



**DRAFT MINUTES SUBJECT TO BOARD APPROVAL AT THE JULY 12 BOARD MEETING**

**Utah Board of Higher Education  
Utah System of Higher Education  
Thursday, June 6, 2024**

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
MINUTES**

**Board Members Present**

Amanda Covington, Chair  
Steve Neeleman, Vice Chair  
Javier Chávez Jr.  
Jon Cox  
Danny Ipson  
Tina Marriott (arrived at 12:30 p.m.)  
Rachel Prickett Passey  
Aaron Skonnard

**Board Members Absent**

Sharon Eubank  
Cydni Tetro

**Office of the Commissioner**

Geoffrey Landward, Commissioner  
Alison Adams, General Counsel and Board Secretary  
Taylor Adams, Associate Commissioner of Student Affairs  
Trisha Dugovic, Director of Communication  
Malin Francis, Director of Facilities and Planning  
Brynn Fronk, Executive Assistant to the Utah Board of Higher Education  
Russ Galt, Senior Assistant Commissioner for Tech Education Finance  
Jared Haines, Senior Advisor to the Commissioner  
Julie Hartley, Associate Commissioner of Academic Education  
Ben Langley, Manager of Accounting and Finance  
Vic Hockett, Associate Commissioner of Talent Ready Utah  
Carrie Mayne, Chief Economist  
Katie Mazzie, Director of Student-Centered Initiatives  
Jefferson Moss, Associate Commissioner for Innovation, Commercialization and Economic Development  
Will Pierce, Assistant Commissioner of Technical Education  
Dave Pulsipher, Senior Assistant Commissioner  
Hilary Renshaw, Associate General Counsel  
Nate Talley, Deputy Commissioner and CFO  
Melissa Van Hien, Office Manager / Executive Assistant to the Commissioner

**Institutional Presidents Present**

Mindy Benson, Southern Utah University  
Darin Brush, Davis Technical College  
Elizabeth Cantwell, Utah State University  
Clay Christensen, Mountainland Technical College  
Paul Hacking, Tooele Technical College  
Stacey McIff, Snow College

Brad Mortensen, Weber State University  
Jordan Rushton, Dixie Technical College  
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, Chief Financial Officer, University of Utah

Dave Cowley, VP for Finance and Administrative Services, Utah State University

Phil Dean, Chief Economist and Publish Finance Senior Fellow, Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute

Richard Ellis, Executive Director my529

Joseph Fitzgerald, Legislative Financial Analyst

Natalie Gochnour, Director, Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute

Paul Morris, VP of Administrative Affairs, Utah Tech University

John O'Neil, VP for Operational Strategy & Special Advisor to the President, Utah State University

Brett Perozzi, VP for Student Affairs, Salt Lake Community College

Laura Snow, Senior Advisor to the President, University of Utah

Wayne Vaught, Provost/Sr. VP, Utah Valley University

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

### Committee of the Whole

#### *Institutional Highlights*

Dixie Tech President Jordan Rushton and Utah Tech Interim President Courtney White provided highlights from their institutions. Board member Ipson inquired about the impact of the tech high school in St. George. President Rushton shared it has been positive since it is one more pipeline into Dixie Tech and Utah Tech. This was an information item only; no action was taken.

#### *Resolution of Appreciation for President Deneece Huftalin*

Chair Covington highlighted President Huftalin's Resolution of Appreciation and recognized her remarkable career. **Vice Chair Neeleman moved to adopt the Resolution of Appreciation for Dr. Deneece G. Huftalin. Board member Ipson seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.**

#### *Resolution of Appreciation for Board Member Rachel Prickett Passey*

Chair Covington expressed appreciation for Board member Prickett Passey and highlighted her time on the Board. **Board member Skonnard moved to approve the Resolution of Appreciation for Rachel Prickett Passey. Board member Cox seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.**

#### *Enrollment Task Force Update*

Commissioner Landward provided an update on the Enrollment Task Force. The Task Force requested to conduct a market study, return to the Board with the results, and make some recommendations for the Board to consider. This was an information item; no action was taken.

#### *Community College Task Force Update*

Taylor Adams updated the Board on the Community College Task Force. Commissioner Landward reminded the Board of the purpose of the Task Force. The Board members and presidents discussed performance metrics, transfer rates, tuition rates, access, and affordability. **Board member Cox moved to accept the recommendations within the task force memo with also the Commissioner's office coming back with the recommendation on how to pilot a systemwide look at the associates degree tuition rates at one or more institution in the**

**system. Board member Prickett Passey seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.**

#### *Strategic Plan Task Force Update*

Commissioner Landward introduced the agenda item. He explained that the Strategic Plan Task Force was created at the previous Board meeting to look at the current strategic plan and make it their own as the new Utah Board of Higher Education. The Task Force has narrowed the priorities to access, completion, value, and economic development. Board member Skonnard shared that they want the vision to be more aspirational. The Board acknowledged that the Task Force was moving in the right direction. **Board member Ipson moved to authorize the Strategic Plan Taskforce to incorporate today's feedback into a draft strategic plan to be reviewed at the next full Board meeting. Vice Chair Neeleman seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.**

#### *Cyclical Program Reviews within the Utah System of Higher Education*

Julie Hartley and Carrie Mayne explained the cyclical program reviews and the program approval process within the Utah System of Higher Education. The Board members discussed the timeframe of the program reviews, metric points, and the Board's role in the program review process. In addition to the seven-year review, the Board supported implementing a red/yellow/green stoplight analysis for programs at a statewide level.

