

Jefferson County Fair Park Committee

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 10, 2026

1. **Call to order:**

Blane Poulson called the meeting to order at 8:29am.

2. **Roll call (establish a quorum):**

Members Present: Libby Hafften, Gary Skalitzky, Mark Groose, Brandon White, Rori Eilenfeldt

Members Not Present: Blane Poulson, Georgia McWilliam,

Others Present: Becky Roberts, Michael Luckey, Abby Schopen

Others Present via Teams: Watertown Daily Times (James)

3. **Certification of compliance with Open Meetings Law:**

Michael Luckey certified compliance with the Open Meetings Law.

4. **Welcome to new committee member filling at-large vacancy:**

Rori Eilenfeldt was introduced as the newest member of the Fair Park committee.

5. **Review of Agenda:**

A motion was made by Skalitzky, seconded by White to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

6. **Public Comment:**

Groose wanted to pass along accolades to Sammy Garvey. He has heard many great things about her hard work.

7. **Approval of August 13, 2026, committee meeting minutes:**

A motion made by Skalitzky, seconded by Groose to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

8. **Communications:**

Roberts shared that a letter from an attorney representing someone injured at the Fair was received. It was forwarded to corporate counsel for follow up.

9. **Discussion of 2027 Fair Planning**

Several theme suggestions will be presented on social media in the coming week for public voting. Once a theme is chosen there will be a push for the poster contest. Entertainment locked in for 2027 includes a two-day Demo Derby, Truck pull, Tractor Pull, Rodeo and Friday thrill show. The horse pull has been moved to Saturday morning. 2027 will feature some sort of petting zoo in the kids' area. The community stage will see more active entertainment after dark. Saturday entertainment for the Coors Entertainment tent is already coming together. Marketing efforts will begin in October. Fairest of the Fair applications are currently being accepted, with January judging and coronation on the calendar. Roberts shared a report of Fair Board members whose terms expire. Recommendations for the Fair Board are due October 6. The premium book is currently being edited and will hopefully be complete and ready for approval prior to the October Fair Park Committee meeting. There will be a change for the Auction in 2027 with Brittany Heine will be taking over leadership for Carrie Pellmann.

10. **Discussion and possible action on Future National Act entertainment at the Fair:**

After much discussion about safety, security, logistics of the facility and cost the committee emphasized the importance of having evening entertainment in the grandstand, including but not limited to music acts.

11. **Discussion of Fair Park Operations and updates:**

Roberts shared the loss of both an administrative assistant and a part-time maintenance & grounds team member. Becky currently recruiting for both positions. September will be a heavy month for events. Winter storage reservations have opened to the public with move-in scheduled for the first week in November.

12. **Discussion and scheduling of Master Plan Stakeholder meetings (held Sept. 1 & 2)**

Stakeholder meetings with Johnson Consulting took place September 1 & 2nd. There were eight focus groups with sixty-two participants, including Fair Park staff. Of the Fair Park Committee, Libby Hafften, Georgia McWilliam and Rori Eilenfeldt attended.

13. Monthly Financial Review – July YTD 2026 results

Year to date financials through June were distributed. The 2027 Fee Schedule for the Jefferson County Fair Park was presented for further comment.

14. Discussion and possible action of Fair Park dedications /memorials:

Roberts shared that there is money in a fund from previous donations to memorialize previous individuals involved with Fair/Fair Park. Several ideas were discussed. A formal plan for memorials will be on the October agenda.

15. Old Business:

A future property acquisition was discussed after it was disclosed that a healthcare provider has purchased just over 12 acres of land to the west of the Fair Park. This activity motivates the committee for future land acquisition possibilities. The topic will be vetted to the County Board Chairperson to determine next steps to present for consideration.

16. Discussion and possible action to tentative future meeting schedule and agenda items:

- Memorials
- Property Acquisition

17. Adjournment:

Motion made by Skalitzky, seconded by Goose to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 10:06am.

Respectfully submitted,
Abby Schopen
Fair Park Events Manager