

# 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](http://venturacountyfair.org) Contact: Stacy Rianda, CEO

Tuesday, January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023 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

## I. Call to Order

### Roll Call

### Declaration of Recusal or Conflict of Interest

The meeting convened at 9:00 a.m. and called to order by President Lacayo.

**Directors present:** President, Leah Lacayo, Michael Bradbury, Leslie Cornejo, M. Cecilia Cuevas, Daniel Long and Shanté Morgan-Carter (joined late).

**Staff present:** Stacy Rianda, CEO, Jason Amelio, Sales Manager, Madalyn Johnson, Concessions Manager, Cristian Yopez, Accounting Dept., Shannon Patrick, Exhibits Supervisor and Heidi Ortiz, Executive Assistant.

**Guests Present:** Charles Southwick, Fairs & Expositions, Cary Glenn, City of Ventura Economic Development Office, Linda Wolf, Tom Kiskin, Rick Conrad, Megan Hook, Phil Foster Ranger, Tom Kiskin, Carla Alvara, Kathie Moore, Penny Boehm, Sandy Spooner, Julie NLN, Dawn NLN, Pete F., Eileen Shaw, Julie Solomonson, Gregg NLN and Sharon Ferro.

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

## II. Pledge of Allegiance

Director Cuevas 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)

Charles Southwick from California Department of Food and Agriculture, Fairs and Expositions Branch introduced himself.

## 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.

There were no public comments.

**V. Approval of Minutes**

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

**MOTION:** To approve the November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022 Board Meeting minutes.

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

**B. November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022 Special Board Meeting**

**MOTION:** To approve the November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022 Special Board Meeting minutes.

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

**VI. Financial Report – Cristian Yepez**

**A. Financials ending November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

Mr. Yepez reviewed the financials.

**VII. Old Business**

**A. Discussion regarding the PSG contract and payment.**

The contract and payment information were included in the board packet.

Director Cuevas asked if this item could be deferred until Director Morgan-Carter joined the meeting because she had questions. President Lacayo agreed, and the meeting continued.

The board came back to discuss this item at about 9:45 a.m.

Director Cuevas stated that she wanted to know who negotiated the contract, where the payment went, what the purpose of the payment was and was it designated in the budget, which she found was not. She stated that several members of the board met with these individuals including the former CEO and current CEO and when they came to present, she

was not part of that meeting either. After the October meeting when the PSG proposal was discussed and voted that it would not be entertained Director Cuevas asked to know how it all came about and why several members of the board already met with these individuals.

President Lacayo stated that there were no Operation Meetings held in all of 2022.

There was a lengthy discussion that ensued on how the contract came about and who was involved. The \$25,000 was an arbitrary figure that was non-refundable, and it was to cover any staff time that was spent to gather information for the proposal. It was deposited into the general fund and this amount was within the CEO's delegation of authority. The Board agreed that policies and procedures need to be reviewed and/or changed to address individual board member's participation with outside parties.

### **VIII. New Business**

#### **A. Election of Vice President for 2023**

(CEO presides over elections of Board Officers)

President Lacayo stated that the election of Vice President will take place which will fill the un-expired term of Armando Lopez who resigned from the board.

CEO Rianda opened the floor for nominations for Vice President.

Director Long nominated himself.

Director Cuevas stated that Director Morgan-Carter talked about nominating her and asked about postponing this item as well. There was a brief discussion that ensued and President Lacayo wanted to continue with the elections and seconded the motion to elect Director Long as Vice President.

CEO Rianda asked if there were any more nominations for Vice President.

Director Cuevas submitted a nomination for herself. The motion failed for lack of a second and a roll call vote took place to approve Director Long as Vice President.

**MOTION:** To approve Dan Long as Vice President of the Ventura County Fair Board.

<b>Board Member Name</b>	<b>Approved (Yes Vote)</b>	<b>Not Approved (No Vote)</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Director Bradbury	X		
Director Cornejo	X		
Director Cuevas		X	
Director Long (Motion)	X		
Director Morgan-Carter (not present)			
President Lacayo (Second)	X		

#### **B. Discussion and possible action regarding paying off the Livestock Barn**

CEO Rianda stated that there needs to be a vote on record that the Board has agreed to pay off the Livestock Barn. The principal balance on the loan was \$398,508.76.

