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**STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**  
**Draft Minutes Pending Board Approval**  
GENERAL BOARD MEETING

DATE: Thursday, July 10, 2025  
TIME: 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
LOCATION: DWS Metro Employment Center  
720 South 200 East, Salt Lake City, UT 84111  
Google Meet: [meet.google.com/pbu-urjy-tao](https://meet.google.com/pbu-urjy-tao)  
Phone: (US) +1 219-706-2356  
PIN: 930-840-709#

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**MEMBERS  
PRESENT:**

Celina Sinclair  
Debra Fiori  
James Jackson  
Lucio Gallegos-Notario  
Megen Ralphs  
Sara Dansie Jones  
Sarah Brenna  
Shawn Newell  
Stacey Taylor  
Stephanie Patton  
Steven L. Olson  
Tannen Ellis Graham  
Whitney Harris

**EXCUSED:**

Casey R. Cameron  
Deanna Hopkins  
Gary Harter  
Greg Paras  
Kendall Thomas  
Matt Loo  
Rich Fullmer  
Vic Hockett

**ABSENT:**

Jeff Worthington  
Jeremy Haslam  
Jordan Leonard  
Michelle Hill

**MEMBERS  
PRESENT  
(VIRTUAL):**

Laurel Timmins  
Lauren Navidomskis  
Shawn Milne  
Sherry Stevens  
Spencer Loveless  
Tonya Hales  
Tyler Low

**QUORUM:**

Yes

**BOARD  
STAFF:**

Elizabeth Carver  
Alexia Murphy  
Amira Mijic  
Kimberley Bartel  
Lindsay Cropper  
Natalie Garrett  
Nycole Tylka

**OTHER ATTENDEES (VIRTUAL)**

Helen Hanson  
Marilyn Cannon

**BOARD STAFF EXCUSED:**

Heather Mousley

**OTHER  
ATTENDEES:**

Amie Graff  
Becky Wickstrom  
Benjamin Crabb  
Chris Williams  
David Fogerty  
Helen Hanson  
John Talcott  
Joshua Rodeback  
Scott Romney  
Weston Miller  
Zac Whitwell

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**1. Welcome and Opening Business**

**Megen Ralphs**

- a. Acknowledgements and Introductions:
  - i. The meeting was called to order at 1:02 P.M.
  - ii. Whitney Harris was acknowledged as the new chair of the Apprenticeship Committee with Rich Fullmer serving as co-chair.
  - iii. Sydnee Dickson has retired as Superintendent of the Utah State Board of Education. Her replacement is Dr. Molly Hart. Stephanie Patton has been serving as the designee for this board position.
- b. Approval of the draft minutes from the SWDB General Board Meeting held on 04/10/2025:
  - i. Voting for approval of the minutes was delayed as a quorum was not present at the beginning of the meeting.
  - ii. When it was confirmed that a quorum was present (1:19 P.M.), Chair Ralphs was able to return to this item to allow for voting to proceed.
  - iii. Motion to approve the meeting minutes: Sarah Brenna
  - iv. Second: Steven Olson
  - v. Discussion: None
  - vi. In favor: All
  - vii. Opposed: None
  - viii. Motion passed unanimously
- c. State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) Meeting, October 9, 2025
  - i. The October board meeting will be held October 9th, following the One Utah Summit in Cedar City, October 6-8. Many board members are anticipated to attend the Summit.
  - ii. To accommodate all attendees, the October board meeting will offer several participation options:
    1. In person attendance at the South County Employment Center:
      - a. Location: 5735 S. Redwood Road, Taylorsville, UT 84123
    2. In-person attendance at the Cedar City Employment Center

- a. Location: 176 East 200 North, Cedar City, UT 84721
3. Virtual attendance via Google Meet or call in option, which will be made available as the meeting gets closer.
4. Board members who are interested in attending the One Utah Summit and would like to inquire about ticket availability were asked to contact Natalie Garrett. Board members would be responsible for paying for their own hotel accommodations and travel expenses, but not the ticket registration fee if a ticket can be provided.
  - a. Natalie Garrett: [ngarrett@utah.gov](mailto:ngarrett@utah.gov) or (385) 245-4627
- iii. October Service Project:
  1. To help with organizing the October board meeting effectively and commit to specific service activities with the local shelters, a survey will be sent out to ask board members to indicate their preferred location of participation (Cedar City or Wasatch Front).
  2. Chair Ralphs explained that a possible service project will be providing support to the Cedar City Care and Share and to another local food shelter in Salt Lake City for those board members who are participating in the Salt Lake area for the meeting.

