

CITY OF NORTH SALT LAKE
CIVIC EVENTS COMMITTEE MEETING
PUBLIC WORKS BUILDING 642 NORTH 400 WEST, NORTH SALT LAKE
MARCH 24, 2026

FINAL

PRESENT: Dallas Golden, Chair
Catherine Johnson, Vice Chair
Sarah Jensen, Treasurer
Tammy Clayton, City Council

EXCUSED: Frances Marcus

STAFF PRESENT: Jon Rueckert, Public Works Director; Randy Simmons, Operations Manager; Carmen Wilson, Operations Manager; Linda Horrocks, Communications Manager.

OTHERS PRESENT: Taressa Earl, Why I Love America; Emilio Rodriguez, Jim Cowley, Elizabeth Miller, Eddy Thompson, Evie Thompson, Conrad Jacobson, Carolyn Jacobson, Gentry Holbrook, residents; Alisa Van Langeveld, Suzette Jackson, City Council.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Dallas Golden, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. and those present introduced themselves.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

3. UPCOMING EVENT PLANNING AND INCORPORATION OF AMERICA'S 250TH
ANNIVERSARY IN 2026

a. UNITY IN COMMUNITY & VENDOR FAIR: PRIDE-JUNE 1

Councilmember Van Langeveld commented that all of the citizen chairs had been invited to discuss the events.

Catherine Johnson said she had previously mentioned switching events each year rather than focusing on the same events. She felt that this would bring more unity rather than highlighting

the same groups every year. Councilmember Van Langeveld replied that this question had been discussed and voted on by the City Council. She said at this time the City Council did not want to switch events annually. She noted that this was a topic for continued discussion and explained the history of how these events came to be.

Councilmember Van Langeveld suggested removing “Unity in Community” from the events and titling them as “Community Events” (Pride, Girls Night, Juneteenth, etc.). She said these events started when the Governor designated Juneteenth as an official State holiday and encouraged cities to acknowledge this Federal and State holiday. She continued that the City Council had determined to designate this as an official City holiday with a paid day off for staff. She noted that this then led to a low impact community event in conjunction with the food truck night.

Councilmember Van Langeveld shared that one of the committee members for the Juneteenth event had suggested hosting additional events. She said the Health and Wellness Committee then discussed additional events including Pride, Latino Heritage, and Pacific Islander. She noted that the goals for these events included that they were citizen lead rather than the City, supporting those who wanted to chair these events. She shared that the Pride (chaired by Jeff Scroger), Latino Heritage (chaired by Angie Dalio), and Juneteenth (chaired by Eddy Thompson) still had citizen chairs which was part of the reason they continued to be held annually. She noted that media coverage during the first several years, dance group participation, and continued citizen chair support were also reasons these events had grown. She said the Back to School Night was added last year and would be part of the Night Out Against Crime event this year. She spoke on the origin of the Bolder Way Forward Night/Girls Night Out (chaired by Elizabeth Miller) through former Councilmember Baskin and becoming the first designated Bolder Way Forward city.

Catherine Johnson commented that the events were called Unity in the Community but only specific groups were featured and not all groups were represented. She said unity in the community meant all and suggested hosting a cultural night or Flag Day that would be inclusive for everyone rather than separate events only highlighting a specific group.

Councilmember Jackson added that there were several discussions between the City Council and that the vote had not be unified. She said it seemed like it was agreed upon for rotating events.

Councilmember Van Langeveld emphasized that these events were meant to be citizen lead and it was agreed that the events could be rotated. She introduced Gentry Holbrook as the Back to School Night citizen chair.

Those present discussed the need to inform residents that they could suggest and volunteer to chair different events. They also spoke on people who may not attend certain events such as A Bolder Way Forward which was geared towards women.

Councilmember Jackson noted that some residents had shared feedback that they were not in favor of the same events every year that were taxpayer funded and City approved. She said there was positive and negative feedback.

