

# 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: Jennifer McGuire, Acting CEO

**Tuesday, September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 9:00 a.m.**  
**Ventura County Fairgrounds – Santa Rosa Hall**

## **I. Call to Order**

### **Roll Call**

### **Declaration of Recusal or Conflict of Interest**

The meeting convened at 9:06 a.m. and called to order by Vice President Long (President Lacayo arrived late).

**Directors present:** President, Leah Lacayo, Vice President, Daniel Long, Michael Bradbury, Guillermo Rodriguez Ceja, Betsy Chess, Leslie Cornejo, M. Cecilia Cuevas, Miriam Mack and Shanté Morgan-Carter.

**Staff present:** Jennifer McGuire, CEO, Jason Amelio, Sales Manager, Madalyn Johnson, Concessions Manager, Lisa McGowan, Premiums, Megan Hook, PR & Marketing Firm, Jim Howell, Maintenance Supervisor, Marty Lieberman, Sponsorship Coordinator and Heidi Ortiz, Executive Secretary.

**Guests Present:** Cody Stultz, Peter Sheydayi and Tom Kisen.

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

## **II. Pledge of Allegiance**

Director Bradbury led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

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.

## **V. Presentation – City of Ventura**

A. Surfers Point Managed Retreat: Cody Stultz, Project Manager & Peter Sheydayi, City Engineer

President Lacayo explained that the fairgrounds has been doing this project with the City, the Coastal Commission and any agency that is involved with the retreat of the beach, the parking lot and the bike path. We are now getting ready to do Phase II and Mr. Stultz will take the board through the presentation.

Mr. Stultz introduced himself and stated that he was joined by Peter Sheydayi, the City Engineer. They thanked the Board for having them and conducted a power point

presentation on the overview of the project, project costs and grant funding, what the next steps are and project design. They explained why the project is needed and explained that the objective is to prevent long-term erosion from the coastline and fairgrounds. Their intent is to come back to the Board in March to authorize the project construction. Once they have a construction contract ready to be awarded, they will come back to the Board to get authorization to execute that agreement. They are hoping to start construction in the fall of 2024. Once the construction is done, there will be five to seven years of monitoring that the City will be driving per the terms of the permit with the Coastal Commission.

The board had a couple questions regarding the project which Mr. Stults answered.

President Lacayo stated that Director Bradbury and Director Cornejo have been, since the inception of this project, been on the Surfers Point Committee. She explained that the relationship between the fairgrounds and the City has been good as far as this project goes. She explained they are going to try and plan a tour during the retreat or another time to go over some of the details like where the parking was, where the parking is, how the road has been reconstructed, etc.

Director Cornejo commented that it has been a great collaboration. It has been an example of how all the agencies come together to make sure the environment is protected and the fairgrounds rights and property owner's rights are protected; from the fairground's point of view we want to make sure we can maximize parking because that is important to us. The amount of funding that came in to cover this project is amazing and is a great thing for our asset and something we share with the community. She commented on how great of a relationship the fairgrounds has with the City over this project.

## **VI. Approval of Minutes**

A. July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes

**MOTION:** To approve the July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023 Board Meeting minutes.

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

## **VII. Financial Report**

A. Financials ending July 31<sup>st</sup> and August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023.

CEO McGuire explained that Mr. Yepez's baby came early, so there are only July financials for this meeting. She continued and reviewed the July financials.

Director Chess asked what the basis was for our land when looking at long-term assets and CEO McGuire stated that she will inquire with the State to find the basis.

Director Cuevas asked for an update on the outstanding Skull and Roses payment.

Staff explained that the promoter is waiting for another vendor to pay him before he pays us. The promoter is working on getting investors in the actual event itself. Mr. Amelio has expressed to the promoter that the fairgrounds is seeking collections through the State, but we would prefer to go the traditional route. The promoter has been told that the fairgrounds cannot guarantee 2024 dates without payment and any potential future dates would be under a completely different pay structure.

It was discussed what staff would do going forward to prevent the fairgrounds from having such a large outstanding payment. With the larger events, paying the fairgrounds in full up front is not feasible, so the promoter will be required to pay a minimum of sixty percent of their rental fee so the bulk of the event will be paid for. This has been the consistent policy going forward with these larger events.

