

The Budget Committee of Davis County met on October 1, 2025, at 8:30 a.m. in room 306 of the Davis County Administration Building, 61 South Main Street, Farmington, UT. Notice of this meeting was given under the requirements of Utah Code Annotated §52-4-202.

Disclaimer: The meeting was an open dialogue. Agenda items appear in bold and are only briefly summarized. The reader may refer to the audio recording and the attachments for further content clarification. Each presentation is recorded separately and labeled by the department's name unless indicated otherwise in the topic's title line. The audio recording is available based on the County's current retention schedule.

Note: The Budget Committee is not a governing body but makes recommendations. These recommendations must then go through the Commission for formal action.

The meeting commenced at 8:33 a.m.

Opening Roll Call

Committee members present were Scott Parke, Controller; Commissioner John Crofts; Commissioner Lorene Kamalu; Commissioner Bob Stevenson; Chris Bone, Human Resources Director; and Jeff Hassett, Information Systems Director. Shairise Bills, Deputy Controller, recorded the minutes of the meeting. Various County staff members were present throughout the presentations. Their names were not recorded unless a comment was made. The public in attendance was Kendalyn Harris, Bountiful City Mayor.

8:30- 9:00 a.m. Sheriff —Presented by Sheriff Kelly Sparks

Chief Taylor West, Chief Arnold Butcher, Chief Andy Oblad, Brian Gurr, Corrections Captain, and Tanner Allen, Sheriff's Business Manager, were with Sheriff Kelly Sparks to present the Sheriff's budget. Sheriff Kelly V. Sparks began the presentation by thanking the committee and expressing pride in the work of the Sheriff's Office. He provided a high-level overview of the various divisions to contextualize the budget and resource needs.

Key Department Statistics & Workload Highlights (Annualized/Daily Averages):

- **Patrol Division:** Handles 51 calls for service and 21 traffic stops daily.
- **Detectives:** Investigated over 500 criminal cases, making 51 felony arrests and 30 misdemeanor arrests last year.
 - **Court Security:** Provided services for 13 judges across three courthouses. Screened nearly 120,000 people (averaging 460 people per day).
- **Records:** Processed over 9,000 police reports and 1,000 GRAMA requests.
- **Dispatch:** Handled approximately 380 emergency 911 calls per day (one every 4 minutes).
- **Corrections (Jail):** Books about 21 new arrestees and processes a similar number for release daily. Manages an average of 630 inmates in-house and another 130 on ankle monitoring.
- **Buildings & Grounds:** Handled over 1,400 work orders last year.

- **New Responsibilities:**
 - **School Guardian Program:** Trained 45 school guardians for deployment in county schools, per a new state mandate.
 - **Shooting Range Management:** Issued 51 annual passes and averaged 25 daily passes each weekend since taking over management.

Primary Discussion Point: Personnel Attrition & Retention

Sheriff Sparks identified personnel as the most critical resource and highest priority. He highlighted the "crazy competitive labor market" as a major challenge.

- **Attrition:** The office has lost 75 sworn deputies in the last three years (24 in 2023, 29 in 2024, 22 so far in 2025).
- **Financial Impact:** The cost to train a new deputy is conservatively estimated at \$16,000. The total cost to replace the 75 deputies has exceeded **\$1,000,000** over three years.
- **Trend:** The majority of departing deputies are leaving the law enforcement profession entirely, not just moving to other agencies.
- **Sheriff's Plea:** The Sheriff urged the committee to prioritize competitive pay, benefits, the 401 (k) match, and the merit pay program to attract and retain employees. The issue of understaffing and mandatory overtime is a significant stressor on current staff.

Personnel Budget Requests & Action Items

The following specific personnel and funding requests were made:

- **Corrections Budget:**
 - **Request:** Reinstatement of **7 Deputy Sheriff positions** that were relinquished in the 2023 budget.
 - **Request:** Addition of **2 new Deputy Sheriff positions** to staff the new Competency Restoration program, which is expected to generate \$1.4 million in revenue for the County.
- **Sheriff's Budget (Patrol Division):**
 - **Request:** Reinstatement of **2 Deputy Sheriff positions** to handle increased call volume and a growing number of civil process services. This is a reduction from an initial request of three, due to internal efficiencies.
- **Dispatch (911) Budget:**
 - **Adjustment:** The office will relinquish **2 of the six currently vacant dispatcher positions** and only seek to fill 4, in anticipation of future dispatch consolidation.
- **Personnel Savings:**
 - **Action:** A vacant part-time Criminal Analyst position will **not be filled**. The savings will be used to help offset an anticipated reduction in VOCA grant funding.
- **Uniform Allowance:**
 - **Request:** A **20% increase** in the uniform allowance for all required personnel (Deputies, Jail Operations Specialists, Dispatchers). The allowance has not been adjusted in approximately 10 years, and uniform costs have risen significantly. The current allowance is \$100/month (\$1200/year).

