Utah Board of Higher Education
Utah System of Higher Education
Thursday, June 11, 2026

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MINUTES

Board Members Present
Amanda Covington, Chair
Jon Cox, Vice Chair
Javier Chavez Jr.
Jeremy Hafen
Danny Ipson
Garrett Largent
Steve Neeleman
Cydni Tetro

Board Members Absent
Jodi Hart
Aaron Skonnard

Office of the Commissioner
Geoffrey Landward, Commissioner
Alison Adams, General Counsel and Board Secretary
TJ Bliss, Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs
Trevor Cross, Systems Administrator
Trisha Dugovic, Director of Communication
Kevin Enright, Director of Finance and Facilities
Brynn Fronk, Executive Assistant to the Utah Board of Higher Education
Carrie Mayne, Chief Economist
Katie Mazzie, Associate Commissioner of Strategic Initiatives, Community and Government Relations
Jefferson Moss, The Point's Innovation District Project Director
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
Clay Christensen, Mountainland Technical College
Leslie Durham, Weber State University (interim)
Stacee McIff, Snow College
Brad Mortensen, Utah State University
Greg Peterson, Salt Lake Community College
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

Other Guests
Jennifer Ciaccio, Faculty Senate Past President, Utah Tech University
Maddie Clements, Community Outreach Representative, Congressman Owens' Office
Troy D'Ambrosio, Chief of Staff and Vice President for Innovation, University of Utah
Mark Halverson, Vice President of Administrative Services, Weber State University
Harriet Hopf, Academic Senate Past President, University of Utah
Jeff Lund, Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, Davis Technical College

Gary McArthur, Deputy Enterprise Chief Financial Officer, University of Utah
Shauna Mendini, Interim Provost, Southern Utah University
Mirella Meyer-Ficca, Faculty Senate President Elect, Utah State University
Brent Milne, Academic Senate President, University of Utah
Lisa Moon, Executive Vice President and Chief Instructional Officer, Bridgerland Technical College
Paul Morris, Vice President of Administrative Affairs, Utah Tech University
Val Peterson, Vice President of Administration and Strategic Relations, Utah Valley University
Evelyn Porter, Academic Senate President, Utah Valley University
Richard Preiss, Academic Senate Past President, University of Utah
Angela Smith, Managing Director, Nucleus
Justen Smith, Interim Vice President of Extension, Utah State University
Tim Tingey, Vice President for Finance and Administrative Services, Snow College
Nate Trauntvein, Faculty Senate, Utah State University
Tony Wagner, Chief Financial Officer, University of Utah
Kenny Wright
Lisa Wright

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

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Resolution of Appreciation for Student Board Member Garrett Largent

Chair Covington recognized Board Member Largent and highlighted his service on the Board. Board members expressed their appreciation for his contributions, and Board Member Largent shared his gratitude in return.

Vice Chair Cox moved to approve the Resolution of Appreciation for student Board member Garrett Largent. Board member Hafen seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

USU Extension Update

President Brad Mortensen and Interim Vice President for Extension Justen Smith presented an update on USU Extension and addressed questions from the Board members. Chair Covington encouraged the presidents to connect with President Mortensen or Justen if they would like to partner. This was an information item only; no action was taken.

Utah Council of Faculty Senate Leaders

Commissioner Landward introduced the presentation from the Faculty Senate Leaders, emphasizing the importance of the Board hearing directly from faculty. Richard Preiss addressed the Board on behalf of the Utah Council of Faculty Senate Leaders. The Board expressed appreciation for the presentation and engaged in discussion, asking questions about managing tensions, and the role and risks of AI. At the request of Board members, the Utah Council of Faculty Senate Leaders will present more regularly at future Board meetings. This was an information item only; no action was taken.

Nucleus Update

Jefferson Moss, Angela Smith, and Val Peterson provided an overview and update on Nucleus and responded to questions from the Board. Chair Covington requested that regular Nucleus updates be brought before the Board to identify opportunities for support. This was an information item only; no action was taken.

Open and Public Meeting Act Training

Hilary Renshaw provided an overview of the Open and Public Meetings Act and conducted the required annual training. This was an information item only; no action was taken.

Federal and State Updates

Katie Mazzie provided federal and state legislative updates to the Board, including reports on the Accreditation, Innovation, and Modernization (AIM) Committee and the May Education Interim Committee. Commissioner Landward offered additional insights on the May Education Interim Committee. Both Katie Mazzie and the Commissioner responded to questions from the Board. This was an information item; no action was taken.