Director Morgan-Carter asked how many permanent versus temporary employees are on staff and how that might change.

CEO McGuire stated that there are seven permanent employees and there used to be twenty-six. She is trying to get additional permanent employees. The testing phase opens in October, which she will put in for several permanent positions. There are several temporary maintenance employees that we really want to keep, so we will try to roll them over to a state employee position.

## **VIII. Committee Reports**

### **A. Executive Committee Meeting September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023 – Leah Lacayo, Chair**

#### **1. Discussion and possible action regarding 2024 Fair dates.**

CEO McGuire is proposing the 2024 fair dates to be July 31<sup>st</sup> through August 11<sup>th</sup>.

**MOTION:** To approve the 2024 Fair dates to be July 31<sup>st</sup> through August 11th.

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

President Lacayo stated that in regards to the X Games, their dates are driven by ESPN and their TV schedule. In 2024, we are told that they will be held sometime at the end

of June due to the Olympics, but in 2025 they will go back to their original dates in July, which will probably affect the Fair if they sign a multi-year contract.

There was further discussion regarding the X Games and the potential dates and some of the impact it may have.

## 2. Discussion and possible action regarding cannabis policy

President Lacayo stated that the committee discussed having a cannabis policy and explained that a lot of Fairs are doing cannabis shows now. Years ago, the committee started talking about having a cannabis policy, but there weren't real guidelines. In the meantime, the State has come up with a policy and recommended the board adopt that while working on our own policy. This would allow staff to book events now.

Director Morgan-Carter explained that she read the state policy sent by CDFA and they made recommendations that before a board adopts a policy that they need to determine a few things like community values, fairgrounds proximity to schools, relationship with CHP, etc. She also had questions about use and whether it would just be sales or actually used on the fairgrounds. She would like a thoughtful process and wasn't sure why it was being rushed before having more discussion.

President Lacayo stated that staff has had many requests to have shows here and we are missing out by not having a policy.

CEO McGuire stated that one of the shows is an industry show, not a public show, which is Hall of Flowers. They are trying to book something for 2024 and want to book now. She reached out to CDFA legal on what the policy and procedure is, and they referred her to the State policy. The first step would be to adopt the policy and then make it tighter from there. She gave a sample policy from Stanislas County that is a basic policy, which is the same one Cal Expo uses, so we would be in line with other DAA's and what the State is doing. There will be gray areas and details to be worked out, but the Policy Committee can work on tightening that up.

Director Morgan-Carter stated that she remembers some of the issues over the gun shows. The board would start with the process and get hit with the fact that there weren't parameters set and the board wasn't thoughtful in creating that. She stated that her and Director Cornejo will continue with the Policy Committee and set up some timelines in terms of getting that done.

Director Cornejo stated that it would be helpful for policy purposes to at least have some agreement in advance, and maybe one more discussion on this, as to such things as use versus advertising, presentation, and those sorts of things. There wasn't any legal precedent before, but there is now which is helpful to us generally to do this legally if the board chooses. The whole discussion over this, like the prior gun show issue, comes back to what is legal. Following the law, sometimes for or against, there are things the board might personally be opposed to but it is just following the law. Having this pre-vetted through the State the board has some protections there that we didn't have before.

Vice President Long stated that getting other policies that have already been approved by the State like Cow Palace and the other one would be good. The CDFA policy is from

2017 and a little outdated from what it seems, so getting a couple of policies that have been approved to look at would be good before foraging through our own policy.

Director Mack stated that she read the CDFA document as a very interesting and helpful guidelines and recommendations, but didn't read it as a policy. Following Vice President Long's comments she is in support of directing staff to bring back some more information and seeing what other Fairs are doing.

President Lacayo stated that the CDFA document is what the State has given as far as policy goes and it is okay to adopt it as the first step and then put finishing touches on it and include what the board will require as the 31<sup>st</sup> DAA.

Director Mack explained that the CDFA document provided were guidelines and not a policy.

