



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF
FOOD & AGRICULTURE
Karen Ross, Secretary

*BOS: A/C
cc: Amy Nilsen, CAO*

March 4, 2019

Humboldt County Board of Supervisors
Rex Bohn, Chair
825 5th Street, Room 111
Eureka, CA 95501

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

MAR 07 2019

Subject: Operation and Management of the Humboldt County Fair

Chair Bohn:

It has come to the attention of the California Department of Food and Agriculture (Department) that the Humboldt County Fair Association (Association) does not comply with the Brown Act or Public Records Act, despite being a recipient of state funds.

The Humboldt County Fairgrounds is an important resource to the County and surrounding communities and is an integral part of the Network of California Fairs (Network). The Fairgrounds plays an important role in providing a location where the community can come together to celebrate successes, be entertained, and learn about California agriculture.

The Department supports the Network through a variety of ways, including yearly operational and training allocations and grant funds for qualified deferred maintenance projects. Over the past five years, the Department has provided the County, through the Association, over \$190,000 in yearly allocations plus nearly half a million dollars in deferred maintenance funding.

The Department also provides guidance and policy direction to fairs within the Network to ensure fairs are operating in a manner consistent with state law. Particularly those laws that ensure transparency into decision-making and the use of state funds.

Before allocating state funds to any fair, the Department must be confident that its use will be deliberated during open, public meetings and all records available to the public. Therefore, the Association, pursuant to its agreement with the County to operate the fairgrounds, must comply with The Brown Act and the California Public Records Act if the County wishes its fairgrounds be considered for further allocations or deferred maintenance grant money.

Sincerely,

Jeff Cesca, Director
Division of Marketing Services

cc: Senator McGuire, 2nd Senate District

