

**Weber County
Friends of the Fairgrounds Advisory Board Meeting
Thursday, December 18th, 2025
Golden Spike Event Center Conference Room**

Members Present: Teddy Anderson, Tiffany Christiansen, Susan Clontz, Lee Dickemore, Korry Green, Lora Parker, Michelle Taite, Cortney Ryan

Staff Present: Duncan Olsen, Duane Kearsley, Ashton Wilson, Gabby Eisenbarth, Todd Ferrario, Emily Scoville, Kim Salas, Marty Smith, Jim Harvey

Welcome:

Chair Connie Robinson opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. The meeting came to order at 12:25 pm.

Approval of Minutes:

Connie Robinson motioned to approve the minutes from the September 18th, 2025 meeting. So moved. The motion carried.

Weber County Report & Welcome: (Chair Connie Robinson)

Connie welcomed the group and gave thanks for Michelle Taite for being a member in 2025. She let the group know that Michelle would not be serving again in 2026 so this will be her last meeting. Commissioner Harvey discussed a new transfer station that has opened near Midland Drive. The new transfer station, he said, can provide better prices than what the County can offer due to the fact that they are a private business. He also expressed his concern about the big picture of this situation, saying that there is a long game at hand and posed the question, will this company be able to sustain lower prices ten to twenty years down the road. He mentioned that there has been a great deal of concern on the subject but there are efforts being made to work through those concerns, including the effort to work with local Mayors to ensure a guaranteed waste stream.

Golden Spike Event Center Report: (Duncan Olsen)

Duncan began by talking about recent events at Golden Spike Event Center, including both new and returning events, such as the Stetson Wright school and a new event called Glow in the Dark Wrestling. He went on to inform the group about a conference in Denver that some of the team from Golden Spike Event Center had attended, called the IAFE Conference. He expressed the value of this conference for the team, noting that it provided the opportunity for everyone to learn how to improve the fair and how to gain a more solid place within the event industry. Duncan then went on to inform the group of the Weber County Creativity Award that was given to Katie Wall recently. He discussed the fact that he has now been with Golden Spike Event Center for ten years and has been part of four-thousand, three-hundred events at the center, and over-seen two-million dollars in beer sales. He followed with a sincere thank you to his managers, Ashton Wilson, Duane Kearsley and Emily Scoville for their leadership and passion. Duncan reviewed 2025, mentioning that it has been a very successful year in terms of the number of events, as well as the amount of revenue. He expects 2026 to be another great year and mentions that he and the team have ideas for some new events. He continues by adding that the new Motorsports events will help the event center reach financial goals, as will the recently purchased roll out floor for the arena.

Weber County Fair Report: (Ashton Wilson)

Ashton began by announcing the 2025 Fair evaluation. She encouraged everyone to read through the Fair summary and then went on to highlight some of the key takeaways. She discussed some of the improvements that were going to be made in 2026, such as improved lighting, changes to the line flow in vendor areas as well as in concessions areas and opening up the Rec Hall for food service. Ashton discussed the exit survey results from the vendors, noting that there were concerns about water availability and the number of dumpsters, which will be adjusted in 2026. She went on to say that there would be a new game plan for JR. Livestock set up, due to conflicts in 2026 with Pioneer Days. She also mentioned the need to add shade in the employee lot, closest to the Golden Spike Arena Building, due to the extreme heat everyone experienced in that area. Ashton discussed the subject of Fair sponsorships, mentioning that she was just shy of her overall revenue goal but was happy to see some brand-new sponsors in 2025, such as Golden Rule Heating and Cooling, who provided the cooling stations. These cooling stations were a goal based on feedback from 2024 and a great addition to the 2025 Fair. Some of the other new sponsors were Chickfilet, Ogden Regional and Karl Malone Powersports. Ashton went on to mention the new marketing efforts that were made this year, including ads for the Spanish demographic, which increased overall attendance. Circling back to the IAFE conference that Duncan had mentioned earlier in the discussion, Ashton said that a key take away was learning more ways to enhance the 2026 Fair theme, which will be the 250th Anniversary of America. She plans to tie this theme into exhibits. She added that it is her intention to not take away from any of the successful elements of the Fair that are already being done, but to weave in patriotic elements. Teddy Anderson asked about adding the 250th theme to the Fair shirts and Ashton responded by saying that she is considering all ideas to include the theme. She added that she will be working with the Egyptian Theater this year to increase advertising efforts. Ashton shifted to the topic of entertainment, noting that the Bullfighters group has not been responding and will not be a part of the 2026 Fair, which will be a big change in entertainment since they have been part of the Fair since 2022. She added some possible new options, such as a gladiator horse show, an Ice age dance group and a group called Puppy Pals. Ashton concluded by mentioning that she is working hard to get things locked in early and is working on settling an agreement with a canopy company.

Committee Discussion: (Chair Connie Robinson)

Connie went around the room asking for any feedback or questions. Michelle Tate seconded Teddy's suggestion to create Weber County America 250 shirts. Marty Smith responded by saying that there are marketing dollars going into collaboration between the Fair and other events in Ogden, such as the Farmers Market and the Mountain Man Rendezvous to advertise with a Ogden-Weber America 250 logo. He added that he will need to work with the State of Utah to gain permissions to use official America 250 branding.

Discussion/Action Items: (Chair Connie Robinson)

Todd Ferrario said that the Fairgrounds are going through a big transition with capital improvements in order to broaden their reach and host new types of events. Marty added to Todd's comment by saying that the Fairgrounds have received a great deal of slack due to these changes, especially on the topic of changes to increase motorsports events. He continued by saying that the intention of these changes is not to negatively affect the equine industry or community but to bring new revenue to the County which will allow for added support to both groups.

Old Business/New Business: (Chair Connie Robinson)

Nothing to report.

Adjourn:

The meeting concluded at 1:04pm. Chair Connie Robinson Motioned. So moved. The motion carried.