

## April 1, 2026 – America 250 IN Noble planning meeting

### **NOTES:**

The Celebrate Noble County Indiana 250” working committee met on April 1, 2026 in the Cole Room of the Noble County Public Library in Albion. Grace Caswell, committee chair, commenced the meeting at about 10:30 a.m.

A sign-in sheet was passed around and attendees signed in:

- Grace Caswell
- Alexis Wagner
- Lori Gagen
- Teresa Tackett
- Tiffany Parker
- Becca Adair
- Judy Richter
- Mike Fitzgibbon
- Roberta Stone
- Casey Myers
- Larry Chandler
- Ardean Ebert
- Earle Franklin
- Roberta Stone
- Jim Swartzlander
- Julia Tipton

(Apologies to anyone missed; the sign-in sheet was misplaced.)

Ahead of discussing any old business and partner updates, Grace introduced a special guest speaker, Jim Swartzlander. Jim presented a video and shared additional information about George Wyman, the first person to cross the U.S. on a motorized vehicle. In 1903, Wyman traveled across the county on a motorized bicycle and passed through Noble County, from Ligonier to Kendallville. A special celebration will be hosted at Kendallville Power Sports on June 27, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Once the promo video is ready, the committee suggested Jim have it published on YouTube so it can be easily shared. (Details have been published on the America 250 landing page and calendar.)

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

#### **Bill Shultz – Historic Society Exhibit at the County Annex**

Bill was absent, however Tiffany Parker provided a reminder that communities who have historic artifacts to display at the County Annex are asked to fill out a form (to ensure the safe return) and to contact Bill. The display will be from April 17 through the end of July in the Annex lobby in Albion. Planners will be collecting the items April 13-15. The artifact form to submit is located at:

[https://www.visitnoblecounty.org/files/ugd/a8201e\\_10b2315284cc4d79a07d4b3c1aef005a.pdf](https://www.visitnoblecounty.org/files/ugd/a8201e_10b2315284cc4d79a07d4b3c1aef005a.pdf)

#### **Marketing**

Grace shared that the CVB will be leading an effort to place window exhibits in communities, beginning with the Kendallville Area Chamber office on Main Street

beginning April 1. Lori noted that the committee is still seeking a space in Avilla for May and one in Albion in July. Lori is working on Albion options.

Grace reported good feedback from the newsletters being sent with updates. She also highlighted that the Fort Wayne Journal Gazette had a nice article, prompted by a press release, noting that Noble County will have more than 100 opportunities for people to celebrate America 250 in the county.

Lori Gagen also brought in 50 new table tent promo cards and they were distributed to attendees to place in each community, in restaurants or other public spaces.

### **Fundraising**

Rhonda Stienecker, committee treasurer, was absent. Grace shared that \$1,500 from Visit Noble County awarded to the Community Learning Center on behalf of the committee to help cover costs of the lighted lawn display made possible by the Mid-America Windmill Museum.

Lori Gagen also reported the Albion STAR Team was awarded \$1,500 for the Block Party for America 250 from Visit Noble County. She noted some of that money will be used to decorate the gazebo and other elements of the Courthouse square.

**Albion Parks** – Casey updated the group and shared info about additional lighted displays they have purchased. There will be two additional “torch” lights placed on light poles in downtown Albion, plus a lighted American flag to be placed on the roof of the police booth at the stoplight in Albion.

**Block Party** – Lori asked the group if moving the Block Party to the school was of interest, thinking logistics could be challenging at the courthouse square due to SR 9 construction. However, the group noted that county employees will not be working on July 3 and agreed the celebration should remain at the courthouse square. The hours were set from 2 to 6 p.m. and booths spaces will be limited to information, exhibits and displays, activities, and performances. No food will be allowed, so that local restaurants are supported, as well as food trucks the fireworks display that evening. Grace noted we should make it clear it is a “bring your own stuff” opportunity; no tables or chairs will be provided. Lori and Casey shared that the county commissioners have approved the use of the grounds. Lori will begin working on a booth application system and share soon so organizations can reserve space to participate.

**Commemorative Light Display** – Casey and Lori updated Mike from the Windmill Museum on coordinating the display for downtown Albion. Casey will work with Mike, and the county’s maintenance man, Glen Ryan. They all shared contact info to coordinate.

**Large Format Declaration of Independence display** – Teresa reported that she is trying to use the county’s plotter to generate a large version display piece. She needs a high resolution image to work with, then will see if she can make it work. Lori offered to try to help find an image. If it works, Teresa will see if the county will grant permission to print a few copies to share across the county.

**NEW BUSINESS**

No new business was noted.

**The next planning meeting will be on Wednesday, May 6 at the Noble County Public Library, Cole Room lower level, at 10:30 a.m.**

**The June planning meeting will be a potluck!** Bring a dish to share on Wednesday, June 3 at the Noble County Public Library, Cole Room lower level, at 10:30 a.m.

- Submitted by Lori Gagen