WASHINGTON COUNTY FAIR ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 8, 2025

The Meeting of the Advisory Board for Washington County Fair was called to order by Susi Lafaele at 6:04pm on September 8, 2025 in the Shonesburg Conference Room of the Grafton Building at Washington County Legacy Park, 5500 W. 339 S., Hurricane, Utah. Those in attendance were Andrea Schmutz, Ben Scow, Amy Hughes, Roxie Lee, Chris Caldwell, Ali Foutz, Poppy Babcock, Jill Hunt, Brandon Ipson, Payton Fisher, Lil Barron, Susi Lafaele, Anthony White, Adam Cheney, Roger Erickson, Alison Anderson, Frannie York.

WELCOME:

Susi Lafaele welcomed all in attendance and began the meeting at 6:16pm.

AGENDA:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: MAY 5, 2025

DISCUSSION: No discussion of the notes of May 5, 2025.
MOTION: Motion by Anthony White to Approve the Minutes to the notes of May 5, 2025. Motion seconded by Amy Hughes and carried by a unanimous vote.

2025 WASHINGTON COUNTY FAIR RECAP

Susi mentioned the Washington County Fair won its second gold for best annual event/festival by Best of Southern Utah. Zack Whitney created a sizzle highlight reel that was shown to the commissioners at a public meeting when the award was presented. Susi then played the three-minute sizzle reel.

MISSION STATEMENT, EXPECTATIONS

Susi mentioned that one thing the Commissioners would like from us is to create a mission statement. Susi took the first paragraph from the fair website in the about section and turned it into a mission statement that read:

> "For over 160 years, the Washington County Fair has been a cornerstone of Southern Utah, originating from the early settlers of Washington City who shared their agricultural bounty with the community. While the fair has grown and evolved through the years, its core purpose remains unchanged: to unite our community in celebration of our rich heritage, diverse culture, and shared values. The fair continues to honor tradition, showcase local talent, and create a vibrant space for families to come together."

Susi mentioned that when creating a mission statement, the commissioners ask unity, celebrating Washington County, and bringing the county together. And because everyone uses ChatGPT, Susi said she typed in 'write me a mission statement for Washington County Fair in Hurricane, Utah with zero prompts, and this is what ChatGPT came up:

> "The Washington County Fair is dedicated to celebrating the rich heritage, diverse culture, and vibrant community spirit of Southern Utah. Our mission is to provide a safe, family-friendly environment where tradition meets innovation—offering fun, education, and entertainment for all ages. Through agriculture, arts, music, food, and local talent, we strive to honor our past, showcase our present, and inspire future generations."

Susi asked those in attendance for suggestions. Discussion was brought up about the length of the mission statement and what the intended use of the mission statement. Discussion of having a mission statement that wasn't too specific—mentioning derby or rodeo, or other events. It was suggested to combine the two statements into one. This is what was created:

> "The Washington County Fair celebrates the rich heritage, diverse culture, and vibrant community spirit of Southern Utah. For over 160 years, it has united the community while honoring tradition and showcasing local talent. Our mission is to provide a safe, family-friendly environment where fun, education, and entertainment meet innovation. Through agriculture, arts, music, food, and local talent, we aim to honor our past, showcase our present, and inspire future generations."

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After reading this statement, it was met with applause, and they decided to keep it.

Susi continued with the expectations the Commissioners have.

1. Stay within the budget set
2. 60% minimum return
   Includes ticket sales, admission, sponsorships, etc.
3. Municipality involvement/attendance
   More involvement at the ribbon-cutting
4. University involvement
5. Community outreach/involvement
6. Engage with youth to increase industrial/visual/musical arts
7. Document systems and processes, and continually update

There was a discussion that efforts were made to get more involvement. The board felt that there had been youth involvement with field trips. The advisory board would like more clarification from the Commissioners on what type of involvement they're looking for.
Does the board have any input on these expectations? Andrea asked: How much of an active board can they be to accomplish this? Susi said if we can show that we're making an effort, what more can you ask? There are so many factors, and it's unrealistic to say that we're going to get the 60% minimum when it rains out. Payton asked if we stay within the budget and have that 60% return, does that guarantee more money in next year's budget? Andrea asked if we could go back to what worked in the past ie. Concerts.

2026 FAIR DAYS
April 10-18, 2026
Susi displayed the butcher paper with sticky notes that she used when attending a meeting with the Commissioners a few months ago to decide whether we stay at 8 days or go back down to 4. Susi explained that in her first year in 2019, she had a big piece of butcher paper on a table to decide when events would happen. Eight days won applause from the board.