CEO Rianda stated that there needs to be a vote on record that the Board has agreed to pay off the Livestock Barn. The principal balance on the loan was \$398,508.76.

**MOTION:** To acknowledge that the Board approved paying off the Livestock Barn.

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

C. Discussion and possible action regarding disposal of equipment

CEO Rianda stated that per our disposal of goods policy that was approved at the last board meeting, there were a few items that we came across that are valued over \$500 which requires a vote by the board to dispose of those. The items are a Dodge truck, JLG lift and a Sonoma pick-up truck. They are all beyond repair but still consider valued over \$500 and staff is seeking approval to sell these items.

**MOTION:** To approve selling the Dodge truck, JLG lift and a Sonoma pick-up truck.

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

D. Discussion and possible action regarding Public Relations/Communications RFP contract.

CEO Rianda stated that we went out to bid for public relations and marketing RFP and we had three bidders. It is staff's recommendation to award the contract to The Toland Group in the amount of \$54,000 for the year 2023. This is a one year contract with four one year options and it will be renewed at the District's discretion. The other bidders were not compliant and did not receive the minimum number of points to move onto opening the financials. The Toland Group submitted an excellent proposal. Director Morgan-Carter also sat on the scoring committee but she will concur.



**MOTION:** To approve staff recommendation to award the public relations/communications contract to The Toland Group for 2023 in the amount of \$54,000.00.

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

**IX. Board Correspondence**

A. Email from John Novi regarding Pacific Sports Group proposal

**X. 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, 1-2, 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

**MOTION:** To approve the consent list with items A, 1.

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

**MOTION:** To approve the consent list with items A, 2.

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

## **XI. CEO Report**

- She thanked Mr. Naylor for all the work he does around the fairgrounds.
- A former employee, Mr. Ramirez, is back and has been doing a lot of equipment repairs to get things up and running.
- She has been attending the VVCB Meetings and was happy to announce that the Strawberry Festival will be at the fairgrounds. She will be attending those meetings regularly to update everyone on what is happening at the fairgrounds.
- Pacific Beverage agreed to a 3-year sponsorship of \$300,000, which is the largest sponsorship that this Fair has ever had according to our sponsorship coordinator.
- All the information on the modular was included in the board packet or sent out.
- Mr. Naylor is helping redesign one of our exit signs that was knocked over during the Fair using recycled materials, as well as a new gate two sign. We will just have to supply labor and concrete, but the rest is being donated.
- Surfer's Pint needs to go out to bid and she is working with DGS and waiting for an update.
- Due to the erosion at Surfers Point she met with the City, and they proposed moving the bike path into the parking lot which eliminated some parking stalls, but it was a safety issue and making it safe is first priority.
- She met with Mayor Schroeder to discuss what was happening at the fairgrounds and if there was anything we could help with.
- We now have the Strawberry Festival and commended Mr. Amelio for working so hard to get it here. It is a huge kudo for to the City of Ventura as well as the fairgrounds.
- It is being recommended by F&E to have an MOU with the Foundation so she is working on gathering other Fair's MOU's and will start drafting one. She is hoping to have this for approval at the next meeting.
- OES supplied four pumps to us during the rain, thanks to the help of Mr. Maynard, because there were issues with the ones we have.
- We have agreed with CFSA to host Maintenance Mania in May. With that comes a project that CFSA pays for, so she is working with maintenance to identify what that will be.
- WFA passes are available if anyone wants to attend another Fair.
- She congratulated Director Cornejo for fifteen years of service and has her certificate she picked up at convention.
- She had a meeting with Ms. Patrick and the county arts people and they were really interested in talking about different ways and opportunities to get the arts more involved at the fairgrounds. She suggested possibly exhibiting some of the pieces from Pro Arts and Photography at the Government Center after the Fair.
- CCA did the facility assessment and she has the preliminary report. According to CCA, a lot of our buildings are in good shape, there just needs to be repairs made. She has a list of those items which she will be working with maintenance on.
- She had a breakfast meeting with the Chamber Executive Director Stephanie Caldwell, and looks forward to working with her.
- She attended the King Tide Press Conference which was well attended and she learned a lot about the Surfers Point project. They are hopeful that Phase II will start in the fall.
- We are very busy with getting bids out and doing lots of scoring.
- She gave an update on the maintenance projects that have been finished.



