

Utah State Fairpark Authority Board Meeting Minutes

Date: September 10, 2026

Time: 10:03 a.m.

Location: Utah State Fairpark, Salt Lake City, Utah

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Dave Lewis called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. and welcomed members on the opening day of the Utah State Fair. Roll call was conducted by Becky Knight.

ROLL CALL

Board Members Present: Lillian Bayles, Jim Webb, Kelly Pehrson, Wade Garrett, Dave Lewis, Ted Lewis, Senator Sandall, Darryl Hunting, Tommy Joe Lucia.

Present Online: Elliott Clark attending on behalf of Brook McCarrick

Excused: Jason Thompson, Kip Paul.

A quorum was present.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT AUDIT REPORT

Representatives from the Utah State Auditor's Office presented the results of the annual financial statement audit. The auditors reported an unmodified (clean) audit opinion, no significant findings, no compliance concerns, no disagreements with management, and no audit difficulties. The Board reviewed the Authority's financial position, including a net position of approximately \$16.3 million.

Restricted fund balances were discussed, including livestock panel replacement funds and auction-related accounts. Management reported that panel replacement remains an ongoing project.

INTERNAL CONTROLS AND FINANCE UPDATE

Auditors reported that cash balances were verified through third-party confirmations and internal controls over receipts, disbursements, payroll, and related processes were tested with no concerns identified. Management stated that the Fairpark employs safeguards that exceed minimum requirements to protect public funds.

Management also provided an update on a new point-of-sale system for concession operations, providing real-time sales visibility and enhanced auditing capabilities. Approximately 175 devices were deployed throughout the fairgrounds.

Management reported on the planned retirement of the controller at the end of October and the onboarding and training of a successor to ensure continuity.

BOARD APPRECIATION

Board members expressed appreciation to management, finance staff, and auditors for achieving a clean audit and maintaining strong stewardship of public resources.

UTAH STATE FAIR OPERATIONS UPDATE

Lillian Bayles provided an update regarding opening day preparations. Topics included board apparel and credentials, the rodeo, the junior livestock auction, and the overall condition of the fairgrounds and facilities. Staff were recognized for their efforts and dedication.

SPECIAL NEEDS DAY

Board members discussed the annual Special Needs Day event. Members were encouraged to volunteer and assist with registration and activities. Tommy Joe Lucia offered assistance from the Utah Cowgirl Collective if additional support is needed.

CLOSED SESSION

Elliott Clark advised the Board regarding entry into a closed session pursuant to Utah Code Section 52-4-205(1)(d) for discussion of the purchase, exchange, or lease of real property. Following a roll-call vote, the motion passed unanimously and the Board entered closed session.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

Following closed session, the Board returned to open session. No motions were made and no action was reported from the closed session discussion.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS RIBBON PROGRAM

Board members were reminded to visit exhibits throughout the fairgrounds and award Board of Directors ribbons recognizing outstanding entries. Members were asked to photograph selected exhibits and submit the information to staff for documentation.

RECESS

Chair Dave Lewis announced that the Board would recess rather than adjourn, with final adjournment anticipated at the concluding Sunday meeting of the Fair. There being no further business, the meeting was recessed.

Sept 16, 2026

Call to Order

Following a recess, the meeting was reconvened. A roll call was conducted to confirm attendance.

Roll Call

Board members present included Lillian Bayles, Jim Webb, Wade Garrett, Dave Lewis, Ted Lewis, Kip Paul, Sen Sandall, Darrell Hunting. A quorum was present.

Fair Operations Report

Attendance and Revenue

The Board reviewed fair performance through Day 6 of operations. Management reported that attendance was approximately 10 to 11 percent below the prior year's levels. Despite the decrease in attendance, gate revenue remained relatively strong. Management discussed

implementation of a new ticket-scanning system, customer concerns regarding the mobile ticketing application, strong advance ticket sales, and expectations for increased attendance during the remainder of the fair.

Arena Events and Concert Sales

The Board reviewed arena event revenue and ticket sales performance. Concert and arena event presales exceeded prior-year performance and several events, including the Matchbox Twenty concert, were nearing capacity.

Recognition of Former Board Member

The Board formally recognized Craig Butters for his years of service to the Authority. A commemorative buckle was presented in appreciation of his service and contributions.

Midway Operations and Concessions

Management reported favorable performance in midway gaming operations and increased participation resulting from enhanced attractions and prize offerings. Food and beverage revenues also increased.

