Jordan River Commission
Governing Board Meeting

April 4, 2024 | 11:00 a.m.

Meeting Location

Education Center at Conservation Garden Park
Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District
8275 South 1300 West, West Jordan, UT 84088

And remotely via Zoom.

Meeting Attendees

Governing Board Members

Betty Naylor, Gardner Heritage Farm
Bruce Holyoak, Murray City Parks and Recreation
Councilmember Clarissa Williams, South Salt Lake City
Craig Walker, Jordan River Foundation
Dina Blaes, Salt Lake County
Mayor Dirk Burton, West Jordan City
Councilmember Dustin Gettel, Midvale City
Eric McCulley, Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission
Gina Grandpre, Saratoga Springs City
Joel Thompson, South Valley Sewer District
John Mackey, Division of Water Quality
Larry Mullenax, Utah State Fair Corporation
Laura Briefer, Salt Lake City Public Utilities
Liz Larsen, Utah's Hogle Zoo
Marissa Beckstrom, Tracy Aviary Nature Center
Morgan Faulkner, Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands
Renn Lambert, LimnoTech
Councilmember Ted Knowlton, North Salt Lake City

Commission Staff

Soren Simonsen, Executive Director
Rachel Turk, Communications & Outreach Manager

Visitors and Guests

Tim Davis, Office of the Great Salt Lake Commissioner
Ben Palmer, Office of Congressman Blake Moore
Colby Hill, South Jordan City
Colby Walker, Office of Senator Mike Lee
Jake Serago, Division of Water Resources
Keith Lawrence, Division of Wildlife Resources
Renn Lambert, LimnoTech

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Calah Worthen, Jacobs Construction
Wade Tuft, Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District

Members of the Governing Board first convened as the Jordan River Watershed Council at 10:00 a.m., following which the Council adjourned and reconvened as the Governing Board.

Meeting Minutes

Members of the Governing Board first convened as the Jordan River Watershed Council at 10:00 AM, following which the Council adjourned and reconvened as the Governing Board.

Mayor Dirk Burton, Past Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:01 a.m.

1. Welcome & Introductions

Identification of Governing Board members and other meeting participants in person and online

2. Public Comments

No public comments were made.

3. Presentations & Discussion

2024 General Legislative Session Updates: Soren Simonsen shared brief updates and highlights from the recently concluded General Session of the Utah Legislature. Governing Board Members were invited to share additional information and discuss legislative outcomes.

Soren reported that a bill that would have directed resources toward riparian corridors did not pass the House. However, Representative Bennion is interested in working on this legislation during the interim session and revisiting it next year.

House Bill 562 created a tax increment financing district to fund the development and restoration of the Fairpark and Power District areas. During public hearings on this legislation, Representatives from Rocky Mountain Power and the Larry H. Miller group indicated that they view the Jordan River as a central part of this plan. Rocky Mountain Power has decided not to build its new headquarters along the river and to instead utilize riverfront space for recreational, community, and cultural activities.

Soren stated that there has been a shift in water policy over the past few years. Additional water conservation programs were brought forward this year, such as the bill regarding water-efficient landscaping requirements sponsored by Representative Doug Owens. The legislature also allocated funds to improve water measurement infrastructure.

House Bill 65, which did not pass out of committee, would have enabled future planning for canal trails to be developed and used as active transportation avenues. This topic will be discussed further during the interim sessions. If passed, this legislation may provide opportunities for increasing recreation access, connecting additional communities via trails, and better management of invasive weeds.

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The legislature funded less than half of what Governor Cox and the Office of Homeless Services had requested. While this funding does not enable all aspects of the statewide Homelessness Strategic Plan to move forward, it is still a record level of investment into this issue.

4. Commission Business

Annual Open & Public Meetings Act Training (see https://youtu.be/QNVBuXB7vkM). A brief video was played for attendees during the Watershed Council meeting. Dirk Burton noted that Governing Board Members who are unable to attend the meeting should review this video presentation to complete the training individually.

Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Amendment #1: Soren Simonsen reported that everything is tracking well with the budget. A federal grant of nearly $5 million was awarded that will assist with a variety of projects. A portion of the funding will be allocated to hire additional administrative support staff. A quorum was not present to vote on the budget amendment.

Fiscal Year 2025 Initial Budget Proposal: No formal action will be taken at this meeting; a public hearing and formal budget action and adoption are scheduled for the June Governing Board meeting. There are two major changes to the cost side of the budget for 2025. One is a 4% cost-of-living adjustment for existing staff, and the second is the creation of a permanent position for administrative support staff. It is proposed that these additional costs be covered by modest increases in member contributions.

5. Director's Report

a) Technical & Event Advisory Committee Updates
b) Commission Staff Updates
c) Grants and Funding Updates & Opportunities

Notes: Due to time constraints, items 5a, 5b, and 5c will be addressed at a future meeting.

Upcoming Activities, Events, and Meetings of Interest: Soren Simonsen noted some upcoming events, such as the Golden Spoke Ride on May 11th, as well as the following events:

a) Commission Field Trip – May 2, 10:00 AM – Walking Tour of Jordan Narrows and Camp Williams to Thanksgiving Point

b) Technical Advisory Committee Field Trip – May 16, 2:00 PM – Biking Tour of Jordan River Trail from Three Creeks Confluence & New GREENBike Station (Salt Lake City) to Parleys Trail (South Salt Lake portion) and Crosstowne Trail (West Valley City)

6. Adjourn

Mayor Dirk Burton called for the meeting to adjourn, which was seconded by Ted Knowlton.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

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A meeting recording, presentation and handout materials, and meeting minutes are available at https://www.utah.gov/pmn/sitemap/notice/903857.html.

Meeting minutes prepared by Ren Griffeth, Jordan River Commission Administrative, Grant & Research Specialist.

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