Utah Board of Higher Education – Transfer of Real Property to Davis Technical College

Kevin Enright presented an overview of Davis Technical College's land transfer and responded to questions from Board members.

Board member Neeleman moved to approve the transfer of ownership of the real property located at 318 E 300 N, Morgan, UT 84050, more particularly described as Parcel No. 00-0005-3973 | Serial No. 05-462-002-NA, from the Utah Board of Higher Education to Davis Technical College. Board member Neeleman further moved to authorize the Office of the Commissioner to execute all documents and forms necessary to effectuate the transfer under Utah law as approved by the USHE General Counsel, and to take such additional administrative actions as may be required to complete the conveyance. Board member Largent seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

Utah State University – Disposal of Real Property

Nate Talley introduced the request for disposal of real property, which was then presented by President Mortensen, who responded to questions from the Board. President Mortensen noted that the buyer is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Board member Largent moved to approve the sale of this property. Board member Tetro seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

USU Eastern Student Housing P-3 Acquisition

President Mortensen presented the project to the Board members and addressed their questions.

Chair Covington moved to approve Utah State University's request to enter a P3 purchase agreement for the construction of student housing to serve students at its USU Eastern campus. Board member Ipson seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

Weber State University – Disposal of Real Property

Mark Halverson presented the property disposal to the Board members and addressed questions from the Board.

Chair Covington moved to approve Weber State University's request to dispose of the Powder Mountain property. Board member Neeleman seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

Fiscal Year 2027 Technical College Strategic Reinvestment Guidance

Nate Talley presented the guidance to Board members. Davis Tech Finance Director Jeff Lund shared an example from Davis Technical College that demonstrates how funds are reallocated to support programs and institutional priorities outside the formal strategic reinvestment process. They then addressed the Board's questions.

Board member Neeleman moved to adopt the technical college strategic reinvestment guidance as proposed. Board member Tetro seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

USHE Degree-Granting Institution Strategic Reinvestment Initiative Year Two

Nate Talley introduced the agenda item to the Board members. This was an information item only; no action was taken.

Salt Lake Community College

President Greg Peterson presented Salt Lake Community College's plan and addressed questions from the Board members.

Board member Neeleman approved Salt Lake Community College's Year Two Strategic Reinvestment Plan. Board member Tetro seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

Southern Utah University

President Benson and Shauna Mendini presented Southern Utah University's plan.

Board member Largent moved to approve Southern Utah University's Year Two Strategic Reinvestment Plan. Board member Ipson seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

Snow College

President McIff and Tim Tingey presented Snow College's plan and addressed questions from the Board members.

Board member Chavez Jr. moved to approve Snow College's Year Two Strategic Reinvestment Plan. Board member Neeleman seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

Utah Tech University

President Smeed and Paul Morris presented Utah Tech University's proposal and answered questions from the Board members.

Vice Chair Cox moved to approve Utah Tech University's Year Two Strategic Reinvestment Plan. Board member Tetro seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

Utah Valley University

Interim President Wayne Vaught and Scott Wood presented Utah Valley University's plan and answered questions from the board.

Board member Tetro moved to approve Utah Valley University's Year Two Strategic Reinvestment Plan. Board member Neeleman seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

Weber State University

Interim President Leslie Durham and Mark Halverson presented Weber State University's plan and addressed questions from the Board members.

Vice Chair Cox moved to approve Weber State University's Year Two Strategic Reinvestment Plan. Board member Largent seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

University of Utah

Tony Wagner presented the University of Utah's plan and responded to questions from Board members, including several related to AI. Chair Covington requested that AI be included as a topic on a future Board meeting agenda as the AI Task Force continues its work.

Chair Covington moved to approve the University of Utah's Year Two Strategic Reinvestment Plan. Vice Chair Cox seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

Utah State University

President Brad Mortensen presented Utah State University's plan and addressed questions from Board members.

Board member Ipson moved to approve Utah State University's Year Two Strategic Reinvestment Plan. Board member Largent seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

Consent Calendar

Chair Covington questioned whether sufficient funding is being allocated to student mental health, which Nate Talley addressed.

Vice Chair Cox proposed an amendment to Board Policy R402.

Vice Chair Cox moved to amend Board Policy R402, changing it in subsection 5.1.3.2 from approval and review every five years to every three years. Board member Ipson seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

Vice Chair Cox moved to approve the consent calendar as amended. Chair Covington 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 Neeleman seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

CLOSED SESSION

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

Board member Largent moved to adjourn. Board member Ipson seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

Alison A. Adams, Secretary

Date Approved: July 9, 2026