



Fairgrounds Advisory Board Minutes

Monday, June 15, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 5:04pm with the following members in attendance:

Board Members Present: Monique Brigham, Dorothy Elsner, Kristen Keltz, Virginia Learned

Not Present: Gery Cardenas, Hank Davies, Robert Desmarais

Staff Present: Aric Gaither, Frances Negranza

A motion was made to approve the May 2026 minutes and seconded. The motion was approved and passed unanimously.

Board Discussion:

Meeting Dates

February meeting will be move to second Monday, on an ongoing basis. First three meeting dates of 2027 would be, January 4, February 8, and March 15.

Fairgrounds Foundation

Fairgrounds Foundation will be conducting a 50/50 raffle at the Skagit Speedway this weekend for Dirt Cup. They have over 40 bricks to be installed at the Fairgrounds, and already have 17 registrations for the Quilting Stitching-A-Fair event in September. Gin provided brief update of how the Stitching-A-Fair is evolving and excitement from participants.

Staffing/Resources

The county has announced that there is an expected shortfall next year and has implemented a hiring freeze. There are two expected vacancies coming this summer on parks maintenance (supports around fair-time), and anticipate not be able to be refilled due to the freeze. Frances is expecting to go on leave early-mid July and staff is asking for board help, where they can when fair-time comes.

Misc.

Monthly department briefing expectations to the Commissioners via dept head have evolved, with management staff having a more limited scope on what is shared and prioritized in the spirit of efficiency at higher levels, discussed need to keep finding ways to share successes. Would like the advisory board to continue to help tell the good news and story of the Fairgrounds to the Commissioners and community. Staff invited the board to join the Superintendent Thank You dinner at the Fairgrounds on September 9.

Fair Admission/Fees

Staff consulted board and provided recommendations on 2026 at-the-gate Admission prices. Due to an increase in fairgrounds expenses and inflation, staff recommended an increase in admission and parking fees from 2025 levels. The Advisory Board advised staff proceed with proposed admission prices for 2026. A full breakdown of prices by day/category can be found on the Fair website.



Fair Season Discussion

Advisory board recommended a preview night for elected officials/media night – not for this year but for 2027. NWR Containers is donating a mobile office which will need to be furnished and stocked with snacks, asking the board to help with and set up and coordination of the space. Staff floated the idea of having an info table at the County Staff Picnic on July 15. Dorothy is doing the KAPS/KBRC radio interviews. Other opportunities in which board can help include attending a chamber lunch, and general promotion and helping marketing materials get out in the community.

Welcome Letter for the Fair Guide

Fair Staff is currently working with Skagit Publishing on the Fair Guide and would be a great opportunity for a welcome statement/letter from the Advisory Board to be included. Must be written by the end of the month to make into guide. Advisory board committed to getting something drafted and prepared for guide.

Adjourn 6:05pm