Law Enforcement Bureau Budget Details

Chief Deputy Taylor West provided additional requests specific to the Law Enforcement Bureau budget:

- **Victim Advocate Funding:** Requesting the County pick up half the cost of one Victim Advocate position, as the office will no longer seek the full amount from the VOCA grant. This is to ensure the stability of the position, as grant funding can be unreliable.
- **Drone Replacement:** Request to purchase two new drones to replace obsolete models. Drones have become a standard and frequently used tool in the office.
- **SWAT Team Realignment:** The Sheriff's Office is moving its participation from the South Davis Metro SWAT team to the North Davis SWAT team (Layton-based). This changes the funding model to a more fiscally sound "per-operator fee" system, where the host agency manages equipment and training logistics.
- **Vehicle Fleet:** More than 50 previously ordered vehicles remain unbuilt and undelivered. The funds are encumbered, but a rollover of funds will be necessary for the next budget year to cover the cost upon their eventual arrival.
- **Policy Management Contract:** A new, larger contract with Lexipol (for policy management and daily training bulletins) will cost an additional **\$27,246**. (See Attachments A1-A14.)

Discussion

Commissioner Crofts went on record to offer praise for Sheriff Sparks' leadership, acknowledging his respected status statewide and thanking him and his staff for their dedication and for working in a challenging profession. He appreciates the communication provided to the Commission and admires the Sheriff's care and concern for his staff, as well as his cultivation of such a good environment.

Controller Parke raised a significant point regarding the contracts with West Point, South Weber, and Fruit Heights. He noted that the County General Fund appears to be heavily subsidizing the cost of law enforcement for these cities. He expressed a desire to collaborate with the Sheriff's Office to re-evaluate the funding formula, ensuring these cities pay their full share for the services provided, which would free up General Fund money for other County needs. Chief West confirmed that this is an ongoing effort, with a formula in place to increase the cities' contributions each year incrementally.

Commissioner Stevenson explained that four years ago, the previous Controller, along with the Sheriff's office, formulated the calculation most fairly based on the time spent and services provided by the County.

9:00-10:00 a.m. Search and Rescue, Shooting Range, and Buildings and Grounds West

Search and Rescue— AJ Sano [SAR Commander] was with Brad Barlow [SAR Treasurer] to present the Search and Rescue budget.

Key Points:

- The SAR team consists of 40 operational members (50 total) who train weekly.
- There is significant community interest, with nearly 55 applications received for the upcoming year.

- Historically, members had to provide their own gear at a personal cost of \$2,000-\$3,000, creating a barrier to participation. County financial support has removed this barrier, making the primary commitment one of time, not money.
- The team has logged over 6,100 volunteer hours in the current calendar year through training, exercises, and incident responses.

Budget Request:

- **Operational Budget:** A flat request of **\$61,940**, consistent with the previous two years. Key expenses include technical gear (ropes) and specialized mapping and GPS software.
- **Capital Budget (Additional Request):** A request for **\$20,000** to trade in and replace four snowmobiles and four ATVs as part of an every-other-year agreement with Young Powersports. This is an update from a previous \$12,000 estimate due to new pricing.

Discussion: Commissioner Crofts went on record to express his immense gratitude for the volunteers' service, highlighting it as a "big bang for our buck" for the County. He suggested holding a special recognition for the team at a future Commission meeting. The acquisition of a "Sherpa" (a large, amphibious, all-terrain vehicle) through a tri-county federal grant was discussed. This vehicle enhances the team's capabilities in challenging environments like the wetlands. There is a goal to further integrate SAR with the County's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for broader disaster response, building on past collaborations during events like mountain fires.

(See Attachments B1-B3.)

Shooting Range— Presented by Chief Deputy Sheriff Arnold Butcher (Minute 14:15)

Key Points:

- The facility serves a dual purpose: a professional training environment for all Davis County Law Enforcement (Monday-Friday) and a public recreation facility (Friday-Sunday).
- The range is operated primarily by approximately 75 volunteers and one part-time employee.
- Public revenue in the first six weeks of operation has been nearly **\$10,000**, with 83 annual passes sold. The facility is attracting users from across the Wasatch Front.

