



Commission Meeting Minutes
February 13, 2024
DRAFT

In Attendance

Ronald Fox, Co-Chair
Mindy Benson, Co-Chair
Kathryn Asay
Barbara Jones Brown
David Clark

Sanch Datta
Steve Handy
Luis Lopez
Doug McGregor
Kristy Pike

Byron Russell
Kim Wilson
Don Stirling
Darren Parry
Andrea Clarke

CCE Staff

Nicole Handy
Donna Law
Katherine Potter

Ellen Weist
Renée Leta

Chris Abbott
Jennifer Ortiz

Time: 8:30 AM – 10:30 PM

Location: In-Person and Virtual Meeting

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mindy Benson, the Commission Co-chair, at 8:35 AM.

2. Approval of Minutes from November 13, 2024

The minutes from the November 13, 2024, meeting were reviewed and approved unanimously by the commission

3. Co-Chair Remarks

Mindy Benson welcomed and thanked everyone for their attendance.

4. National Semiquincentennial Commission Update

Nicole Handy provided an update on the national America 250 Commission, including their tentpole projects, such as America's Field Trip and America Gives. Nicole also talked about a national event portal where each state can

input their events. America250 Utah events will be posted on nowplayingutah.com, and staff will add various events to the national platform.

There was a discussion about the presidential administration's Task Force 250 and how it is collaborating with the existing Semiquincentennial Commission. The Semiquincentennial Commission was created and funded by Congress. Task Force 250 was created to organize the executive branch.

5. Legislative Update

Katherine Potter gave an update on legislative issues related to America250 Utah, including the budget request and a new legislative resolution to be introduced by Representative Wilcox. The new resolution is a follow-up to the original resolution passed in 2023 and a reminder to legislators that this important anniversary is coming. CCE is working with Representative Wilcox to draft the language so it's not duplicative of the past resolution.

Katherine also mentioned a recent meeting with the governor and lieutenant governor, who expressed their support for the project. America250 Utah will scale programming based on our fundraising goals. Governor Cox mentioned that the commission should continue to think big. The state is requesting \$500,000 in one-time money that will be available to use on programming until the end of 2026.

6. Update on Signature Programs

Utah's official launch for all programs will be July 1-6, 2025. The south steps of the Capitol are reserved on that Tuesday for a kick-off media event. As part of the larger kick-off, there will be community events for each of the Signature Programs around the state.

The Capitol grounds are also reserved for the evening of April 18, 2025 to commemorate the Battle of Lexington and Concord. Two giant spotlights will shine as part of the national Two Lights for Tomorrow initiative. Cities and counties throughout the state and nation are also encouraged to shine two lights from their municipal buildings in honor of the anniversary. On April 19th the Sons of the American Revolution is hosting an event at the Capitol.

A 29-county tour will be held in May - June 2026. America250 Utah is in the early phases of selecting an event company to run the tour logistics based on an RFP that closed on February 10th. A small panel of staff members and commissioners will serve on the selection committee.

America250 Utah is working with the Center for Constitutional Studies at UVU and their Civic Thought and Leadership Initiative on its k-12 initiative. Recently, a professional development for civics educators was held at Southern Utah University, and another one will be held at Utah State University later this spring.

Plans are underway to gather resources for teachers. All resources will be purposeful and intentional with a focus on the Declaration of Independence. Nicole Handy will present to the Utah School Boards Association for the Superintendents.

The University of Utah Rare Books Collection has some assets that the curators are working to include in the historical exhibit on the 4th floor of the state capitol. The collection includes Revolutionary War pamphlets and a copy of Common Sense. Updates will be provided as the opportunity is explored.

The America250 Utah is partnering with PBS and high-education institutions on a signature speaker series. Additionally, the Utah Bar is creating a resource list of scholars for the commission and individual communities to utilize in creating their own speaker events.

7. Update on Service Initiatives

We are working with UServeUtah to organize four major service projects across the state. Intermountain Health will be one of our founding sponsors. We are also working with Utah's First Lady's Show Up for Service. JustServe is also an organization that we will be working with. There was a discussion about what service projects might look like. Local communities and service organizations will also be encouraged to create their own projects, with connections facilitated through UServeUtah's existing networks. The initiative aims to inspire community action, leveraging national programs such as America Gives.

8. Update on Budget & Fundraising

Katherine Potter presented updates on the budget and fundraising activities. Current funding from the legislature is at \$750,000, and another proposed \$500,000 currently. America250 Utah is seeking additional funding from private sources. We currently have two committed donors: Larry H. & Gail Miller Family Foundation and Intermountain Health. The goal is to have six

donors total at the Founding \$250,000 level. Each Founding Sponsors will have exclusive naming of one of the six signature programs.

Katherine Potter reviewed the commission's current budget, which is almost \$3 million. However, the commission will make adjustments if fundraising goals are not met.

9. Utah250 Community Partner Update

Chris Abbott introduced himself and discussed outreach efforts to both counties and cities. Chris will provide support as local governments complete the process to become an official Utah250 Community by creating a committee, passing a resolution, and submitting their ideas for their commemoration plan. A logo usage agreement is also required for each community. All of these steps culminate in the community receiving a branded logo for its use, along with a small stipend. Three onboarding meetings for counties and cities are scheduled in February. 1:1 meetings will also be held with any community looking for more information.

Organizations not connected with local governments can utilize a "Community Event Logo" by downloading it from the website.

10. Gen Z Outreach

Renée Leta discussed the importance of involving younger generations as they think about the future of America. Renée discussed the commission's work with the Utah Historical Society's Youth Advisory Council. Renée shared a video that featured youth speaking about what America means to them at a ULCT event. The commission feels it is important to include as many voices as possible.

Another engagement opportunity is the official America250 Utah playlist. All are welcome to view the playlist and add songs with the prompt: *What makes you feel proud, hopeful, optimistic, and thankful?*

Renée discussed a collaboration with Made By Us, a group that is specifically looking at institutions and how they engage with Gen Z. Made By Us created a Youth 250 Bureau, which consists of one hundred young adults, two of whom are from Utah, tasked with helping the commission think about how to involve youth in programming.

11. America's Potluck

Renée Leta presented the America's Potluck brand and various assets created by the CCE's MarCom team. Utah is leading this national initiative. A new webpage on america250.utah.gov will be dedicated to America's Potluck. This new brand identify will help promote the national event, which will take place on July 5, 2026.

Initial conversations and outreach to promote America's Potluck has been done with organizations including Interfaith America, America's Test Kitchen, The Dignity Index, and More Perfect. Governor Cox is enthusiastic about America's Potluck.

America's Potluck will be promoted through all channels, including email, social media, community presentations, and other interaction points. A promotional video about the initiative will also be created.

12. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:38 p.m.