## 2. **AJC One Stop Recertification: St. George Employment Center**

**Megen Ralphs**

- a. Board members who participated in the recertification of the Ogden One Stop included: Matt Loo, Whitney Harris and Laurel Timmins. Matt Loo was excused from the afternoon meeting and Laurel Timmins was present online. Chair Ralphs invited Whitney Harris to share her experience.
- b. Whitney Harris shared her positive experiences during the recertification process. A highlight for her was the opportunity to shadow at the front desk, where she observed individuals leaving visibly happier and in a better state than when they arrived.
- c. She also recounted a particularly impactful conversation with a representative from Adult Education. Rather than solely focusing on available services, the representative engaged them by asking, "What is your dream?" This approach encouraged a broader perspective, emphasizing personal aspirations and future goals beyond immediate service offerings.
- d. Laurel Timmins commented that she was present online to support this recertification.
- e. Recertification:
  - i. Voting for approval for the recertification of the St. George Employment Center was delayed as a quorum was not present at this time on the agenda during the meeting . When it was confirmed that there was a quorum present, Chair Ralphs was able to return to this item for voting to proceed. (1:18 P.M.)
  - ii. Motion to recertify the St. George Employment Center: Whitney Harris
  - iii. Second: Laurel Timmins
  - iv. In favor: All
  - v. Opposed: None
  - vi. The motion passed unanimously.

## 3. **Economic Update**

**Ben Crabb**

- a. Workforce Services Chief Economist Ben Crabb presented an update on the Utah Labor Market and broader economic conditions.
- b. Key discussion points included:



- i. **Utah's Economic Outlook:** Sara Jones inquired whether Utah's consistently above-average economic performance might be attributed to an overly optimistic consumer sentiment, suggesting a comparison with consumer sentiment data.
  1. Ben clarified that Utah may be appropriately optimistic and that Utah's indicators tend to be robust and significantly outperform the rest of the nation. He suggested that indicators could be compared using Utah economic performance vs. the national level performance in terms of job growth, inflation, etc. for a useful leading indicator of comparison for consumer sentiment. The information used for the inflation data and consumer sentiment was provided by the surveys conducted by the University of Michigan survey and the Kem C. Gardner Institute at the University of Utah to compile an analogous measure of consumer sentiment with regards to the economy.
- ii. **Interstate Comparisons:** Debra Fiori asked about Utah's economic standing relative to other states, which Ben addressed, clarifying that the data in the survey was from the Kem C. Gardner Institute at the University of Utah and that not all states use this information or have such data collection.
- iii. **Survey Data Clarification:** Steven Olson sought clarification on the data sources, confirming that most of the presented information was derived from surveys of individuals rather than solely economists' analyses.
  1. Ben addressed that the data collection from the Gardner Institute does include some forecasted information by economists but much of the data is being presented to show consumer sentiment among individuals in the state.
- iv. **Teen and Young Worker Employment:** Debra Fiori raised a question regarding the employment trends for teens and young workers ages 20-24, specifically whether current patterns indicate a lack of experience or a cooling labor market.
  1. Ben explained that historically, these demographics are often the last hired and the first to be impacted by workforce reductions. He further clarified that current labor market trends suggest a return to pre-COVID employment figures for these age groups, indicating a normalization rather than an abnormal downturn.
- v. **Unemployment Data Collection:** Sara Jones questioned the methodology for determining teen unemployment.
  1. Ben clarified that data originates from a survey called the Career and Population Survey that is conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Census Bureau's monthly survey of 60,000 households. This survey is conducted on a national basis, and uses a representative sample, and specific questions about employment status on a given date and hours worked ensure the data's accuracy. Ben has isolated the Utah data for his presentation. He also noted that only individuals actively seeking employment are counted in the unemployment rate.
  2. Sara Jones raised a question regarding the subjectivity of teen unemployment survey data, particularly concerning seasonal employment or potential dishonesty in responses.
  3. Ben clarified that the Bureau of Labor Statistics and Census Bureau surveys are designed to minimize subjectivity. Questions are specific, referencing a particular day or pay period of the month to determine employment status and quantifiable work hours. While absolute dishonesty cannot be prevented, the survey's structure aims for high accuracy.
  4. Ben further emphasized that individuals are only counted in the official unemployment rate if they are actively looking for work. If a person is not seeking employment, they are



considered out of the labor force and are therefore not included in the unemployment statistics.

- vi. **Urban vs. Rural Data:** Spencer Loveless inquired about the availability of urban versus rural employment data.
  - 1. Ben stated that the presented data was statewide, though county-level rural data is available, albeit not broken down by age group on a monthly basis.
- vii. **Housing Costs:** Ben mentioned a recent Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute report indicating Utah as the ninth most expensive housing market in the nation.
- viii. **Government Job Categories:** In response to an online question from Shawn Milne about the types of government jobs, Ben explained that federal jobs are categorized as defense and non-defense. State and local government jobs are broken down into education and non-education sectors, with the state category showing recent faster growth.
- c. Debra Fiori requested a copy of the presentation. A copy of the presentation was distributed to the board electronically following the meeting.

