



**22<sup>nd</sup> DISTRICT AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
Del Mar Fairgrounds  
2260 Jimmy Durante Boulevard, Del Mar, CA 92014  
**February 10, 2026**

**MINUTES**

*The following minutes are a summary of the Board action and proceedings. For a full transcript please click on the link below or visit the delmarfairgrounds.com website:*

<https://www.delmarfairgrounds.com/p/public-information1>

**OFFICERS PRESENT**

Sam Nejabat, Chair  
Lisa Barkett, Vice Chair

**DIRECTORS PRESENT**

Mark Arabo  
Phil Blair  
Donna DeBerry  
Michael Gelfand  
Kathlyn Mead  
Joyce Rowland  
Frederick Schenk

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Joshua Caplan, Deputy Attorney General (Counsel)  
Carlene Moore, Chief Executive Officer (CEO)  
Tristan Hallman, Chief Communications Officer (CCO)  
Katie Mueller, Chief Operations Officer (COO)

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Nejabat called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Chair Nejabat, Vice Chair Barkett, and Directors Arabo, Blair, DeBerry, Gelfand, Mead, Rowland, and Schenk were all present.

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA** (see pages 5-11 of transcript)

Shane Harris, Jane Cartmill, Martha Sullivan

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON CONSENT CALENDAR** (see page 11 of transcript)

None

Director Rowland moved to approve the Consent Calendar. Director DeBerry seconded the motion. Chair Nejabat, Vice Chair Barkett, and Directors Arabo, DeBerry, Gelfand, Mead, Rowland, and Schenk all voted in favor. Director Blair abstained. The motion carried 8-0-1.

## **EXECUTIVE REPORT**

- The filing deadline for Form 700 is coming up on April 1, 2026.
- Don Diego Scholarship Foundation Board member Steve Shewmaker shared a letter from a Don Diego Scholarship recipient who is studying at Chico State University. The Foundation plans to award \$121,000 in new scholarship money in 2026. Director Schenk will be the honoree of the annual Don Diego Scholarship Foundation Gala at the San Diego County Fair.
- District department heads introduced themselves to the Board and outlined the responsibilities of each department.
- Monthly financial reports can be found on pages 24-29 of the meeting packet.
- Supervising Environmental Planner Dustin Fuller presented the annual update on the District's contract for on-call environmental services with Harris and Associates. The amount spent between February 1, 2025 and January 31, 2026 was \$1,394,661.34.
- CCO Hallman briefed the Board on the District's external communications strategy and practices.
- CEO Moore asked Board members to confirm if they are interested in traveling to out-of-state fairs and events to see parallel concepts in action.
- Construction on the new special events rail platform project at the Fairgrounds is expected to begin in 2027.
- CEO Moore stepped down from the California Fairs Alliance Board in January.
- The California Construction Authority report will be presented at a future meeting.

### PUBLIC COMMENT ON EXECUTIVE REPORT (see page 117 of transcript)

None

## **GENERAL BUSINESS**

### Item 6-A: DMTC Liaison Committee Report

Chair Nejabat referred to the report on pages 39-86 of the meeting packet. Committee Chair Arabo reported that the committee met with Legends about potential enhancements to the guest experience, and distributed an email from Legends outlining next steps.

### Item 6-A-1: Consideration and vote to approve the 2026 Operating Budget of the Del Mar Thoroughbred Club

DMTC President and COO Josh Rubinstein presented DMTC's proposed 2026 operating budget, which projects an estimated \$3.38 million in payments to the District and Del Mar Race Track Authority (RTA).

### PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 8-A-1 (see pages 123-127 of transcript)

Jane Cartmill, Martha Sullivan

Director Schenk moved to approve the 2026 operating budget of the Del Mar Thoroughbred Club. Director Arabo seconded the motion. Chair Nejabat, Vice Chair Barkett, and Directors Arabo, Blair, DeBerry, Gelfand, Mead, Rowland, and Schenk all voted in favor. The motion carried 9-0.

Committee Chair Arabo referred to a letter from DMTC President and COO Rubinstein included on pages 44-45 of the meeting packet, which outlines DMTC's feedback on the potential impacts of each affordable housing site option being studied at the fairgrounds.