Director Morgan-Carter agreed and stated that within the document it states that if a board approved cannabis events there are certain things that each board needs to consider and this is what she was questioning. She is not against it but wants to be thoughtful in the process. In terms of still being open to this possible opportunity she wants to know if there is time to come back and consider these questions.

Vice President Long asked staff if the board waited one month if it would conflict with the event that wants to come in 2024. Mr. Amelio confirmed that he believes so. The former CEO intended on pushing forward going into April, but we lost all that lead up time where these discussions should have been taking place with everything that transpired. Realistically, it would impact the specific industry event to do a 2024 event here. Vice President Long continued that if the board move to adopt to the policy today Mr. Amelio could move forward and the board could come back next month and have more of a discussion regarding the policy and nail it down as to which direction to go in.

President Lacayo stated that hopefully the Policy Committee will have adequate time to have gone through some of these issues. It is a rush and the board may have to adopt and re-adopt as they move along to decide what they want after looking at various policies. She mentioned that the Stanislas policy references the State and management to make decisions, but she would like to see the board have a set policy in place. Until then, she urges the board to adopt the State policy.

Director Chess stated that it sounds like the board wants to adopt this policy as a placeholder. She agrees, being on the outside looking in during the gun show, the board doesn't want to be put in that situation again. The board should go into a new policy with all questions presented, asked and answered. She rather not have a show and lose revenue than to jump into something as important and complex as this. So that is what she is hearing, is that this is a placeholder and it gives the board the absolute essential opportunity to craft it and answer the questions that everyone has.

President Lacayo stated that is correct in what she is hearing. She stated that to be fair, the board can't compare the gun shows to cannabis because we were hoping the State would legislate no gun shows at fairgrounds and they got there. With cannabis it is already legal here and she believes it is different.

Director Mack commented that she is still wondering why the board was not presented with a policy for the 31<sup>st</sup> DAA that has been vetted and all the issues could be laid out. She does not want to be trapped into something by taking this first step and being bound by something.

Director Cornejo stated that the board approved a series of gun shows subject to new policies as they came and were decided upon before those shows. Any contracts would be subject to any new policies and guidelines and the promoters would have to follow those. Adopting the policy today is opening the door to the show but it doesn't preclude us from putting restrictions before that show happens.

Director Morgan-Carter explained that the Stanislas policy, which she assumes CEO McGuire is going to recommend, gives delegation to the CEO. She would not be comfortable with that, but she would be willing to support it if it gives the board pre-contracting approval until there is a policy in place.

Director Cornejo stated that she believes the contracts state that they are subject to fairground's policies, so if they change the promoter needs to be aware that they may be restricted by the new policies when the board passes them. This is opening the door to accepting the cannabis shows on our fairgrounds, but still subject to whatever policies are put into place and they need to understand that there may be some restrictions to their shows. In her opinion, the board should at least decide if they are going to venture into this world with the State policy and then come up with a more customized policy for our fairgrounds.

CEO McGuire stated that she agrees, and this policy was meant to open the door for discussion, so that when the inquiries come in staff has something to go off of.

Director Cuevas asked for, in terms of clarity, what the board is looking at, if the board is referencing the State guidelines, which is exactly what it is called, for the board to reference it as the State guidelines. Then the board can reference their own policy as the 31<sup>st</sup> DAA policy. Right now the board is looking at adopting the State guidelines to help the board craft their own policy.

Director Bradbury commented that if the board endorses the guidelines then they will be sending a potential message to any potential contractors that this is the direction the board is going. If there is no need to do it right now then why do it today.

Director Cuevas stated that she understands from staff that they are looking for general direction from the board on whether or not they are open to the cannabis industry and having the industry on the fairgrounds. By adopting the State guidelines, it signals to the world that the board is looking at positively supporting that industry as a market on the fairgrounds.

Director Morgan-Carter stated that that is the reason why she is proposing that in the wake of this, that each contract is brought up for board approval, on a case-by-case basis, until there is a policy in place.

President Lacayo stated that it does come up in the consent agenda and the board would have the opportunity to comment on them.



Director Cornejo commented that she sees no problem with approving guidelines and putting contracts in motion as long as the contracts state they are subject to State approval and the 31<sup>st</sup> DAA's current policies.

