



# **TRUST LANDS** ADMINISTRATION

SUPPORTING UTAH SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTIONS

## **Board Meeting Materials**

**September 18, 2025**



## **Board of Trustees Meeting Agenda**

**Thursday, September 18, 2025**

**10:00 a.m.**

102 Tower – 6<sup>th</sup> Floor Boardroom

102 South 200 East

Salt Lake City, Utah 84111

### **1. Welcome**

### **2. Approval of Minutes**

August 21, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes

### **3. Confirmation of Upcoming Meeting Dates**

October 23, 2025 - Regular Meeting

November 20, 2025 - Regular Meeting

December - No Regular Meeting

### **4. Trust Lands Funds in Action by Marla Kennedy, Director of Communications, Trust Lands Administration**

### **5. Social Media Minute by Joelette Organista, Communications Specialist, Trust Lands Administration**

### **6. Public Comment Period**

Trust Lands welcomes comments from the county advisory committee, the public, and other interested parties. The Board sets aside 15 minutes at each board meeting to hear from anyone wishing to speak. Each presenter is allowed one opportunity and has up to three (3) minutes for remarks. Any member of the public participating electronically who desires to comment shall use the “raise hand” feature during the Zoom meeting. The public comment segment of the

board meeting is not the time for a question-and-answer discussion. Trust Lands staff is available for dialogue outside of board meetings.

**7. Chair's Report by Tiffany James, Chair of Trust Lands Administration Board**

**8. Director Report by Michelle McConkie, Executive Director, Trust Lands Administration**

- A. Wildfires Update
- B. Permanent Fund Status Update

**9. Advocate Report by Kim Christy, Director, Land Trusts Protection & Advocacy Office**

**10. Action Items**

- A. Proposed lease agreement of Volcanic Materials Lease OBA (ML-54662) located in Millard County, Utah (640 +/- acres) with PVT Materials LLC by Andy Bedingfield, Assistant Managing Director, Energy & Minerals, Trust Lands Administration.
- B. Request to establish Office Manager, General Counsel, and Deputy General Counsel positions at Trust Lands Administration by Michelle McConkie, Executive Director, Trust Lands Administration.
- C. Budget proposal for the FY 2027 base budget and additional budget requests by Deborah Memmott, Director of Finance, Trust Lands Administration.

**11. Adjourn**

**Note:** Board members may participate in this meeting electronically but may be seen and heard via electronic means at the anchor location specified above. Interested parties, including members of the public or representatives of county governments or Utah Tribes, may attend the meeting in person or through the registration link:

[https://utah-gov.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_GPcpwB6XRgSVoGnUboXwAw#/registration](https://utah-gov.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_GPcpwB6XRgSVoGnUboXwAw#/registration)

Those wishing to provide public comment electronically will be asked at the beginning of the period designated for such comment to use the "raise hand" feature at the bottom of the screen within the Zoom meeting so they may be called upon to provide comment.

**Please call Imaan Ahmed at 801-538-5110 or email [ifahmed@utah.gov](mailto:ifahmed@utah.gov) any time before 4:00 p.m. on September 17, 2025, with questions.**

Items may be heard in any order, at any time, at the Board's discretion. Please be aware that the public portions of this meeting may be broadcast live over the Internet. Also, please note that an audio recording of the public portions of this meeting, along with any materials presented or

distributed in the public portions of this meeting, will be posted on Utah's Public Notice website. Witnesses with questions, concerns, or handouts should contact staff.

Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, individuals needing auxiliary communicative aids and services for this meeting should contact Imaan Ahmed at 801-538-5110 or by email at ifahmed@utah.gov at least three (3) days in advance.

I, Imaan Ahmed, Trust Lands Administration Board of Trustees Executive Assistant, hereby certify that the foregoing agenda was posted on the Utah State Public Notice website, <https://www.utah.gov/pmn/index.html>.