2026 CHANGES/ADDITIONS
The butcher paper allowed the Commissioners to see that they didn't like the tractor pull on the last Saturday, so they moved it to the first Saturday.
Colonial Village was discussed, and asked if it will return. Susi is under the assumption that with America 250, it will return.
Everything is the same, with the exception that the Commissioner Breakfast may not return.
There will be no parade in 2026, as the county fair parade is a "parade to nowhere." It doesn't start or end at the fair.
The Commissioners are asking that we, as a fair board, attend five parades throughout the year as a fair/county entry to include the board, commissioners, royalty, and equestrian. Updates to come.
Unsure about the America 250 pageant.
The concert moved to Friday evening, April 17.
Same hours of operation April 10-18.
Susi has reached out to Bruce with Variety Attractions regarding concerts and would like ALL tickets to go on sale before Thanksgiving. Susi shared with the group some artists and pricing. Red Clay Strays, Zach Top, Ludacris, Nelly, all well above our price range. Top House Band, Wynonna, Dylan Scott, Flo Rida, America, all within budget. Bruce also shared with Susi that Kip Moore, Jake Owens, Scotty McCreery, Trace Adkins, Sawyer Brown, Jamey Johnson, Tyler Hubbard, Aaron Lewis, Sam Barber, Nate Smith, Max McKnown all fit within our price range. Discussion about revenue for top events: Carnival, concert, and derby. Concerts are hit or miss and not necessarily seen as a money maker, but more as a value-added benefit. Both Jill and Anthony asked what the draw is for Wednesday and Thursday, with no large event held in the evening. They asked how we can bring back 60% if there's not a draw.
Suggestions included: mud bog, local concert, Ninja Warrior, Battle of the Bands. Andrea asked what other things have

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been done around the state. Anthony said we're probably the most 'out of the box' fair. Susi praised the Commissioners for allowing us to do things and take things to the next level. Chris suggested we poll our social media to see what the community would like to see.

EXHIBIT ENTRIES/SUBMISSIONS

Susi read an email from a citizen whose daughter entered literary arts but didn't know that she needed to pick up her entry after the fair or that she was awarded any premium money. This prompted some changes to our county fair processes to: 1) how we accept entries and 2) how we deliver the premium money. So the advisory board understood how much the county fair pays out, Susi broke out how much was allocated:

4-H LARGE PROJECTS:	$352.00
4-H SMALL PROJECTS:	$374.00
CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT (1-8 YEARS):	$59.00
FIELD & CROP:	$207.00
FINE ARTS:	$4,692.00
HOME ARTS - CRAFTS:	$2,657.00
HOME ARTS - FOOD & BAKED GOODS:	$1,368.00
HOME ARTS - NEEDLE WORK:	$2,255.00
HOME ARTS - QUILTING:	$1,376.00
HOME ARTS - SEWING:	$1,409.00
HORTICULTURE:	$207.00
LITERARY ARTS:	$643.00
TOTAL	$15,806.00

It was asked how much someone went home with. The largest payout was $404, then $284. Discussed possible changes to entries/premiums from the Commissioners:

- $1 to enter
- Department Chairperson is now responsible for notifying all exhibitors via email of premium money
- Premium bank will NOT be open on Friday and Saturday of the fair or on Monday
    - Andrea and Jill were concerned that taking away the premium bank at the fair would deter people from even attending the fair
- Exhibitors MUST pick up premiums at the treasurer's office at the Washington County Administration Building
    - Andrea asked if there was room to talk about this more with the commissioners
    - Board members were having a hard time finding any pros to these possible changes
    - Chris asked what was to be gained from this last change. Is it a security issue?
    - Roxie felt that these possible changes sabotage #5 and #6 of the expectations asked, and it's a mixed message

Andrea questioned whether they are being asked to be a volunteer fair board and give a lot of their time--boots on the ground--they would hope that the commissioners would trust us to run the fair to be a good fair, and that it feels like the commissioners don't really care what the board has to say.
Roxie asked what kind of education we can provide regarding premiums. Susi and Chris talked about creating an instructional video for the public.

2026 BUDGET

Budgets were passed out to those who it concerns.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

No committee updates to report.

CONTRACTS/MOU

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Carnival Midway 3-year extension has been signed by commissioners. Derby and Showslinger proposal submitted to legal for review.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn by Amy Hughes at 7:41pm. Second by Ali Foutz.

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