- She thanked the City of Ventura for removing all the old tires which saved us thousands of dollars.
- We put a keypad lock on the livestock restrooms so instead of giving clients a key it is a code that can be changed. This helps keep the building secure.
- We moved K-rails out in the beachlot to prevent people from doing burnouts in the circle.
- The power box out at Spectra was replaced. They have a fund that they put money into for improvements and maintenance for their operation.

Director Morgan-Carter joined the meeting.

- She is working on grants and thanked Director Long for continuing to send her different grants that are available through the State.
- ADA compliance was discussed at one of the trainings that she and Director Morgan-Carter attended and she is working on getting our website completely compliant.
- Document retention was brought up at the last meeting and we follow the master destruction of records. That is something put out by the State and what we follow.
- Creating fair email accounts for the Directors was something that was brought up as well and staff can create those again if that is something the board would like.

Director Morgan-Carter clarified that at the training she attended liability was the main issue and the reason for the board to have their own emails. CEO Rianda stated she will see if her account is active and let her know. Also, if any other directors are interested to let her know.

- President Lacayo has sent out the list of committees for this year. An Ad Hoc committee has been formed to review the policy manual which consists of Director Cornejo and Director Morgan-Carter.

Director Cornejo stated that it has been some time since the board has gone through the policies and procedures and there have been changes as needed. The whole thing can't be done immediately, but there are some items related to the Fair, personnel, Bagley-Keene, etc. that can be. They set up a timeline to present proposed changes at the April meeting with the ability to vote in May and have them take effect before Fair. Any interests, changes or suggestions are to be directed to CEO Rianda who can pass them on. They have asked CEO Rianda and will ask CDFA for assistance on any of the legal issues to make sure policies reflect current law. If there are items not addressed they can always go back and work on it later, but that is the overall plan.

Director Morgan-Carter encouraged the full board to let CEO Rianda know if there are any areas of interest that they want the committee to look at because they want to make sure it is a thorough process.

Director Cuevas asked for the committees to be reviewed, which CEO Rianda did. Director Cuevas asked to be removed from the Budget Committee.

- On January 13<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> we were a winter shelter for the people effected by the storm.
- She and Mr. Amelio have been working with an air show promoter to potentially come Veterans Day Weekend in 2024 and 2025.

- She is working to sell the fence line to businesses, partners, concessionaires, etc. who want to advertise to all the people who come in and out of Ventura every day on the train. She got pricing from the OC Fair who will manufacture those signs for us. She also spoke to our sponsorship coordinator and is fine tuning the program. This will be additional revenue.
- The Fair theme this year will be “The Time of Your Life.”
- There was some flood damage to the fire alarm system in the Clark Livestock Center so there will need to be repairs done for that.
- Carnival applications will go out the end of this month and she is hoping for a bigger and better carnival this year.

CEO Rianda turned it over to staff to give their reports.

Ms. Ortiz, Executive Secretary

- She has been working on putting bids together and getting them mailed out. There are about twelve this year with a few new ones.
- December retirement: \$19,952.53 (18 employees)
- Viking Agency will be handling the booking of grounds entertainment and Ms. Fatland will be receiving all the applications directly. Applications will be posted early February, so anyone who is interested should be directed to the website.
- She is working on completing sponsorship and service contracts.
- She has contacted all the park and ride location contacts and is slowly getting responses back. We do not have the Schooner lot this year and encouraged anyone who may know of any lots to email her any information about it.
- She is working on creating and updating the leave balance for the permanent employees.
- The workers compensation data report was completed and sent to CFSA.
- She is working on completing the state property inventory report with the help of Mr. Howell to make sure it is accurate and up to date.