Dated: 9/8/2025

## Meeting Minutes

August 21, 2025



# TRUST LANDS ADMINISTRATION

SUPPORTING UTAH SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTIONS

September 18, 2025



# **TRUST LANDS**

## **ADMINISTRATION**

SUPPORTING SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTIONS

### **Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, Aug 21, 2025**

**10:00 a.m.**

102 Tower – 6<sup>th</sup> Floor Boardroom

102 South 200 East

Salt Lake City, Utah 84111

#### **Board Members**

##### **Present at Anchor Location**

Warren Peterson, Chair

Tiffany James, Co-Vice Chair

Dr. Mike Nelson

Dan Simons

John Baza

Bryan Harris, Co-Vice Chair

Mike Mower

#### **Attending Staff & Public**

Michelle McConkie, Executive Director

Brian Tarbet, New Board of Trustees Member

Andy Bedingfield, Assistant Director for Energy and Minerals

Mike Johnson, Chief Legal Counsel

Imaan Ahmed, Exec. Assistant to Exec. Director and Board

Stephanie Barber-Renteria, Managing Director for Energy and Minerals

Matt Thomspon, AG

Keli Beard, Legal Counsel

Marla Kennedy, Director of Communications & Governmental Affairs

Joelette Organista, Communications Specialist

Chris Fausett, Managing Director of Surface Resources

Marcos Santana, IT Support

Vince Wayodi, IT Support

Kyle Pasley, Managing Director for Planning and Development

**Attending Staff & Public (continued)**

Eric Baim, Project Analyst for Planning and Development  
Kim Christy, Land Trusts Protection & Advocacy Office (LTPAO)  
Liz Mumford, Land Trusts Protection & Advocacy Office (LTPAO)  
Jessie Stewart, Land Trusts Protection & Advocacy Office (LTPAO)  
Stanford Graham, RASA Energy  
Justin Robb, CKC Operations  
Jon Lear, Lear & Lear  
Lionel Trepanier (online)  
Dave Donegan, previous Board Chair  
Paula Plant, Utah State Board of Education (USBEL)  
Margaret Bird, ASTL  
Sheri Mettle, Utah PTA

**Welcome**

At 10:09 a.m., Chair Peterson welcomed the Board, staff, and visitors, and opened the meeting.

**Minutes**

Mr. Simons moved to approve the minutes of the June 19, 2025 Board Meeting, with a correction to his name. Chair Peterson accepted the motion, and Mr. Baza seconded it. The vote was unanimously in favor, with Co-Vice Chair James excused.

Yea	Nay	Excused
<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>
Chair Peterson		Co-Vice Chair James
Co-Vice Chair Harris		
Mr. Simons		
Mr. Baza		
Dr. Nelson		
Mr. Mower		

**Confirmation of Upcoming Meeting Dates**

September 18, 2025 – Regular Meeting, Mr. Mower unable to attend, Mr. Baza will join virtually  
October 23, 2025 - Regular Meeting  
November 20, 2025 - Regular Meeting

### **Trust Land Funds in Action**

Ms. Kennedy announced the start of the school week, noting that the principal's attendance was not requested.

### **Social Media Minute**

Ms. Kennedy and Ms. Organista presented the "Trust Lands Funds in Action" initiative. Ms. Organista introduced "The Bene Bunch," a new series of social media campaign designed to educate the public about the beneficiaries ("Bene") of the Trust Lands Administration. The campaign features a costumed individual representing various beneficiaries, such as public school teachers and coal miners, and aims to answer fundamental questions like "Who gets the money?". The campaign has already shown success, with public comments now defending the trust against the misconception that it manages public land. Despite this, significant public education is still needed, as 80% of comments on a previous post urged the Trust Lands Administration to cease selling public lands.

Mr. Mower inquired about the possibility of boosting numbers through a paid campaign. Ms. Kennedy confirmed that a small portion of the current campaign is paid and that complementary ads are also being utilized. She will provide a comprehensive report on the campaign's performance in September, following its conclusion.

Another video highlighted a collaboration between the Trust Lands Administration, the State Office of Historical Preservation (SHPO), and the Utah Cultural Site Stewardship Program (UCSS). This partnership enables the Trust Lands Administration to utilize volunteer efforts for monitoring and protecting cultural sites on its lands, as the agency lacks the necessary staff to do so independently.

### **Public Comments**

The meeting included a 15-minute public comment session. Mr. Stanford Graham, representing RASA Energy, announced that his company is now in continuous production, extracting pure hydrocarbons from Utah's tar sands, a process that was previously unsuccessful. He stated that their process is water-free and that the resulting hydrocarbons are without contaminants and without toxins. Production is running 21-30% of mass concentration of hydrocarbons by weight by unit of tar sands.

Mr. Baza asked at what temperature they get the hydrocarbons. Mr. Graham indicated it is at room temperature and explained briefly how the process works.

Mr. Lionel Tripanier from Utah Tar Sands Resistance who joined virtually, spoke in opposition to the tar sands leases. He claimed that some information in the board's memorandum (14 d) was false and misleading, specifically regarding the use of a water-heavy steam injection method by a previous company, U.S. Oil Sands. He also disputed the claim that Utah has some of the largest tar sands deposits in the world, citing Canada as having a far greater amount. He expressed concern that the new leases would not cover the administrative costs for the Trust Lands Administration.



Mr. Justin Robb of CKC Operations also spoke, confirming that his company has an agreement with RASA Energy to use their extracted material. He noted that his company had recently paved a road in Vernal with the material and that it had performed well, exceeding UDOT specifications.

### **Chair's Farewell**

Chair Warren Peterson delivered his farewell address, celebrating his successor and other board members. He highlighted the organization's success since its formation in 1994, noting that the trust fund has grown from \$50 million to over \$3.7 billion and has distributed approximately \$2 billion to beneficiaries. He also acknowledged the recent debate over the Advocacy Office but urged the board to move forward with collaboration.

