

## May 6, 2026 – America 250 IN Noble planning meeting

### **NOTES:**

The Celebrate Noble County Indiana 250 working committee met on May 6, 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.

#### Attendance:

- Grace Caswell
- Teresa Tackett
- Lori Gagen
- Alexis Wagner
- Judy Richter
- Becca Adair
- Wendy Howard
- Casey Myers
- Pam Younce
- Doug Younce
- Mike Fitzgibbon
- Bill Shultz
- Rhonda Stienecker
- Roberta Stone
- Earle Franklin
- Adam Dunlap
- Julia Tipton
- Cyndi Schlemmer
- Larry Palmer
- Tiffany Parker
- Sam Tipton

Grace explained there was no formal agenda prepared for this meeting, but suggested that sub-committees and partners provide updates.

#### **Financial Update:**

Rhonda provided a financial report. She noted the gross contributions total \$3,450 through March 31, 2026. The only expenses paid thus far have been to the Community Foundation for administrative costs of managing the funds. Julia added that another \$1,500 was given by the CVB for America 250 expenses, to the CLC. A few outstanding expenses were reported by partners:

- Digital MapMe – the CVB has paid for software to map all America 250 events in Noble County. Grace will submit an invoice to CFNC for reimbursement.
- The Mid-America Windmill Museum has a balance of \$1,600 due for the lighted lawn display. \$1,500 was paid by the Community Learning Center from a grant awarded to them by the CVB. Mike will send an invoice to the CFNC showing the down-payment seeking the balance due.
- Bill noted costs for signs for the Annex exhibit came to \$350. He requested to wait until other expenses clear before seeking reimbursement for the Historic Society.

Rhonda asked if there is any tracking of in-kind donations and no one reported any to date. After some discussion, and Lori's recommendation to note them in historical documentation, at least,

Grace indicated she will make a list of the CVB's in-kind donations and others are encouraged to do the same and bring to the next meeting in June.

### **Sub-Committee Reports:**

#### Declaration of Independence "posters"

Teresa provided a large-format sample of a printing of the Declaration of Independence that is available at \$5.00 each. She said the county gave permission for some to be printed on their large-format plotter, however, does not want the offer made to the general public. Partners who have been attending America 250 IN Noble planning meetings can reach out to Teresa by May 15 if they want a copy for display. Framing is DIY and not included. Teresa can be reached at 260-636-7217 to request a copy. The \$5 is payable to Noble County Commissioners. Grace will investigate framing the one brought to the meeting to be in the traveling window display.

#### Lighted Lawn Display

Pam said the display has been moved from the CLC to Sylvan Cellars. The museum personnel will move it May 22 to downtown Albion and will coordinate with Casey. Pam reminded that the display requires grass and a location within 100' of an electrical hookup. Mike has asked to have dates firmed up for when to move the display to the Gene Stratton-Porter site and Avilla locations. Adam said he will advise on June 3 when and where to move the display to Avilla ahead of the June 25-30 Freedom Festival. After some discussion and concerns about back-to-back moves on the tentative schedule published on the website, Lori and Casey agreed the plan to bring the display back to Albion for July 3 can be scrapped in favor of moving it to the Fairgrounds instead.

Grace asked Rome City reps to capture a photo of the display while it is in town, then noted all exhibitors are asked to get photos when the sign is in their neck of the woods.

#### Courthouse Annex Display

Bill confirmed the historic display is up in the county Annex. Teresa noted that she has seen people taking time to look at it. Annex personnel are keeping an eye on the displays for security. Cyndi recommended taking in the timeline that is there, that Sarah Knopp put together. The exhibit reportedly shares some great artifacts from local communities. If anything is added, there is a box below the table with town signs to label items.

#### Window Display:

Grace noted that the traveling, promotional window display that was in Kendallville will now move to Pixie Pies in Avilla. Adam has a backup location if that's not workable. Partners are encouraged to get with the CVB if they have something to add.