**MOTION:** To approve the State guidelines on cannabis for the 31<sup>st</sup> DAA.

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

Director Cuevas brought up the discussion around the Ethics Committee and asked for clarification as to why it was brought up and the purpose of the committee.

President Lacayo stated that they talked about reinstating the Ethics Committee, which the board has had before, and it was previously under the Executive Committee which is the way it will continue to be.

CEO McGuire commented that years ago it was geared more towards the junior livestock portion of the Fair's program. It is more about making ethical decisions inside and outside the showing and Dr. Mike, the Fair vet, and some of the leaders would like to bring that back. It helps to ground people and make them realize that there are rules to follow.

Director Cornejo brought up a correction to the minutes and her comments about the Foundation and the Fairgrounds and how there needs to be a strong line between the two groups and not a fine line. The Executive Committee minutes will be corrected with that change as well as the discussion around the Ethics Committee.

## **IX. Old Business**

### **A. Retreat**

President Lacayo stated that CEO McGuire has been talking with Ms. Bailey-Finley and she is available November 13<sup>th</sup> through the 18<sup>th</sup>. She has located a place in Camarillo but the only date available is November 14<sup>th</sup>. They are estimating it will take half a day and will probably be scheduled from noon to five. The agenda hasn't been set yet, but there will be a lot of training and indoctrination.

CEO McGuire stated that she sees it as a team building exercise. Everyone can get to know one another and learn everyone's strengths and what they can bring to the table. Fair operations can be reviewed, because some things have changed since the pandemic, and it would be nice to have some in-depth detail about things like contracts, the process of rental inquires, learn terminology, etc. The board can identify goals for 2024, establish

ad hoc committees and review what the responsibilities of the staff, CEO and the board are.

President Lacayo stated that they would do dinner afterwards for those that are able to stay, and significant others are welcomed. They might possibly invite the Foundation Board just as a social.

There was a discussion regarding the date of the retreat. President Lacayo stated that for the time being the retreat is set for November 14<sup>th</sup> but will continue to research and speak to Ms. Bailey-Finley on her availability.

**B. Policy Manual Review**

The ad hoc committee and staff will continue to work on and changes and bring them to the full board.

**X. Board Correspondence**

- A. Memo from Mike Francesconi at California Department of Food & Agriculture, Fairs & Expositions: Sponsorships must be reviewed by F&E – FAC 4051.1
- B. Memo from Mike Francesconi at California Department of Food & Agriculture, Fairs & Expositions: Employee Travel to States with Discriminatory Laws
- C. Memo from Mike Francesconi at California Department of Food & Agriculture, Fairs & Expositions: 2023 State Rules Advisory Committee Meeting

**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 list with items A, 1-3.

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

**XII. CEO Report**

- A. Discussion and possible action regarding Resolution authorizing the application for grant funding under the Community Resilience Centers Program as administered by the Strategic Growth Council.



CEO McGuire explained that staff had a great round table discussion regarding all things Fair. Staff will go over some of the details which are already in her report. She told the board if anyone wanted clarification or more details to please see her after the meeting. She explained that the staff here is the best that you will find anywhere.

#### Megan Hook, Marketing

- Youth Poster had 32 entries and the top 3 winners were awarded prizes.
- Read and Ride had 685 entries and 4,110 ride passes were awarded to Ventura County Youth.
- Individually thanked 24 sponsors on social media.
- Created hundreds of graphics for digital and printed media, including 8 entertainers with unique ticket sale tracking.
- Published 92 organic posts during the fair and had 294 posts total through the 2023 fair season.
- Partnered with 7 content creators to reach over 140,000 audience members.
- Took over 44,000 photos and videos over the course of the fair.
- Collaborated with 4 drone operators to produce content for the fair. Sent 27 e-newsletters to 24,864 subscribers with a 54% open rate.
- Created and advertised 6 commercials, 8 radio ads, 12 print publications, a digital billboard, and 3 movie theater ads, for a combined estimated impression of 5.3 million.
- Ran 45 paid social media ads which resulted in reaching an audience of 417,000 people, 64,931 clicks, and 3,261 shares.
- Additional efforts included: VCF one-sheet, vendor spotlights, ticket giveaways, onsite film crew, and Juneteenth sponsorship.
- One of the goals in collecting all this data, is to use it for future use so we learn from it and adapt as we go along.