### **Recognition of Chair**

Executive Director Michelle McConkie and other board members offered tributes to Chair Peterson's service, recognizing his wisdom, professionalism, and dedication as an outstanding leader and mentor.

### **Swearing In of the New Board Member Brian Tarbet and New Leadership**

Brian Tarbet was sworn in as a new board member by Chair Peterson.

A motion was made by Co-Vice Chair Harris to nominate Ms. Tiffany James as the new Board Chair, Mr. Mower seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Chair James then suggested continuing Mr. Peterson's tradition of having two Co-Vice Chairs. Mr. Baza made a motion to nominate Mr. Bryan Harris and Dr. Mike Nelson as Co-Vice Chairs, Mr. Simons seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

### **Comments from New Board Leadership**

Chair James praised legislative leaders and advocates for creating the board's composition rules.

Described as a "blue ribbon panel" of community leaders and subject matter experts, the board guides the agency and supplements staff expertise. The speaker expressed honor in serving on the board, thanking Warren for six years of service and his expertise in water rights, land, and minerals. Dave Donegan was also thanked for his unmatched expertise in oil and gas exploration and production.

### **Director's Report**

Executive Director Michelle McConkie announced that several TLA staff members and Mr. Simons attended the NASTL conference in July in Denver, CO. The final revenue for fiscal year 2025 is slightly over \$142 million, marking one of the top 2 or 3 years for the organization. She also introduced two new hires: Imaan Ahmed, Assistant to the Director and Board, and Joe Barker, a returning employee in the IT department.

Mr. Beddingfield, from Energy & Minerals, presented a notification item about a minor amendment to the Fossil Rock coal mine lease (newly opened coal mine), which added 20 acres to the lease for a

bleeder panel. He also reported on the June mineral auction results, stating that the auction brought in over \$1.1 million. The highest bid was \$823 per acre for a 243-acre parcel.

### **Advocate Report**

Mr. Kim Christy, Director of the Land Trusts Protection & Advocacy Office, had Ms. Jesse Stewart and Ms. Liz Mumford provide an update. The SITFO Board of Trustees recently appointed Rocky Patel as a new member and Angelique Pappas as the new Deputy CIO.

They reported on various advocacy and outreach efforts, including participating in conferences and collaborating on a video for principal training on Trust Lands. They announced a media event on September 2nd to celebrate the \$111 million in land trust distributions to schools this year, which will highlight the impact the funds have on classrooms.

They also provided updates on other beneficiaries, noting that the Schools for the Deaf and Blind are now under the oversight of the Utah State Board of Education. They mentioned that seven non-active mining certificate programs were cut at the University of Utah but that they are working closely with the dean to ensure career pathways remain open for students.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### **Action Item 14a.**

Petition for Appeal and Adjudicative Proceedings, re: Wesco Operating, Inc., by Michael Johnson, Chief Legal Counsel for Board of Trustees.

A meeting was held to mediate a dispute, successfully leading to an agreement in principle between the parties. The agreement is not yet final, with a 90-day timeframe given for the parties to finalize the details and potentially withdraw the matter through a settlement.

This is seen as good news, resolving the issue before it escalates to the board.

### **Action Item 14b.**

Proposed Major Development in Leeds, Washington County, Utah (115.52 +/- acres) with Brennan Holdings by Aaron Langston, Assistant Managing Director (Washington) of Real Estate Development. A 115.52-acre Leeds parcel with a 20-year history has undergone multiple iterations due to market and environmental changes. Significant efforts, including collaboration with DEQ and the use of hand tools at the site, have protected cultural sites like the Silver Reef Museum and the Christy Mill. Leeds and Washington County Commissioners also prioritize site protection. The plan includes 45 lots with defined housing footprints, developed in three phases. Leeds Domestic Waterusers Association will provide water, with will-serve letters secured for all lots. Brennan Holdings was selected after advertising from February to May, due to their 45% sales price offer, adequate funding, ability to navigate regulatory environments, and strong track record.

Co-Vice Chair Harris made a motion to authorize negotiations with Brennan Holdings with the expectation of a second Board presentation after negotiations have been finalized. Dr. Nelson seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Yea	Nay	Excused
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Chair James  
 Co-Vice Chair Harris  
 Mr. Simons  
 Mr. Baza  
 Co-Vice Chair Dr. Nelson  
 Mr. Mower  
 Mr. Tarbet

**Action Item 14c.**

Proposed Amendment to include additional prospective acreage in a Clay and Metalliferous Minerals Lease OBA (ML-54409) with Ionic Fox LLC, Utah County (3,700.54 +/- acres) by Andy Bedingfield, Assistant Managing Director (SLC) of Energy & Minerals.

