

## **Deschutes County Fair Board Meeting**

June 12, 2025

In attendance: Fair Board members Steve Curley (starting at 3:07pm), Arron Curtis, Bill Kuhn (until 4:31pm), Carrie Novick (until 3:35pm) and Libby Richie.

Fair & Expo team members in attendance: Geoff Hinds, Director; Brandi Ebner, Sales & Marketing Coordinator; and Elyse Ballinger, Management Analyst.

Guests included the Populous team of Bill Bourne, Dana Morrow, Charlie Kolarik, Mackenzie Modde, Chris Oxley, and Joel Feldman (3:33 pm - 5:02 pm via conference call)

The meeting was available via Zoom.

Arron Curtis called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.

Carrie Novick moved to approve the May 8, 2025, Fair Board meeting minutes.

Bill Kuhn seconded the approval. All present were in favor. Minutes approved.

### **Directors Report/ Facility & Events Update/Fair Update**

Geoff noted the event successes of May, with 24 unique events held over the month. The local economic impact generated by DCFE in May was \$5,570,900. Economic impact for the calendar year is approximately \$22,532,200.

Geoff shared the first self-produced event Blippi occurred and the second is occurring this week: the Three Dog Night & Ambrosia concert: with ticketing expected to be around 1,000. These represent new revenue opportunities and will be evaluated for future events.

Brandi shared new events including Cascadia Reptile Expo and Oregon's Largest Open-Air Garage & Vintage Sale which hopes to return twice annually. Upcoming returning events include Overland Expo and Southern Oregon Flea Market, which have both seen growth. Mt. Bachelor Kennel Club's (MBKC) annual Dog Show merged with their scheduled Obedience Trial event in August.

Steve asked if the two MBKC events merging would carry into future years.

Geoff replied the producers will evaluate after this year to determine if the events remain combined. He noted the potential overlap with Cascades Futurity's setup days, which has increased over the years.

Geoff shared that the 2025 Fair concerts were announced. The Board discussed the entertainment acts, including the Budweiser Clydesdales are who confirmed for this year's Fair. Contracts are in finalization following County contract requirements. Media advertising continues in support of the Fair. Monthly workshops and training in partnership with the Fair Association is ongoing. Buckaroo Breakfast organizers met with Fair Association members and improvements are planned, along with establishing an MOU. The Livestock Committee will also see

Arron asked if the MOU would require Buckaroo Breakfast to present a business plan to the Board and Fair & Expo.

Geoff noted the event would continue to be a separate entity and likely be more similar to a limited use agreement.

**Business & Finance Reports/Legislative Report/Building & Grounds**

Steve shared that the Committee met to review the reports together. He noted the revenue actuals are behind budget but ahead of last year.

The Board meeting moved into the Master Planning presentation, and the Populous team provided the included presentation.

*(Carrie left the meeting)*

Bill asked if the final report will include focused recommendations and insight on creative funding options, including prioritizing initial best return to the County.

Bill Bourne, Populous, shared their process of determining possible recommendations, and CSL will then determine cost and benefit analysis of each. Surveys and feedback gathered is helpful, including the upcoming meeting with the review committee.

Joel Feldman, CSL, confirmed they are in communication with Geoff and the Fair & Expo team about current and anticipated financial state. The final plan will provide both capital investment and ongoing operational focuses.

Arron and Steve discussed the future of 19<sup>th</sup> street and how the proposed southern entrance adjustments would integrate.

Steve noted the importance of close parking to support events across the grounds.

Joel noted the Youth & Amateur Sports Space option could capture a current community need with available space – which could include partnership with private entities.

The Board discussed the sports tourism and local sports market and how revenue could be generated with this option.

Arron noted the significant short-term capital needs that may require immediate funding and attention.

*(Bill left the meeting)*

Geoff noted the importance of this master plan to help determine current and future vision, including conversations with community partners.

Brandi asked for clarification on the RV Park site expansion included in the presentation.

The Populous team noted the importance of placing new sites in locations that support the event facilities. They advised caution around facility changes focused on festivals, due to the inconsistent nature of that industry.

Populous will meet with the review committee by the end of the month.

*(the Populous team left the meeting)*

The Board discussed the presentation and the inclusion of the community in the planning effort.

Arron Curtis adjourned the meeting at 5:08 p.m.

Next board meeting will be held on July 10, 2025, at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Elyse Ballinger