#### Madalyn Johnson, Concessions

- They were able to service over twenty-seven community vendors which are vendors from all over including Sparc to VPD to the Girl Scouts etc. She tries to get the most diverse group and help them in any way possible to get on grounds. One group in particular was the Veterans group and they had a representative here and they were able to get veterans benefits onsite.
- She had about 59-60 food vendors and the day after the Fair they have a check out day and they pay their percentage. They roughly collected \$928,000 which represents sales of about \$3.3 million gross.
- She explained that Ms. Hook had someone who made reels and he went around and did videos on the food stands which helped tremendously. She not only did it for food, but also did it for commercial vendors, which is not usually done.
- The fair did several hundred thousand dollars in commercial revenues.
- One goal is to be diverse and to have every single stand have something special in it.
- She worked with Director Chess's group and Ms. Patrick on the museum booth which brought Chumash interpretive, which we do not have.
- She worked with Director Morgan-Carter on a booth and will do again next year.

Director Morgan-Carter and Director Cuevas left the meeting.

Marty Lieberman, Sponsorships

- He explained that he brought in \$520,000 in revenue plus the additional money that Pepsi is supposed to send in as part of the rebate. The all-time high for sponsorships was \$523,000, so he got pretty close to that.
- There were about 30 sponsors this year and everyone wants to come back. A lot of them want more space, which is a challenge for obvious reasons.
- He is already planning for next year and is hoping for bigger and better.
- He explained that he has experience with the cannabis industry and he wanted to make sure the policy covers the Fair or other events we put on as it relates to sponsorships and marketing.

Jason Amelio, Sales Manager

- This report covers events from 6/26 through 9/22. During this time, we hosted some several first-time events including Spencer Mackenzie's Throwdown, The National Heirloom Expo and X Games along with returning events from 805 Night Market, Ventura Nationals and the Indoor Super Custom Lowrider Car Show. There were, of course, no rental events for the majority of August due to our county fair.
- During this period, we took in \$397,557 in rental invoice revenue. That is up \$316,009 from 2022's \$81,548 rental revenue. Parking revenue from events this period was \$84,360 vs \$67,007 during the same period. An overall increase of \$17,353.
- Looking ahead at the event calendar we have a full month of returning fall events including the 2<sup>nd</sup> Seaside Oddities Expo, Seaside Card Collectors Expo, The Harvest Festival, Seaside Highland Games. Boots and Brews, the Latino Business Expo, Gold Coast Gem Show, a second brand new Cat Show and more.
- In the Sales Office we continue to work on the remaining events for 2023 and are working to confirm the early part of 2024 calendar and beyond. We should have updates regarding return dates from X Games and National Heirloom Expo by the November board meeting if not sooner.

Jim Howell, Maintenance Supervisor

- They have been watering the grass around the grounds to try and get the lawns green so there isn't dust for our clients and their events. The watering is kept to a minimal and they also try and utilize drought tolerant plants to eliminate the need to water often.
- He is breaking the maintenance staff up and having them work in zones. This provides ownership and accountability.
- They continue to work on the updates to the grandstands. They have dug out the footings and will be pouring cement. He stated that he and CEO McGuire would give a tour to show anyone who wants to see the progress.
- He explained that they are busy keeping up with all the events that have been booked.
- They have had assistance from the laborer's union on things such as plumbing and pouring concrete, which has been a big help. He is in the process of working with Steve to get more projects scheduled.
- With Vice President Long's help they have gotten the flower boxes looking good and set those out at events.

CEO McGuire continued with Fair stats that were not covered.

- Attendance for Fair was 333,000 compared to 2022 which was 270,000.