Ionic Fox LLC seeks to expand the lease by an additional 3,700 acres, maintaining an annual rental of \$13 per acre. Royalty rates are \$1.60 per ton or 10% gross for clay, and 4% for metalliferous minerals. Existing mineral leases have been carved out, and 80 acres with long-term development potential were excluded. Chair James emphasized the importance of long-term planning (30, 50, and 100-year horizons) for the trust, including post-closure land use and collaboration.

Co-Vice Chair Dr. Nelson made a motion to approve the proposed amendment as it was presented, with a second from Mr. Baza. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Yea	Nay	Excused
<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>

Chair Harris  
 Co-Vice Chair Harris  
 Mr. Simons  
 Mr. Baza  
 Co-Vice Chair Dr. Nelson  
 Mr. Mower  
 Mr. Tarbet

**Action Item 14d.**

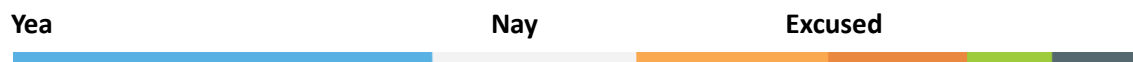
Proposed Amendment and Extension to OBA (ML-49927) with 2020 Resources LLC, Uintah and Grand Counties (4,319.86 +/- acres) by Chanse Rinderknecht, Geoscientist/Lease Manager (Vernal) of Energy and Minerals.

Mr. Rinderknecht presented the proposal, detailing the challenges of producing tar sands due to high viscosity and poor wettability. He explained that 2020 Resources purchased a mine from U.S. Oil Sands, which had failed to economically extract bitumen. Sky Quarry is using a new process that involves grinding the tar sands to increase surface area and then using a solvent called EcoSolve, which also

works on asphalt shingles to extract bitumen. This process is expected to be more economic and is nearly operational.

The key terms of the amended lease include extending it to match an adjacent lease expiring in 2030, upfront payment of rentals and minimum royalty, an increased royalty rate of 10%, and an upfront bonus payment. A crucial aspect is the "produce-to-earn" clause which prohibits any new disturbance until exposed hydrocarbon has been produced. This clause aims to protect the TLA's interests and ensure focus on existing disturbed areas.

During the discussion, Chanse Rinderknecht also addressed public comments, clarifying that the previous U.S. Oil Sands process did involve water injection and steam, and reiterating his belief in the significant resource potential of Utah's tar sands. He distinguished 2020 Resources' solvent-based approach from another company's "polar selected agent." The TLA acknowledges the potential value of the resource and the importance of monitoring the company's activities and results. Dr. Nelson, Co-Vice Chair, moved to approve the proposed Amendment and Extension to OBA ML-49927, which Mr. Baza seconded. The motion passed with unanimous approval.



Chair James  
Co-Vice Chair Dr. Nelson  
Co-Vice Chair Mr. Harris  
Mr. Simons  
Mr. Baza  
Mr. Mower  
Mr. Tarbet

#### Action Item 14e.

New Proposed Bituminous Asphaltic Sands Lease OBA (ML-54596) with RASA Energy, Inc., Grand County (50.42 +/- acres) by Chanse Rinderknecht, Geoscientist/Lease Manager (Vernal) of Energy and Minerals. Mr. Rinderknecht commended RASA Energy for their professional approach and willingness to allow observation of their process. RASA Energy is developing a "polar selective agent" and a system involving a conveyor belt to extract hydrocarbons from tar sands. They have successfully produced a barrel of oil from over 1,500 pounds of material and are continually refining their process.

The lease has a bonus payment of \$1.50 per acre, and a minimum royalty of \$500. The production royalty is 8.5% on all produced material, and the lease term is 10 years, which can be extended by production if the royalty exceeds the minimum.

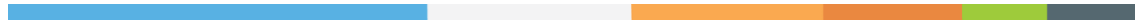
The project's jurisdiction falls under DOGM and RASA Energy is in the process of securing their permits and bonding. The discussion highlights the significance of innovative partners in an area where production has historically been challenging, emphasizing the potential for these new methods to bring a long-unproduced commodity to market.

Mr. Baza made a motion to approve the proposed OBA ML-54596, with a second from Co-Vice Chair Dr. Nelson. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

**Yea**

**Nay**

**Excused**



Chair James  
Co-Vice Chair Harris  
Co-Vice Chair Dr. Nelson  
Mr. Simons  
Mr. Baza  
Mr. Mower  
Mr. Tarbet

## NOTIFICATION ITEMS

### Notification Item 15a.

Minor Development Transaction: Sale of Lincoln Culinary Pump House Site, 1.3 acres in Tooele County in the Pine Canyon area of Tooele Valley by Eric Baim, Project Manager (SLC) of Real Estate Development. No comments or questions from Board members.