Item 6-A-2: Discuss and vote on whether to amend Policy 4.03 Contracts and Procurement to approve the California Multiple Awards Schedule (CMAS) as a District procurement method

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 6-A-2 (see page 128 of transcript)

None

Director Arabo moved to amend Policy 4.03 Contracts and Procurement to approve CMAS as a District procurement method. Director DeBerry seconded the motion. Chair Nejabat, Vice Chair Barkett, and Directors Arabo, Blair, DeBerry, Gelfand, Mead, Rowland, and Schenk all voted in favor. The motion carried 9-0.

Item 6-A-3: Consideration and vote on whether to authorize the District's procurement of replacement video boards for the Grandstand, the Paddock, and Five Points, in accordance with the District's procurement policies

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 6-A-3 (see pages 138-139 of transcript)

Martha Sullivan

Committee Member Barkett referred to page 43 of the meeting packet and reported that the committee met with the Race Track Authority's bond counsel, who confirmed that using cash reserves to fund replacement video boards would not affect the RTA-issued revenue bonds.

Director Barkett moved to authorize the use of up to \$3 million of the District's cash reserves to directly complete the purchase of three replacement video boards after a vendor is selected and final pricing is confirmed, in accordance with the District's procurement policies. Director Arabo seconded the motion. Chair Nejabat, Vice Chair Barkett, and Directors Arabo, Blair, DeBerry, Gelfand, Mead, Rowland, and Schenk all voted in favor. The motion carried 9-0.

Item 6-B: Fair Operations Committee Report

Chair Nejabat referred to the report on pages 87-89 of the meeting packet. Committee Chair Mead reported that planning for the 2026 San Diego County Fair began last summer at the 2025 Fair, and commended District staff for their work. COO Mueller announced four artists who will perform in the Grandstand concert series: Koe Wetzell, Los Tucanes de Tijuana, Marshmello, and Good Charlotte. More concerts will be announced at the March meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 6-B (see page 156 of transcript)

None

Item 6-C: Finance Committee Report

Chair Nejabat referred to the report on pages 90-91 of the meeting packet.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 6-C (see page 157 of transcript)

None

Item 6-D: People & Culture Committee Report

Chair Nejabat referred to the report on pages 92-95 of the meeting packet. Committee Chair Mead reported that the committee is interviewing potential facilitators for a Board governance workshop, which will likely be scheduled over two sessions in March or April.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 6-D (see page 159 of transcript)

None

Item 6-E: City of Del Mar Affordable Housing Request Update

CEO Moore outlined the six locations on District property being studied as potential affordable housing sites. The feasibility study results will be presented to the Board as soon as its May meeting.

Item 6-E-1: Discuss and vote on whether the District CEO should discontinue affordable housing discussions with the City of Del Mar under the Exclusive Negotiating Rights Agreement entered into between the District and the City of Del Mar until a future District Board meeting during which (a) any and all proposed ENRA amendments are presented to the Board for consideration and approval and (b) all feasibility studies have been completed and all feasibility study work product has been transmitted to the Board

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 6-E-1 (see page 180 of transcript)

None

There was no motion on Item 6-E-1, and no action was taken by the Board.

Items 6-F, 6-G, and 6-H

Chair Nejabat announced that Items 6-F, 6-G, and 6-H would be tabled until the next Board meeting.

**RECESS TO CLOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The Board recessed to a lunch break followed by Closed Executive Session at 12:43 p.m.

**RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION**

The Board reconvened to Open Session at 4:06 p.m. Chair Nejabat stated that the District Board of Directors considered the advice of Counsel on the items listed on the Closed Session portion of the agenda and has nothing to report. The Board also evaluated the performance of its CEO consistent with government code, and has nothing to report.

**MATTERS OF INFORMATION**

Updated committee assignments as of February 1, 2026 can be found on pages 113-118 of the meeting packet. The 2026 Board meeting schedule can be found on page 119 of the meeting packet. Contracts executed per the CEO's delegated authority can be found on pages 120-123 of the meeting packet.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to discuss, Chair Nejabat adjourned the meeting at 4:07 p.m.



[Carlene Moore \(Mar 16, 2026 10:21:52 PDT\)](#)

Carlene Moore  
Chief Executive Officer

# 2026-02 BOD Minutes - Feb 10 2026

Final Audit Report

2026-03-16

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