

# 2-1 vote keeps Fair in Hurricane

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ST. GEORGE - The Washington County Fair will remain in Hurricane.

The Washington County Commission, by a 2-1 split, voted to keep the fair in Hurricane Monday

after discussing the issue with many of the more than 30 people in attendance at the meeting.

Commissioners John Whitney and Garth Last voted in favor of the motion to leave the fair in Hurricane, while Commission Chairman Jerry Lewis voted against the motion.

Lewis said he received a lot of input from community members on the fair issue and said he saw things a little different than his counterparts on the commission. Therefore, he said he decided against voting for the motion.

Last was very outspoken in his support of the fair remaining in Hurricane and made the motion to keep the fair in Hurricane. He offered plenty of support for his decision.

Last said he visited the Dixie Center last week and came away convinced it was not the place to hold the fair. "It is a beautiful structure," he said. "But the exhibit center will have less space than Hurricane High." He also stated that many of the animal and possibly other exhibits would have to be set up on pavement and the carnival would be set up on a dirt field.

Last also said that the reasons he heard at last week's meeting were not compelling reasons to move the fair and he believes the fair will best be served by remaining in Hurricane.

It was anticipated that the fair location might be put on the ballot for a public vote, but the question was quickly settled when Last said it was the commissioners' decision to make, and if every controversial issue went to a public vote it would be a dangerous thing.

Washington County Attorney Paul Graf stated earlier in the meeting that if the commission put the issue on the ballot it could only be for a straw vote to get the voters' opinion. The commission would still have to make the decision.

"The decision has to be made by the commission," Graf said.

The commissioners listened to public input concerning the motion before making their vote.

Fair chairman Cleo Atkin told the commission the Dixie Center would be more than an adequate place to house the fair for at least the next five years. "We have indeed outgrown the high school," Atkin said. "We on the fair board are the experts and we know what is wrong with the school."

Andrew Jones, the Mayor of Toquerville, and Dewey Hardcastle, the mayor of Hurricane, spoke out in support of Last and his reasons for keeping the fair in Hurricane.

Bob Colter, a member of the Dixie Center control board, presented Commissioner Lewis with a letter from Lynn Henke, the mayor of Ivins, stating that the city of Ivins is in favor of moving the fair to St. George. Colter also questioned Last and the other commissioners on whether or not they had seriously looked at all the issues connected with moving the fair to St. George, or if they were just basing the decision on their own assumptions.

Lewis said that Atkin is still the fair chairman until another person is named. He said Atkin, along with others, will be considered for the position, but as of now, he said no decisions have been made. Last said Atkin would probably have to be replaced and that Doug Bringhurst would certainly be considered for the position. He said nothing will be decided for another four or five weeks.