

## Utah Inland Port Authority Board 2023

### APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

Utah Inland Port Authority Board Meeting Minutes  
Monday November 6, 2023  
2:00 pm  
Utah State Capitol, Room 445  
350 State Street, Salt Lake City, Utah 84103

---

Board Members Present: Miles Hansen, Ryan Starks, Mike Schultz, Abby Osborne, Jerry Stevenson  
Non-Voting Board Members Present: Bill Wyatt, Victoria Petro  
Board Members Absent: none

UIPA Staff: Ben Hart, Benn Buys, Larry Shepherd, Lynne Mayer, Stephen Smith, Diana Gardner, Carol Watson, Amy Brown Coffin, Max Ivory, Mona Smith, Scott Wolford, Danny Stewart, Kaitlin Felsted

Others in Attendance: Brook McCarrick, Brandon Tholen, Tammy Coffey, Elita Thurber, Karol Long, Bernadette Taylor, Margaret Droling, Jim Droling, Shantal Decker, Joan Gregory, Sarah Buck, David Bennett, Heather Dove, Brain Moench, Lorin Hansen, Mason Aeschbacher, Andy Hulka, Ann O’Connell, Patricia Becnel, Gary Hanneran, Monica Hilding, Patti Hobfoll, Michael Drury, Deeda Seed, Lauren Griffeth, Shantae Decker, James King, Katie Pappas, Steve Van Maren, Leia Larsen, Holly Lopez, Camden Woll, Melissa Early, Jaime Hernandez, Abdikadir Hussein, Alexis Hanks, Joy Prince, Sean Higgins, Jeilani Athman, Kira Kaur, Fich Monsen, Brice Wallace, Elizabeth Weight,

#### 1. **Welcome**

UIPA Board Chair, Miles Hansen, welcomed the board members, staff and public to this Utah Inland Port Authority Board Meeting.

#### 2. **Closed Session**

At 2:05 pm the board voted to move into a closed session meeting held in the Utah State Capitol at 350 State Street, Salt Lake City, UT, 84103, for the purpose of a “strategy session to discuss the purchase, exchange, or lease of real property,” as allowed and described in Section 52-4-205 of Utah Code and sections 52-4-204 of the Open and Public meetings act.

Board member Starks made a motion to move into closed session. Board member Stevenson seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed with a unanimous vote of board members present. Board members Schultz and Osborne joined the meeting after the closed session began.

Roll Call Vote:

Ryan Starks – yes

Jerry Stevenson – yes

Miles Hansen – yes

The closed session began at 2:05 pm and concluded at 2:39 pm.

**3. Approval of Minutes, October 4, 2023 and October 24, 2023 Board Meetings**

Board member Osborne moved to approve the minutes from the October 4, 2023 and October 24, 2023 board meetings. Board member Stevenson seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

**4. Executive Director Report**

UIPA Executive Director Ben Hart provided an executive director's report, he talked about the Inland Port's efforts to counter the increasing number of lower wage warehouse/distribution facilities in the Northwest Quadrant and the ability to help with more environmentally friendly development in the area. He mentioned recent news coverage of the positive impact of the port's project area creation in rural areas of the state. As the port authority is completing negotiations on the purchase and ultimate remediation of a former landfill, he noted that the things the port is doing are important and transformational.

He announced the intent to proceed with the presentation of the Tooele County and Grantsville City project areas for approval at the board's meeting on December 5, 2023 and that the Weber County project has been placed on hold.

He also discussed the grants to be awarded under the Westside community impact provisions in the interlocal agreement with Salt Lake City and announced the recommended recipients and funding amounts. The UIPA Board will make the final determination on the grant awards.

**6. Budget Update**

UIPA Deputy Director, CFO, and Treasurer Benn Buys provided a budget update. He summarized expenses for the first three months of FY 2023 and discussed the role of the UIPA Finance & Audit Committee.

**5. Policy Presentations**

UIPA Chief Compliance Officer Amy Brown Coffin discussed the annual review and edits to three UIPA policies which will be considered for approval in a future meeting:

**BP-06 - Board Policy Review**

Policy ensuring timely review of board policies.