Madalyn Johnson, Commercial and Food Vendor Manager

- All the invitations to return for the commercial, food and community vendors have already went out late December early January.
- We have been recruiting anything that is unique and special.
- Since we have returned from WFA, we have already received dozens of applications and payments from the returners, so she is working on getting those all processed and figuring out location.
- She attended WFA which was a great place for collaboration to find solutions and get information.
- The vendors are all excited about the new layout from CEO Rianda and there is a lot of interest around our Fair.
- She has put it out to the VVCB, the City of Ventura, the Arts Council and to the board to share her contact information if there is a vendor or something unique and special that should be at our Fair.

Jason Amelio, Sales Manager

- His report covered the period between the last board meeting October 23<sup>rd</sup> through yesterday.



- Ventura Raceway ran three scheduled nights of racing including Turkey Night. In addition to strong food and beverage, parking also brought in an additional \$6,435 in camping revenue.
- December saw the return of Snow N Glow, The Great Junk Hunt and several private events. Chopperfest did have to cancel due to rain, but they are rescheduled for next month.
- We started hosting meetings for the California Strawberry Commission. They've ran three separate meetings so far and are scheduled for one more coming up. This leads into the exciting announcement about the Strawberry Festival coming to the fairgrounds.
- During this period we roughly took in about \$166,000 in rental invoice revenue and \$40,000 in event parking revenue.
- In February there are several returning events including Jurassic Quest, Valdivia concert, Chopperfest, The Great Train Show and the first show with the Special Olympics.
- We are continuing to fill in dates for the rest of the year.

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

- Thanked CEO for her participation in sending out all the RFP's and all her work on those. She also thanked Director Morgan-Carter for her help with the process of grading the PR/Marketing RFP.
- She also thanked Director Cornejo and Director Morgan-Carter for their work on the policies, which is an on-going process.
- She reminded everyone that there will be two board meetings in February on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> which are both posted on the website.
- She recognized Cary Glenn, with the Economic Development Office, who will be joining the meetings from time to time to hear what is going on.

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

### **Director Long**

- He explained that Mike Johnson is the new liaison for the City of Ventura.
- He was proud of the fairgrounds for handling the helicopter landing for the river rescues as well as housing the RV's from the local RV resort during the recent rain. It is very valuable to have a large space that can provide for emergency purposes and have a safe place to go.
- He gave an update on some of the grants he has been researching. He stated that the board may want to look for a grant writer and CEO Rianda may know of some possible candidates.
- He appreciates all the work that staff has been doing.

### **Director Morgan-Carter**

- Thanked the CEO and staff for all their hard work in so many ways to make us superior and improve our facilities.
- There are quite a few activities that are happening for Black History Month and encouraged the board to participate and enjoy the celebrations in Ventura County. She will pass the information on the various events onto CEO Rianda to forward to the board.

### **Director Bradbury**

- Wished a Happy New Year to his fellow board members.

Director Cornejo

- Thanked CEO Rianda and staff for all the work they are doing. There is a lot going on and this is the chance for the public to find out everything that is happening.
- She stated that with the county emergencies, our importance to the community in these situations plays a major role because people rely on us for a place to go and to stage rescues which she is proud of.
- She likes hearing staff reports because it gives the board the chance to hear directly from the department heads and get to know them better.

Director Cuevas stated that she wanted to defer her director's comments to make comments on future agenda items which are also her requests.

#### **XIV. Future Agenda Items**

1. Consideration for meetings in person
2. Security report of the theft reported on the Fairgrounds during the Fair
3. Set up a meeting with the Fairgrounds Foundation
4. Update on X-Games
5. Discussion on appropriateness of contract with PSG

#### **XV. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:53 a.m.

Submitted by: Heidi Ortiz  
Heidi Ortiz, Executive Secretary

Approved by: Stacy Rianda  
Stacy Rianda, CEO Ventura Fairgrounds

Approved by: Leah Lacayo  
Leah Lacayo, Board President