Councilmember Van Langeveld commented that the City had not recruited residents to chair additional events. She added that the events had been considered, when someone approached the City and volunteered to chair an event. It was noted that former Councilmember Lisa Baskin suggested adding “A Bolder Way Forward” night to the Unity in Community event series. Later, a resident in attendance at an Events Committee meeting expressed support for the idea and volunteered to serve as chair for the event.

Councilmember Jackson mentioned that the City could only sponsor so many events due to budgetary and staff constraints.

Councilmember Van Langeveld shared that the budget for the Unity in the Community events was \$1,000 each in contrast to the Liberty Fest celebration which was over \$100,000.

Catherine Johnson suggested that the events could be varied or combined into a single event. She also recommended that, instead of “Latino Night” the event be broadened to a “Cultural Night” to include a wider range of cultures.

Councilmember Van Langeveld spoke to staff capacity, noting that if the City received additional requests that could be accommodated, they could be addressed at that time. She expressed concern that canceling existing events, with active citizen chairs and engaged participants, in favor of theoretical events would be out of balance.

Catherine Johnson commented that to most citizens it seemed like the City Council had chosen which events to host and which groups to single out. She said most residents did not know it was an option to propose other events. Councilmember Van Langeveld replied that it was the volunteers who had suggested the majority of the events including the Kite Festival and the Trot or Treat.

Councilmember Jackson mentioned that a veteran had asked if there would be events for Veteran’s Day and another resident had mentioned Flag Day. She said the number one comment she had received from residents was that the City should choose broad events that encompassed

the community such as a cultural night. She asked if men would not feel welcome to attend the food truck night that was held in conjunction with the Girl's Night Out (A Bolder Way Forward) event. She suggested the City sponsor Veteran's Day, Pioneer Day, Flag Day, or a NSL Day with a broader blanket for everyone.

Gentry Holbrook asked those present if they had attended all of the Unity in the Community events. She shared that as a citizen she had attended these events even though she was not always a member of the minority or culture and felt it was a great opportunity for residents to learn about other cultures or supporting other residents who may not look like them. She spoke on participating and learning from others she may not normally engage with and recognizing and supporting fellow community members. She suggested inviting citizens to bring proposals for other events and said there were already concrete examples and community engagement at the existing events. She noted that these populations had historically been marginalized and disregarded so having the City recognize this made an impact for them.

Catherine Johnson commented that while she agreed with Ms. Holbrook's sentiments that it should be a broader blanket to celebrate everyone in the community.

Gentry Holbrook suggested that if a resident brought an idea to the City for an event that they should be willing to chair that event. She mentioned how she had recognized an opportunity to bring Little Free Libraries to the community in a more engaged format and had been involved with this for two years.

Councilmember Jackson said there was a good chance that a large subset of the population who did not attend (such as males with Girls Night Out) or did not feel highlighted or seen in the City when only a few niche populations were being highlighted. She felt this was a good reason for rotating or broadening the umbrella so everyone felt included or identified with an event.

Councilmember Van Langeveld commented that all City events were niche in some regard such as the Kite Festival, Halloween event, or the Easter Egg Dash. She said all of the events were meant to appeal to certain demographics and mentioned that not every resident attended the firework display. She shared that every event did not need to be universal and that the nature of these community events was smaller, non-competing with regional events, unified residents, and acknowledging community that were not routinely recognized. She noted that attendance at the food truck nights was better when combined with the Unity in the Community events.

Sarah Jensen noted that broadening the events too much could risk diluting their intent and that not everything needs to be the same. She also asked about the process for determining which events would be approved if a large number of residents submitted ideas to the Committee.

Councilmember Van Langeveld shared that the City Council voted on events in October so that staff could publish the event calendar in November for the upcoming year. She said the Events Committee should make recommendations for events in 2027 to the City Council for approval.

Councilmember Clayton asked if residents who had expressed concern about current events had provided suggestions for other events. She also asked if those residents who had voiced their opinions on certain events had actually attended those events.

