

Fair Advisory Board MINUTES

Wednesday, July 23, 2025
7:00 p.m.

Fair Advisory Board Members

Kylene Anderson, Lindsay Baneck, Tracy Brandel, Joy Brattlie, Kevin Doherty, Robert Ganzow, Brad Gefvert, LaVern Georgson, Angie Greving, Jessica Hansen, Ryan Isaacsen, Leah Mindemann, Carie Pellmann, Heather Reu, Ashley Sinkula, Kim Turner, Jerry Wilcenski, Dave Zimmerman

1. Call to Order

- Chair Brad Gefvert called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

2. Roll Call

- **In Person:** Dave Zimmerman, Jerry Wilcenski, Lindsay Baneck, Joy Brattlie, Ryan Isaacsen, Kevin Doherty, Brad Gefvert, and Angie Greving
- **Online:** Leah Mindemann and Kylene Anderson
- **Also Present:** Becky Roberts (Fair Park Director), Sammy Garvey (Fair Coordinator)

3. Certification of Compliance with Open Meetings Law

- Gefvert confirmed that the meeting complies with the Wisconsin Open Meetings Law.

4. Approval of Minutes – May 28, 2025

- Brattlie moved to approve the May 28 minutes. Isaacsen seconded. Motion carried.

5. Public Comment

- Although no members of the public were present, Roberts shared two comments received from out-of-state individuals regarding animal welfare concerns during the horse pull at the Fair. The board emphasized that the health and wellbeing of the horses are a priority and are well-considered during this event.

6. Review of June 12 Fair Park Committee Meeting

- Roberts reported on the Fair Park Committee's discussions, including long-term master planning and capital funding. These plans will affect Fair Park finances and development over the next five years.

7. 2025 Fair Debrief & Discussion

a) Logistics (Gates, Trash, ATMs, Hours)

- The board expressed appreciation for the positive and friendly demeanor of the gate staff.
- The addition of general parking near Gate 10 was well received. Staff will review traffic patterns to improve handicap parking and exhibitor vehicle navigation.
- Additional signage was suggested to help direct fairgoers into parking areas.
- Baneck noted that vehicles were parked too close to the Beef Barn; it was agreed they should park south of the Sheep Barn in future years.
- Zimmerman and Brattlie raised concerns about accessibility to the handicap gate. A shuttle or "bus stop" concept was suggested for easier return access.
- Roberts reported a **15% increase in overall attendance** from 2024 (excluding exhibitors, vendors, campers, and staff), and a **40% increase in sales**.
- Trash can management was praised—no overflowing cans were reported.

b) Exhibiting

- The board appreciated that ribbons remained on static exhibits during Fair, due to a change in judging methods.
- Concerns were raised over having the same judge two years in a row; there was a split between preferring judge continuity vs. rotation.

c) Programming

Kidz Zone

- Positive feedback was shared on each event/activity timing and layout.
- Due to strong attendance, the board suggested adding more events if the budget allows.

Music

- The board discussed location, performer selection, and scheduling.

- Community Stage placement was seen as a success, especially considering it was its first year. The merits of moving the stage or keeping it in the same location were discussed.

EXPO Building

- Vendors appreciated being indoors but noted low foot traffic. Consistency with location over time may help improve attendance.

LEGO Station

- The LEGO area was extremely well received by both the public and the board.

d) Carnival

- Roberts reviewed pros and cons of the current carnival provider. The carnival contract is up for renewal, and Roberts explained she's not shopping, but she is exploring more cost-effective options.

e) Sensory Day

- Garvey reported on the success of Low Sensory Day, which helped families and groups attend that are affected by special needs.
- While attendance was modest, the board supports growing this effort in future years.

f) Entertainment

Rodeo

- Board members requested shifting the rodeo to a Friday or Saturday. This could draw larger crowds, however it's significantly more expensive.
- There was also discussion about making the grandstand more versatile for both animal and motorsports events.

Draft Horse Pull

- It was suggested to move the Draft Horse Pull to the grandstand.
- Doherty and Roberts noted the event's popularity and that promoters are also in favor of the move.

g) Animal Exhibits

- Gefvert noted conflicts between goat and sheep exhibitors sharing barn space. Garvey and Roberts are developing a plan to address this for 2026.
- Poultry show adjustments were well received; rabbit show was too long. Garvey is considering multiple judges in 2026 to help shorten the schedule.
- While evening shows were requested for some species, auction logistics make it difficult to accommodate.
- Awards and banners were positively received but inconsistencies across departments caused confusion among exhibitors.
- Master Showmanship timing and award advancement criteria were discussed, with a suggestion to standardize selection for Grand and Reserve Champion titles.

8. Old Business

- No old business was presented.

9. New Business

a) FAB Membership & Terms Review

- Membership terms will be reviewed in August.
- Roberts asked members to come to the next meeting ready to discuss team structure and its evolution.

b) Board Resignation

- Former chair **Jim Schroeder** had officially submitted his resignation.

10. Next Meeting

- The next meeting will be held on **August 27, 2025**.

11. Adjournment

Doherty moved to adjourn; Greving seconded. The meeting adjourned at **8:46 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted

Sammy Garvey Fair Coordinator

Jefferson County Fair Park