



**Utah Board of Higher Education
Virtual Meeting
Wednesday, September 9, 2026**

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MINUTES**

Board Members Present

Amanda Covington, Chair
(excused from 10:00-11:30 a.m.)
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 Presidential Leadership and Special Projects
TJ Bliss, Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs
Brynn Fronk, Executive Assistant to the Utah Board of Higher Education
Vic Hockett, Associate Commissioner of Talent Ready Utah
Carrie Mayne, Chief Economist
Katie Mазzie, Associate Commissioner of Government and Trustee Relations
Natalie Reidhead, Administrative Assistant Supervisor
Hilary Renshaw, Associate General Counsel
Angie Stallings, Chief Educational Pathways Officer
Nate Talley, Deputy Commissioner and CFO
Rachel Terry, Chief of Staff

Institutional Presidents Present

Jon Anderson, Utah Valley University
Mindy Benson, Southern Utah University
Darin Brush, Davis Technical College
Clay Christensen, Mountainland Technical College
Chris Mallett, Weber State University
Stacey McIlff, Snow College
Lisa Moon, Bridgerland Technical College
(interim)
Brad Mortensen, Utah State University

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)
Aaron Weight, Uintah Basin Technical College
Brennan Wood, Southwest Technical College

Other Guests

Andrea Brandley, Senior Education Analyst, Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute, University of Utah
Phil Dean, Chief Economist and Research Director, Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute, University of Utah
Rob Muir, Associate Vice President for Debt and Asset Management, University of Utah

Kylee Spjut, Senior Public Relations Manager, Penna Powers

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

Committee of the Whole

Chair Covington welcomed new presidents Chris Mallett from Weber State University and Jon Anderson from Utah Valley University. She also welcomed new USHE Chief of Staff Rachel Terry and new student Board member Tyler Shumway.

Oath of Office

Brynn Fronk administered the Oath of Office to new student Board member Tyler Shumway.

This was an information item; no action was taken.

Resolution of Appreciation for President Clay Christensen

Board Member Hafen recognized President Christensen for his career and service at Mountainland Technical College. President Christensen thanked the Board for the recognition and shared his appreciation.

Board member Ipson moved to approve the Resolution of Appreciation for President Clay Christensen. Board member Hart seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

Weber State University Update

President Mallett provided an update on Weber State University, highlighting strong enrollment, leadership, partnerships, fundraising, and a focus on expanding industry partnership and experiential learning opportunities.

The Board discussed opportunities to expand internships and apprenticeships through improved employer engagement, incentives, and infrastructure. Chair Covington directed the formation of a task force to explore potential solutions. Board members Aaron Skonnard and Cydni Tetro volunteered to serve, and Commissioner Landward agreed to convene the group and report back to the Board.

This was an information item; no action was taken.

Federal and State Updates

Katie Mazzie provided state and federal legislative updates, including a recap of the August Interim Meeting, federal student loan borrowing changes, the Protect College Sports Act, and the U.S. Department of Education's National Call to Action.

This was an information item only; no action was taken.

USHE Technical College Strategic Reinvestment Initiative Proposals

Nate Talley presented the system-level summary, then each institution's itemized proposal.

Bridgerland Technical College

Board member Chavez Jr. moved to approve Bridgerland Technical College's Strategic Reinvestment Plan, conditional on more detailed reporting in future years' approval requests. Board member Neeleman seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

Davis Technical College

Board member Ipson moved to approve Davis Technical College's Strategic Reinvestment Plan, conditional on more detailed reporting in future years' approval requests. Board member Shumway seconded the motion, and Vice Chair Cox opposed the motion. All other Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

Dixie Technical College

Board member Neeleman moved to approve Dixie Technical College's Strategic Reinvestment Plan. Board member Hafen seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

Mountainland Technical College

Board member Hart moved to approve Mountainland Technical College's Strategic Reinvestment Plan, conditional on more detailed reporting in future years' approval requests. Board member Shumway seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

Ogden-Weber Technical College

Board member Chavez Jr. moved to approve Ogden-Weber Technical College's Strategic Reinvestment Plan, conditional on more detailed reporting in future years' approval requests. Board member Neeleman seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

Southwest Technical College

Board member Ipson moved to approve Southwest Technical College's Strategic Reinvestment Plan, conditional on more detailed reporting in future years' approval requests. Board member Skonnard seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

Tooele Technical College

Board member Skonnard moved to approve Tooele Technical College's Strategic Reinvestment Plan, conditional on more detailed reporting in future years' approval requests. Board member Neeleman seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

Uintah Basin Technical College

Board members requested additional information regarding proposed finance and accounting streamlining.

Board member Ipson moved to approve Uintah Basin Technical College's Strategic Reinvestment Plan, conditional on more detailed reporting in future years' approval requests. Board member Ipson further moved that the institution report to the Commissioner's office further details, including impacts and outcomes, associated with proposed disinvestment in accounting and finance. Board member Neeleman seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

Demographic Change and Institutional Budget Stress Testing Framework

Phil Dean and Andrea Brandley of the Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute presented updated demographic projections and a higher education budget stress-testing framework. The presentation highlighted upcoming enrollment challenges and opportunities to strengthen student retention, increase adult learner participation, and enhance systemwide coordination. The Board discussed reducing barriers for adult learners and improving retention and completion rates. The Board directed the Commissioner's office to provide periodic updates on progress in these areas and to review and update the Board's strategic plan to align with identified priorities and ongoing system redesign efforts.

This was an information item only; no action was taken.

Conflicts of Interest Training

Due to time constraints, this item was pushed to the October 2026 meeting.

Consent Calendar

In regard to Utah State University's Logan Campus Student Housing Project Scope Change Request, Board Member Ipson inquired whether due diligence had been conducted on the site before the original approval. Nate Talley noted that recent process improvements are intended to provide greater certainty regarding project scope and location before projects come before the Board.

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

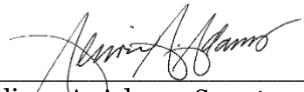
Board member Ipson moved to go into closed session for the purpose of discussing the character, professional competence, or physical or mental health of an individual; impending litigation; or the sale of real property. Board member Hart seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted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

CLOSED SESSION

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

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

The meeting adjourned at 12:17 p.m.


Alison A. Adams, Secretary

Date Approved: October 2, 2026