

Deschutes County Fair Board Meeting

March 13, 2025

In attendance: Fair Board members Steve Curley, Arron Curtis, Bill Kuhn, Carrie Novick and Libby Richie (via conference call).

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

The meeting was available via Zoom.

Steve Curley called the meeting to order at 3:38 p.m.

Carrie Novick moved to approve the February 21, 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 February, with 10 unique events held over the month. The local economic impact generated by DCFE in February was approximately \$3,800,000.

Brandi shared upcoming returning events including the State FFA Convention. She noted the growth of 4-H and FFA programs across the state. Other events include the kickoff of the Oregon Lightning arena football league, the CORVDA RV Show, and the Bend Health Fair. The Beaver State Comic Con is returning for a second year, with a bigger footprint after last year's success. The National Arabian Zone 4 Show will be hosted in May, with plans for a multi-year contract.

Geoff noted ongoing effort to identify lucrative event industries and target markets to pursue. The music market has become a new focus, and partnership with a production agency has led to a newly contracted June concert.

Bill asked if the new Food & Beverage coordinator will provide additional offerings.

Geoff offered confirmation and noted in-house Concessions offerings have expanded and small-scale catering efforts have begun. Long-term planning for the Food & Beverage business is ongoing. Concessions revenue is trending steady and alcohol sales revenue are trending slightly down. Brandi shared that this trend is reported by industry partners.

Bill asked if Oregon Beverage Services (OBS) has feedback regarding the sales trend.

Geoff confirmed this industry trend has impacted their revenue, but the increase in events has partially backfilled the reduction in sales. The Fair & Expo team continues to work with OBS to identify new and creative ways to upgrade sales and experience opportunities.

Geoff noted the lighting upgrade projects are ongoing, as is project planning for new Energy Trust dollars.

Libby shared attendee feedback that the carnival restrooms were closed during the Sportsmen's Show.

Geoff noted this could be due to the restrooms being winterized or lack of temporary staff to manage them.

2025 Fair vendor applications are open and entertainment contracts are in progress. An announcement event for concert lineup is tentatively planned for May. Carrie asked if Buckaroo Breakfast has seen coordination progress. Geoff replied that Kathleen Curtis of the Fair Association is collaborating with the event's volunteers.

Business & Finance Reports/Legislative Report/Building & Grounds

Steve shared that the Committee met to review the reports. The fiscal year is now 66.7% complete, and no significant changes are seen across the funds. He noted the Events Revenue will see increase into the spring and summer.

Arron noted the Food & Beverage revenue year-over-year is trending down.

Geoff replied that Fairwell Festival's and other event attendance declines this year impacted that revenue. Overland Expo has not yet occurred this budget cycle and will add revenue.

Geoff noted the first round of FY26 budget is due March 31. Internal Service Fees are capped but increasing.

Bill offered insight that increasing personnel costs contribute to the fees.

Geoff shared continuing forecasting efforts with County Finance, reflecting a need for increased revenue with focus on new revenue sources. Contributions to the capital reserve fund 617 will again be absent from the FY26 budget. Video Lottery funds will continue to be requested.

Transient Lodging Tax (TLT) allocations are expected to be consistent.

Arron shared the urgency for establishing a 5-year capital plan, reflecting financial need to support facility function.

Steve asked if the Event Production budget items will carry into the FY26 budget.

Geoff confirmed they will, with efforts continuing to identify successful event production partners.

Libby shared that the priority bills in the legislative are seeing momentum, to remove funding caps for Oregon fairs.

Geoff noted that a few TLT bills are in discussion that would change distribution of funding and allow for spending flexibility of TLT funds. He will keep the Fair Board updated on the relevant bills progress.

DSL Update/ Facility Master & Strategic Planning

Geoff shared that the recent joint meeting of City of Redmond and Board of County Commissioners provided updates about the DSL land trade. A managed camp in Redmond is being planned, to alleviate camping on the County land to be traded.

Bill reminded the Fair Board of several upcoming efforts to close other local camps, and the possible impact on Redmond sites.

Geoff noted the long-range master planning efforts continue. CSL has produced an initial report with market research, and conversation is ongoing with Populos about the next phase. Updates are expected prior to the 2025 Fair and there is possibility of unveiling conceptual at Fair. He will share the market research report with the Fair Board. He shared the importance of defining

the purpose of Fair & Expo.

Steve encouraged the use of a facilitator to assist the Fair Board in that effort.

Carrie, Steve and Arron echoed that the current deliverable was provided, and they look forward to detailed analysis from Populos and CSL. Good conversation about local infostructure changes was insightful at a recent review.

Geoff noted local outreach for a Lance Hill memorial facility piece at Fair & Expo..

Election of Officers

Election of officers will be postponed until the full Fair Board can gather.

Steve adjourned the meeting at 5:11 p.m.

Next board meeting will be held on April 10, 2025, at 3:30 p.m. *Post-meeting update: Next board meeting will be held on April 17, 2025, at 4:00 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,
Elyse Ballinger



Deschutes County Fair & Expo Board Meeting Agenda
April 17th 2025 4:00pm
Deschutes County Fair & Expo
3800 SW Airport Way Redmond OR 97756

Virtual Meeting Access available: contact DCFE office for dial or web log-in info

Call to order	3:30pm
Roll call	3:31pm
Introduction of visitors	
• Public Comments on items not listed on the agenda	3:32pm
Minutes from Prior Meeting	
• March 13th, 2025 Meeting Minutes	3:33pm
Business & Finance Reports	
• Directors Report	3:34pm
○ Facility/Events Update	
• Facility Update	
• 2025 Events	
• Fair Update	
• Finance report	3:55pm
○ FY26 Budget Draft	
• Legislative Report	4:05pm
Old Business	
• DSL Update	4:10pm
• Long Range/Master Planning	4:15pm
• Facility Use Discussion	4:40pm
New Business	
• Election of Officers	4:45pm
Correspondence	
• If Applicable	4:50pm
Agenda items for future meetings	
Director's Comments	4:55pm
Approval to adjourn to subsequent Meeting	5:00pm

ORS 192.630 Meetings of governing body to be open to public; location of meetings; accommodation for person with disability; interpreters. (1) All meetings of the governing body of a public body shall be open to the public and all persons shall be permitted to attend any meeting except as otherwise provided by ORS 192.610 to 192.690.

At any time during the meeting, an executive session could be called to address permissible issues, as per ORS 192.660(2). Executive sessions are closed to the public, however with few exceptions and under specific guidelines, are open to the media.