**Chair Covington moved to approve the strategy for conducting Cyclical Program Reviews as presented. Vice Chair Neeleman seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.**

**Board member Cox moved to direct the Office of the Commissioner to develop a broader quantitative program assessment accountability tool that allows for access to programs at a state-wide level. Board member Skonnard seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.**

#### *Instructional Program Approval Policies*

Julie Hartley provided a quick overview of the policy changes, and Will Pierce shared the purpose of the updates. The Board members and presidents discussed service regions, fully online degrees, and missions and roles. President Weight addressed his concerns with Board policy R402 and asked the Board to consider an exception to the policy for three of his programs.

**Board member Ipson moved to approve the following Board policies, with the direction to the Office of the Commissioner to involve all presidents in determinations about what constitutes labor market demand under the regional demand definition in those policies:**

- **R312, Institutional Roles and Missions and Approval of Out-of-Role Instructional Programs;**
- **R315, Designation of Service Regions and Approval of Out-of-Region Instructional Programs, Branch Campuses, Instructional Service Centers, and Extension Centers;**
- **R401, Approval and Modification of Instructional Programs and Administrative Units within Institutional Role, Mission, and Designated Service Regions;**
- **New R402, Certificate and Degree Structures**
- **New R403, Short-Term Training**

**Chair Covington seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.**

**Chair Covington moved to approve an exception to the three credit minimum for technical certificates under R402 for the Well Control Workover Operator (1 credit), Well Control Supervisor (1 credit), and Oil and Gas Operator Representative Workover (1 credit) programs at Uintah Basin Tech. Board member Ipson seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.**

*Annual Report of Credit for Prior Learning at USHE Degree-Granting Institutions*

Julie Hartley reviewed the Annual Report of Credit for Prior Learning with the Board members. Commissioner Landward noted that based on the feedback received, there is an opportunity to consider how this can be more available and celebrated on our campuses. There was a discussion on CLEP testing, the cost of assessments, assessment coverage, and Concurrent Enrollment. This was an information item only; no action was taken.

*my529 Update*

Richard Ellis reviewed my529's strategic plan and provided an update. This was an information item only; no action was taken.

*FY 2026 Capital Project Request Process & Timeline*

Nate Talley reviewed the FY 2026 Capital Project Request Process and Timeline, and Commissioner Landward provided his perspective. Board member Marriott noted she would prefer to have the opportunity to review the projects since there is new information and data. Presidents Cantwell and Rushton provided feedback as the next institutions in line. Board member Ipson asked for context on the three-year process, which Nate provided. **Chair Covington moved to adopt the proposed timeline for Fiscal Year 2026 capital facility requests and further resolve to reprioritize non-dedicated projects for both degree-granting institutions and technical colleges. Board member Skonnard seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.**

Nate Talley reviewed the proposed FY 2026 Technical College Capital Project Fund allocation formula with the Board members. The technical college presidents weighed in on the proposed formula. **Vice Chair Neeleman moved to adopt the proposed FY 2026 Technical College Capital Project Fund allocation formula and to direct the Commissioner's office to develop a corresponding policy for Board approval. Board member Pricket Passey seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.**

*USHE FY 2025 Tuition & General Fee Adjustments and Institutional Efficiencies*

Nate Talley discussed USHE FY 2025 Tuition and General Fee Adjustments and Institutional Efficiencies. This was an information item only; no action was taken.

*Gardner Institute's Value of Higher Education*

Natalie Gochmour and Phil Dean presented on the Gardner Institute's Value of Higher Education, the democratic cliff, and research agenda. They shared a few educational success stories. Board member Skonnard asked if they would study why some of our high school students choose not to attend college. Natalie responded that they are conducting a six-year study with USHE, and a portion of the budget is left for special studies. This could be one that could be elevated. Board member Cox expressed appreciation for the presentation. There was a discussion on the return on investment of higher education.

**Vice Chair Neeleman moved to authorize the Office of the Commissioner to enter a contract with the Gardner Institute for up to \$1.7 million over the next six years to**

**conduct research and provide reports on the value of higher education including, but not limited to, the economic contributions of USHE institutions, budget stress testing, affordability, and ROI. Board member Cox seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.**

*Higher Education Student Success Endowment Spending Policy*

Nate Talley provided background on the Higher Education Student Success Endowment and reviewed the spending policy with the Board members. President Mortensen pointed out that endowment funds could be critical this year as we deal with the FAFSA changes. Board member Chavez Jr. identified that FAFSA is a national issue impacting USHE institutions. He asked President Mortensen what he recommended, to which President Mortensen responded with support for staff and messaging to students going through this process. Board member Cox asked if there is some way to make this similar to performance or incentive-based funding. Nate responded that we could craft something to contemplate that kind of match. Commissioner Landward clarified that, based on the discussion, they will bridge the funding gap from FAFSA completion this year. **Chair Covington moved to approve the formula presented today with the flexibility to evaluate again next year the deployment of those dollars. Board member Cox seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.**

*Consent Calendar*

**Vice Chair Neeleman moved to approve the Consent Calendar. Board member Marriott seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.**

**Board member Cox moved to go into closed session for the purposes of discussing the character, professional competence, or physical or mental health of an individual; Chair Covington seconded the motion, and the Board members in attendance voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.**

*Closed Session*

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

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

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

Date Approved:

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Alison A. Adams, Secretary