**BP-08 - Whistleblower Policy**

Policy to provide protection to individuals who report illegal, unethical, and improper activities.

**BP-09 - Internal Control Program Policy**

Policy governing internal controls over agency operations, financial reporting, and compliance.

UIPA Environmental & Sustainability Manager Mona Smith presented the following policy for board consideration:

**BP-17 - Wetlands Policy**

Policy to maintain regulatory compliance for wetlands present in UIPA project areas.

**6. Public Comment**

Board Chair Hansen opened up the public comment period and invited those in the room to submit comment cards for an opportunity to speak. He reminded all that the port welcomes written public comment anytime via the UIPA website at <https://inlandportauthority.utah.gov/contact/>.

Comments made included uncertainty over the port's purpose and mission, concern over negative impact on the environment and development that encroaches on wetlands, saving the Great Salt Lake, and opponents of development feeling they are unable to participate in the process of port policymaking.

**7. Review and Award of Funding, Westside Community Enrichment Initiative**

The following projects were selected by the board to receive funding under this initiative.

**Neighborhood House - \$100,000**

**Suazo Business Center - \$50,000**  
**Tree Utah - \$50,000**  
**Neighborworks - \$100,000**  
**Salt Lake City Police Foundation - \$10,000**

Board member Osborne moved that the UIPA board authorizes funds to be appropriated as presented for grants, from the Community Impact portion of the Westside Community Enrichment grants between the Inland Port Authority and Salt Lake City. Board member Stark seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**8. Approval of BP-17 Wetlands Policy**

Board member Starks moved to approve BP-17 Wetlands Policy, as presented. Board member Stevenson seconded the motion.

Vote:

Ryan Starks – yes  
Jerry Stevenson – yes  
Mike Schultz – yes  
Abby Osborn – yes  
Miles Hansen – yes

**9. Adjourn**

Board Chair Hansen adjourned the meeting.



---

Board Vice Chair, Abby Osborne

**Written Public Comments submitted during and after the meeting:**

Patricia Hobfoll - 11/6/2023

I am writing to once again state my opposition to the inland port, and my disappointment in the lack of concern for the impacts it will have on our community - human and non-human - in the Salt Lake Valley. It is absolutely critical right now to have all hands on deck for the conservation of our Great Salt Lake, its wetlands, and the ecosystems they house. Building roads and parking lots over wetlands is not the answer. Bringing more trains, planes, and ground freight is not the answer. Our water and air is already suffering, and the port(s) only exacerbate the problems. It is time to immediately abandon all port projects in Utah.

Katie Pappas - 11/6/2023

I hope you will all take the time to read the submitted wetlands report. It is a thorough assessment of potential (probable) harms resulting from development in or near wetlands. I have also read your wetlands policy. While it identifies the process for developing in these areas, only the last two pages address UIPA's plans. Unfortunately, incentives and motivators are all optional. The best way to protect wetlands is to not build on or near them. Please stop this.

James King - 11/6/2023

1. The existence of the UIPA violates the Utah constitution, 5:2, no matter what the corrupt Utah Supreme Court says.
2. There are earthquake faults below the SITLA property or landfill.

Shantae Decker - 11/6/2023

I am a mother of 3 amazing kids.

Their lives, their future, and their safety depend on the protection of the Great Salt Lake.

The harm you are planning on inflicting on the Great Salt Lake, its wetlands and ecosystem is unacceptable.

Lorin Hansen - 11/6/2023

I want to urge the board to consider the sanctity of all life, including insects and wildlife. Everything we destroy will be part of our own destruction. Please listen to the public! Please put constituents over profit!

Thank you.

Monica Hilding - 11/6/2023

The Great Salt Lake is in a crisis situation. Wetlands are an essential part of the lake much as kidneys in the human body. Wetlands filter much of the water that eventually reaches the lake. Besides providing homes and stop over refuge for millions of migratory birds, they protect surrounding communities by providing overflow basins for spring runoff and torrential rain storms. UIPA's promises of using the best materials and methods for ensuring the safety of storm water runoff in the numerous parking structures already constructed around built warehouses have been proven false. Worthwhile suggestions by the public and scientists have been ignored.

