

Hurricane to keep Fair

by Alleen Sorenson
Staff Writer

ST. GEORGE — In a 2-to-1 vote, Washington County Commissioners approved keeping the County Fair in Hurricane instead of moving it to the Dixie Center in St. George in 1987, as has been discussed for several weeks.

Newly appointed Commissioner Garth Last made the motion to keep the fair in Hurricane, and John Whitney seconded the motion, with Commission Chairman Jerry Lewis voting against the proposal today.

The decision had been tabled after extensive discussion Sept. 29 with people standing to air their opinions both in favor and against moving the Washington County Fair.

Last, who had yet to tour the Dixie Center — the proposed St. George site — asked to see the building before he made a final decision.

After being shown through the facility, Last said although he believed the center is a fine looking facility, it does not have more space than Hurricane High School, the present site of the fair.

"I contend the fair will not have nearly as much chance to grow (in St. George) as in Hurricane," he said.

Last added that although reasons for moving the fair to St. George are all valid, "They are good reasons, not compelling reasons," to change something that has been established for 30 years.

Last noted during his tour of the Dixie Center he was led to believe the livestock shows would be held on blacktop and the only place available for the carnival was on a

dirt field.

However another member of the crowd asked Last if he considered the possibility of using the Sun Bowl for livestock and a grass field near the Dixie Center, used by college students for an intramural playing field, as a location for the carnival.

"When I look at the Dixie Center I see things a little differently (than Last)" Lewis said, explaining his no vote.

"There has been a lot of input by many people in the community," Lewis said, noting he did not feel the comments should be disregarded.

Saying the fair is a "very political issue right now," Fair Board member Nick Lang noted "it appears you are voting against the Dixie Center."

After hearing the motion, Bob Colter submitted a letter from Ivins Mayor Lynn Henke stating he was in favor of moving the Fair to St. George, but Emery Jones, Toquerville mayor and former member of the Dixie Center Control board, noted the center is not a proper place to hold the fair because of the atmosphere of learning the college wished to convey to the public.

"A fair is a celebration," Jones said, "it is also a place of noise and music with people hawking wares." He added he did not think this represents a "proper use of a college facility."

"We would like to have an opportunity to show you what a real county fair can look like," said Dewey Hardcastle of Hurricane, while Kay Bundy of St. George said the fair has been in Hurricane but now needs to be moved to St. George where space is available, noting "you can't stop progress."