#### Block Party:

Lori reported on the block party and reviewed the application and information with the committee. She will collaborate with Casey to ensure the Albion Town Council and departments are informed of what is coming and submit a Special Event Application.

#### Introducing Sam Tipton

Julia noted her retirement from the CLC effective last Friday and introduced Sam Tipton as the new director. Sam is joining the committee, taking Julia's place. Pam added that Julia was also named Citizen of the Year in Kendallville last Saturday, and the group offered their congratulations.

#### **Other partner updates**

**CLC:** Julia noted the CLC is showing a free screening of an episode of The American Revolution by Ken Burns tomorrow evening in the Assembly Room.

**CVB: Alexis** noted the CVB would like to know about any multi-day events where photos or other support would be helpful so they can make plans to attend. She requested being advised ASAP to ensure their availability.

**Noble County Genealogical Society: Judy** noted the group purchased the pocket-sized Constitutions and distributed them to the six libraries. They also placed some on the table at the Annex.

**Albion Parks: Casey** thanked the group for fireworks donations and said fundraising is going well for their July 3 show. They will have a few food vendors; he and Tiffany will be working on the policy to have food trucks. Some will have to pay to be there to help narrow down the numbers and help offset costs. Asbury Church will also have food. They usually stop serving at 7 p.m. when others begin selling.

**Noble Trails: Tiffany** reported that the Noble Trails 5K had 135 participants, setting a record!

**Gene Stratton-Porter SHS:** Tiffany reported their Mother's Day Tea, 250 themed, sold out at 26 people. She said it went very well and they promoted other events happening in the county. GSP is seeing a lot more historical visitation/tour participants already this year.

**Mid-America Windmill Museum: Pam** noted that Kite Day is this Sunday, with free admission 11-3. The museum will also have a free admission day on July 3.

**Old Jail Museum: Bill** noted it is the museum's 150th anniversary and they are gearing up. Brick repairs are happening now and they will have a special display with a jail timeline on display. They will be open during all of the STAR Team downtown events. Their first open weekend is May 23.

**Thrive Noble County: Teresa** noted, at the Engage Noble graduation, one of the graduates shared that they were going to try to visit a different place in Noble County each month. She thinks that is good advice and is making a personal pledge to do the same.

**Ligonier Visitors Center: Cyndi** reported that the Ligonier Visitor Center just opened yesterday for the season, and will be open through the end of October. The community picnic, facilitated by Main Street and the Visitor Center, is coming together. Food vendors are lined up, organizations will be offering free activities, and more plans are still in progress. Cyndi would like to share flyers of other America 250 events. If you have a flier for your event, please share with Cyndi to share at the Visitors Center. She has shared calendar, but would like to have flyers, too. Cyndi's email is cndschlemmer@gmail.com.

**Rome City: Roberta** reported she has confirmed four churches who will participate in a community picnic on July 5.

**City of Ligonier: Earle** reported that the Veterans Memorial celebration is all set. They have 100 hand flags to hand out. The tree at Prentiss Park has been replanted (it died.)

**Avilla:** Adam reported that the Freedom Festival will kick off with a message from Adam – with 30 minutes to speak. Festivities will include a Jeep show, car show, bounce house, Kiddie pageant, poker run, Kiddie games, tourneys, concert night, and more. He said, “they are blowing the doors off!”

**Noble County Fair: Larry** noted the Noble County fair parade is coming in July and suggested that the committee could have a float. He has a wagon that can carry people. We can also have a booth in Floral Hall. The CVB will coordinate the booth display during the fair.

**YPN:** Grace reported the YPN is doing “YPN Gives a Pop” on Bixler on July 4 with a hydration station. They are working with Culligan to provide water, popsicles, etc. More info will be available at the June meeting. They are also coordinating food trucks. The CVB is also volunteering at the CLC farmers markets and can share flyers. It opens this Saturday.

**Participants are asked to bring a dish to share to the next meeting, on June 3 for a potluck. The meeting will begin at 10:30 a.m. in the Cole Room of the Noble County Public Library in Albion.**

- Submitted by Lori Gagen