State of California will be followed to the last detail. There is not a plan set in place because everything is changing daily, but the safety of customers and staff is at the top of our minds. We do know that it will include signage, additional hand washing stations, sanitizers and along with any other requirements that are put into place between now and then.
- The marketing survey will be part of our marketing plan which will come from Mr. Lockwood, who has been implementing parts of the marketing survey since we have set the fair dates. Once the Marketing Committee hears the marketing plan it will be complete, and everyone will know what steps we are taking.
- We haven't received the last report on the gun show from Tom Cady as of yesterday, so as soon as she receives it we will address it. The next gun show is scheduled for August 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>.
- We received the results from our compliance audit and have responded to their office with corrections. They have been addressed and we are implementing the corrections.
- President Lacayo and she were part of a call with California Construction Authority. We were a recipient of a grant for \$155,000 to install generators in the Livestock Center and adjacent restrooms and to add backup power connections to the sewer and storm water pumps. This grant was issued through the Office of Emergency Services. It is a project that we will fund to CCA and they will reimburse us.
- The directors have the report from the sales department of all the events we have had this past month and some of the events the sales department is working on.
- Concessions and grounds entertainment applications are still online and directed anyone who may be interested to the website.
- There was a total of 24 employees for the month of February and we are hoping that we can at least double that by the end of April to be able to complete all the projects we are working on and have planned for the future.

### **VI. Approval of Minutes**

A. February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022 Board Meeting

**MOTION:** To approve the February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022 Board Minutes as presented.

Board Member Name	Approved (Yes Vote)	Not Approved (No Vote)	Abstain
Director Bradbury	X		
Director Cornejo	X		
Director Cuevas (Not present yet)			
Director Long (Second)	X		
Director Morgan-Carter	X		
Vice President Lopez (Motion)	X		
President Lacayo	X		

**VII. Financial Report**

A. Financials ending February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

Mr. Yopez gave a report on the financials ending February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

**VIII. Foundation Report**

- Since September of 2021 there were four bricks sold for a total of \$1,000.
- The Foundation Hog dollars from 2019 paid for the panels and gates for livestock which totaled almost \$64,000. There is about \$5,400 left from that fund to spend on additional projects that are needed.

**IX. Committee Reports**

A. Operations Committee Meeting – Canceled due to lack of quorum.

B. Executive Committee Meeting March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022 – Leah Lacayo, Chair

1. Discussion and possible action regarding Fair items.

- Operational Hours for the Fair – CEO Quaid discussed what has been done in the past and explained her reasons for her recommendation of opening the fair at noon five days (first day of Fair and both weekends) and 1 p.m. the other seven days.

There was a discussion about opening early one day during the fair for the benefit of the customers. CEO Quaid explained that it would impact us financially because we would have to bring in a double shift, so employees don't go over an eight-hour day. Director Cornejo explained that the hours were discussed in length, advocating for kids and seniors especially, but under management recommendation for the cost the committee agreed to that with regrets.

President Lacayo opened the floor for public comments.

Megan Hook – she wanted to know the exact financial impact to opening later. She also offered a differing opinion that picking away at the hours also limits the hours for income. With the public being eager to get back to normal, and excited for the Fair to return the Fair should be capitalizing on that opportunity and eagerness to get people in the gate. She doesn't think the decision can be based off of past gate because the scenario is very different. There is a real opportunity to bring people in because they are excited, and this should be a more profitable year for the Fair than ever if enough excitement is created around it.

**MOTION:** To approve the recommendation from the CEO as it related to Fair hours.

Board Member Name	Approved (Yes Vote)	Not Approved (No Vote)	Abstain
Director Bradbury	X		
Director Cornejo	X		
Director Cuevas (not yet present)	X		
Director Long (Second)	X		
Director Morgan-Carter	X		
Vice President Lopez (Motion)	X		
President Lacayo	X		

- Gate admission – CEO Quaid explained this is something she always tries to push back against, but if we want to stay solvent this is something that needs to be done. Her recommendation is to raise the gate to \$15, seniors from \$9 to \$10 and children should also be raised from \$9 to \$10 (that is a correction to what was discussed at the Executive meeting). CEO Quaid surveyed other Fairs and we are still reasonable. We have so many discounted/free days that if they do come on a weekend the impact lessons because they could have come on a free/discounted day.

CEO Quaid reviewed, upon request for public awareness, the special admission days (subject to change).

Director Lopez pointed out that one situation the fairgrounds is faced with financially and one the board members tend to forget is deferred maintenance. The board looks at the cost of operations and the income necessary to meet that cost. One thing that will be looked at closely this year with the Operations Committee is deferred maintenance, which can become very expensive, so he can't emphasis enough to raise revenue.

**MOTION:** To approve the recommendation to increase the gate to \$15 for adults and children and seniors to \$10.

Board Member Name	Approved (Yes Vote)	Not Approved (No Vote)	Abstain
Director Bradbury (Motion)	X		
Director Cornejo (Second)	X		
Director Cuevas (not yet present)	X		
Director Long	X		
Director Morgan-Carter	X		
Vice President Lopez	X		
President Lacayo	X		

- Main Lot Parking Fee – Currently we charge \$15 to get into the main lot and CEO Quaid would like to increase it to \$20. We do not put credentials or passes in the

main lot because we try and leave it open for the customers. The lots that we have reserved are much less in numbers than we had in 2019 but their rental costs have gone up as well as the busing costs. Therefore, to offset some of those costs CEO Quaid is recommending increasing the main lot parking fee.