#### 4. Workforce Development Outreach Report

**John Talcott**

- a. John Talcott, Assistant Director for the Mountainland service area (which includes Summit, Wasatch, Utah, and Juab counties), provided an update on recent activities across the state.
- b. Key initiatives and partnerships highlighted:
  - i. **Assisting Federal Workers:** The department has actively engaged with the community, including collaborations with Ogden-Weber Technical College (OTEC) and assisting displaced federal workers in securing new employment.
  - ii. **Nebo School District Career Fair:** Workforce Services sponsored and participated in a career fair with the Spanish Fork-Salem Area Chamber of Commerce, where parents were invited to explore career options alongside their children using virtual reality headsets.
  - iii. **Advanced Manufacturing Partnership:** A successful collaboration with staffing agencies and advanced manufacturing companies resulted in over 200 filled positions, with one employer planning to expand to 700 new roles due to the event's success.
  - iv. **High School Engagement:** In the Uintah Basin, a partnership with the Vernal Area Chamber engaged over 150 participants from local high schools.
  - v. **Veteran Support:** Ongoing and significant partnerships with Hill Air Force Base (HAFB) continue to support transitioning service members and their families.
  - vi. **National Apprenticeship Day Job Fair:** This event saw over 180 participants and more than 10 employers.
  - vii. **Work Ability Career Preparation and Job Fair:** Over 250 job seekers and 30+ employers participated in this event.
- c. Upcoming events were highlighted, as listed on the back of the provided flyer.
  - i. August 5, 2025: Tooele Career and Resource Fair
  - ii. August 26, 2025: Utah Valley Job Fair at the Utah Valley Convention Center in Provo
  - iii. Sept 11, 2025: Dept. of Workforce Services Virtual Job Fair
  - iv. Nov 7, 2025: Utah County Health Career Fair
- d. Chair Ralphs commented on the success of the virtual job fairs. She emphasized that employers new to virtual job fairs can easily multitask, engage with their booths, and chat with job seekers during these events.

## 5. Committee Report Out

### Committee Chairs

- a. **Apprenticeship Committee** (Committee Chair Whitney Harris; Co-Chair Rich Fullmer)
  - i. Whitney Harris provided an update on recent apprenticeship initiatives:
    1. **National Apprenticeship Day:** A successful job fair event was held at the Salt Lake Community College (SLCC) Gail Miller Campus with over 180 job seekers participating in career exploration, including through the use of virtual reality.
    2. **National Apprenticeship Week:** Starting in 2026, National Apprenticeship Week will shift from its traditional November observance to April.
    3. **Youth Apprenticeship Study:** The Utah Education Policy Center, in collaboration with Talent Ready Utah, completed a study on youth apprenticeships in June 2025.
    4. **DOL Visit:** US Deputy of Labor Secretary Keith Sonderling visited Utah to learn about the state's registered apprenticeship programs. The Department of Labor has referenced Utah as a best practice model regarding registered apprenticeships.
- b. **Youth Committee** (Committee Chair Matt Loo; Co-Chair Jordan Leonard)
  - i. On behalf of Chair Matt Loo, Workforce Services Program Manager Lindsay Cropper reported on the Youth Committee's recent activities and upcoming initiatives:
    1. A significant collaboration with the Services to Disabilities Committee is planned for October. The committee is also looking into more efficient ways to share data.
    2. Lindsay highlighted collaborative efforts with Adult Education to streamline data sharing across their respective systems and with Workforce Services. This initiative focuses on quarterly reporting of student data and direct messaging to instructors. This improved communication and data exchange assists in planning credits and funding amounts for students' educational pathways, ultimately leading to more efficient data sharing.
    3. This committee worked with Service Area Director for Central and Southern Utah Amie Graff, who introduced the "Raising Kane" event, a successful job fair specifically for youth in Kanab. This event, a collaboration with the local chamber and city, brought together students from small high schools in Kanab and Orderville. Approximately 100 attendees engaged with around 30 employers, with virtual reality career exploration being tested with the high school students. The goal is to have at least 150 attendees at the next event.
      - a. The committee aims to replicate this successful job fair model in other small counties and towns, encouraging similar events within high schools.
- c. **Serving Individuals With Disabilities** (Committee Chair Steven Olson; Co-Chair Stacey Taylor)
  - i. Steven Olson, Committee Chair, provided an update on the committee's activities and upcoming events. The committee has been highly active, particularly in business relations and youth engagement. Recent highlights include:
    1. **Spring Career Events:** The Business Relations team hosted a successful Work Ability Career Preparation and Job Fair hosted 34 employers and approximately 250 job seekers.
    2. **Presentations & Outreach:** Members delivered presentations on business relations services, toured Deer Valley, and Ben Baldonado presented on "Accessibility in Your Workplace" at the Utah Worksite Wellness Council (UWWC) Conference. The Business Relations team and the Utah Center for Assistive Technology (UCAT) also provided an



accommodation assessment for a Weber County library employee and presented at the Holladay Business Alliance "Meet an Expert" event.