Councilmember Van Langeveld suggested conducting a public opinion survey to gather feedback on which events the community would be interested in.

The Committee was in favor of changing the name from “Unity in Community” to something else.

Councilmember Jackson commented that if the events did not feel unified and appeared to focus on smaller, niche communities, it could raise concerns about the use of taxpayer funds. She stated that the role of city government is to broadly serve all residents, rather than to focus on select populations. Councilmember Van Langeveld acknowledged this as a valid point in determining how City funds are allocated and noted that the same criteria could also apply to events such as the Senior Lunch Bunch. She clarified that if the standard is to avoid funding events not open to all residents or that serve only a small portion of the community, that principle should be applied consistently.

Councilmember Jackson said most of residents’ property taxes are allocated to the school district, reflecting the community’s value on education. She added that seniors are the backbone of society and have helped build the community. She felt that this differed from highlighting a specific cultural group, such as the Marshallese residents, compared to broader groups like youth or seniors.

Gentry Holbrook mentioned the suicide of a young Black resident, noting concerns related to bullying and a lack of engagement with available services and resources for youth in these populations. She questioned what message was being sent.

Dallas Golden said that this year’s events had been set and suggested addressing this topic in September when determining the events for 2027.

Eddy Thompson mentioned that the community had the opportunity to suggest new events for 2027. He agreed with obtaining more information on what events residents wanted.

Caroline Jacobson shared that the Senior Lunch Bunch had grown and showed seniors that they had importance in the City.

Councilmember Van Langeveld suggested a call to action in the newsletter or elsewhere to see who would be willing to chair additional events.

Taressa Earl, Why I Love America, said she would like to see City involvement and unifying the community under the flag of being an American. She spoke on promoting patriotism no matter what color, religion, or social group someone identified with. She expressed concern that the City had been unwilling to host patriotic and unifying events in compliance with a bill passed in 2023 per Governor Cox.

Councilmember Van Langeveld commented that the City did host patriotic events including Liberty Fest.

Catherine Johnson said that she appreciated these comments and that the City and the Events Committee had events planned to celebrate America 250 this year. She was in favor of celebrating the holidays including Juneteenth, Flag Day, and Pioneer Day as City events. She suggested that Pride or Latino Night should not be sponsored by the City.

Taressa Earl spoke on segregation and special interest groups in California that had divided so many communities.. She told of several city councils outside of the large cities that had chosen to unify as Americans and create that culture for their cities.

Emilion Rodriguez spoke from his perspective as a Latino. He highlighted his involvement with the Why I Love America committee and America 250 efforts, noting that these types of events help foster unity within a community.

Councilmember Van Langeveld summarized that she recommended a call to action for residents to suggest new events and to advertise this. She also suggested a name change from Unity in the Community for current events. She expressed that the decision criteria for rotating or cancelling events should be used universally for every single event to ensure fairness.

Caroline Jacobson commented that some seniors may not attend other City events due to parking or mobility issues.

Councilmember Van Langeveld added that even the weather could impact whether residents attended an event. She said it was great that the City offered events that met different needs. She then provided a review for the event chairs and noted that the previous budget was \$1,000 which

had since been adjusted to \$800 per event for a total of \$4,500. She continued that there was a focus on booths that were targeted from this population (Black or LGBTQ owned, etc.) as either a vendor or services that were related. She suggested inviting previous vendors for specific events and general vendors such as Utah Foster Care and the Health Department for all events.

Catherine Johnson asked if the vendors should be from the City as it was a City sponsored event. Councilmember Van Langeveld replied that the service was for residents and while local vendors should be a priority that there should not be a limit. She mentioned that these events also had a DJ or live entertainment with a priority for local performers and the potential to rent a stage for next year.

Dallas Golden spoke on the location for these events including Hatch Park once it reopened. Councilmember Van Langeveld said these events had been established at Legacy Park. She spoke on providing balanced events across the City and areas that were more or less supportive of these events.

