

Jordan River Commission Governing Board Meeting

December 7, 2023 | 10:45 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

Councilmember Sylvia Catten, Chair, Millcreek City
Councilmember Andy Pierucci, Riverton City
John Mackey, Division of Water Quality
Councilmember Don Shelton, South Jordan City
Wendelin Knobloch, Midvale City
Gina Grandpre, Saratoga Springs City
Mayor Karen Lang, West Valley City
Mayor Kristie Overson, Taylorsville City
Ben Stireman, Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands
Shazelle Terry, Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District
Betty Naylor, Gardner Heritage Farms
Heidi Hoven, National Audubon Society
Eric McCulley, Utah Reclamation, Mitigation, & Conservation Committee
Alicia De Leon, Salt Lake City
Councilmember Clarissa Williams, South Salt Lake City
Dina Blaes, Salt Lake County
Kim Sorensen, Murray City
Councilmember Paige Albrecht, Lehi City
Mayor Dirk Burton, West Jordan City
Councilmember Todd Draper, Draper City
Representative Jeff Stenquist, Utah State Legislature
Councilmember Stan Porter, North Salt Lake City

Commission Staff

Soren Simonsen, Executive Director
Rachel Turk, Communications & Outreach Manager
Rae Robinson, Vegetation Management Coordinator, Division of Forestry, Fire & State Lands

Visitors and Guests

Laura Vernon, Division of Water Resources
Carly Payne, Division of Water Resources

Derek Anderson, Office of Senator Mike Lee
Todd Munger, Lehi City
Nate Brakey, Office of Congressman Burgess Owens
Jim Winder, Division of Forestry, Fire & State Lands
Laura Haskell, Division of Water Resources
Cory Fralick, West Jordan City
Todd Stonely, Division of Water Resources
Steve Van Maren, Sandy City Resident
Gretta, Salt Lake Tribune
Colby Hill, South Jordan City
Marissa Beckstrom, Tracy Aviary
Dina Blaes, Salt Lake County
Wayne Niederhauser, Utah Office of Homeless Services Coordinator
Tish Buroker, Riverton City
Elliot Mott, Community Volunteer Organizer
Olivia Bonds, UTA Planning

The Governing Board initially convened as the Jordan River Watershed Council, following which members adjourned as the Watershed Council and reconvened as the Governing Board.

Meeting Minutes

Silvia Catten, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:45 a.m.

1. Welcome & Introductions

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

2. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

3. Presentations & Discussion

Jordan River Extra Patrol Program Updates: Jim Winder, newly appointed Chief Law Enforcement Officer with the Division of Forestry, Fire & State Lands, shared an update and led a discussion about the goals, priorities and next steps for the Jordan River Extra Patrol (JREP). This program is funded through the Jordan River Recreation Area ongoing legislative appropriation. Jim reported a significant number of felony arrests along the River, both from felonious activity and outstanding warrants. He expressed a desire to better specify the goals and priorities for this program. Jim also stated that having a common language and better coordination would be important going forward.

Eric McCulley asked if Jim's team utilizes the My Jordan River mobile app.

Jim replied that they are not, partially because some law enforcement data is protected and partially because there are technical challenges involved with sharing certain types of data.

Alcia DeLeon asked if someone could share what website or GIS program was mentioned, linked to monitoring or tracking activities on the Jordan River Trail.

Soren replied that MyJordanRiver.org is a mobile site that the Jordan River Commission uses for all types of crowd-sourced reporting by trail users.

Ben Stireman added that unused past unused funds from this program have been utilized for other purposes along the Jordan River.

Tish Buroker requested that officers in this program use a standardized form of transportation and abide by trail etiquette. She noted that she has seen several officers riding ATV's along the trail, which leads residents to think that ATV's are permitted on the trail.

Jim acknowledged this point.

Kristie Overson asked if there is enough funding available to hire a full-time patrol along the River rather than waiting for volunteers.

Jim replied that he would like to discuss options for full-time patrols with different municipalities because there are some drawbacks to the current model, but also some benefits.

Silvia Catten added that she would anticipate benefits from cities seeing data from along the River more regularly so that they can better allocate resources to address recurrent problems.

Jim agreed that this would be beneficial.

Soren Simonsen noted that dense vegetation sometimes contributes to enforcement issues. He also noted that the Commission provides a structure that could be leveraged for better coordination of efforts.

Utah's Strategic Plan to Address Homelessness & Budget Proposal Updates: Wayne

Niederhauser shared an update on the ongoing implementation of Utah's Plan to Address Homelessness that was adopted earlier this year. This included discussion about current winter overflow programs, coordinated efforts across the Wasatch Front region, a non-congregate shelter pilot project in Salt Lake City, and other coordinated efforts to address the impacts of the growing unsheltered population along the Jordan River Parkway. He noted that homelessness occurs in every city, but becomes concentrated in Salt Lake City partially because other areas lack resources.

Wayne discussed data showing that rates of homelessness are strongly tied to the cost of living across the country. He noted that the majority of people looking for affordable housing will not be able to find it due to large gaps in availability for the population that cannot afford market rates. He also discussed the legislative priorities and budget proposal for the upcoming 2024 General Legislative Session, which was recently presented by Governor Cox and Lieutenant Governor Henderson. He emphasized the need to expand non-congregate shelter options.

Wayne asked the Commission to support the legislative appropriations that will be requested by Governor Cox.

Marissa Beckstrom stated that she would love to be part of a conversation about how they can all do their part. She comes from a background in homeless services, and would love to see more community care in all realms.

4. Commission Business

[Action Item] Consider Amending the Commission Bylaws to Include Minor Additional Provisions Related to Certification of the Jordan River Watershed Council:

Don Shelton moved to adopt the proposed amendments. Stan Porter seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call results:

***Eric McCulley- yea
Silvia Catten- yea
Cory Fralick- yea
Betty Naylor- yea
Karen Lang- yea
Kristie Overson- yea
John Mackey- yea
Ben Stireman- yea
Stan Porter- yea
Colby Hill- yea
Wendelin Knobloch- yea
Don Shelton- yea
Clarissa Williams- yea
Paige Albrecht- yea
Shazelle Terry- yea
Heidi Hoven- yea***

[Action Item] Consider Adopting a Proposed 2024 Meeting Schedule for the Jordan River Commission Governing Board:

Betty Naylor moved to adopt the proposed schedule. Karen Lang seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by the present Board members.

Thank Outgoing Governing Board Members: Stan Porter was recognized as the longest-serving Board member and a champion to the Jordan River. Board members expressed their appreciation for his service.

5. Director's Report

Soren Simonsen asked attendees to share any information about upcoming legislation of interest that they may hear about.

6. Adjourn

Karen Lang moved to adjourn the meeting. Ben Stireman seconded the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

A meeting recording, presentation and handout materials, and meeting minutes are available at <https://www.utah.gov/pmn/sitemap/notice/876903.html>.

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