Patricia Becnel - 11/6/2023

I attended my first Inland Port meeting yesterday at the capital. Though I have not been a proponent of the port from the beginning, I have not been actively involved in stopping it. And then my daughter had our first grandchild and everything changed. Now, more than ever I want to protect this beautiful place for her as I am sure all of you wish to do for your own children. However, there are some discrepancies in how we might achieve a vital economy while preserving a high quality of life. Ben Hart, you said that it seems no matter what you do, people will object. In most cases I agree. It is impossible to make everyone happy and so I have found the best way to move forward on anything is with collaboration, research, planning, and a holistic view. I think that is the biggest objection to the port. Developers saw vacant land and for them, vacant land meant money. Just as we had devalued the Great Salt Lake because it is a terminal lake, and the philosophy seemed to be that the water should not sit idle- it should do something tangible to be profitable. We are learning that was not a wise decision and are now pumping millions of dollars into saving the lake. I would hope we had learned something that will be applied to the concept of the port. It seems we haven't. Your actions are stating that empty land is not

valuable unless it is paved over and turned into an industrial complex. And there is the crux of the argument.

There was no long-term vision for the port. We were promised environmental standards would be followed just as now we are promised damage to wetlands will be mitigated. Yet, the construction continues, the damage to wetlands increases, truck traffic clogs our roads and our air – already out of attainment- gets worse. Do you wonder why we object? Your promises do not match your actions.

I am from San Bernardino, California. When I grew up there, it was a beautiful place to live- nestled beneath the mountains and not far from the beach. We could see across the valley on a clear day and most days were clear. However, slowly smog crept in. The Inland Port was established and the air became thick and dirty. The last few times I have been to the area, the air is so brown and polluted, we can't wait to leave. Businesses are boarded up, crime is high, and truck traffic has devastated surrounding communities. Health problems have increased and a once beautiful valley is gone. I know none of you want the same to happen here. I know you will not want to explain to your kids how you let this beautiful valley become uninhabitable.

So we are asking you to rethink the port. Stop the construction and truly bring all cohorts to the table to create a vision. Mr. Hart, yesterday again you laid blame on the Stop the Polluting Port coalition for not collaborating to help create a viable plan. Yet, for most meetings, you have excluded any public commentary. And you have also assumed that if we don't agree with you, then we are disruptive. In truth, we have done our research. We have cited other places with ports and the low paying jobs they have brought, the increased traffic, congestion and poor air quality. We have supplied economic studies showing these ports benefit a few developers, but for the most part, not the major populations. And now we have given you a well-researched, documented guideline outlining the need to preserve wetlands. I appreciate Mona's report but most of hers, from my understanding, focused on mitigating damage to wetlands. Mitigation is not the same as preserving them in their natural states. We are asking you to acknowledge the buffer zone established and to preserve our existing wetlands by not allowing construction in or in close proximity to them. The future of Utah depends on it; the Great Salt Lake depends on it, and the health and welfare of our residents deserve no less.

It is only through honest and open collaboration, well documented research, and a long-term vision that we should move forward. The port has been haphazard from the beginning, and it is time to stop wasting tax payer money and endangering our health in the hope of small economic gains. Currently we have a shortage of workers, a shortage of affordable homes for them and too much costly pollution. Why would you want to make all that worse by providing a high traffic center for low paying jobs, poor air quality and a assured destruction of the lake?

Miles, you were so kind to the little girl, Evie, who almost spoke. You said your daughter would think the same. Why are you not actively protecting this area for her?

I ask all of you to pause. To read the research submitted yesterday and to adjust or abolish your plans until your actions can match your rhetoric and if they cannot- if the port cannot be created in an environmentally sound manner, abandon it.

Thank you.

David Bennett - 11/9/2023

Wetlands

At the 6 November UIPA Board Meeting, Mr. Starks spoke about the importance of economic development as the state population is expected to double by 2050.

Of course economic development is important; however, if we don't have clean air to breathe or enough water to drink there will be no economic development.

