
41st District Agricultural Association is a State Agency

By Kevin Hendrick: In My View August 13, 2026

I just spent 4 days at the County Fair volunteering in the Democratic Party booth. It is impressive every year to see a small army of volunteers, paid staff and Board members work together to pull this off. Kudos to Kim and the crew. I have an issue to resolve with the District, but I do wish them future successes.

On June 25 I wrote a column, "Unfair Free Speech Policy" about a new policy adopted on April 21 by the 41st District Agricultural Association (41st DAA) Board of Directors (Fair Board) that restricts free speech and parking on the Fairgrounds. This is State owned property and the 41st DAA is a State agency.

Since finding out about this policy change, I have been paying attention to their meeting schedule so that I could attend a Fair Board meeting to initiate a discussion of my concerns. This has proven to be more challenging than I anticipated. They cancelled their June meeting and held their July meeting early.

Their website says they meet at 5PM on the 4th Tuesday of every month. I looked at agendas going back to January 2025 and found that in only three months did they meet on the correct day. In 8 months out of 19 they did not have any meetings.

The 41st DAA Board of Directors posted an agenda notice that they would be meeting at 8am on every day of the fair (August 6-9). I went to their meeting room on August 6 at 8am. The room was open, the lights were on, but nobody was home. I waited 30 minutes and then left.

If they were there, this is part of what I would have said to them.

"On behalf of the Del Norte County Democratic Party I want to register our disagreement with the "Free-Speech Expression Policy" that you adopted on April 21."

"Today I am requesting three things: 1) Schedule a regular meeting on August 25 at 5 PM, 2) Include on the agenda a discussion and possible action to revisit this policy, and 3) Appoint an ad hoc citizens advisory committee to meet with, review this policy and propose revisions."

"We intend to be polite and diplomatic with the hope that you will keep an open mind to consider our concerns. We are also committed to trying to address any concerns that you have that drove this policy change."

"I respect you all and I know you are doing your best in difficult circumstances. Sometimes mistakes happen. But when you make a mistake, you should be open to correcting it."

This is what I would have said to the Board of Directors and staff if they had been there. I will try to find another time when I can attend their meeting, but I have spoken individually to a few Directors who thought it would be fair to meet and work this out. All we are saying is give speech a chance.

As a State Agency, the 41st DAA has an obligation to follow state rules regarding advance notice of regular meetings where the public can engage in their process. In the good old days, they could do whatever they wanted. Those days are gone. It's time to start acting like a true state government agency.

If an agency does not meet when they say they will meet, they deprive the public of their right to participate in decision making. All government agencies do better when they can hear feedback from constituents. Having predictable meeting days and times is a reasonable expectation. This can be fixed.

If you support free speech, please encourage the District Directors Kara Miller, John Pritchett, Rich Taylor, Kim Haban, Vanessa Nunes and Jeffrey Molnar to support the 3 remedial actions listed above. You can leave a message through Kim Floyd CEO, 41st District Agricultural Association. kfloyd@dnfair.org

If you have questions, contact the Del Norte Democrats. dndems@gmail.com