

**Weber County
Friends of the Fairgrounds Advisory Board Meeting
Thursday, September 19th, 2024
Golden Spike Event Center Conference Room**

Members Present: Jon Beasley, Naomi Brower, Tiffany Christiansen, Susan Clontz, Tom Close, Lee Dickemore, Korry Green, Sharlan Holmes

Staff Present: Duncan Olsen, Jim Harvey, Ashton Wilson, Kimberly Salas, Marty Smith

Excused Members: Lora Parker

Welcome:

Chair Connie Robinson opened the meeting and welcomed board members, the meeting came to order at 12:24 pm.

Approval of Minutes:

Connie Robinson motioned to approve the minutes from the July 18, 2024, Meeting. So moved. The motion carried. She added that she will need to leave the meeting by 1:45pm and that Commissioner Harvey would take over to conclude the meeting.

Weber County Report & Welcome: (Commissioner Harvey)

Commissioner Harvey shared statistics on the growth in Weber County, noting that the projection was an increase of 2.8% but actual growth is at 3.1%. He added that county expenses have also increased, which has offset the tax revenue from the growth. He then mentioned that Duncan and his team have done a great job in representing the needs of the facility in relation to economic impact. Commissioner Harvey then went on to mention that Ogden Valley wants to be their own city. He believes that their request is likely to pass. He then added that development is inevitable and that larger developments are purposefully being constructed near freeways, to ease congestion. He noted that in the future we will see a new freeway going in but we can expect a lengthy process with the environmental studies. This could put this project out 40+ years but the planning is being done now and water is a huge factor when planning for growth in the county. Adding to the topic of planned growth, he mentions that the Inland Port project is not and should not be pieced together but is being planned as a whole. The Commissioner noted that there was a post Fair comment submitted which stated that Weber County does not support JR Livestock. He said that simply is not true and noted that JR Livestock sales are at or above where they have been in the past. He mentioned the importance of future generations having access to peruse the western way of live, which is why the county does absolutely want to support JR. Livestock.

Golden Spike Event Center Report: (Duncan Olsen)

Duncan began by noting how busy Golden Spike Event Center has been this fall, as compared to years past where the facility was slow after the fair. He adds that the facilities team has been short staffed, including throughout the fair, but have just hired 4 new staff members, which should help ease the burden.

Weber County Fair Report: (Ashton Wilson)

Ashton let everyone know that she had hoped to share the fair evaluation data with everyone at this meeting but has not yet received it back from the marketing company. She noted that numbers for

their fair were down this year, by about 5,000 people. She added that she believes this is largely due to the heat and somewhat due to the thunderstorm but was also affected by the issues with the past marketing company, noting that social media posts were not going out until a week before the fair. She added that she believes it will help the thrill zone to have more attendance if shade is provided and that is something she is working on for 2025.

Committee Discussion: (Commissioner Harvey)

Ashton Wilson asked for feedback from the group, as related to the 2024 fair.

Sharlan Holmes noted that junior livestock sales were up. Naomi Brower complimented the photo booth, saying it was a great value-added benefit for guests. David Widdison was thankful for the young entrepreneur's booth space to help support 4H. Ashton added that she wants to add misting stations next year and has found a great new contact of someone who puts on car shows. She also noted that the fireworks show may be moved to a different day next year, in order to allow bull fights group to utilize time to sell merchandise. Commissioner Harvey complimented the efforts of volunteers who support the fair. He then asked the group to think about what motivates people to enter exhibits into the fair and how we can engage those under 30 to participate in order to carry the tradition of the fair to future generations. He then added that the issues faced with the previous marketing company made an impact on the attendance number this year. In regard to Commissioner Harvey's question, Millie Stewart suggested possible partnerships with Weber State University and Hill Air Force Base. Susan Clontz added to the discussion by suggesting that more activities are considered for JR. High age kids. She also noted that it is difficult to find representatives from each city to participate. Commissioner Harvey committed to discussing this issue with city Mayors throughout Weber County. Marty Smith suggested that more small project superintendents are added, which would decrease the time commitment for each of them. Commissioner Harvey discussed the importance of the ability to pivot and think creatively in order to ensure the future growth of the fair. Marty agreed but added that there have been great increases in attendance to the fair since Ashton took over and believes it is headed in the right direction. To conclude the discussion, Lee Dickermore added his opinions regarding the WACOG meeting, noting that many Mayors attend this dinner but do not put any effort forward to support the fair. He suggested that more effort is made to "sell" the fair to the mayors and hold them more accountable to get the messaging to City Council and their communities. He added that a promotional video could be made and shared in advance to support these efforts. Marty Smith agreed and volunteered his team to make the video. Commissioner Harvey also agreed and committed to both informing the mayors and holding them more accountable to drive the success of the fair.

Discussion/Action Items: (Commissioner Harvey)

No action items to report.

Old Business/New Business: (Commissioner Harvey)

Commissioner Harvey asked the group to come prepared with their budget notes to the next meeting for discussion.

Adjourn:

The meeting concluded at 1:15pm. Commissioner Harvey Motioned. So moved. The motion carried.