

Draft Minutes  
Land Trusts Protection & Advocacy Committee  
Tuesday, October 10, 2023 | 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Electronic Meeting with Anchor Location  
310 S Main St., Ste. 1275, Salt Lake City, UT 84101

In-Person Participants:

Paula Plant, Advocacy Committee Vice Chair  
Richard Ellis, Advocacy Committee  
Louie Cononelos, Advocacy Committee  
Kim Christy, Advocacy Office Director  
Ashton Hatch, Advocacy Office  
Chris Pieper, Assistant Attorney General  
Marlo Oaks, Utah State Treasurer  
Brittany Griffin, Office of State Treasurer  
Brad Benz, Advocacy Committee Appointee  
Holly Korous, School LAND Trust Office  
Kira Bennet, School LAND Trust Office  
Margaret Bird, Community Member

Zoom Participants:

Steven Ostler, Advocacy Committee Chair  
Brigham Tomco, Advocacy Committee  
Scott Ruppe, TLA Deputy Director  
Jessie Stuart, Advocacy Office Assistant  
Director  
Roger Barrus, Advocacy Committee Appointee  
Peter Madsen, SITFO Director  
Kirt Slaugh, Office of State Treasurer  
Marla Kennedy, TLA Director of  
Communications & Legislative Affairs

1. Call meeting to order  
Meeting called to order by Chair Ostler at approximately 10 a.m.
2. Chairman's Report  
Chairman Ostler welcomed meeting participants.
3. Approval of Minutes  
Mr. Cononelos motioned to approve the July 18, 2023 meeting minutes. Ms. Plant seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.  
Mr. Ellis motioned to approve the September 12, 2023 meeting minutes. Ms. Plant seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.
4. Recognition of existing committee members and welcome of new committee members  
Ms. Plant, Mr. Cononelos, Mr. Ellis, and Mr. Christy expressed gratitude for Chair Ostler and Mr. Tomco in their positions of service on the Land Trusts Protection and Advocacy Committee. Their service is much appreciated on behalf of the Trust System and the beneficiaries.  
Ms. Plant and Mr. Christy welcomed and introduced Mr. Brad Benz (appointed by the SITFO Board of Trustees) and Mr. Roger Barrus (appointed by the Trust Lands Administration Board of Trustees) to the Advocacy Committee. Mr. Benz has a background in investing, finance, education, and technology. Mr. Barrus has previously served in the Utah State Legislature and on the Trust Lands Administration Board of Trustees.
5. Election of committee chair and vice chair  
Mr. Cononelos motioned to elect Mr. Richard Ellis as Chair of the Advocacy Committee. Ms. Plant seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.  
Mr. Cononelos motioned to elect Ms. Paula Plant as Vice Chair of the Advocacy Committee. Mr. Ellis seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

6. Calendar and confirmation of meeting dates

The next Advocacy Committee meeting will be held on January 9, 2024 from 10 am-12 pm.

7. Stakeholder and Public Input

No public input was provided.

8. Open Public Meetings Act training

Mr. Pieper led the Open Public Meeting Act training.

9. Trust Lands System Reports

**Trust Lands Advisory Committee (TLAC) Report:**

Ms. Plant introduced Ms. Holly Kouros, as a training specialist, and Ms. Kira Bennet, as a compliance specialist with the School Children's Trust Office. Final distributions have been sent out to schools throughout the state with the exception of three new schools that have not yet completed the requirements.

Ms. Plant informed the Advocacy Committee that the School Children's Trust Office will be running two bills during the next legislative session. One bill is designed to authorize funds be distributed to schools that are unable to seat a community council in unique circumstances. Another bill is outlining approvals regarding charter schools.

**Trust Lands Administration Report (TLA):**

Ms. Marla Kennedy provided the TLA report to the committee. She provided an update on the Trust Lands Administration's revenues for FY2023 topping \$145 million.

Upcoming land exchanges include the Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration Exchange Act of 2023 (HR3049 & S1405) and the Dingle Act. The Exchange Act has passed favorably out of House and Senate Committees and will next go the floors of both bodies. The Dingle Act is within the appraisal process and is anticipated to be finalized in early Spring 2024.

Outreach efforts made by the Trust Lands Administration include a new public website, social media campaign, rebranding, participating in an oil and gas royalty audit, and involvement at the Uintah Basin Energy Summit and One Utah Summit, where Director Michelle McConkie was able to participate along with other leaders within the Trust System and external state and county leaders.

**SITFO Report:**

Mr. Peter Madsen presented the SITFO report, providing the following updates on SITFO meetings, budget, and SITFO performance.

The Finance and Compensation Committee approved the FY2025 budget. Mr. Madsen announced SITFO is looking to hire two people to grow their investment team.

The 2023 SITFO Summit occurred in Park City and was an educational and enlightening event for all. SITFO awarded former Treasurer David Damschen with the Friend of the Trust award on October 5. The Friend of the Trust award recognizes former Treasurer David Damschen for the efforts he made to establish and perpetuate SITFO and aided leaders of that agency in their development and made their work possible.

**Protection & Advocacy Office (Advocacy Office) Report:**

Mr. Kim Christy led the Advocacy Office report. He updated the committee on the supplemental budget

request that has gone forward to request the necessary funding to fund the new communications specialist position within the Advocacy Office. Mr. Christy informed the Committee of efforts made by the Trust System to create a video to help educate School Community Councils and other stakeholders regarding the work of the Trust System. Additional updates were given regarding the upcoming constitutional amendment campaign, progress with one on one legislator visits, and a planned interim breakfast to be hosted at the Capitol building in November.

Ms. Stuart notified the committee of the recent distribution announcements for FY2024 and efforts to inform the beneficiaries of their distribution.

Mr. Hatch presented outreach and communication efforts made by the Advocacy Office including outreach efforts at conferences and conventions and beneficiary social media spotlights. In addition, the Advocacy Office will commence distributing daily news updates that provide news briefs from various media sources to inform internal stakeholders on current issues relating to the Trust System.

#### 10. Legislative Updates

Mr. Christy discussed potential bills going forward during the next legislative session. Alongside the School Children's Trust Office bills regarding charter school plan approval process and exempting school community council requirements in unique circumstances. There may also be a bill introduced altering the makeup of the Advocacy Committee.

#### 11. Closed Meeting:

Chair Ellis entertained a motion to enter into a closed session pursuant to Utah Code §52-4-205(e), strategy session to discuss the sale of real property. Mr. Connelos motioned to move into closed session. Ms. Plant seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

#### 12. Adjourn

Upon ending the closed session and entering into an open session, Mr. Connelos moved to adjourn. Ms. Plant seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.