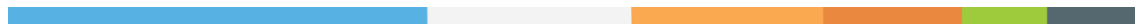
## ADJOURN

At 12:24 p.m., Mr. Mower moved to adjourn the meeting. Co-Vice Chair Harris seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

**Yea**

**Nay**

**Excused**



Chair James  
Co-Vice Chair Harris  
Co-Vice Chair Dr. Nelson  
Mr. Simons  
Mr. Baza  
Mr. Mower  
Mr. Tarbet

**Respectfully Submitted,**

Imaan Ahmed

Executive Assistant to the Director and the Board

Audio of this meeting can be found at <https://www.utah.gov/pmn/files/1313725.m4a>

Proposed Volcanic Materials Lease OBA  
PVT Materials, LLC



**TRUST LANDS**  
ADMINISTRATION  
SUPPORTING UTAH SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTIONS

September 18, 2025



# TRUST LANDS ADMINISTRATION

SUPPORTING SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTIONS

## Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration Board of Trustees Memorandum

**Date:** September 18, 2025

**From:** Andy Bedingfield, PE, Assistant Managing Director  
Energy & Minerals

**Applicant:** PVT Materials LLC  
32 West 200 South #642  
Salt Lake City, UT 84101

**Lands:** T19S, R6W, Section 16: All  
Millard County

**Acreage:** 640 acres, more or less

**Beneficiary:** Public Schools Trust

### **Summary**

The agency requests the Board approve this Volcanic Materials Lease OBA for lands in Millard County. Pursuant to Utah Code § 53C-2-401(1)(d)(ii), the agency may enter an OBA with Board approval. This action requires Board approval because the proposed lands are not being offered on the standard lease form via the competitive lease process.

### **Key Information and Background**

The OBA is located north of Pahvant Butte, which is west of Fillmore, in Millard County. The proposed lease agreement includes 640 acres of surface and mineral land. The land was acquired through the Enabling Act in 1896 via Confirmatory Patent 43-65-0178. The land is currently leased for geothermal exploration under RNBL 2007-OBA to Chinati Minerals LLC. It is anticipated that cross-leasing will not be a significant issue as the geothermal resource lies in the deep strata and the well pads can be placed in a variety of areas. The volcanic resource is at or near the surface and will be mined on the surface. The applicant (PVT) must work with Chinati Minerals prior to submitting any mine plans. In addition, PVT Materials performed a number of drill holes on the parcel in 2023 (ML 54375-ROME). The pozzolan resource was delineated and studied. PVT has submitted this data to the agency for our

mineral library. Based on the results of the drilling, PVT has sought a mineral lease on the property. PVT also holds ML 53990 and federal mine claims adjacent to the subject parcel.

The Resource: Volcanic materials for use as pozzolan or other industrial uses.

The Applicant: PVT Materials is an industrial mineral company located in Utah with a positive track record.

### **Material Terms of the Transaction**

Term: The applicant will receive a ten-year primary term lease agreement for volcanic materials.

Payments to Trust Lands Administration:

- 1) Bonus Payment in the amount of \$7.00 per acre or \$4,480
- 2) Annual Rental of \$4/acre or \$2,560
- 3) Production royalty rate for volcanic materials at \$1.20 per ton or 10% gross value, whichever is greater.

Work/Expenditure Requirements: PVT Materials has previously performed exploration work on this parcel and has submitted that data to TLA. Standard diligent operations requirements to maintain a minerals lease will be applicable.

Data Reporting Requirements: The agency will require any additional geologic data from exploration activities conducted on the subject lands.

### **Rationale**

PVT Materials has previously performed exploration work on the parcel. The company also holds the surrounding federal mining claims. PVT has shown itself to be an innovative company with an emphasis on finding new markets for the volcanic sands. PVT has worked with Fervo/Chinati (geothermal) on adjacent properties and will be required to work with Fervo should geothermal be developed on this parcel.

### **Committee Discussion**

The committee discussed the royalty rate in comparison to other leases and commodities in the area. As the volcanic material may have multiple marketable products, the royalty rate has a percentage of gross sales (at 10%) which will provide a fair royalty should the lessee find more lucrative markets for the material. The annual rental of \$4/acre was also discussed. Mineral lease rentals are comparatively low against uses such as solar leases or housing rentals. This lease has an annual rental in line with standard mineral leasing for state and federal leases/claims. Also discussed was the cross-leasing of the property and if this lease will cause any conflicts with the existing geothermal lease. Staff added that the PVT and the geothermal lessee had been encouraged to communicate to TLA staff and there has been full cooperation between the two parties.

