AMERICA 250 | UTAH

Commission Meeting Minutes
August 20, 2026

In Attendance

Christine Durham, Co-Chair	David Clark	Kim Wilson
Mindy Benson, Co-Chair	Doug McGregor	Luis Lopez
Ronald Fox, Co-Chair	Kathryn Asay	Sanchaita Datta
Barbara Jones Brown	Kristy Pike	Steve Handy
Byron Russell		

CCE Staff

Kat Potter	Renée Leta	Chris Abbott
Nicole Handy		

Time: 11:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.
Location: North Capitol Building – Museum of Utah, 2nd Floor

1. **Call to Order and Co-Chair remarks**
   The meeting was called to order by Ron Fox, Commission Co-Chair, at 11:09 A.M.

2. **Approval of Minutes from May 13, 2026**
   Steve Handy motioned to approve the minutes and Sanchaita Datta seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

3. **Remarks and Message from Governor Cox**
   Kat Potter, Commissioner of the Utah Department of Cultural & Community Engagement, expressed her appreciation for the work of the Commission members and staff over the past three years and recognized their contributions to the success of the America250 Utah commemoration.

   Mike Mower, Senior Advisor of Community Outreach and Intergovernmental Relations, on behalf of Governor Cox, offered formal appreciation on behalf of the Governor's office. He highlighted the significant impact of Utah's participation in national events—specifically referencing the Utah Pavilion during the Great American State Fair on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. and the

4. **Budget**

   Kat Potter provided an overview of the budget, reporting that total funds raised reached approximately $2.5 million through state appropriations, foundation support, and private organizational contributions. Approximately $400,000 in outstanding commitments remain, primarily for final marketing, administrative and staffing costs, and civic textbook distributions. The estimated remaining operational surplus is $75,000–$100,000.

   Kim Wilson moved to recommend that any funds remaining after all operational obligations are fulfilled be directed to the Utah Historical Society and the Museum of Utah for projects that support the mission and legacy of America250 Utah. Christine Durham seconded the motion. The resolution was approved unanimously.

5. **America250 Utah Final Report**

   Great American State Fair, Washington, D.C.: The Utah Pavilion received Best in Show honors and welcomed more than 100,000 visitors over 16 days. The pavilion was staffed entirely by Utah residents and state alumni.

   K-12 Education

   America250 Utah made a significant investment in civic education, with 500 classroom sets of the We the People curriculum distributed to teachers statewide, reaching an estimated 70,000 students annually. The program also reached 1,367 superintendents and principals through quarterly communications. In total, the team curated 53 curriculum lessons and activities, created 33 new lessons, published one picture book, and developed three original maps.

   The Pen Is Mightier

   The Pen Is Mightier exhibit included 5 artifacts at the Utah State Capitol and was expanded into traveling exhibits that reached 42 locations. The traveling exhibits visited all 29 Utah counties, bringing the content directly into communities.

   Walk250

   Walk250 generated strong statewide participation, with 25,000 collectible sticker sets distributed, more than 2,500 participants, and more than 140,000 miles recorded as of July 31, 2026. 618 Utahns have asked for a certificate for completing all 250 miles, and 60 communities incorporated Walk250 themes into their programming. Five weekend getaway packages were also awarded. The numbers for this program will be updated in the final report in December 2026.

Serving a Common Cause

Utahns recorded more than 709,427 volunteer hours through America Gives. United in Service events engaged 1,427 volunteers, and 490 service certificates had been distributed as of July 31, 2026. Certificates will continue to be distributed by UServeUtah through December 2026.

Exploring the Declaration at 250

The speaker series delivered 21 lectures across 7 higher education institutions, with 11 communities incorporating speakers into their local programming. The program also produced 75 minutes of online master classes through Utah Valley University.

America's Potluck in Utah

America's Potluck generated substantial statewide visibility, including 50 Utah recipes collected, 115 news and social media mentions, 29.2 million impressions, and an estimated $623,000 in advertising value. The initiative also engaged 30 Utah social media influencers.

America's Potluck Nationwide

What began as a Utah initiative expanded nationally, with all 50 states and Puerto Rico participating by July 5, 2026. More than 1,700 potlucks were hosted nationwide, generating 153,000 website sessions, 505 news and social mentions, 1.2 billion impressions, and an estimated $30.7 million in advertising value.

Community Engagement

Statewide reach of America250 Utah through photos of both commission signature events and events hosted by communities across all 29 counties. The commission partnered with 157 municipalities, resulting in 402 events listed on Now Playing Utah and more than 100 events planned during Independence Week. The commission also distributed $365,400 directly to municipalities to support local celebrations. Photos showcased the scale and local character of the effort and demonstrated how communities across Utah made the commemoration their own.

Archival Preservation

Media, Marketing & Archival Operations: Media Impact: $45,000 paid campaign through KSL yielded an estimated $220,000 in added-value coverage and 12.5 million impressions.

Digital records, community event documentations, municipal photo archives, and local stories will be stored in Google Drive repositories managed by CCE before full transfer to the Utah State Archives in 2027. The official website will remain active through 2026–2027 before being merged into the permanent CCE/Utah Historical Society web domain. A final digital report has been written and designed. It will be available on the website through December, updated with final numbers in December, and included in the official archive.

6. **Co-Chair and Commissioner Report**
   The commission extended a formal expression of gratitude to the co-chairs for their extraordinary effort and leadership throughout the multi-year planning and execution process.

7. **Adjournment**
   Ron Fox moved to adjourn the meeting and the meeting adjourned at 12:45 P.M.