

July 8, 2026 – America 250 IN Noble planning meeting

NOTES:

The Celebrate Noble County Indiana 250 working committee met on July 8, 2026 in the Cole Room of the Noble County Public Library in Albion. Grace Caswell called the meeting to order at 10:33 AM.

Attendance:

- Grace Caswell
- Lori Gagen
- Alexis Wagner
- Pam Younce
- Doug Younce
- Mike Fitzgibbon
- Cyndi Schlemmer
- Larry Palmer
- Tiffany Parker
- Ardean Ebert
- Roberta Stone
- Bill Shultz

Reports:

Window Display – Grace reported that the window display was placed in Albion for the month of July and will **Window Display** move to Rome City next. Roberta and Grace will coordinate.

Annex Display – Bill reported that plans have been made to remove the display items at the Annex already, to happen yet this week. Some items (those that are not subject to damage or deterioration) will be moved to place on exhibit at the Noble County Fair, in Floral Hall. Grace will bring additional items to fill in as needed. Bill will bring a 6' table for her to use.

Lighted Lawn Display – Mike followed up on remaining lawn display opportunities during the meeting. He will be reaching out to Tim Gaby about moving the display to the fairgrounds tomorrow, and began making plans to move the display in early August to Rome City – Roberta shared her contact info to help coordinate so it is at Town Hall around Aug 3. The display will then move to Ligonier, to the Gazebo west of Cavin Street for the festival. Mike will contact Margarita White for planning. Afterwards, it can move to Stone's Trace, coordinated with Wendy Howard. Mike will check with Mary Kaiser about having it in Cromwell for Cromwell Days in September as well. After Cromwell, the display will return to the Windmill Museum and be part of a special display at Winter Wonderland.

Feedback Requested – Visit Noble County has requested that communities and organizations who have hosted America 250-related events provide feedback to the bureau, such as how many participated, what comments did they share, any out-of-town travelers, etc. Events that had engagement of 100 or more people may also request data from the bureau's geo-fencing tools to know more about who engaged. Contact Alexis Wagner at Visit Noble County for information.

Windmill Museum Free Day – The museum personnel reported a good day of attendance on Friday, July 3, especially given the extreme heat wave. They said 24 people visited, which is far more than the average 2-4 people on a weekday. Pam noted that while the patrons did not spend money during their visit, they enjoyed their time and will likely return and/or tell others to visit.

Rome City Fireworks – Roberta said the fireworks display was well attended, but inclement weather sped things up a bit and communication with lake residents was an issue – they didn't know it would begin early. Road construction was a pain. About 275 people viewed from the Our Lady property and had a great view. They will do that again in the future. Roberta noted that they need to add another porta-potty next time.

Rome City Community Picnic – Tiffany reported that eight churches participated in the picnic and about 60 people attended. They had “plenty of hot dogs” and sloppy joes, as well as carry-in items shared. Attendees gave good feedback, asking if they can do it again. Planners are considering doing another picnic during Chautauqua Days, on Sunday.

Old Jail Museum – Bill reported the Noble County Historical Society made a last minute decision to add a booth at the America 250 IN Noble Block Party on July 3 at the courthouse square, which helped drive up attendance at the Old Jail Museum that day. Weather was very warm, but they still had about 40 visitors, vs. normally 5-10 on a summer Saturday. Admission was free.

Community Picnic Ligonier – Cyndi shared that the Ligonier community picnic on July 4 went well, with about 36 kids playing the library's activity, and an estimated 100 visitors in all. The event included food trucks and a bounce house, which was donated for use. Families enjoyed face painting and crafts, too. She noted seeing some people just come and get food from the food trucks, and not engage in other activities. One BBQ vendor sold out and the vendors seemed happy. She is interested in getting data from the CVB about their visitors.

YPN Gives a Pop – Grace said their event at Bixler Lake, ahead of fireworks on July 4, went well with about 10 food trucks (two pulled out at the last minute.) There were good photo opps with props and they prepared 1000 water bottles. About 300-350 were handed out. YPN lacked volunteers for clean-up, so they tore down early. There was one medical call. Overall she noticed families did not engage early as much as arrive later for the fireworks.

America 250 IN Noble Block Party – Lori reported she counted 11 booths on the square and estimated about 100-125 people participated. She checked analytics on the new Walking Tour on the Clio app, and 22 people have tapped into the tour since launch. A sign is placed at the Gazebo for ongoing engagement. The program at the Gazebo included remarks from Vicki Jellison on behalf of the Town of Albion; Mary Ann Troutner with Albion STAR Team re-dedicated the gazebo following renovations made possible by a gift in late 2025, in honor of Charles and Helen Frazee. Joy LeCount, former county commissioner and editor of the Albion New Era shared her own

remarks on the state of Noble County today, as well as excerpts from a speech given by Nelson Prentice at the square on July 4, 1876.

Albion Fireworks – Tiffany and Lori agreed the Albion fireworks show was very well attended, with thousands of visitors and a busy school campus. The show started a little early due to lightening in the area, but no rain fell. Food trucks were very busy.

Freedom Festival – Those no one was present to report officially, members of the committee said the festival was phenomenal, with an estimated 3,500 people at one of the concerts.

Upcoming (remaining) Events:

- July 10 free concert at Gaff Park in Rome City (Todd Herendeen)
- Rome City – Brimfield Lions celebrating 70 years
- July 11-17 – Noble County Fair
- Old Jail Museum open Saturdays
- July 30 – Aug 1 – Wolf Lake Onion Days
- August 7-8 Chautauqua Days in Rome City
- Labor Day Weekend – Tri-State Bluegrass Festival at the fairgrounds
- Sept 4-6 – Ligonier Marshmallow Festival
- Sept 12-13 – Stone's Trace Festival
- Oct 3-4 – Apple Festival of Kendallville
- Nov 7 – Foraging in the Forest at Gene Stratton-Porter SHS
- Dec 4-6, 11-13 – Winter Wonderland at Mid-America Windmill Museum
- Dec 5 – Red, White & Blue Christmas in the Village, Albion

Other Business

As the meeting was winding down, Pam expressed to the group that Noble County should be proud, noting all of the activities that different communities put on and contrasting it to others in the region who did almost nothing. Committee members joined Pam in thanking Grace for her leadership, without which these things would not have been so plentiful and well planned.

Lori made a note to add Cromwell Days to the calendar, on the recommendation of Cyndi. It occurs in September.

Grace recommended that anyone promoting events on Facebook please make Visit Noble County a co-host, making it easier for the bureau to cross-promote.

Ardean shared a rundown of all the things the local DAR Chapter has done to celebrate America 250 IN Noble, including supplying books to 11 local schools highlighting women in history; the planting of a Liberty Tree with the Mayor in Ligonier; a parade entry at Freedom Festival that earned

a 2nd place award; and an American Revolution Knowledge quiz with prizes at the Block Party, as well as a stand-up George Washington photo prop. The group offered novelty prizes to meeting attendees as well.

Meeting attendees agreed there is no need to hold another committee meeting. Grace discussed outstanding expenses to be reimbursed through funds held at the Community Foundation of Noble County. Lori has an invoice for table tent cards. After some discussion, Mike made a motion to pay remaining reimbursements, then send any remaining funds to Visit Noble County to cover their related expenses. Lori seconded the motion and it passed by vote of those present.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:24 AM.

- Submitted by Lori Gagen