

**Utah Board of Higher Education  
Utah System of Higher Education  
Thursday, May 14, 2026**

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
MINUTES

**Board Members Present**

Amanda Covington, Chair  
Jon Cox, Vice Chair  
Javier Chavez Jr.  
Jeremy Hafen  
Jodi Hart  
Danny Ipson  
Garrett Largent  
Steve Neeleman  
Aaron Skonnard  
Cydni Tetro

**Board Members Absent**

**Office of the Commissioner**

Geoffrey Landward, Commissioner  
Alison Adams, General Counsel and Board Secretary  
Taylor Adams, Associate Commissioner of Student Affairs  
TJ Bliss, Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs  
Cassidy Dragunat, Assistant Commissioner of Financial Aid  
Trisha Dugovic, Director of Communication  
Kevin Enright, Director of Finance and Facilities  
Brynn Fronk, Executive Assistant to the Utah Board of Higher Education  
Vic Hockett, Associate Commissioner of Talent Ready Utah  
Carrie Mayne, Chief Economist  
Katie Mazzie, Associate Commissioner of Strategic Initiatives, Community and Government Relations  
Jimmy McDonough, Senior Assistant Commissioner of Education Workforce Programs  
Natalie Reidhead, Administrative Assistant  
Hilary Renshaw, Associate General Counsel  
Angie Stallings, Deputy Commissioner and COO  
Nate Talley, Deputy Commissioner and CFO  
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  
Clay Christensen, Mountainland Technical College  
Leslie Durham, Weber State University (interim)  
Stacey McIff, Snow College  
Greg Peterson, Salt Lake Community College  
Taylor Randall, University of Utah

Jordan Rushton, Dixie Technical College  
Shane Smeed, Utah Tech University  
Jim Taggart, Ogden Weber Technical College  
Kent Thygerson, Tooele Technical College (interim)  
Wayne Vaught, Utah Valley University (interim)  
Aaron Weight, Uintah Basin Technical College  
Brennan Wood, Southwest Technical College

**Others**

Shake Agaronyan, Cushman & Wakefield  
David Anderson, CEO, University of Utah Growth Capital Partners Foundation  
David Bridges  
Mark Cain, Executive Director, my529  
Dave Cowley, Vice President for Finance and Administrative Services, Utah State University  
Troy D'Ambrosio, Chief of Staff, Vice President for Innovation, University of Utah  
Teresa Kehl, Deputy Chief of Staff, University of Utah  
Jeff Labrum, Chief Operating Officer, University of Utah  
Randy Larsen, Attorney, GilmoreBell  
Rob Muir, Associate Vice President for Asset Management, University of Utah  
Arthur Newell, Board Chair, my529/Utah Educational Savings Plan  
Rob Oldenburg, Growth Capital Partners, University of Utah  
Jim Russell, Director, State Division of Facilities Construction and Management  
Danny Wall, Executive Director, Real Estate, University of Utah  
Matt Webb

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

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

*Technical College Update*

President Chad Campbell provided an update on Bridgerland Technical College. This was an information item; no action was taken.

*my529 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and Update*

my529 Executive Director Mark Cain and my529/Utah Educational Savings Plan Board Chair Arthur Newell presented an update on my529, including highlighting my529's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. Board members inquired about the key factors contributing to my529's national leadership, as well as strategies for marketing to employers and facilitating employer referrals. Mark and Arthur addressed these questions. This was an information item; no action was taken.

*Federal Update*

Katie Mazzie provided an update on the congressional appropriations process and reviewed details of President Trump's Executive Order 14400, "Urgent National Action to Save College Sports". This was an information item; no action was taken.

*Strategic Plan Update: Financial Value*

Katie Mazzie introduced the Strategic Plan update on the Financial Value priority. Nate Talley provided highlights on tuition and fees, strategic reinvestment, and the Higher Education Student Success Endowment. Cassidy Dragunat followed with a review of endowment spending, efforts to support FAFSA completion across the state, and updates on state aid and scholarships.

Board members asked questions regarding data on students who begin but do not complete the FAFSA, the interventions contributing to higher completion rates, and how the state is assessing potential reductions in fraud following recent national changes. The Board expressed a desire to increase FAFSA completion rates to 50 percent and asked what more aggressive actions could be taken to achieve this

goal. Katie Mazzie responded that the strategic plan could be adjusted to further prioritize this effort and offered to facilitate that process.

Commissioner Landward addressed system redesign and integration, highlighting the impacts on affordability, value, and system-wide efficiencies. Carrie Mayne concluded by sharing resources available to Board members through the Institutional Funding Overview Dashboard.

This was an information item; no action was taken.

#### *Space Utilization Task Force Update*

Kevin Enright presented the Space Utilization Annual Report, followed by Carrie Mayne, who reviewed the findings of the Space Utilization Task Force and shared its recommendations. Board members raised several questions, including whether the University of Utah's space utilization concerns had been addressed, whether adjustments to the University of Utah's course scheduling were influenced by the task force's work, and whether any gaps remained due to challenges not fully considered in the study. They also inquired about the role of utilization rates in capital funding decisions and the extent of institutional centralized scheduling. At Chair Covington's request, Nate Talley provided an overview of how the data will inform the Board's evaluation of capital funding requests anticipated this fall.

**Board member Chavez Jr. moved to direct the Commissioner's office and institutional staff to take action on the task force's recommendations and to proceed with implementing and refining the technical college space utilization reporting process. Board member Tetro seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.**

#### *University of Utah City Centre Property Sale & Lease*

Nate Talley introduced the University of Utah's request, which was then presented by Jeff Labrum. Board member Ipson asked questions about the master lease, which Danny Wall addressed.

**Board member Ipson moved to approve the University of Utah's City Centre property sale, as the \$38 million asking price exceeds the 'as is' appraised value of \$33.8 million. He further moved to approve the corresponding lease arrangement in support of the institution's downtown campus strategic initiative. Board member Largent seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.**

#### *University of Utah – Series 2026A Revenue Bonds*

Nate Talley introduced the University of Utah's request, which was then presented by Rob Muir.

**Board member Largent moved to approve the proposed resolution for the University of Utah's General Revenue and Refunding Bonds Series 2026A. Board member Hafen seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.**

#### *Consent Calendar*

Board Member Ipson asked a question regarding the Medical Coding and Billing program listed under Technical Education Programs—New Programs, Modifications, and Discontinuances, included in the reports for Board review. He inquired about how the program is adapting to changes driven by AI and whether the certificate will remain sustainable. President Brush addressed his question.

**Board member Skonnard moved to approve the Consent Calendar. Board member Hart seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.**

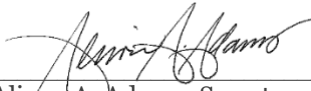
**Board member Ipson moved to go into closed session for the purpose of discussing the character, professional competence, or physical or mental health of an individual; impending litigation; or the sale of real property. Board member Tetro seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted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

**CLOSED SESSION**

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

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

The meeting adjourned at 12:08 p.m.

  
Alison A. Adams, Secretary

Date Approved: June 11, 2026