Why is almost every UIPA project area located in and around wetlands? How are we supposed to have confidence in a system that created UIPA at the last minute by the same legislature that relocated the prison to sensitive wetlands that cost an outrageous sum to build because of the location, causing the size of the prison to decrease, and is now faced with an unsolvable pest problem? Or that signed on to the ridiculous, ultimately deemed illegal scheme by Lake Restoration Solutions? Or the original UIPA director that entered into a a 40-year \$120,000 /month lease for land for a purpose later deemed not feasible and for which taxpayers are saddled with this debt?

The Human Health Risk Assessment has yet to be completed. A coherent focus for UIPA has never been properly articulated. The same developers are showing up for almost every project area for buildings on sensitive lands for questionable projects.

Yes, the state needs economic development. But not at a cost of putting our environment at risk.

Last winter's epic snow was not an end to the "drought" that we are experiencing. Rather, it was part of aridification—the changing of precipitation patterns. We cannot lose focus on the need to make dramatic changes in order to save the Great Salt Lake. There is no question that the lake is in distress. There are NO examples of lakes like the GSL that have returned to normal health once in distress.

All efforts have to be on saving the GSL so it doesn't suffer the same fate as Owens Lake in California, not in developing questionable project on environmentally sensitive lands.

William McAllister - 11/17/2023

No to Inland Ports Tooele County and Grantsville City

Meetings at the Grantsville Library and Tooele Library regarding the communities' concern about the Inland Ports occurred last night. Both meetings were so full, there was standing room only. The members of Grantsville City and Tooele County DO NOT WANT the Inland Ports.

There are many empty warehouses in Salt Lake for these companies to use - they do not need to build out here. The ports will have massive negative effects on our community. And they will permanently damage our wetlands. People come out to Tooele County and Grantsville to live because of a certain lifestyle it is known for - a lifestyle that will be ruined by these inland ports. We do not want the traffic these ports will create. We do not want the impairment of water quality. We do not want the noise pollution. We do not want the light pollution. WE DO NOT WANT THE PORTS.

Sincerely,

William McAllister

Concerned Member of

Tooele County

Patricia Becnel - 11/28/2023

Tooele Port

I oppose the proposed port for Tooele. The predicted truck traffic alone will increase pollution and diminish the air quality in the entire Salt Lake Valley. It will also further jeopardize the Great Salt Lake and surrounding wetlands. Mitigation for wetlands or restoration does not equal the benefits of an original wetland.

David Peterson - 11/28/2023

I Oppose The Proposed Tooele Inland Port

Good afternoon UIPA,

I am a Canadian clean-air activist with friends and acquaintances in Utah, particularly in and around the Wasatch Front. I am concerned about the deteriorations in air and water quality that will occur if your agency's proposed inland-port projects proceed.

In an era of climate, pollution, and extinction emergencies, we need to be investing in solutions to those issues, not creating more of them.

I respectfully urge you to protect the health of Tooele's residents and visitors and rescind your proposal to build an inland port there.

Thank you for your time.

David Pedersen, Saanichton, BC, Canada

Michael Fields - 11/29/2023

UIPA

Our Utah legislators knew for many years, where they were going to put the new prison. They went through the motions of different locations, but they knew all along where they were going to put it. The reason was so taxpayers would pay for the cost of infrastructure to the site so business thinking about locating in the inland port would not need to pay for infrastructure. Taxpayers foot the bill. The prison is in a swamp. It has cost more to construct it there and there is also a mosquito hell for inmates and corrections people. Our legislators could care less what the public wants. They don't answer to us and have not listened for years. The inland port is a complete farse and will cost us millions of taxpayer dollars! They are not fooling everyone. UIPA has taxing authority and answer to no one.

Mary Ellen Sloan - 11/29/2023

Tooele Proposed Inland Port

Registering opposition. Air quality is one of the most serious health issues in Utah particularly the Wasatch Front. More development bringing more truck and train traffic will add to an already air quality health creating problem for seniors and children in particular. Please stop this rush to just have more money lining the pockets of developers.