Budget Request:

- An estimated **\$50,000** in revenue is projected, though it is expected to be a conservative estimate.
- The operational budget covers costs for propane, portable toilets, targets, maintenance supplies, and fuel for a utility vehicle.

Discussion:

A significant discussion occurred regarding the facility's funding source. Since the range functions as a public recreation and tourism-drawing asset on weekends, the Controller proposed that a portion of its operational costs be covered by the County's Tourism, Recreation, Cultural, & Convention (TRCC) tax fund (also known as the restaurant tax). Commissioner Stevenson said there have been discussions about using Prop 1 monies to help revamp the parking lot. The Controller will work with the Sheriff's Office to develop a formal proposal to transfer funds from the TRCC budget to offset the range's cost to the General Fund. Still, Commissioner Stevenson wants to be involved in that discussion with Tourism. It was noted that other law enforcement agencies from outside Davis County use the facility for training, but are not currently charged a fee.

(See Attachments C1-C4.)

Buildings and Grounds West— *Presented by Mitch Matern, Buildings and Grounds West Maintenance Manager (Minute 32:18)*

Key Points:

- This has been one of the busiest years on record, driven by multiple construction and remodel projects.
- Many budget increases are directly related to new facilities coming online in the 2026 budget year, including the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and a new sewer lift station.
- A **\$59,000** increase in utilities is requested, primarily due to the new EOC being a 100% electric facility.

Capital Improvement Requests (Additional):

- **Security System Upgrade (\$168,000):** A high-priority request to replace 5-year-old servers, touchscreens, and PCs. The upgrade is critical as the current system operates on Windows 10, which will no longer be supported.
- **Parking Lot Lighting Replacement:** To replace aging (1991) and brittle light heads with modern, efficient LED lighting for safety and security.
- **Work Center Chiller Replacement:** To replace the original (1998) chiller unit that has met its life expectancy.
- **Crime Lab Design & Proposal (\$1,000,000):** A request to fund the complete architectural and engineering design for building out a new, expanded crime lab in the existing empty shell space above the facility's medical wing.
 - The current crime lab is severely overcrowded with evidence. The State Crime Lab is not an alternative due to its own backlog, which would cause multi-year delays for Davis County cases. The total construction cost is estimated to be around **\$3 million**, which would be requested in the 2027 budget. This project is deemed critical and has been on the 5-year plan for seven years. This would also free up space in the existing crime lab for the armory, which is also in critical need of more space. The Controller questioned whether funding the design for the crime lab is a reasonable expenditure if there is no money to build it. The cost of the build-out was questioned, as it seemed high for a structure already in place. *(See Attachments D1-D6.)*

10:00-11:00 a.m. Dispatch, Corrections, and Commissary—*Presented by Chief Deputy Taylor West*

911 Dispatch—*Presented by Chief Deputy Taylor West*

The 911 Dispatch budget is facing a significant financial shortfall. Due to the loss of contracts with Kaysville and Farmington, and a decrease in call volume leading to reduced state funding, the dispatch center is projected to have a deficit of over **\$670,000**. To remain compliant with state law, which prohibits budgeting for a deficit, the County must either cut expenses or increase revenue.

The Sheriff's Office has indicated that cutting services would compromise public safety, as it could lead to 911 calls being put on hold and a reduced ability to respond to officers. The consolidation with the North Davis Dispatch Center is expected to provide long-term financial stability, but it is still 1-2 years away. In the interim, the County is

considering a one- to two-year subsidy from the General Fund to cover the shortfall, but that will be a Commission decision. *(See Attachments E1-E3.)*

Corrections and Commissary —Presented by Chief Deputy Andy Oblad (Minute 14:42)

Corrections is facing challenges with inmate medical costs and staffing. The contract with Wellpath for inmate medical services is increasing by **\$170,000**. Additionally, the department is consistently understaffed, leading to increased overtime costs and burnout among deputies.

To address this, a proposal was made to over-hire by four to five positions. This would allow the department to have a continuous pipeline of trained officers to fill vacancies as they arise, reducing the need for overtime and ensuring the jail is adequately staffed.

A significant development is the opening of the **Competency Restoration Unit (CRU)** within the jail. This unit, operated in partnership with the state hospital, will provide mental health services to inmates and is expected to generate approximately **\$1.4 million in revenue** for the County.

Commissary

The Inmate Benefit Fund, which is funded by commissary sales, was a topic of discussion. It was noted that this fund, intended for the benefit of inmates, could potentially be used to fund programs and positions supporting inmate welfare, such as re-entry coordinators. This could help to alleviate some of the financial burden on the General Fund.