3. **Youth Empowerment:** A session on "Empowering Youth with Disabilities in Their Career Journey" was presented at the Work Based Learning (WBL) Summer conference, and the committee hosted a booth at the Disability:IN Utah 5K Run, Walk, and Roll event.
  4. **Youth Worksite Council:** The committee has received several valuable presentations from the Youth Worksite Council and on empowering youth.
- ii. **Upcoming Events:** The committee encourages members to save the date(s) for the following:
    1. July 22, 2025: ADA 35th Anniversary Virtual Lunch and Learn
    2. August 5, 2025: Tooele Career and Resource Fair
    3. September 9, 2025: Employer Workshop on Recruiting, Hiring, and Retaining Individuals with Disabilities
    4. September 25, 2025: Disability:IN Utah Summit: "Building Resilient Workplaces – One Story at a Time & 51st Annual Golden Keys Awards."
    5. October 7, 2025: Work Ability Career Preparation and Job Fair.
  - iii. Members were encouraged to review the provided packet for full details on these events. For any questions, please contact Steven Olson.
- d. **Career Pathways** (Committee Chair James Jackson; Co-Chair Vacant)
    - i. James Jackson reported on the Career Pathways Committee, noting a recent transition in leadership and the successful holding of their first meeting last month under the new leadership.
    - ii. **Action Plan:** The committee is energized and looking forward to stepping into a new action plan. There's significant enthusiasm for the career virtual reality headsets, with Adult Education departments also expressing excitement about their potential.
    - iii. **UServe Presentation:** Yvette Woodland gave a presentation during the last meeting on UServe's One Utah Service Fellowship and the Youth Mental Health Corps program.
  - e. **Operations** (Committee Chair Gary Harter; Co-Chair Vacant)
    - i. Chair Ralphs provided an update on behalf of committee chair Gary Harter:
    - ii. **Employment Center Recertifications:** The St. George Employment Center successfully completed its One-Stop Recertification in June. Upcoming recertifications for the Spanish Fork and Lehi Employment Centers are anticipated soon; dates will be announced, and board member volunteers are encouraged.
      1. Upcoming One-Stop Recertifications (tentative dates):
        - a. September 2025: Spanish Fork and Lehi Employment Centers
        - b. Board members that would like to participate in an upcoming recertification should contact:
          - i. Kim Bartel: [kbartel@utah.gov](mailto:kbartel@utah.gov) or (801) 824-7524
          - ii. Natalie Garrett: [ngarrett@utah.gov](mailto:ngarrett@utah.gov) or (385) 245-4627
    - iii. Sara Jones commented as a follow up from the April meeting that positive feedback has been received from SHRM (Society for Human Resource Management) regarding the employer survey. The committee intends to circulate this feedback to the board for additional input before proceeding with broader survey distribution. Sara will provide feedback received from the board

members to Zac Whitwell and continue to coordinate with SHRM. Sara will provide Chair Ralphs with an email summary of her meeting with SHRM.

## 6. Public Comment & Closing Business

Megen Ralphs

- a. **Public Comment:** No public comments were received.
- b. **Metro Employment Center Tour:** Megen reminded the board about the annual July field trip, this year focusing on witnessing the universal services provided at the Metro Employment Center. She noted that while services are consistent, some offices cater to different clienteles and experience varying levels of busyness.
- c. Workforce Services Workforce Development Division Assistant Director Nycole Tylka explained that the tour would involve three groups rotating through five distinct stations:
  - i. Job Connection Room
  - ii. Triage
  - iii. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Counselors
  - iv. Case Management & Homeless Support
  - v. A station in the conference room with Wasatch Front South Service Area Director Weston Miller and his leadership team.
- d. Steven Olson specifically suggested that the board members take an opportunity to spend time at the triage center during the tour, observing and listening to how staff interact with customers and manage a variety of issues. He commented on how enjoyable his experience was to observe two employees prior to the meeting.
- e. **Adjournment** at 2:07 PM.
- f. A tour of the Metro Employment Center followed the meeting.

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**UPCOMING SWDB MEETING:** Thursday, October 9, 2025, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

**Due to the One Utah Summit, this meeting will have split locations:**

Utah Department of Workforce Services, South County Employment Center  
5735 S. Redwood Road, Room 114  
Taylorsville, UT 84123

Utah Department of Workforce Services, Cedar City Employment Center  
176 East 200 North  
Cedar City, UT 84721

[jobs.utah.gov/edo/statecouncil/index.html](https://jobs.utah.gov/edo/statecouncil/index.html)