Alexandra Weiss - 11/29/2023

Keep the wetlands safe

I am writing this to share my strong objection to the proposed addition of two inland ports in Tooele. Taxpayers should not be required to subsidize business that will benefit private interests, but also

damage the public wetlands and risk the already threaten Great Salt Lake. Please do not allow either of these projects to move forward.

George Robison - 11/29/2023

December meeting

I am amazed that you scheduled a meeting when a majority of people are working. Sure does limit the number in attendance. I also read your requirements for comments at the meeting that I can't attend, they wreek of political control. I guess suggesting a more appropriate time in the evening would be a lost cause. As you can tell I am totally opposed to your attempt to create a massive money investment for the inland port.

Teresa Stepanek - 11/29/2023

No Tooele warehouse district

To all concerned,

Do not allow a taxpayer subsidized polluting warehouse space in the Tooele Valley. The pollution from the estimated 50,000 new vehicle trips generated will harm air quality throughout the region.

Karlee S Dorman - 11/29/2023

Tooele Inland Port

Hello!

I am concerned and opposed to the destruction of wetlands especially so close to the Great Salt Lake that will occur if the inland port moves forward in Tooele. Our Salt Lake is already at risk and this would only make matters worse. The inland port will add to the already increasing pollution and inversion. Please take my comment into consideration and do not move forward in Tooele.

Scott J. Degelbeck - 11/30/2023

Tooele County Inland Ports

I have tried to read and understand the UIPA plans for Twenty Wells in Grantsville Utah and Tooele County.

Needless to say, the plans are swayed in favor of UIPA. Having said that, I do not believe that the Inland Ports will benefit the lifestyle that many Tooele County residents desire including myself. Of particular concern to me is the additional tax burden that will be placed on Tooele County Residents! If I read your model summaries correctly (page 21 for the Tooele County Plan, and page 25 of the Twenty Wells [Grantsville] plan, Tooele County residents will be liable for 25% of the tax burden for the next twenty-five years. That looks to be \$ 18,100,000 for the Tooele Plan and \$ 49,300,000 for the Twenty Wells Plan. If that is the case I find that to be unacceptable.

Please correct me if I am wrong in my assumption.?

It also looks like the Plans do not see any impact on plant or animal species in the area? I believe that there are animals in the area that will be affected. ( rabbits, badgers, birds, )

In Summary I am opposed to the Inland Port Plans for both areas .

Thank you. Hope to get a response and explanations from you.

Bruce R. Remington - 11/30/2023

inland port

Stop the polluting inland port!

Kelsey Palmieri - 11/30/2023

Stop the Port!

This is a ridiculous thing to do! We definitely don't need more pollution in our state and we need to preserve our water. This is unnecessary and would be a huge mistake to follow through with it.

Mary Zimmerman - 11/30/2023

Stop Inland Port

Our environment cannot sustain the addition of many more trucks emitting exhaust. The west side of Salt Lake City takes the brunt of the poor air, but it is a problem throughout the valley.

It makes no sense.

Jerry and Annette Davis - 12/1/2023

inland ports

We hope you stop building these ports..they are detrimental to the population and will do no good....save the land, the people and the animals.

Do what is right and stop this nonsense.

Valerie - 12/1/2023

I cannot make it to the meeting in Tooele, but this is my opposition of the port

We do not want more pollution in the state of Utah. When did money begin to matter more than health?

Sue deVall - 12/2/2023

Wetlands

Any construction into wetlands is a bad idea.

Ann Scarborough - 12/2/2023

Inland Port-oppose

I am strongly opposed to the concept and plan for the Inland Port, for two reasons. 1) The health and wellness of residents in the Tooele and the western Salt Lake Valley will be compromised and 2) The environmental degradation to the Great Salt Lake, its brine shrimp and migratory waterfowl. I am absolutely opposed!!

Kim Adams - 12/2/2023

Opposition to subsidizing polluting warehouse spaces

I oppose the subsidizing of two new polluting warehouses. These projects will harm over 12,000 acres of wetlands in and adjacent to the proposed project areas. They will also pollute the water and reduce scarce water supplies.