

Minutes of Wednesday, April 15th, 2026 El Paso County Fair Board Meeting

Board Members: Grant Harris, Ed Dills, Kate Johnson, Wade Canaday,
Chantel Bruce

Staff: Theresa Odello, Andschana Aljets, Skye Bogle, Jonathan
Vrabec, Crystal LaTier, Commissioner Geitner

Guests: Sheila Canaday, Caylee Andrew, Stacy Cantu

The meeting was called to order by Chair Pro Tem, Ed Dills at 6:31p.m. We welcomed everyone and introduced ourselves.

Agenda Items & Meeting Minutes

Wade Canaday made a motion to approve the December 2025 Meeting Minutes and April 2026 Meeting Agenda, 2nd by Grant Harris.

Public Comments

- Ed Dills shared information about the Protein 4 Helping Others Springs Rescue Mission's World Hunger Day event taking place on May 28th.

Action Items:

4.A. 2026 Sunshine Act Memorandum

Theresa Odello presented the annual 2026 Sunshine Act Memorandum for Board approval. This memorandum defines the designated posting locations for public meeting notices, the physical location for future meetings, and names the official custodian responsible for maintaining the minutes on file. Kate Johnson made a motion to approve the 2026 Sunshine Act Memorandum. The motion was seconded by Chantel Bruce and passed with no opposition.

4.B. 2026 Board Elections

Andschana held the Board Election for the 2026 Fair Advisory Board. Grant Harris was nominated as Chair and Ed Dills was nominated as Vice Chair. Kate Johnson made a motion to approve Grant Harris as the Fair Advisory Board Chair and Ed Dills as the Fair Advisory Board Vice Chair, 2nd by Chantel Bruce. There were no opposition and the motion carried with approval.

4.C. 2026 4-H/FFA Award Overview

Theresa Odello presented the 2026 4-H/FFA Award and the associated application form. During discussion, she clarified that there are no age restrictions and that the funds are no longer limited to schooling; recipients may now use the award for any purpose that furthers their 4-H journey, including purchasing livestock.

The winning applicant is required to present to the Board between November and January to report on how the funds supported their personal or 4-H/FFA goals, a

requirement designed to provide accountability and public speaking experience. Following the presentation, the Board requested that the application be distributed to members and FFA leaders to initiate the nomination process.

4.D. Outstanding Fair Volunteer Award

Andschana Aljets provided a report on the newly established Outstanding Fair Volunteer Award. She clarified that this initiative combines the former Fair Advisory Board Volunteer Service Award and the BoCC Fair Volunteer Award into a single, unified honor. This award also introduces a new objective application rubric process that is tied to the strategic plan and values of El Paso County. As the highest recognition available to Fair volunteers, it honors individuals who demonstrate exceptional dedication to the administration of the County Fair. The program is limited to one recipient per year, who will be honored with a plaque during the VIP Reception held at the Fair. Furthermore, the recipient's biography, photograph, and details regarding their service will be featured in the official Fair Program. The Andschana Aljets concluded the presentation by reviewing the eligibility requirements and the formal application process.

4.E. Fair Ambassador Program

Andschana Aljets introduced the Fair Ambassador Program, a new initiative for the 2026 El Paso County Fair featuring a guest-accessible Info Booth on Vendor Row. The booth will be staffed by volunteers from various County departments daily from 11 am to 8 pm. Currently, 24 staff members have volunteered to participate, and a six-week training series is being developed to ensure they are fully prepared. The Board was invited to review the draft training plan and provide feedback or insights from past fair experiences to help refine the program.

Information/Miscellaneous Reports

5.A. Fair Dashboard

Andschana Aljets presented the Fair Dashboard, providing progress updates on programming, marketing, grounds, vendors, sponsorships, and the Fair Queen program. Currently, programming, vendors, and sponsorships are over 90% on track regarding both action items and revenue goals. Marketing has entered its second phase, with efforts scheduled to increase from May through July. Facilities staff are currently prioritizing climate control improvements in the Livestock Arena and Whittemore Building, with the general Fair preparation list slated to begin in May. The Fair Queen was in attendance and provided a comprehensive report under item 5.C.

5.B. Vendor Report

Skye Bogle provided an update on vendor logistics and revenue targets, noting that collected fees have reached 92% of the goal, while total revenue—including committed fees—stands at 119%. All outdoor vendor spaces are currently occupied, with only three indoor locations pending final confirmation. Immediate next steps include finalizing all vendor agreements and compiling the vendor list for the Fair Guide. Additionally, both the site map and the completed vendor list will be distributed to the Fair Advisory Board.

5.C. Queen Introduction & Report

Caylee Andrew, the 2026 Fair Queen, introduced herself to the Board and expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to serve in this role. Her upcoming schedule of appearances includes the Calhan Loyalty Day Parade on May 2nd and the Spring Fling & Fast Things event at the Fairgrounds on May 3rd. Additionally, she will represent the Fair at the Western Heritage Spirit Mixer at the Pro Rodeo Hall of Fame on May 13th and will give her 2026 Fair Queen Speech for the first time.

5.D. CSU Extension & 4-H Report

Jonathan Vrabec provided an update on upcoming 4-H programming, highlighting a series of clinics and mock shows designed to help youth participants refine their projects ahead of the El Paso County Fair. He also reported a significant 25% increase in enrollment, with 425 youth already registered to participate in the upcoming Fair.

Board and Staff Comments

- Theresa Odello provided a report on her recent attendance at the Pikes Peak or Bust meeting, noting the committee's interest in increasing collaboration with the 4-H program. She shared that a meeting is being scheduled with 4-H leadership to explore how the venue can support youth programming and activities throughout the year, independent of the County Fair.
- Skye Bogle shared information about the Spring Fling & Fast Things events taking place at the Fairgrounds on May 2nd and 3rd.
- Andschana Aljets provided information on Felicia Publicker's memorial service and extended an invitation for all members and guests to attend.

Next Meeting: Fair Advisory Board meeting, May 20th, 6:30pm – Swink Hall

Grant Harris adjourned the meeting at 7:42pm.