Discussion of “unfunded” or “over-hired” positions

The Controller proposed a solution to the Sheriff's Office's chronic staffing shortages by offering the concept of "unfunded" or "over-hired" positions.

The core problem is that due to continuous turnover, the Sheriff's Office is never truly at its fully budgeted staffing level. By the time new deputies are hired and complete the lengthy training process, other deputies have already left, creating new vacancies. This leads to consistent understaffing, which in turn results in significant overtime costs and burnout for the existing staff.

The proposed solution is to allow the Sheriff's Office to hire for more positions than are technically vacant at any given moment. For example, if there are five open positions, the office would be authorized to hire nine candidates. The rationale is that the department already has the budget for the full number of positions, but is never able to spend it all due to the hiring lag.

This approach would not require an increase in the overall budget. Instead, it would enable the Sheriff's Office to utilize its existing salary funds more effectively. By the time the new group of hires is trained and ready for duty, natural attrition will have likely created the openings to absorb them into funded positions. The ultimate goals of this strategy are to get the department closer to being fully staffed, reduce the heavy reliance on mandatory overtime, and improve retention by decreasing employee burnout.

(See Attachments F1-F5.)

11:00- 11:30 a.m. Animal Care— Presented by Michelle Hicks, New Animal Care Director

Mischelle Robinson, Office Manager; Madison Leyba, Shelter Services Supervisor; and Thom Crocker, Field Service Supervisor, were with Michelle to present their 2026 budget. Michelle highlighted the department's performance, discussed the impact of new staff positions, and outlined plans related to the upcoming new facility.

Performance and Operations

- **Calls for Service:** The department is on track to exceed 4,000 calls for service, surpassing the number reported in 2024. Layton and Clearfield generate the highest call volumes.
- **Software:** The department has transitioned to a new software called Animals First, which provides more accurate data and better reporting capabilities.
- **Return-to-Owner:** Proactive efforts have resulted in 671 pets being reunited with their families, with an average shelter stay of just two days.
- **Adoptions & Foster Program:** The shelter has facilitated over 1,300 adoptions this year. The foster program is described as amazing and critical to the shelter's success, allowing animals (especially very young ones) to be cared for in homes rather than in the facility.
- **Euthanasia Reduction:** The hiring of an Animal Behavior and Training Coordinator has resulted in a 27% decrease in shelter euthanasia from 2023 to 2024, with further reductions anticipated this year.

New Shelter Facility

- The groundbreaking for the new shelter is scheduled for **April 2026**.
- The department is actively planning for the logistical challenges of operating during construction, which may involve blasting bedrock on-site.
- A proposal was discussed for Animal Care to pay a "lease" to the County for the new building. This would replenish the Capital Projects fund that paid for the construction, treating the facility as a County-owned asset leased by the department.
- Fundraising and seeking large donations for specific areas of the new facility, such as a cattery or clinic, were also mentioned as possibilities.

Veterinarian and Other Topics

- A primary ongoing goal is to hire a **full-time, in-house veterinarian**. This is expected to be more cost-effective than the current system of using contract vets and paying for external emergency services. The new veterinary program at Utah State University is seen as a positive development for finding future candidates.
- The question of whether providing low-cost services, such as microchipping, competes with private veterinary practices was discussed. It was noted that such events are often aimed at low-income residents who may not use a private vet anyway.
- A question was raised about the County's handling of nuisance raccoons. The department clarified that this is considered a **pest control issue**, not an animal control issue, and they are neither staffed nor legally equipped to trap, euthanize, or relocate wildlife.

(See Attachments G1-G9.)

The meeting adjourned at 12:24 p.m.

Davis County Budget Committee

Meeting Minutes

October 1, 2025

All documents associated with this meeting are listed as the following attachments:

A1-A14	Sheriff and Fire Warden 2026 Budget Summaries and Additional Requests
B1-B3	Search and Rescue 2026 Budget Summary
C1-C4	Shooting Range 2026 Budget Summary and Additional Requests
D1-D6	Buildings and Grounds West 2026 Budget Summary and Additional Requests
E1-E3	E-911 Dispatch 2026 Budget Summary and Additional Requests
F1-F5	Corrections and Commissary 2026 Budget Summary and Additional Requests
G1-G9	Animal Care 2026 Budget Summary and Additional Requests

Minutes prepared by:

Shairise Bills

Deputy Controller

Minutes approved on: 10/27/2025

/s/ Scott Parke

Scott Parke

Controller— Budget Officer