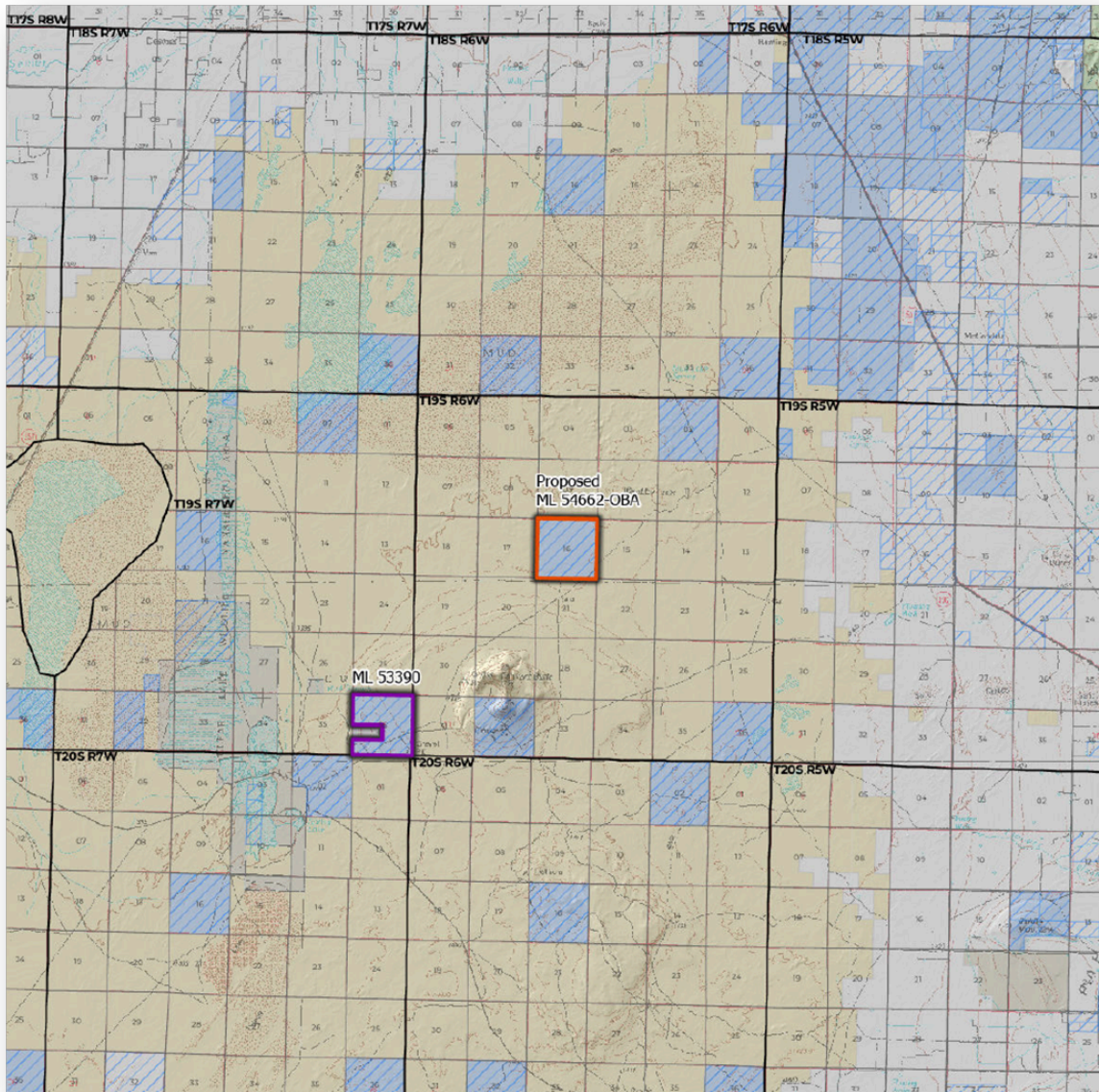
### **Request Action**

The agency requests that the Board approve the OBA and offers the following proposed motion:



“I move to approve ML 54662-OBA on the terms set forth in the Board Memorandum and to have the agency take all further actions necessary to finalize the transaction.”

## Appendix A



New TLA Position Requests



**TRUST LANDS**  
ADMINISTRATION  
SUPPORTING UTAH SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTIONS

September 18, 2025



# TRUST LANDS ADMINISTRATION

SUPPORTING SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTIONS

## Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration Board of Trustees Memorandum

**Date:** September 18, 2025

**From:** Michelle McConkie, Executive Director

**Re:** Request to Establish Office Manager, General Counsel and Deputy General Counsel Positions at Trust Lands Administration

**Fund:** N/A (Personnel Matter)

### **Summary**

Due to some recent agency reorganization, the Trust Lands Administration requests the positions of Office Manager, General Counsel and Deputy General Counsel be established with their accompanying salary ranges. This reorganization did not increase the agency budget or the overall number of agency FTEs. However, it did change some of the reporting structures and duties, which prompted these requests.

### **Office Manager:**

We are requesting the Board approve the creation of a new Office Manager position at the Trust Lands Administration. This position exists in the state employment system for other organizations but not specifically at the Trust Lands Administration, necessitating the Board's Approval.

