



Fairgrounds Advisory Board Minutes

Monday, July 21, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 5:02pm with the following Fairgrounds Board members in attendance:

Board Members Present: Monique Brigham, Gery Cardenas, Hank Davis, Robert Desmarais, Dorothy Elsner, Kristen Keltz, Gin Learned

Staff Members and Representatives: Aric Gaither, Frances Negranza

A motion was made to approve the June 2025 minutes and seconded. The motion was approved and passed unanimously.

Board Discussion:

Bylaws

Fair staff received feedback from the county legal team, the board will review before pushing forward for approvals.

Past and New Events

Aric shared an update on events that recently took place at the fairgrounds. On June 17, the fairgrounds hosted the Mount Vernon's Mayors Coffee hour. Staff invited and are excited that Mayor Donovan will be attending the Fair on Thursday.

Discussed new events coming in 2026: Washington State Grange Convention, WSU Pesticide Training and a potential Renaissance Fair in the works.

General Overview of Board Packet

Covered sponsorships, community partners, and nonprofits who leverage the Fair as a fundraising opportunity.

Budget

Discussed the 2026 budget which is due at the end of this month. The fairgrounds is looking at areas to cut and save in the budget. Also reviewed Fair specific revenues and expenses.

Restroom Update

Building is installed, some final touches coming either before Fair or might need to come after the Fair depending on vendor schedule.

WSDA Capital Grant

Funding pool has been increased by \$1 million for next budget cycle (2026-2027), grant is due at the end of September. Large capital projects are challenging, and Fairgrounds is looking to do paving projects or health and safety equipment as an alternative.

**Fair Participation**

Barns have grown substantially, swine numbers are at a record high and turkey numbers have quadrupled. While the Fair has not had to turn any exhibitors away, we have had to put limits on number of exhibits that an individual can enter.

Board Participation at the Fair

Discussed board member availability and areas to focus on, participate and view during the Fair.

Commissioners Presentation

Invited Advisory Board to the Fair Commissioners presentation happening tomorrow, July 22 at 10:30am in the commissioners hearing room at 1800 Continental Place.

Misc.

Board discussion about personal experience at recent Cirque Ma'ceo event which was on grounds. Fair Staff explained the logistical turn around between Skagit Highland Games to Cirque Ma'ceo.

Board suggested creating a time-laps or set up videos to promote prior to the Fair. The community likes to see behind the scenes of large events preparing for opening day.

No board meeting scheduled in August due to the Fair.

Adjourn 6:30pm