

14th District Agricultural Association

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY FAIR

Established 1885



BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Board of Directors' Meeting

2601 East Lake Avenue, Watsonville, CA

Tuesday, February 28, 2017

The Board Room

Approved by: _____

Date: _____

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 PM by President Barton

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Bill Barton President; Loretta Estrada, Director; Jody Belgard, Director; Stuart Yamamoto, Director; Stephanie Fontana, Director; Don Dietrich; Director; Tony Campos, Director.

DIRECTORS ABSENT: Director Hammer

DIRECTORS EXCUSED: none

GENERAL MANAGER (GM): Dave Kegebein welcomed the public and provided an overview of the struggles and successes of the past 5 years. He noted that this is the beginning of a planning process that will be ongoing. He explained that the weekly flea market brings in about \$100,000 annually and that the RV Park generated about \$75,000. Auto racing generates \$69,000 per year. Lots of building rentals and outdoor events are held as well.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: John Skinner commended Dave and his team for coming so far since the dark times 5 years ago. Car race gentleman – (Tim) encouraged mixed use, supports the racetrack. Director Dietrich encouraged honesty and criticism if warranted. This is an open forum with open communication encouraged. Pat Davidson, neighbor and volunteer, liked that original mission statement included involving youth. Would like to see 1) an expanded equestrian program, 2) would like to see further outreach to North County. John Holman with Scotts Valley police department and Special Olympics. They raised \$39,000 for Special Olympics in Northern California through the events held at the car races. He expressed gratitude to John Prentice for letting them participate. He left handouts for the board.

Dave Schnitter was interested in hearing the board member's plans for the facility. Tony Oliveira has been coming to the races for over 30 years. He recognized that attendance is down due to the economy, but this is a very important activity for the kids. There is very little else for the kids to do in town. Jeff Stanich – his son works for the racetrack doing Facebook and social media. He is surprised that the track does not race Saturday nights, especially during the holidays. Elsewhere he has noticed that embracing a diverse ethnic community has been successful. That could be a great revenue generator.

Joan – has brought their family to the racetrack since their children were small and feels it's a wholesome family activity. She complimented the board on the varied activities including the Holiday Fair. John Skinner, volunteer, noted that the Santa Cruz Flea Market is closing and encouraged an effort to bring them down here. Terry Traub with Police in Pursuit Special Olympics event at the car races for the past 4 years. He has been embraced by the race community and finds them to be an important close knit community that

contributes much to the local economy. Ken Orr has been affiliated with the fairgrounds since 1959 and has a daughter with FFA. He noted that some nationally recognized drivers got their start here.

Steve Tedesco explained the Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds Foundation's function and how it supports the maintenance of the fairgrounds. The Crab Feed this week will generate about \$60,000 which is nearly the annual rent of the car races.

John Prentice, on 12th year as race promoter here, thanked the fair board for their hard work. He also thanked the race supporters. He noted how important the Friday night races are to families who don't have a lot of other entertainment opportunities. He has every intention of coming back after their lease is up in 3 years and intends to do whatever they can to keep the races here. It is a challenge for them to be limited to 25 races per year (per terms of the neighbor's lawsuit) along with the 90-decibel sound limit. He asked that the economic value to the overall community be considered when dealing with the racetrack. Tony Karis – writes for the Sentinel and does racetrack announcing. He said he's heard from cyclists that there is interest in a velodrome for cyclists. He wondered if the track could be used for equestrian events on weekends when races aren't happening. Electric go cart racing is also popular and a potential revenue generator – maybe electric motorcycles too.

Derrick Witmer was in 4-H and FFA and grew up with the programs which helped him be successful in his life. He was grateful for the opportunities the fairground provides.

Julie Mabie is involved with the equestrian events and recommended looking for grants to get a covered arena. She noted that the footing for a car track is very different than for horses need, and even different horse events require different footing material. She mentioned that the judge's employment contracts are out of date.

Becky Steinbruner has been involved with 4-H and the fair and has kids who were brought up here. She also noted that the County is looking for sites for large solar arrays.

Bill Robertson was raised nearby and has been involved with the baseball and car race activities. His son now plays Little League here. He would be willing to help with the cleanup. He really appreciates the Fair and supports the community involvement and support of the folks who are involved and who showed up tonight.

Ron Haedicke thinks the City of Watsonville is willing to be active at the Fairgrounds. He encourages a conversation with the City as well as the neighbors in the north part of the county.

DIRECTOR COMMENTS: President Barton asked for the representatives of the various interests to stand. Approximate public attendees representing the car races (30), Little League (7), equestrian events (6), 4-H and FFA (6). There were about 15 fair volunteers in attendance (many counted in the other categories above).

Director Dietrich read the Fair's mission statement. He noted that without state funding sustaining the facility and generating revenue is critical. He asked that the racing community show they care and spend time and effort to maintain the racetrack facility. Sustainability of the fairgrounds is the goal that must be front and center of the discussions.

Director Yamamoto thanked the public for their participation and encouraged them to continue to be involved. Director Campos encouraged everyone to support the other activities at the facility. We all want the fair to succeed.

Director Fontana talked about how important the youth groups are including 4-H, Eagle Scouts and FFA. She encouraged these folks to continue their involvement as it is key to the success of the facility.

Director Estrada read a long list of improvements and upgrades that have been accomplished in the past 5 years. She encouraged everyone to tour the grounds and see the tremendous improvements and to be sure to appreciate the work that our General Manager has overseen. She encouraged everyone to get their tickets for the Crab Feed Saturday night. Director Belgard has been coming to the races since she was 10 and enjoys them today. She was also involved in Little League and has been involved in car shows at the fairgrounds. She thanked everyone for coming and for continued participation by all interested parties. She asked the participants to continue to stay in touch and provide input on these important issues.

CONSENT CALENDAR: The Consent Calendar contained the corrected minutes of November 29, 2016 regular meeting, Minutes of January 24, 2017 regular meeting, and Contracts. *Director Dietrich moved, Director Belgard seconded approval of the Consent Agenda. Motion Carried 7-0, Ayes – Directors Barton, Belgard, Campos, Dietrich, Estrada, Fontana, Yamamoto.*

FINANCIALS: GM reported a cash balance of about \$164,000. The closing of the December financials are awaiting a few minor details – so 2016 STOP report and budget will be brought back in March.

MANAGER’S REPORT:

1. Projects Update – GM reported on the many projects underway, including painting of the Harvest & Arts Buildings. Department Heads chose the theme “Fly Me to The Fair!”
2. Letter of Intent to Agricultural History Project – the LHF – site has not yet been mapped due to bad weather. Will be brought back to the March regular meeting. John Kegebein spoke about the concept of a Living History Farm and how a vibrant example of a working rural farm would be so valuable to our community. He mentioned that a large number of the earlier speakers had expressed how very valuable the time they spent with livestock and around a fair family had been in their development.
3. Alcohol Sales Contract with the SC Fairgrounds Foundation – GM reviewed terms of the contract that was approved last month.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Approve Resolution covering Fair Volunteers for Workers’ Compensation coverage. Lynne explained how CSFA has requested the resolution for providing insurance for all volunteers. The 2016 modification ratio is 90%. Last year the bill was \$26,004 for 15556 hours of labor.

Director Dietrich moved and Director Estrada seconded approval of Resolution covering Fair Volunteers for Workers' Compensation. Motion Carried 7-0, Ayes – Directors Barton, Belgard, Campos, Dietrich, Estrada, Fontana, Yamamoto.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Was in the agenda package.

Next Meeting:

Next Regular Board Meeting Schedule is March 28, 2017 at 1:30 in the Board Room.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.