The Office Manager is a management level position that leads the Trust Lands Administration's office operations team. They supervise the Operations Coordinators, Operations Specialists, Senior Research Analysts, and similar positions. They manage the day-to-day operations of the agency and ensure the Director's vision for agency culture, internal functions, and operational plans are effectuated.

They work closely with the Deputy Director of Operations and the Technology Director to implement agency strategic initiatives, develop operational plans, set goals, manage personnel and operational resources, oversee the budget for operational services, and establish and implement policies and procedures. The salary range for this position would range between \$30.00 to \$48.00 per hour.

**General Counsel:**

We are requesting the Board approve the creation of the General Counsel position at the Trust Lands Administration. Mike Johnson currently acts in this capacity, as did his predecessor at the Trust Lands Administration. However, although this position exists within the state system for other entities, the Trust Lands Administration does not currently have this classification. Mike's current classification within the Department of Human Resource Management system as a Managing Director does not accurately reflect his job duties.

The General Counsel is a management level position that leads the Trust Lands Administration's legal team and directly supervises its attorneys. They provide legal counsel to the Director and Board of Trustees regarding all administration and Board activities. This includes advice regarding legislative matters, rulemaking, Board and administration policies, laws of general applicability such as GRAMA and the Open and Public Meetings Act, land exchanges, the impacts of federal and other governmental actions on trust lands, and other matters. The General Counsel advises the Trust Lands Administration regarding the implementation of its revenue-generation programs.

This work includes conducting research, writing memoranda, drafting agreements, leases, patents and other documents and reviewing and approving the form of contracts. The General Counsel also represents the Trust Lands Administration in litigation with the approval of the Attorney General, coordinates legal representation by the Attorney General's Office, and supervises outside counsel in cases in which Trust Lands Administration is represented by private sector attorneys. The salary range for this position would range between \$80.00 to \$108.00 per hour.

**Deputy General Counsel:**

We are requesting the Board approve the creation of a Deputy General Counsel position at the Trust Lands Administration. This position exists in the state employment system for other organizations under various names. However, this position has not previously existed at the Trust Lands Administration, necessitating the Board's approval. The primary difference between the existing classification as Legal Counsel, and the role of the Deputy General Counsel, will be the supervision of non-attorney members of the Legal Group.

The Deputy General Counsel supervises the non-attorney employees within the legal team (Legal Assistant, Internal Compliance Officer, Records Manager and Special Agents). They also advise the Trust Lands Administration regarding the implementation of its revenue-generation programs. This work includes conducting research, writing memoranda, drafting agreements, leases, patents and other documents, and reviewing and approving the form of contracts. The Deputy General Counsel also represents the Trust Lands Administration in litigation with the approval of the Attorney General, coordinates legal representation by the Attorney General's Office, and supervises outside counsel in cases in which Trust Lands Administration is represented by private sector attorneys. The salary range for this position would range between \$72.00 to \$99.00 per hour.

FY 2027 Proposed Budget



**TRUST LANDS**

**ADMINISTRATION**

SUPPORTING UTAH SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTIONS

September 18, 2025



## Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration Board of Trustees Memorandum

**Date:** September 18, 2025

**To:** Board of Trustees, School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration

**From:** Deborah Memmott, Finance Director

**Re:** Approval of FY 2027 Budget

In accordance with Utah Code 53C-1-303(1)(e), Board approval is needed on Trust Lands Administration's operating budget before these numbers are submitted to the Governor. The Governor's office has requested FY 2027 budget numbers by September 30, 2025. Trust Lands Administration's annual budget appropriation request is attached. The amounts requiring approval are highlighted on the budget plan and summarized below.

Trust Lands Administration is requesting board approval of the following budget amounts for FY 2027 –

- The base budget for FY 2027 for the following three budget line items
  - Operating \$15,942,400
  - Capital \$5,000,000
  - Stewardship \$1,000,000
  - Total Base Budget \$21,942,400
- An on-going increase of \$165,000 for a new full-time Land & Forestry Resource Specialist position, to cover salary, retirement and benefits for the new position. This position would help increase our capacity to enact proactive land management measures, including forest health and watershed protection initiatives, recreation land management plans, and land stewardship projects.
- An on-going increase of \$130,000 for a new full-time Marketing & Communications Specialist position, to cover salary, retirement and other benefits for the new position. This position would assist the Communications team with the preparation and issuance of an annual report, as well as brand strategy, analytics, content creation and outreach.