- Admissions revenue was \$3.1 million and in 2022 was \$2.5 million.
- Carnival was down slightly which was \$3.5 million and in 2022 it was \$3.7 million. Staff reviewed this and it came down to carnival presale. There were a lot of people that really missed that presale purchase in person, so that is something we will bring back in 2024.
- Parking was down this year, which was 511,000 compared to 555,000 last year, which staff attests to less parking spaces that was allocated to the Players Casino and Derby Club as well as the shuttles being up which is a good thing.
- The shuttle ridership was up this year, which was 103,000 and last year it was about 94,000.
- The Junior Livestock Auction was down slightly this year bringing in \$1.31 million and last year was \$1.38.
- Entries were up this year, we had over 9,000 as compared to last year, which was 8,000.
- Sponsorships were about \$521,000, which can change a little bit, compared to last year, which was around \$390,000.
- Beer sales were up this year at \$1.2 million compared to \$1.1 million from last year.
- Our biggest attendance day was Dia De La Familia and the second day was the Ashanti concert.
- We have had good extensive round table discussions about the Fair next year. Staff discussed what they can do, what needs to change, and the common theme is more space.
- A theme idea for next year is some sort of a 150<sup>th</sup> celebration. Staff would like to include some historical milestones and have further discussions, which the board will be updated on. Staff would like to go vintage with the poster and bring back an old logo.
- Staff wants to develop some new ideas for some of the areas. For instance, one of Ms. Johnson's ideas is an outdoor living area. Another idea is to redevelop the 805 Station Stage area and possibly make it a secondary food court. We could open it up and add some more sponsors and food vendors. Another area that staff wants to redevelop is area 1, which is the first area you encounter as you walk through the main gates. She wants to rebrand the Morgan Arena, which she is working on more grant money, and brand it as a western theme.
- Mr. Amelio built a bike valet service, and she wants to enhance that and encourage everyone to ride their bike to the fair.
- As far as admission and ticket sales, staff is going to look at different platforms and technology. A lot of the bigger fairs have self-servicing kiosks and there is an attendant that monitors and assists customers, so that will be something staff investigates.
- Garden Street gate was closed this year due to safety issues. The shuttle praised us for doing so because it was a lot safer and more efficient for them. VPD also commended us for keeping that gate closed because it helped them as well. This is something that will be continued and it is a game changer for safety reasons.
- We are an independent carnival, which means there are multiple operators instead of one company that comes in and handles everything, and we will continue that next year. She wants to add some self-serving kiosks in the carnival which will be very helpful.
- Staff has a really good parking system, ParkHub and Park Mobile, which we might try to utilize next year to help the Lions Club out.

- The grandstand entertainment vendor resigned the account, so we have the opportunity to change things and do something different. She has been in contact with CDFA legal to make sure we follow protocol and procedures. We do not have to go out for an RFP for grandstand entertainment buyer if we don't lock into a three-year deal. She has gotten three different vendors who are interested and are working on putting proposals together. This was brought up at the Executive Committee Meeting, but she is considering having two paid concerts.
- The focus now is the grandstand bleacher project and following the CCA assessment. She has provided a list of what has been done and the last step is to replace the seats.
- The Santa Cruz roof replacement project, which is done through DGS who work in conjunction with the California Construction Authority, will be breaking ground next month and getting that started. It should be completed by March 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- She has been working with the Wood Claeysens Foundation on the Morgan Arena retrofit. They had given grant money to do some basic cosmetic things in order to get ready for this year's fair. Going into 2024 we would like to do some additional work like lengthen and widen the arena, repair the warm-up arenas in the back, new bucking chutes, paint and upgrade the electricity.
- The biggest project she has been working on is the CRC program grant funding which is a \$5 million grant that she just submitted. We have received great letters of support from different entities. The next step is the review stage and then if we make it through that then the implement stage. She has been working with a grant writer who has been helping her with it.
- Staff will be getting some new equipment. We purchased a couple golf carts and are working on getting a new forklift through the Oak View Group as well as a boom lift through a trade deal with CBF Productions.
- One focus in 2024 is to get a new website and make it a little more user friendly. She would like to start emailing the board any upcoming events so everyone knows what is happening on grounds.
- Mr. Naylor and Ms. Ortiz are working on getting the sign/reader board upgraded to LED which we would be able to sell space on. She explained we might have a sponsor to fund this upgrade and was going to follow up on that.
- CEO McGuire stated that the board has to formally adopt into the record the resolution for the CRC program grant because it is part of the grant process.