Councilmember Van Langeveld continued her review of the events and said a DJ or performers could be invited or suggested that utilizing a playlist would save money.

Jon Rueckert commented that a small sound system was available for use at these events.

b. UNITY IN COMMUNITY AND VENDOR FAIR: AMERICA 250-JUNE 8

Conrad Jacobson commented that he reached his 250 miles in February for the America 250 walking contest. Linda Horrocks noted that he should be highlighted for achieving this goal and that the sponsors of the event, Zions Bank, had some opportunities available for those who completed the challenge.

Conrad Jacobson shared that he and his wife would dress as George and Martha for the Kite Festival on May 16th at Tunnel Springs Park. He asked that the Committee supply the costumes.

Dallas Golden agreed to dress as Ben Franklin and Councilmember Clayton mentioned Elexis Contreras had agreed to dress as Betsy Ross, although she has moved out of the City.

Councilmember Jackson asked about the parameters of the budget including a stage and the potential for America 250 t-shirts. Linda Horrocks replied that she was working on shirts and that staff could order certain things as needed.

Jim Cowley commented that he was a resident and part of Why I Love America. He spoke on the upcoming event planned for North Salt Lake in June and said it would include a color guard, a reading of the Declaration of Independence, and drone photographs with residents holding a large flag. He added that this would be a great opportunity to celebrate the City and America 250.

Catherine Johnson and Dallas Golden commented that they would coordinate with the Why I Love America group and assist with this event

Eddy Thompson asked about other America 250 events throughout the State and if Why I Love America was affiliated with those events. Jim Cowley replied that they were a separate organization but would tag team with America 250.

Taressa Earl added that the proposed event should be festive and educational with displays including artifacts and banners explaining the history of the United States as well as patriotic music. She continued that the Mayor or a City Councilmember would be invited to lead the group in the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a reading of the Declaration of Independence, a presentation by the Sons of the American Revolution, and recitation of 27 grievances. She spoke on the commemoration of America 250 with a photo of residents holding the giant flag. She also mentioned photo opportunities with a 1952 red pickup truck with America 250 flags.

Linda Horrocks noted that North Salt Lake was an official America 250 city and had an official logo that could be utilized. She also mentioned that Representative Melissa Ballard had presented the City with a flag that had flown over the State Capitol that could also be incorporated into events or awarded to someone.

Catherine Johnson asked if the City could have U.S. flags at these events. Randy Simmons replied that staff could place these flags and asked for specific locations.

Taressa Earl suggested the flags be placed around any platform or stage and maybe a walkway. She also requested a banner with City information to be displayed at the event.

Linda Horrocks noted that the City had a large logo banner and feather flags.

c. UNITY IN COMMUNITY AND VENDOR FAIR: JUNETEENTH-JUNE 15

Dallas Golden will coordinate with Eddy Thompson who is the citizen chair for the Juneteenth event.

d. UNITY IN COMMUNITY AND VENDOR FAIR: BACK TO SCHOOL-
AUGUST 10

The Committee confirmed that the Night Out Against Crime would be held in conjunction with the Health and Wellness Fair and the Back to School Night on August 6th rather than with the food trucks on August 10th. They discussed the layout for the Night Out Against Crime joint event including accommodating the helicopter and police dogs.

e. UNITY IN COMMUNITY AND VENDOR FAIR: A BOLDER WAY
FORWARD-SEPT 14

The Committee discussed what to name this event including Girls Night Out and Dallas Golden mentioned that the name could be similar to the Night Out Against Crime event and suggested that the Unity in the Community events could be renamed to Night Out with Juneteenth, etc.

f. UNITY IN COMMUNITY AND VENDOR FAIR: LATINO HERITAGE-SEPT
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The Committee will review the details of this event as the date grew closer.

g. LIBERTY FEST-JUNE 26, JULY 2, AND JULY 3

The Committee discussed utilizing Why I Love America in future years including during the Liberty Fest celebration.

