

**Weber County  
Friends of the Fairgrounds Advisory Board Meeting  
Thursday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2026  
Golden Spike Event Center Conference Room**

**Members Present:** Teddy Anderson, Tom Close, Shae Hill, Sharlan Holmes, Eli Johnson, Jeremy Dearden, Monte Stewart, Rob Venderwood, David Widdison, Stephanie Solomon, Connie Robinson

**Staff Present:** Todd Ferrario, Duncan Olsen, Kimberly Salas, Marty Smith, Ashton Wilson, Jim Harvey, Duane Kearsley, Emily Scoville

**Welcome:**

Chair Connie Robinson called the meeting to order at 12:25 p.m. and welcomed those in attendance.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Connie Robinson motioned to approve the minutes from the meeting held on February 19th, 2026. So moved. The motion carried.

**Weber County Report & Welcome:** (Chair Connie Robinson)

Chair Robinson welcomed attendees and invited Commissioner Jim Harvey to provide a county update. Commissioner Harvey discussed upcoming operational changes to the Weber County Transfer Station. Due to increased competition from the privately operated Ogden Transfer Station, which currently offers lower pricing, Weber County has decided to reduce operating hours and scale back certain transfer station operations. Commissioner Harvey then invited Marty Smith to provide updates on recent county events. Mr. Smith reported on the successful World Curling Competition held in Ogden the previous month. Weber County partnered with Ogden City and Visit Ogden to promote and support the event. Upgrades were made to the Ice Sheet facility in preparation, and all revenue and ticket sales goals were achieved. Mr. Smith also shared details regarding a supply chain conference initiated through collaboration with representatives from the U.S. Air Force. The conference was developed to address supply chain challenges and bring key industry stakeholders together. Following extensive planning and approvals, the event was successfully executed and generated significant economic impact for Weber County. Commissioner Harvey noted that Weber County funds conference and tourism-related initiatives through tourism tax revenues rather than property tax revenues, providing a financial benefit to county residents. Commissioner Harvey also highlighted a recent conference hosted in partnership with the Weber County Sheriff's Office focused on drone innovation and technology. Eli Johnson of the Sheriff's Office provided additional information regarding the department's use of drones for search and rescue operations, transportation of supplies to remote areas, tactical support for law enforcement personnel, and mosquito abatement efforts. These technologies continue to improve operational efficiency and public safety services throughout the county.

**Golden Spike Event Center Report:** (Duncan Olsen)

Duncan Olsen reported that the Golden Spike Event Center has experienced a particularly active spring season. During the previous weekend alone, the facility hosted a home show, barrel race, cornhole tournament, and demolition derby.

Mr. Olsen reported that the Icebreaker Rodeo attracted 527 contestants representing 18 states and three countries, with total prize payouts of \$103,120.

Additional events hosted this year included Dash for Dollars, a gem show, gun show, Spring Cutting Competition, Whiskey Throttle races, an antique show, and a junior high rodeo.

Mr. Olsen noted that promotional photos showcasing the facility's new temporary arena flooring have helped expand marketing efforts and attract new event opportunities.

Several capital improvement projects have also been completed or are underway. These include the purchase of new utility vehicles to improve operational efficiency and the installation of upgraded parking lot lighting. The new lighting system will provide improved visibility while reducing energy consumption. Additional lighting is also being installed in the infield area to better accommodate truck pulls, Whiskey Throttle races, and other motorsports events. These improvements are expected to be completed prior to the Weber County Fair. Mr. Olsen reported that the recent demolition derby was the first in five years that did not sell out. He suggested that broader economic factors, including higher fuel costs, may be affecting attendance and discretionary spending.

### **Weber County Fair Report: (Ashton Wilson)**

Ashton Wilson reported that preparations for the Weber County Fair are progressing. Fair T-shirt orders are being finalized, and premium books are currently being printed.

New entertainment and attractions planned for this year's fair include:

- A foam party, replacing the previous bubble tower attraction.
- A monster truck show scheduled for Thursday, available as an additional ticketed event.
- A paintball attraction featuring inflatable obstacles and a designated children's area, included with general fair admission. The attraction will be located in the Barn D parking lot.
- A new horse exhibition performing three times daily in the warm-up arena area, replacing the previous jousting attraction.

Fair ticket sales are scheduled to begin on May 29, while RV site reservations will open on May 27 at 10:00 a.m. Ms. Wilson explained that ticket and RV sales will be launched on separate dates this year. Several new food vendors will participate in the fair, including Burger Daddy, Kings Concessions, Mac Attack, Mi Puebla, Sweet Kate's Licorice Ropes, and Rolling Pineapple. Overall, the fair will feature an increased number of food vendors compared to previous years.

Ms. Wilson encouraged board members and community members to volunteer for upcoming parades and fair activities, noting that additional volunteer support is needed. Shae Hill informed the committee that funds remain available in the Friends of the Fairgrounds account and should be utilized. One suggestion discussed was supporting junior livestock exhibitors by sponsoring a bag of feed for each participant, potentially in partnership with Cal Ranch to offset costs.

Duncan Olsen agreed that efforts should begin this year to identify appropriate uses for the available funds. Tom Close suggested exploring opportunities to provide complimentary fair admission to lower-income families. Commissioner Harvey recommended reviewing the organization's bylaws before implementing any funding initiatives to ensure compliance with governing requirements.

### **Committee Discussion: (Chair Connie Robinson)**

Discussion focused on several new fair attractions and promotional opportunities.

Duncan Olsen expressed optimism regarding attendance for the monster truck show, particularly if the public is made aware that admission is included with a fair ticket. He also noted that the paintball attraction would provide additional activities for teenagers attending the fair.

Ashton Wilson shared that discussions are underway with an organizer of a popular regional line-dancing event to host activities under the fair's new large event tent. The activity has proven successful elsewhere and may appeal to younger attendees. Rob Vanderwood inquired about the dimensions of the new tent. Ms. Wilson explained that the structure measures approximately 80 feet

by 40 feet and can be configured in 20-foot sections. David Widdison reported that 4-H is introducing a new tabletop exhibit designed to showcase the activities and accomplishments of individual clubs. Stephanie Solomon suggested creating a dedicated section on Visit Ogden's website to highlight free attractions and activities available during the fair. She also noted the popularity of the line-dancing events currently held at Neptune Skating and expressed support for incorporating similar programming into the fair. Ms. Wilson stated that discussions with the event organizer are ongoing and noted that the arrangement would not require a participation fee, which may increase the likelihood of securing a commitment. Marty Smith announced that the Mountain Man Rendezvous would take place over the current and following weekends at Fort Buenaventura, followed by a music festival the subsequent weekend. Monte Stewart shared positive feedback regarding the recent World Curling Competition, noting that representatives from Ogden City attended the event and found it to be exceptionally well executed. He commented that the event helped increase regional visibility and promote Ogden as a destination.

**Discussion/Action Items:** (Chair Connie Robinson)

Kim Salas will schedule a meeting with Shae Hill and Ashton Wilson to discuss ideas for utilizing the Friends of the Fairgrounds funds.

**Old Business/New Business:** (Chair Connie Robinson)

No additional old or new business was presented.

**Adjourn:**

The meeting concluded at 1:17pm. Chair Connie Robinson Motioned. So moved. The motion carried.