**MOTION:** To approve the resolution authorizing the application for grant funding under the Community Resilience Centers Program as administered by the Strategic Growth Council.

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

### **XIII. President's Report**

- She took the opportunity to fair hop and visited the Tri-County Fair. She saw the Ventura staff in action which was great and urged anyone who has the opportunity to visit another fair to do so.
- She attended the Volunteer Event at the fairgrounds and played Bingo. There was a good turnout of directors which was good to see.
- She is working on the retreat as well as getting committees organized which she will be sending out next week.
- She congratulated CEO McGuire on an outstanding fair. She explained that it exceeded all of her expectations. She thanked the staff who she knows worked really hard on all the events leading up to fair and all the events we now have on our books for the rest of 2023 and going into 2024.

### **XIV. Director's Comments**

Director Ceja

- He attended the Volunteer Event and was able to meet some of the Superintendents and one of the concerns is how we recognize our volunteers. He was blown away and explained there was a lot of history in the room, and he is appreciative and glad he attended. He would like to see something more to thank the volunteers.

Director Mack

- She explained how we received really good publicity with X Games as well as the Throwdown which was another expansive opportunity to get the fairgrounds on the map.

Director Chess

- She explained this was her first official fair and because she was so concerned about volunteers she went to every pavilion and said thank you, which made her feel good.
- Another thing that made her feel good was that she purchased a carnival gold card and on the last day of the fair gave it to a family to use. They were thrilled and which was a good feeling.

Director Cornejo

- She congratulated staff and everybody for a wonderful fair. They deserve the greatest amount of respect for all that they do and did for the fairgrounds and the community through the fair.
- She was most worried about the closure of Garden Street mainly for the negative feedback on it, but after explaining the safety issue people understood. Also, to see that the shuttles ran so much better and efficiently and enabled more people to come in by shuttle turned out to be fantastic.
- As she thinks about the meeting today and hoping the X Games will come, she is picturing in 2025 the overhead view of the property, with all the improvements being made, things will be that much better. It will be very exciting to showcase our property and she is excited about the fairground's future.

Director Bradbury

- He thanked and congratulated the staff and explained he is delighted they are here. They created an extraordinary atmosphere for a wonderful fair under some adverse circumstances, so he recognizes and thanked them for that. He stated that this was contributable to CEO McGuire's leadership and inspiration and thanked her for that. The

board is blessed with an extraordinary staff and is not sure what the board would do without them.

Vice President Long

- He stated he couldn't say things any better than how Director Bradbury just said it. Their hats are always off to all of the staff, superintendents and volunteers and thanked them all.
- He still sees the X Games train car go by, so we are still getting that recognition.
- The Volunteer Event was nice but had some glitches and seemed like it was put together at the last minute. The volunteer base has gone down, so we need to find some ways to do some recruiting whether it be from schools. We do have a lot of pins, which we got a few years back. It was still a nice event and everyone can think of ways to bump up the volunteers and figure out a way to recognize them.
- As far as committees, he thinks it is good for all directors to sit on every committee so everyone can see all aspects of the fair and see how things work.
- The CRC program grant is really great and he learned a lot about grant writing and how hard it can be. They always seem last minute and there was a rush to get letters of support which President Lacayo and him reached out and were able to get some really good ones from people who love the fairgrounds as much as we do.

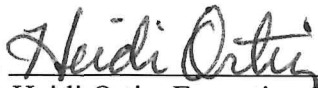
**XV. Future Agenda Items**

1. Fair 2024
2. Cannabis Policy
3. Retreat
4. Plan for rainy season

**XVI. Adjourn**

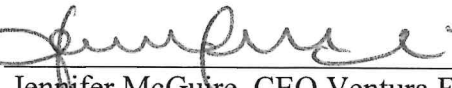
The meeting was adjourned at 11:47 a.m.

Submitted by:



Heidi Ortiz, Executive Secretary

Approved by:



Jennifer McGuire, CEO Ventura Fairgrounds

Approved by:



Leah Lacayo, Board President