Taressa Earl said that Constitution month was in September with a kickoff event in August. She suggested the Committee discuss potential dates. She shared that the Why I Love America main event would be at the State Capitol on August 17th. She clarified that the Governor had invited cities to hold an event commemorating September as Constitution month.

Catherine Johnson mentioned there were 27 slots open with 10 slots filled for auditions for the National Anthem contest. She said they could use multiple winners who could perform at the Kite Festival, Liberty Fest, and other events.

Linda Horrocks confirmed that the color guard would perform at the Kite Festival and July 3rd race. Catherine Johnson said Fran was arranging for the color guard.

The Committee also discussed a more formal program at Liberty Fest including honoring veterans at the Liberty Fest event, the color guard performance, and the Star Spangled Banner.

h. KITE FESTIVAL -MAY 16

Councilmember Clayton commented that she would order 500 kites with red, white, and blue tails for the Kite Festival.

The Committee discussed what type of food truck to invite to the Kite Festival. They also discussed handing out America 250 swag (stickers, shirts), a potential balloon artist, costumes (Ben Franklin, Besty Ross, and the Washingtons), a manned booth, and a themed quiz. Taressa Earl said their group had many costumes from this era that the City could use for this event.

Dallas Golden mentioned utilizing the #NSLlife hashtag for events and to encourage others to use it as well.

i. OTHER(S)

There were no other events discussed.

4. PUBLIC WORKS UPDATE

Jon Rueckert reported on the Purge the Spurge event on April 11th at 10 a.m. at the Springhill Geological Park which was sponsored by the Trails Committee. He said the ribbon cutting for the dog park would be May 11th at 6 p.m.

Councilmember Van Langeveld mentioned The Dog Den may want to participate in a dog parade with rainbow kerchiefs at the dog park ribbon cutting.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Civic Events Committee minutes of February 24, 2026 were reviewed and approved.

Committee Member Golden moved that the Civic Events Committee formally approve the meeting minutes from February 24, 2026. Committee Member Johnson seconded the motion. The motion was approved by Committee Members Golden, Johnson, and Jensen. Committee Member Marcus was excused.

Sarah Jensen was excused at 7:50 p.m.

6. CITY COUNCIL UPDATES-COUNCILMEMBER TAMMY CLAYTON

Councilmember Clayton commented that she would report on the discussion from this meeting to the City Council including rotating events and a potential name change to Night Out for Pride, etc.

Linda Horrocks observed that the Why I Love America group presented a well-developed event plan and requested minimal assistance from City staff. She noted that this model is the intended framework for all Unity in Community events to help reduce staff burden. She added that graphic design and advertising would still require support from City staff.

Councilmember Van Langeveld noted that staff support should include graphic design and advertising with the citizen groups providing the planning and organizing.

The Committee confirmed the color guard on July 3rd for the firework show (potentially at 6:30 p.m.) and May 16th for the Kite Festival (at 10 a.m.). They also confirmed a flag display at the Kite Festival.

7. SCHEDULE FOR THE NEXT CIVIC EVENTS COMMITTEE MEETING

The Committee decided to hold the next Committee meeting on April 28th. Members proposed the following topics for the next meeting:

- Public comment
- Discuss 2027 Community “Night Out” events and make recommendation to City Council
- Upcoming event planning
 - America250
 - Kite Festival
 - Unity in the Community: Pride-June 1
 - Unity in the Community: America 250-June 8
 - Unity in the Community: Juneteenth-June 15
 - Bolder Way Forward- September 14th
 - Unity in the Community: Latino Heritage-September 21
 - Back to School Night: August 10
- Public works update
- City council update
- Approval of minutes
- Schedule for the next Civic Events Committee meeting

8. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

The foregoing was approved by the Civic Events Committee of the City of North Salt Lake on April 28, 2026 by unanimous vote of all members present.



Dallas Golden, Chair



Wendy Page, City Recorder

