

## City Council – Action Request Form

**Date:** August 13, 2019

**To:** Mayor, Mayor Pro Tempore, and Members of the City Council

**From:** Ben Rowe, Assistant City Manager

**Council Action Requested:**

Resolution Directing City Staff to Engage a Marketing Consultant to Develop a New Name for the Dixie Classic Fair

**Strategic Focus Area:** Livable Neighborhoods

**Strategic Objective:** Support Inclusion of Community Populations

**Strategic Plan Action Item:** No

**Key Work Item:** Yes



**Summary of Information:**

At the April 2019 meeting of the Community Development/Housing/General Government Committee, a group of citizens requested that the City change the name of the Dixie Classic Fair because of its “very segregating, separating, divisive, racist, and bifurcating” name. The committee directed staff to provide information about the history of the fair, its current name, and other names of fairs across the state. In addition, the Mayor and Council directed City staff to work with the Fair Planning Committee and the Public Assembly Facilities Commission to develop a public input process to receive ideas for a new name. Later that month, the City initiated a public input process in which members of the public could submit suggestions through an online survey, email through the City’s website, its social media platforms, the citizens’ feedback phone line, and a public hearing on May 7<sup>th</sup> at the Fairgrounds Education Building. The public input process concluded on June 3<sup>rd</sup>.

On June 10<sup>th</sup>, the Fair Planning Committee held their regular business meeting and reviewed the suggestions and comments submitted by the public about changing the name of the Dixie Classic Fair. While the City received many suggestions for a new name, overall most respondents suggested keeping the current name. At their meeting, the members of the Fair Planning Committee voted to recommend to the Public Assembly Facilities Commission that if the City

**Committee Action:**

<b>Committee</b>	_____	<b>Action</b>	_____
<b>For</b>	_____	<b>Against</b>	_____
<b>Remarks:</b>	_____		

wishes to consider a new name, more time and resources should be provided to come up with a name that would endure. At the Public Assembly Facilities Commission’s meeting on June 17<sup>th</sup>, members discussed the public input on the name change and, based on the concerns communicated by the Fair Planning Committee, requested additional guidance on how to proceed.

As a result of the input from these appointed boards, City staff are prepared to draft a request for qualifications (RFQ) to retain a marketing consultant who can conduct a comprehensive branding study that would include focus groups and market studies to assist in the development of a new name. The goal of this effort would be to come up with a name that would go into effect with the 2021 Fair.

The following table provides a proposed time line for working with the consultant and bringing forward a recommendation for a new name in spring 2020. The Fairgrounds staff would begin their promotional efforts for the 2020 Fair immediately after the 2019 Fair. Therefore, sufficient lead time would be needed in 2020 to develop the promotional campaign for the new name that would be unveiled for the 2021 Fair.

**Potential Time Line for Developing a New Name for the Dixie Classic Fair**

<b>2019</b>	
Late August	Advertise RFQ for consulting services
September	Staff evaluation of responses to RFQ and recommend a consultant
Late September	Review proposal of selected consultant by Fair Planning Committee and award contract by Public Assembly Facilities Commission
October	Selected consultant to attend Dixie Classic Fair
<b>2020</b>	
Early March	Consultant provides three potential names
April	Fair Planning Committee and Public Assembly Facilities Commission review and ranking of potential names
May	Mayor and City Council consider ranking of potential names and select new name
June – September	Rebranding preparations and development of marketing strategy for new name
October	Reveal new name and logo, with on-site rebranding efforts for the 2021 Fair  Release to national fair publications and vendors

Based on the City's general rebranding effort in the late 1990's, staff estimate the cost to develop a new name for the Fair between \$50,000 and \$60,000. The scope of this naming effort would not include the development of a new logo or materials for a larger rebranding effort. The focus of the consultant strictly would be the development of a new name. The City's Marketing and Communications Department would develop potential logos for the recommended names. Funding for these consulting services would come from fairground fund cash reserves, not City tax dollars.

Council Member Besse requested a list of the new names that were submitted as part of the public input process. Attachment A provides the suggestions by the source of public input (e.g., online survey, public input meeting, and citizen feedback phone line). The City received approximately 11,500 comments through these sources, as well as the City's social media platforms (Facebook and Next Door).

The attached resolution directs City staff to engage a consultant to develop a new name for the Dixie Classic Fair that would go into effect with the 2021 Fair.

## ATTACHMENT A

### SUGGESTIONS FOR NEW NAMES PROVIDED DURING THE PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

#### Online Survey

Yadkin Valley Classic Fair  
Winston Classic Fair  
Winston-Salem Regional Fair  
Twin City Classic Fair  
Twin City Fair  
Triad Classic Fair  
Trails in the Sand  
Tobacco City Classic  
The Winston-Salem Classic Fair  
The Dash Classic  
SweetTea Classic Fair  
Southern Classic fair  
Red Clay Country Fair  
Piedmont Regional Fair  
Piedmont Classic Fair  
Piedmont Agricultural Fair  
Orange Rock Fair  
Old North State Fair  
NC Classic Fair

Hometown Fair  
Forsyth Classic Fair  
Forsyth Family Fair  
Foothills Festival  
Family Classic Fair  
Carolina Foothills Fair  
Carolina Classic  
Carolina AgriClassic  
Cardinal Classic Fair  
Camel City Classic  
Blue Ridge Foothills Fair  
Golden Leaf Classic  
Camel City Fair  
Turtle Town Peach Parade Fair  
City of Arts and Innovation Fair  
Magnolia Classic  
Northwestern Carolina Classic Fair  
Northwest North Carolina Fair  
Long Leaf Pine Classic Fair

#### Public Input Meeting (May 7<sup>th</sup>)

Carolina Classic  
Forsyth  
Piedmont  
Winston-Salem  
Classic Fair  
Twin City  
Maya Angelou  
Triad Classic  
Catawba Classic  
Sparks Classic

#### Citizen Feedback Phone Line

Southern Classic Fair  
Triad Classic Fair  
North Carolina Fair  
Twin City Classic Fair  
Winston-Salem Fair  
“The” Classic Fair  
Corporate Sponsorship