**MOTION:** To approve CEO recommendation to increase the main lot parking from \$15 to \$20.

Board Member Name	Approved (Yes Vote)	Not Approved (No Vote)	Abstain
Director Bradbury (Motion)	X		
Director Cornejo	X		
Director Cuevas	X		
Director Long	X		
Director Morgan-Carter	X		
Vice President Lopez (Second)	X		
President Lacayo	X		

- Fireworks – This was very heavily discussed, and President Lacayo appreciates Mr. Hickman’s comments because the board as stakeholders in our property, the beach and the environment take this very seriously.

CEO Quaid explained that we are still waiting for a proposal from Zambelli and we’ll bring it to the board when we receive it. CEO Quaid briefly explained the history of the fireworks and that people usually see it as a signal that the Fair is closing. The auxiliary costs have increased significantly like the fire marshal, the City permit and the additional staff. CEO Quaid recommended that if the Board wants to have fireworks to do the last day only. Even at that, she is unsure that the cost of the fireworks is going to be in a range we can afford and that we can comply with the requests of the Surfriders. We all just want to do the right thing for the beach and for the environment and sometimes we just can’t do that so it forces us to stop an activity.

Director Bradbury agreed completely with CEO Quaid regarding the impact on the environment. We have an obligation to be a good neighbor and to set an example in this regard, and as much fun as the fireworks are he moves to discontinue the fireworks because of the impact on our climate and the environment. Director Lopez seconded.

There was a full discussion regarding different issues around the fireworks such as cost and environmental impact. Some directors felt that the board should wait and see what the costs are before deciding, and other directors feel they already know what the costs have been and that this is an environmental issue that could be eliminated.

President Lacayo opened the floor for public comments.

Kathie Moore – she would like to see CEO Quaid find out more about what Santa Barbara does for fireworks before eliminating them because they are important. She would like to know what the cost is and stated that people may even want to donate towards the fireworks.

Director Bradbury withdrew his motion in order for CEO Quaid to obtain additional information that the rest of the board is interested in.

President Lacayo stated that this will be brought back to the next meeting with more information from CEO Quaid. She also stated that box seats were an item that was tabled for another meeting.

The other item from the Executive Committee Meeting was reserved parking and CEO Quaid stated that should have just been parking not reserved parking. Ideally, she would like to have a designated lot for sponsors, concessionaires, employees and the others left open for the public. She asked anyone that if they know of a lot to send her the location and contact or any information that would be helpful in trying to secure the lot.

President Lacayo stated that one of the last items was a discussion regarding the order of the meeting and closed session and she stated that this has been addressed quite extensively and it has been sorted out.

**X. Board Correspondence**

A. Memo from Mike Francesconi at California Dept. of Food & Agriculture, Fairs & Expositions: Youth for the Quality Care of Animals (YQCA) Platform Transition

**XI. Consent Agenda: Items hereunder on the Consent Agenda are considered routine, not requiring separate discussion and will be enacted in one motion. Individual items A, 1-3, are approved by the vote that approves the Consent Agenda, unless an item is pulled for separate consideration.**

A. Agreements

1. Standard Agreements
2. Rental Agreements – Interim
3. Concession Agreements

**MOTION:** To approve the consent agenda with items A, 1-3.

Board Member Name	Approved (Yes Vote)	Not Approved (No Vote)	Abstain
Director Bradbury (Second)	X		
Director Cornejo	X		
Director Cuevas	X		
Director Long	X		
Director Morgan-Carter (left meeting)			
Vice President Lopez (Motion)	X		
President Lacayo	X		

## **XII. President's Comments**

- Appreciates everyone's comments and weighing in on all the discussion items. She knows the fireworks are very near and dear to everyone's hearts, but we'll get more current costs. She does agree with Director Bradbury as far as being good stewards of the property, the ocean and the environment.

## **XIII. Director's Comments**

Director Cornejo

- Loves seeing the consent agenda growing with all the Fair events, that means it is coming and we have participation.
- A thought came to her when discussing fireworks and it may be a pipe dream, but major cities have done the drone lighting events and she would love to see that because it isn't an environmental issue.

Director Long

- He went to the office to turn in his Form 700 and it was nice to see all the action going on and it is a good reminder that we are going to have a Fair. He knows how hard the staff is working that is there and he hopes we can get additional staff and we can afford to do so.
- He is really happy the way things are shaping up and appreciates all that are putting the work in to that.
- As far as the letter he sent in as a suggestion it seems like President Lacayo has figured out how she wants to do that, so he is happy with that.

Director Bradbury

- Thanked CEO Quaid, Ms. Ortiz and staff for the great work they do even short-handed especially in such a critical time. He appreciates them and the board is here to help in anyway they can.
- Reiterated what an honor it is to serve with each board member. Everyone's willingness to speak out and do what's best for the fairgrounds is respected and appreciated.
- He hopes everyone has a great next week.

Director Lopez

- Agreed with what everyone has said.

## **XIV. Future Agenda Items**

1. Box Seats
2. Fireworks
3. Update on parking
4. Possible update on concerts
5. Committee meetings

President Lacayo reminded everyone that there is a Closed Session Board Meeting this coming Friday.

Ms. Pelle – Closed session was left off of this agenda so there is closed session this Friday at 9 a.m. for the CEO search. She did get some edits back which she will finalize and send out for another round of edits on Wednesday.

President Lacayo stated that there will be a closed session on every agenda while going through the CEO search.

**XV. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

Submitted by: Heidi Ortiz  
Heidi Ortiz, Executive Secretary

Approved by: Barbara Quaid  
Barbara Quaid, CEO Ventura Fairgrounds

Approved by: Leah Lacayo  
Leah Lacayo, Board President