Point-of-Sale System Implementation

The Board reviewed implementation of a standardized point-of-sale system for concession vendors. Management emphasized improved transparency, consistency, and audit capability.

Pricing and Promotional Activities

Management confirmed that general admission and parking rates remained unchanged from the prior year. Promotional programs were utilized to encourage attendance and provide value to guests.

Special Friends Day

Board members reported on the success of Special Friends Day, during which more than 1,800 participants attended. The Board commended volunteers and partners for supporting the event.

Fine Arts and Educational Exhibits

The Board received an update regarding exhibits in the Fine Arts Building, including a special tribute honoring artist Joe Venus.

Legislative and Agricultural Outreach

Representatives reported on a legislative agricultural tour conducted in conjunction with the fair. Board members emphasized the importance of continued outreach and education efforts.

Rodeo Operations Review

The Board reviewed rodeo attendance trends and discussed scheduling alternatives designed to improve attendance. The Rodeo Committee was directed to further evaluate

attendance data, scheduling options, marketing effectiveness, and audience demographics and to provide recommendations at a future meeting.

Rodeo Marketing Analysis

Management advised that a comprehensive marketing analysis is underway to better understand rodeo attendance patterns and promotional effectiveness.

Recess

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was recessed and will reconvene on Sept 20, 2026. The primary location for the meeting will be the Hospitality building at the Utah State Fairpark 155 N 1000 W SLC UT 84116

Sept 20, 2026

Call to Order

Following a recess, the meeting was reconvened. A roll call was conducted to confirm attendance.

Roll Call

Board members present included Lillian Bayles, Jim Webb, Wade Garrett, Dave Lewis, Ted Lewis, Steve Lund, Jennifer Seelig, Tommy Joe Lucia, Darrell Hunting. A quorum was present.

Fair Operations Report:

Attendance and Revenue

The Board reviewed final fair performance and attendance results following completion of the 2026 Utah State Fair. Management reported attendance was below the prior year's record-setting fair. Discussion focused on economic conditions, consumer spending trends, ticketing system implementation, and other factors that may have contributed to lower attendance. Despite attendance declines, several operating areas performed favorably, including food and beverage sales, midway games, and arena events. Management advised that final attendance and revenue reports will be distributed to the Board.

Arena Events and Entertainment:

The Board reviewed attendance and financial performance of arena events and concerts. Management reported strong participation and discussed event-related expenses associated with entertainment programming. Revenue and attendance remained favorable when compared to prior years.

Rain Insurance Review:

Management reported that the Authority's weather insurance policy is expected to provide a significant reimbursement resulting from qualifying weather events during the fair. Board members discussed the value of maintaining insurance coverage to reduce financial risk associated with adverse weather conditions.

Concessions and Guest Experience:

The Board discussed food pricing, family affordability, and guest purchasing behavior. Management reported that discounted meal options remained available throughout the fair and noted that the newly implemented point-of-sale system will provide improved reporting capabilities for future analysis of guest spending patterns and vendor performance.

Livestock Operations Review:

Management provided an overview of livestock operations, including participant conduct issues and enforcement actions that occurred during the fair. The Board discussed current policies, enforcement authority, and opportunities to improve livestock rules and procedures. Management reported that a formal grievance had been submitted and would be reviewed by the Board at a future meeting, together with supporting documentation and recommendations.

Junior Livestock Auction Report:

The Board received a report regarding the Junior Livestock Auction. Auction participation remained strong and overall proceeds exceeded the previous year's performance. Management highlighted support from buyers, sponsors, and community partners. Additional charitable purchases benefited food banks and community organizations.

Fair Operations Feedback:

The Board reviewed feedback from exhibitors, volunteers, supervisors, and guests. Positive comments were received regarding livestock management, operations support, facility improvements, grounds maintenance, and security operations. Board members expressed appreciation for fair staff and volunteers whose efforts contributed to the successful operation of the event.

Community Partnerships and Special Events:

Management reported on several special events conducted during the fair, including a partnership with the Make-A-Wish Foundation and community sponsors that provided a special experience for a young cancer survivor during the demolition derby. The Board commended staff and partners for their efforts in supporting community engagement activities.

Future Planning:

Board members discussed opportunities for continued improvement in fair operations, livestock programming, rodeo attendance, and future development initiatives. Management expressed appreciation for the support of the Board and noted several positive opportunities moving forward.

Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The motion passed unanimously. There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned.