



22nd DISTRICT AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION

Board of Directors Meeting

Del Mar Fairgrounds
2260 Jimmy Durante Boulevard
Del Mar, CA 92014

May 12, 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](https://www.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
Kathlyn Mead
Ted Miyahara
Elsa Morales-Roth

OTHERS PRESENT

Joshua Caplan, Deputy Attorney General (Counsel)
Becky Bartling, Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
Tristan Hallman, Chief Communications Officer (CCO)
Katie Mueller, Chief Operations Officer (COO)
Mike Seyle, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Nejabat called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Chair Nejabat, Vice Chair Barkett, and Directors Arabo, Blair, DeBerry, Mead, Miyahara, and Morales-Roth were all present. Director Schenk had an excused absence.

Chair Nejabat announced that agenda Item 6-D-1 would be removed from the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA (see pages 5-12 of transcript)

Bridget Browning, Jamie Rivera, Martha Sullivan, Mike Septak, Victoria Word

CONSENT CALENDAR

Chair Nejabat referred to the Consent Calendar items on pages 9-28 of the meeting packet.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON CONSENT CALENDAR (see page 12 of transcript)

None

Director Blair moved to approve the Consent Calendar. Director DeBerry seconded the motion. Chair Nejabat, Vice Chair Barkett, and Directors Arabo, Blair, DeBerry, Mead, Miyahara, and Morales-Roth all voted in favor. The motion carried 8-0.

EXECUTIVE REPORT

- Don Diego Scholarship Foundation Chair Kirby Morrison who invited the Board to attend the Don Diego Junior Livestock Auction on June 27, during the San Diego County Fair. Executive Director Ashley McCaughan encouraged the Board to volunteer for the Plant*Grow*Eat program during the week of May 18-22.
- Legends Global General Manager Jamie Houtman previewed the food and beverage offerings for the upcoming San Diego County Fair and Del Mar Thoroughbred Club race meet. New features include a VIP lounge for Fair concertgoers, a World Cup watch party during the Fair, a walk-through self-checkout beverage market, and tableside portable ordering from the grandstand.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON EXECUTIVE REPORT (see pages 55-56 of transcript)
Irene Moreno

GENERAL BUSINESS

Item 6-A: Fair Operations Committee Report

Chair Nejabat referred to the report on pages 29-30 of the meeting packet. Committee Chair Mead recapped a meeting with the District's department heads highlighting preparations for the San Diego County Fair, including the hiring of about 1,200 temporary employees. District Marketing Director Jennifer Hellman presented an overview of advertising and community outreach efforts. COO Mueller previewed new deals, promotions, attractions, entertainment, events, food items, and more that can be found at the Fair this year.

Item 6-A-1: Consideration and vote to delegate authority to Chair Nejabat to approve contracts that exceed the CEO's Delegation of Authority, beginning May 13, 2026 through the next regularly scheduled and noticed District Board meeting

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 8-A-1 (see page 117 of transcript)
None

A motion was made and seconded to delegate authority to Chair Nejabat to approve contracts that exceed the CEO's Delegation of Authority, beginning May 13, 2026 through the next regularly scheduled and noticed District Board meeting. Chair Nejabat, Vice Chair Barkett, and Directors Arabo, Blair, DeBerry, Mead, Miyahara, and Morales-Roth all voted in favor. The motion carried 8-0.

Item 6-B: DMTC Liaison Committee Report

Committee Chair Arabo referred to the reports on pages 31-50 of the meeting packet and introduced Del Mar Thoroughbred Club President and COO Josh Rubinstein, who expressed optimism about the horse racing industry. DMTC Vice President of Marketing

Erin Bailey presented an overview of discounts, promotions, events, and marketing efforts leading up to the DMTC summer race meet.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 6-B (see pages 144-146 of transcript)

Martha Sullivan

The Board recessed for a short break at 12:05 p.m. and resumed the meeting at 12:20 p.m.

Item 6-C: Finance Committee Report

The Finance Committee report can be found on pages 143-149 of the meeting packet.

Item 6-C-1: Discussion and vote on whether to extend the contract terms for Legends Global to December 31, 2031

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 6-C-1 (see pages 146-151 of transcript)

Cherilyn Besson, Lynn Kaimuloa

Committee Chair Arabo moved not to extend the Legends Global food and beverage agreement through December 31, 2031. Directo Mead seconded the motion for the purpose of discussion. After discussion among the Board, Director Arabo amended the motion to extend the Legends agreement for one year while the District puts the food and beverage agreement out to bid. Following discussion with Counsel, the motion was withdrawn and no action was taken by the Board. The topic will be brought back for further discussion at the next Board meeting.

Committee Chair Arabo reported that:

- The Finance Committee has directed the District to audit its contracts, vendors, internal processes, technology, and other areas to identify opportunities to improve efficiency and reduce waste and redundancy.
- The District has obtained insurance policies through 2027, including property insurance, earthquake insurance, crime insurance, and cyber insurance.

Item 6-D: Master Site Planning Committee Report

Chair Nejabat referred to the reports on pages 68-74 of the meeting packet.

Item 6-D-2: Discussion and vote to appoint CEO Bartling to the California Construction Authority Board of Directors

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 6-D-2 (see page 191 of transcript)

None

Vice Chair Barkett moved to appoint CEO Bartling to the California Construction Authority Board of Directors. Director Arabo seconded the motion. Vice Chair Barkett then amended the motion to appoint the District's Facilities Director as an alternate. Director DeBerry seconded the amended motion. Chair Nejabat, Vice Chair Barkett, and Directors Arabo,

Blair, DeBerry, Mead, Miyahara, and Morales-Roth all voted in favor. The motion carried 8-0.

Item 6-D: Update on the City of Del Mar's San Dieguito Lagoon levee, habitat enhancement, and trail project

District Supervising Environmental Planner Dustin Fuller shared the District's comment letter on the draft CEQA document for the proposed project, as well as a letter from the City of Del Mar. The District opposes the proposed 2027 start date for construction. The Board of Directors would have to approve the final CEQA document before any work can take place on fairgrounds property.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 6-D (see pages 203-208 of transcript)
Ashley Jones, John Spelich, Abigail Hawthorne

Item 6-E: Board of Directors' one-way requests for placement of information or action items on an agenda for a future meeting of the District's Board of Directors

- Director Arabo asked District staff to send the results of the HAP grant affordable housing site studies to each Board member ahead of the next meeting.
- Director Miyahara asked for a staff report and potentially recommendations regarding the affordable housing study results.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 6-E (see pages 211-212 of transcript)
Abigail Hawthorne

MATTERS OF INFORMATION

Correspondence can be found on pages 75-77 of the meeting packet. Updated committee assignments can be found on pages 78-83 of the meeting packet. Contracts executed per the CEO's delegated authority can be found on pages 84-143 of the meeting packet, and contracts executed by the COO can be found on pages 144-170 of the meeting packet.

RECESS TO CLOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board recessed to Closed Executive Session at 1:31 p.m.

RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION

The Board reconvened to Open Session at 2:16 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.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Chair Nejabat adjourned the meeting at 2:16 p.m.

Rebecca Bartling
Rebecca Bartling (Jul 7, 2026 15:03:41 PDT)
Becky Bartling
Chief Executive Officer