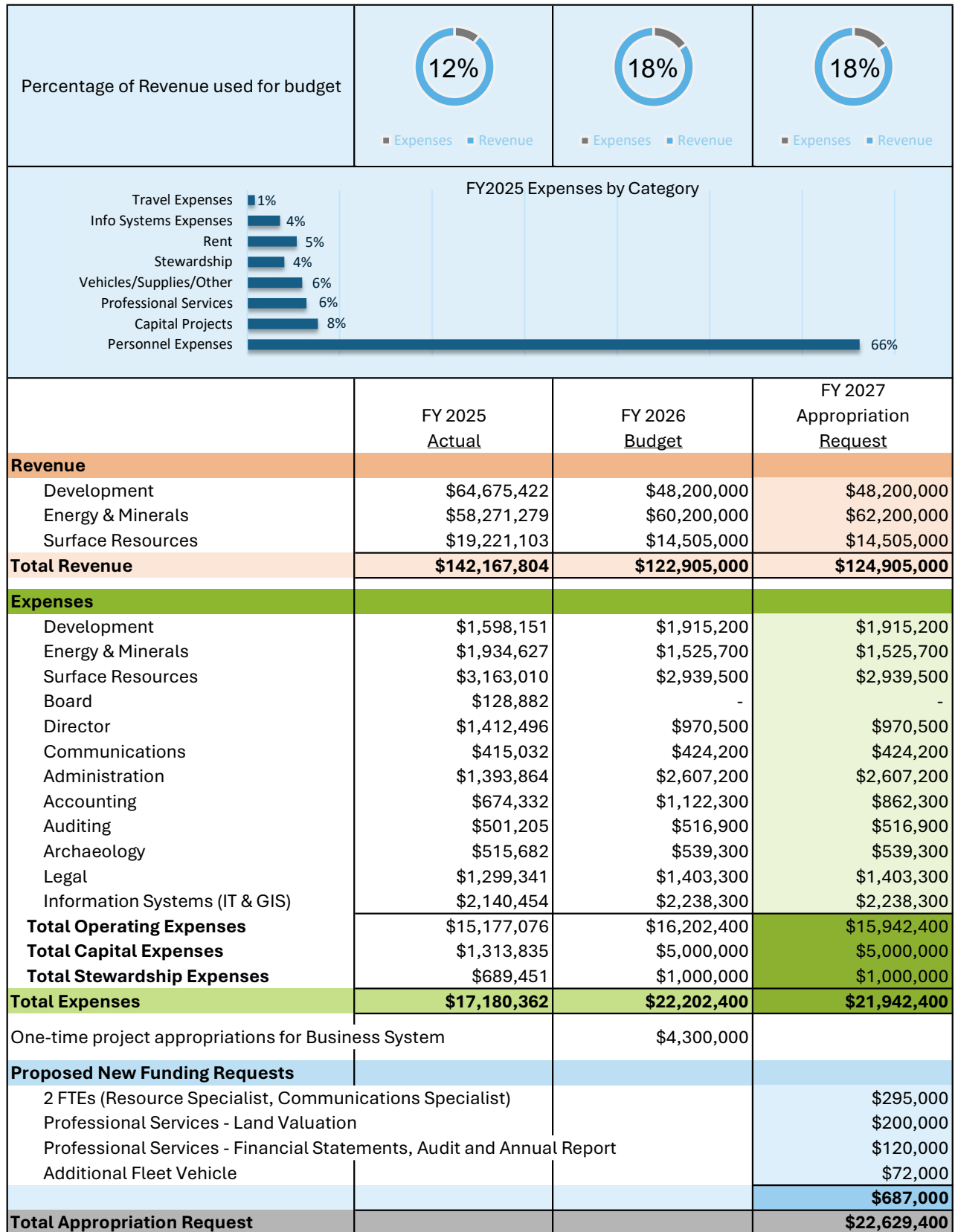
- A one-time increase of \$200,000 for professional services related to land valuation. This funding would be used to implement a more proactive and comprehensive land management model as required by the statutory changes made during the 2025 General Session.
- An on-going increase of \$120,000 for professional services needed for financial statement preparation, a yearly independent financial audit, and preparation and issuance of an annual report.
- A one-time increase of \$60,000 to add an additional fleet vehicle, as well as an additional ongoing increase of \$12,000 for the monthly/yearly maintenance and operating expenses for the vehicle. This vehicle would be used for the proposed new land & forestry position.

**Requested Agency Action**

The agency requests that the Board approve the FY 2027 base budget and additional budget requests.

## FY 2027 Appropriation Request

(July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027)





## School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration

### Additional Budget Funding Request

#### **FY 2027 Requests**

<b>On-going Increase Requests</b>	\$ 165,000	Funding for new position - Resource Specialist (salary & benefits)
	\$ 130,000	Funding for new position - Marketing & Communications Specialist (salary & benefits)
	\$ 120,000	Funding for professional services for yearly financial statement preparation, a financial audit, and preparation of an annual report
	\$ 12,000	Funding for monthly maintenance and operating expenses for an additional fleet vehicle
<b>One-time Increase Requests</b>	\$ 200,000	Funding for professional services to implement a comprehensive land management model
	\$ 60,000	Funding to purchase an additional fleet truck
<b>TOTAL FY 2027 Request</b>	<b>\$ 687,000</b>	