

## **Deschutes County Fair Board Meeting**

September 9, 2025

In attendance: Fair Board members David Bishop, Steve Curley, Arron Curtis, Wendie Every (via conference call 3:31-3:46), Bill Kuhn, and Libby Richie.

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

The meeting was available via Zoom.

Arron Curtis called the meeting to order at 3:31p.m

Visitors: Deschutes County Administrator Nick Lelack, Deputy County Administrator Erik Kropp, Dan Mooney, Scott Brees, Trygve Bolken, and Jeff Hannon (starting at 4:01pm). Joel Feldmen, Chris Oxley, and Bill Bourne (via conference call starting at 4:15pm)

Wendie Every moved to approve the August 19, 2025, Fair Board meeting minutes.

Libby Richie seconded the approval. All present were in favor. Minutes approved.

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

Geoff noted the event successes of 2025 through August, with local economic impact generated by DCFE at \$67,992,100.

Libby asked about the Reggae Rise Up attendance.

Geoff noted it was an overall success and the event hopes to return.

Brandi shared upcoming returning events including Vernardos Circus and Cascade Equinox. New events in September includes Southland Industries and Gammil Quilting. State 4-H judges will also congregate for education in October.

Geoff confirmed bookings are strong, and facility repairs will again be planned for the winter seasons.

He made note of the potential to host Reggae Rise Up festival in June 2026, which would adjust the ongoing agreement with Oregon Youth Challenge Authority. Fair Expo hosts the organization's graduation in trade for year-round services across the facility. He shared the ongoing effort to accommodate date requests of events.

Brandi shared that the graduation event has accommodated location change in the past.

Erik Kropp asked if there is an official agreement with Oregon Youth Challenge Authority noting the trade.

Geoff said he will follow up with information.

Arron noted that additional information from both events is needed.

Erik agreed the Fair Board could offer guidance once the date availability is established.

The Board discussed the possibility of other location options in the community for the event relocation.

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

Steve shared that Steve, Geoff, Erik Kropp met and reviewed the financial reports together. Geoff noted the August 2024 comparison included the FMCA rally, which historically is not an annual event. He also shared that Food & Beverage is trending upward. The ending fund balance shows an increase over FY25's expected revenue.

Steve noted a few additional expenses will affect Fund 616 calendar year report. The current net revenue for the 2025 Fair is \$302,353.

Arron noted the 2024 Fair ended at a negative last year.

Steve shared that the two reserve funds continue to grow but will not sufficiently cover capital repairs or growth.

Libby noted no significant legislative updates.

Geoff introduced Dan Mooney, Fair Expo's contracted Sponsorship Coordinator.

Dan noted new building sponsors for multi-year facility and Annual Fair sponsorships, including HiLine Homes, Wilco and Cascade Lakes Design. Fair sponsorships include Demolition Derby, Rodeo, and Concert. He described his strategies for both flat rate and increased rates in both year-round and Fair deals, and noted sponsorships include trade when useful. He will share his sponsorship report with the Board.

The Board discussed sponsorship successes and potential new opportunities.

Geoff noted the possibility of a facility-wide naming sponsorship.

Arron asked about sponsorship rate determination.

Dan replied that he collaborates with Geoff on the rates, to align with regional comparison. He welcomed the Board's feedback.

Geoff noted Fair & Expo's partnership with industry memberships which offer data and insight on sponsorship rates. These partners could offer market evaluations to guide significant sponsorships.

Geoff shared that Populous was present and introduced those present.

Jeff Hannon, Populous, noted the upcoming presentation at the joint meeting with the Commissioners, to highlight partnerships and future developments. The Populous team will provide an update on their trajectory of next steps into the future. He noted the fluidity of master planning which allows for a framework during growth and change.

Geoff shared the desire to maintain a level of flexibility for public feedback on potential designs. Bill Bourne and Chris Oxley, Populous, agreed that feedback is welcome from County and City contacts.

Geoff noted the recent pause on the Mission and Vision project due to his transition away from Fair & Expo. He offered encouragement for the effort to support business decisions, financial stability and purpose of Fair & Expo.

Arron shared the Board's ongoing effort to identify potential facilitators to guide the process.

Geoff shared the three proposed draft Board policies for the Board's review, to improve clarity for contracted events:

Event Camping: challenge lies in limiting ability for the facility's multi-use, in addition to competition with the Expo RV Park revenue.

Bill noted the similar ongoing discussion of an MOU with OSU and Deschutes County 4-H's building location on the facility.

Geoff shared the conversation is ongoing with County Property and Administration.

Nick Lelack noted an MOU with another entity may require or be advisable to receive Board of County Commissioners approval.

Livestock & Equine Stalling: these industry events have several requirements to be addressed. Challenge lies in limiting revenue and addressing full expense of setup and facility use.

Additionally needed is confirmation of stall usage.

Event Rental Policy: need for revisiting the current Booking Policy, to provide clear guidelines and outline how the facility is utilized. To correct or address situations of facility usage outside of contracted dates or locations, including a check-in and check-out process.

Regarding these Board policy drafts: the Board agreed to provide feedback on these Board policy drafts which would then be updated by staff. After final review by the Board in a future meeting, the policies can then be reviewed by County Counsel before adoption.

Brandi shared the need for a policy addressing OSU, State 4-H, and Deschutes County 4-H Leaders Association's use of the facility.

Geoff added the inclusion of the entities' activities during the Annual Fair event.

Arron and Bill agreed the effort for clarity between the partnerships needs forward motion.

Geoff shared final comments prior to his departure from Fair Expo.

Arron Curtis adjourned the meeting at 5:04 p.m.

Next board meeting will be held on October 9, 2025, at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Elyse Ballinger