



**Utah Board of Higher Education
Utah System of Higher Education
Thursday, March 27, 2025**

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MINUTES**

Board Members Present

Amanda Covington, Chair
Steve Neeleman, Vice Chair
Javier Chavez Jr.
Jon Cox
Sharon Eubank
Danny Ipson
Tina Marriott
Aaron Skonnard
Cydni Tetro
Muskan Walia

Board Members Absent

Office of the Commissioner

Geoffrey Landward, Commissioner
Alison Adams, General Counsel and Board Secretary
Taylor Adams, Associate Commissioner of Student Affairs
Trevor Cross, IT Support
Trisha Dugovic, Director of Communication
Brynn Fronk, Executive Assistant to the Utah Board of Higher Education
Vic Hockett, Associate Commissioner of Talent Ready Utah
Steve Hood, Assistant Commissioner of Academic Affairs
Carrie Mayne, Chief Economist
Katie Mazzie, Assistant Commissioner of Strategic and Government Affairs
Hilary Renshaw, Associate General Counsel
Brian Shuppy, Senior Assistant Commissioner for Budget and Finance
Angie Stallings, Deputy Commissioner and COO
Nate Talley, Deputy Commissioner and CFO
Melissa Van Hien, Executive Assistant to the Commissioner and Office Manager
Kim Ziebarth, Associate Commissioner of Technical Education

Institutional Presidents Present

Mindy Benson, Southern Utah University
Darin Brush, Davis Technical College
Chad Campbell, Bridgerland Technical College
Paul Hacking, Tooele Technical College
Stacey McIff, Snow College
Brad Mortensen, Weber State University
Jim Mortensen, Utah Valley University (acting)
Greg Peterson, Salt Lake Community College

Taylor Randall, University of Utah
Jordan Rushton, Dixie Technical College
Al Smith, Utah State University (interim)
Jim Taggart, Ogden Weber Technical College
Aaron Weight, Uintah Basin Technical College
Courtney White, Utah Tech University (interim)
Brennan Wood, Southwest Technical College

Other Guests

Cathy Anderson, CFO, University of Utah

Raj Chetty, William A. Ackman Professor of Economics, Harvard University, and Director of Opportunity Insights
Dave Cowley, Vice President for Finance and Administrative Services, Utah State University
Troy D'Ambrosio, Chief of Staff and Vice President for Innovation, University of Utah
Natalie Gochmour, Associate Dean and Director, Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute, University of Utah
Kirt Michaelis, Vice President of Administrative Services/CFO, Mountainland Technical College
Mitzi Montoya, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, University of Utah
Shannon Simonsen, Research Coordinator, Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute, University of Utah

Chair Covington called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Committee of the Whole

Resolution of Appreciation for Richard Ellis

Chair Covington highlighted Richard Ellis's accomplishments. **Vice Chair Neeleman moved to approve the Resolution of Appreciation for Richard Ellis. Board member Cox seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.**

Resolution of Appreciation for President Elizabeth R. Cantwell

Chair Covington highlighted President Cantwell's accomplishments. **Board Member Marriott moved to approve the Resolution of Appreciation for President Elizabeth R. Cantwell. Chair Covington seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.**

Institutional Highlights

President Mindy Benson from Southern Utah University and President Brennan Wood from Southwest Technical College provided updates on their institutions. This was an information item only; no action was taken.

Legislative Update

Commissioner Landward thanked the presidents and the Board for their ongoing support during the legislative session. Nate Talley, Katie Mazzie, and the Commissioner walked through the details of the legislative session from the fiscal and legislative sides.

Board member Ipson moved to approve the proposed FY 2026 technical college equipment funding allocation as presented and instructed the Commissioner's office to report the distribution methodology to the Higher Education Appropriation Subcommittee prior to disbursing the funding. Board member Cox seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

Pursuant to Board policies R742 and R744, Vice Chair Neeleman moved to adopt the non-dedicated capital project rankings as prioritized in the October 4, 2024, Board meeting for the FY 2027 budget cycle. Board member Marriott seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

In response to the Center for Civic Excellence at Utah State University, the Board requested more information on general education. The General Education Council will present to the Board at a future Board meeting. Board member Cox asked for early check-ins during the SB 129 process so the Board is comfortable early on.

Fiscal Year 2026 Institutional Strategic Reinvestment Guidelines & Resources

Commissioner Landward introduced the agenda item, and Nate Talley reviewed the guidance with the Board members. Carrie Mayne presented the Program Outcomes Dashboard. Vic Hockett shared the Talent Ready Utah prioritization. The Board members and presidents discussed HB 265.

Board member Cox moved to adopt the proposed FY 2026 Institutional Strategic Reinvestment Guidance. Board member Ipson seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

Economic Opportunity: Utah Insights

Dr. Raj Chetty presented the economic opportunity in Utah to the Board. He identified four key predictors of economic mobility: poverty rates, family structure, school quality, and social capital. He shared approaches to increasing upward mobility. The Board members and presidents asked Dr. Chetty questions related to his research. This was an information item only; no action was taken.

Financial Ratio Report

Nate Talley reviewed the Financial Ratio Report found under the Reports for Board's Review. This was an information item only; no action was taken.

Annual Money Management Report – FY 2024

Nate Talley reviewed the Annual Money Management Report found under the Reports for Board's Review. This was an information item only; no action was taken.

Mountainland Technical College Request for Approval of Instruction at the Payson Extension Campus

Kim Ziebarth and Kirt Michaelis presented the agenda item to the Board members. **Board member Marriott moved to approve Mountainland Technical College's request to establish the Payson Campus as an extension center. Board member Walia seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.**

New Board Policy R252, Institutional Statements Acknowledging Relationships with Tribes and Ancestral Lands

Alison Adams presented the agenda item to the Board members. The policy was shared with all eight federally-recognized tribes and the Utah Division of Indian Affairs. Alison shared recommendations that were made by tribes. **Chair Covington moved to approve new Board Policy R252, Institutional Statements Acknowledging Relationships with Tribes and Ancestral Lands, and the companion template statement. Board member Ipson seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.**

Federal Executive Order on Improving Education Outcomes by Empowering Parents, States, and Communities

Commissioner Landward introduced the agenda item, and Angie Stallings provided an overview of the Federal Executive Order on Improving Education Outcomes by Empowering Parents, States, and Communities. This was an information item; no action was taken.

Consent Calendar

Chair Covington shared a concern she had regarding Board Policy R209. **Chair Covington moved to approve amendments to Board Policy R209 with a revision to section 4.2 to require the performance indicators to be approved by the Executive Committee of the Board in addition to the Commissioner. Board member Skonnard seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.**

Board member Cox moved to approve the consent calendar with the changes to R209 that were discussed. Board member Marriott seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

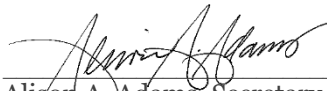
Board member Ipson moved to go into closed session for the purpose of discussing the character, professional competence, or physical or mental health of an individual; impending litigation; or the sale of real property. Vice Chair Neeleman seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

Closed Session

Board member Skonnard moved to end closed session. Board member Cox seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

Board member Cox moved to adjourn. Chair Covington seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.


Alison A. Adams, Secretary

Date Approved: May 15, 2025