

INTERIM JOINT COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Minutes of the 3rd Meeting of the 2026 Interim

August 27, 2026

Call to Order and Roll Call

The third meeting of the Interim Joint Committee on Agriculture was held on August 27, 2026, at 10:00 AM ET/9:00 AM CT in Freedom Hall at the Kentucky State Fair in Louisville. Senator Jason Howell, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

Present were:

Members: Senator Jason Howell, Co-Chair; Representative Myron Dossett, Co-Chair; Senators Gary Boswell, Gary Clemons, Matthew Deneen, Shelley Funke Frommeyer, Matt Nunn, Aaron Reed, Craig Richardson, Reginald L. Thomas, and Mike Wilson; and Representatives Chad Aull, Ryan Bivens, Anne Gay Donworth, Daniel Fister, Chris Freeland, David Hale, Mark Hart, Kim Holloway, Kim King, Matthew Koch, Candy Massaroni, J.T. Payne, Michael Sarge Pollock, Felicia Rabourn, Sarah Stalker, James Tipton, and Joshua Watkins.

Guests: Mayor Craig Greenberg, Louisville Metro; Michael Berry, Interim President and CEO, Kentucky Venues; Ray Perry, Chairman, Kentucky State Fair Board (KSFB); Scott Baker, Finance and Administration Cabinet.

LRC Staff: Stefan Kasacavage, Kelly Ludwig, and Rachel Hartley.

Approval of July 2, 2026 Minutes

A motion was made by Representative Pollock and seconded by Representative Bivens to approve the minutes of the July 2, 2026, meeting. Minutes were approved by voice vote without objection.

Welcome

Mayor Craig Greenberg, Louisville Metro, stated that creating partnerships has been an economic success for Louisville and Kentucky. It is important to look at the future of agriculture for urban and rural areas.

Report of the Kentucky State Fair Board

Michael Berry, Interim President and CEO, Kentucky Venues, stated that Kentucky Venues is committed to agriculture, tourism, and economic development. He said the Phase 1 project is the largest expansion and renovation of the Fair and Exhibition Center campus since 1956. Phase 2 projects have begun. Kentucky Venues is committed to ensuring the use of the dollars appropriated by the General Assembly. Mr. Berry stated the mission of Kentucky Venues continues to emphasize agriculture.

Mr. Scott Baker, Finance and Administration Cabinet, stated the projects remain on schedule and on budget.

Ray Perry, Chairman, KSFB, stated the Board is committed to supporting the growth of agriculture and tourism events.

In response to Representative Tipton, Mr. Perry stated the Governor is interested in conducting a nation-wide search for a CEO and the Board will consider candidate qualifications and background. Mr. Berry stated Kentucky Venues will report to the Board the strengths to be considered of a CEO.

In response to Representative Bivens, Mr. Berry said 56% of State Fair attendees are from Jefferson County and the Kentucky State Fair offers a variety of activities for all ages.

Representative Bivens stated agriculture is a family affair and important to the state's economy. He said the fairgrounds may sit in Louisville, but is a state-owned property.

Chair Howell said he has learned the facility serves as an economic driver for Louisville and the entire state. He said that previous out-of-state CEOs have not always worked well in the position and encouraged the Board to hire a qualified candidate.

A motion was made by Representative Tipton and seconded by Representative Pollock to present a Citation of Appreciation for David Beck. Motion was approved by voice vote without objection.

Adjournment

With no further business, Chair Howell adjourned the meeting.