

The Budget Committee of Davis County met on September 30, 2025, at 11:00 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 11:03 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.

11:00- 11:30 a.m. Treasurer— Presented by Matt Brady, Davis County Treasurer

Phil Conder, Chief Deputy Treasurer, was with Matt to present the Treasurer's budget.

Key Initiatives and Focus Areas:

- The office is continuing to fine-tune its new tax collection and distribution system in collaboration with Information Systems (IS).
- A primary focus is on handling data requests (GDPA) and developing compliance procedures with IS, the Clerk's Office, and legal counsel.
- Future initiatives for 2026 include revamping cash handling procedures, conducting a self-assessment of the ACH pre-payment program, and improving the processing of returned mail to reduce the list of delinquent parcels.

Budget Request - Postage Increase:

The only additional funding request is for an increase in the postage budget, which is increasing annually. The original 2025 budget for postage was \$60,500, but the department anticipates spending approximately \$66,000 by the end of the year. The total requested amount for 2026 is \$68,000, representing a \$7,500 increase over the revised 2025 budget. This increase mirrors a similar request from the Controller's Office for valuation notices.

Armored Car Service:

The department has decided to delay reinstating a contract for armored car services to transport deposits to the bank. They will continue to utilize the assistance of law enforcement for bank deposits in the meantime. This is a budget-related decision. The estimated annual cost for the service is approximately \$5,000. Commissioner Kamalu expressed strong support for reinstating the service as a matter of best practice and safety.

Electronic Notices and Payments:

A discussion was held regarding the potential to save on postage by increasing the use of electronic tax notices, which is now permitted by state statute at the discretion of the Treasurer. Currently, a third-party printer manages an "e-notices" opt-in program for taxpayers. It was noted that a more robust, County-managed system would require significant IS infrastructure, specifically a secure login portal for property owners.

Training Budget:

The training budget will remain flat for 2026. The Treasurer's Office decided not to request an increase this year to "stay lean" but may revisit the need in future budget cycles to keep up with certifications and best practices.

(See Attachments A1-A3.)

11:30- 12:00 p.m. Recorder— Presented by Kelly Silvester, Davis County Recorder

Dakota Wurth, Chief Deputy Recorder, was with Kelly to present the Recorder's budget.

Performance and Key Initiatives:

- **Revenue Trend:** The office has experienced a modest recovery in revenue since reaching its lowest point in 2023. Revenue is currently pacing approximately **5% ahead of last year**, with September trending 11% higher year-over-year.
- **Modernization:** The office is focused on modernization, having successfully implemented an updated **Property Watch** service and a new Recorder website this year, with assistance from the IS department.
- **New Staff:** A new Cadastral Mapper, funded in the previous budget, was hired in June and has already helped improve service levels.
- **Fee Schedule Review:** The department plans to conduct a comprehensive analysis of its fee schedule, last updated in 2015, to improve cost recovery metrics.

2026 Budget Requests:

- **Confidential Administrative Assistant:** The primary request is for funding for a new Confidential Administrative Assistant position, estimated to have an annual cost of approximately **\$107,000** (including benefits).
 - **Justification:** The position is part of a larger office reorganization to capture the institutional knowledge of two long-term employees who are expected to retire soon.
 - **Long-Term Plan:** The department does **not** intend to backfill the positions of the retiring employees, meaning future attrition savings will offset the new role.
- **Office Supplies:** A **\$3,000** increase is requested for the office supplies budget (from \$12,000 to \$15,000) to account for rising costs and volume-dependent needs.
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Additional Discussion Points:

- **AI and Document Processing:** The office is working with IS to use AI technology to process a backlog of 450,000 historical documents. This initiative is expected to significantly increase staff efficiency, improve document accuracy, and open a new revenue stream by making the documents accessible online. The immediate goal is to support existing staff rather than replace them.
- **Revenue Realignment:** The IS department currently receives approximately \$300,000 in annual revenue from services like ReadWeb and Property Search. It was agreed that this revenue properly belongs to the Recorder's Office, and the Controller will work to transition the revenue to the correct department to ensure budgetary accuracy. (See Attachments B1-B2.)

12:00- 12:30 p.m. Budget Committee Working Lunch

The Davis County Budget Committee discussed the strategy for creating a balanced 2026 budget, with a focus on employee compensation as the most significant and critical component. Scott outlined the need for direction from the commissioners on how to structure pay and benefits to close a budget gap. The primary options discussed included:

- **Reallocating 401(k) Funds:** Reducing the County's 401(k) match (e.g., from 4% to 2%) and adding those funds directly to employee wages.
- **Adjusting Merit Pay:** Lowering the budget for merit-based increases from the current 3.5% down to 2.5%.
- **Focusing on COLA:** Prioritizing a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) to keep pay grades competitive and reduce the need for large, reactive benchmark adjustments in the future.

The discussion also touched on the need for targeted market adjustments to retain key employees in high-demand fields, versus applying broad, across-the-board increases that may be less effective.

12:30- 1:00 p.m. Children's Justice Center (CJC) —Presented by Julie Stephenson, CJC Director

Brindy Solomon, Office Specialist, was with Julie to present the 2026 budget.

Key Discussion Points:

- **Increasing Workload:** Director Julie Stevenson reported that the CJC's caseload is growing. The center served 610 children in 2024, and based on numbers through August 2025, the year is on pace to be even busier.
- **Staffing Concerns:** The center's two forensic interviewers conduct approximately 90-95% of all interviews, raising concerns about the high workload and the potential for burnout and secondary trauma.
- **Critical Role in Prosecution:** County Attorney Troy Rawlings emphasized that the high-quality interviews conducted at the CJC are essential for achieving successful prosecutions and convictions in child abuse cases. The CJC's work and processes are considered a model for other centers across the state.
- **Grant Funding:** The center relies on grants, such as the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) grant, to fund key positions, including the victim coordinator, and to cover specific costs, such as therapy and in-state training.

Budget Requests

The CJC's budget is largely flat, with two minor increases requested:

- An increase of **\$671** for **Training and Education** to cover required out-of-state training for leadership, as mandated by national accreditation.
- An increase of **\$2,900** for **Miscellaneous Services** to account for VOCA grant funds that have been specifically awarded to pay for **victim therapy costs**.

(See Attachments C1-C3.)

1:00- 1:30 p.m. Attorney and Victim Services—Presented by Troy Rawlings, County Attorney

Craig Webb, Chief Deputy Attorney, and Suzanne Webb, Attorney Secretary, were with Troy to present the Attorney's 2026 budget.

Key Points of Discussion:

- **High Performance & Efficiency:** Troy emphasized that his office operates with high efficiency and success. He stated that the cost of prosecution in Davis County is **\$21.45 per taxpayer**, compared to Salt Lake County's \$45 per taxpayer. Despite the lower cost, his office maintains a **conviction rate at trial of over 90%**, which is far higher than Salt Lake's rate of approximately 50%.
- **Staff Retention is Critical:** He argued that this success is due to retaining a team of experienced, senior prosecutors who handle a caseload approximately **2.5 times the nationally recommended standard**.
- **Warning Against Cuts:** He strongly cautioned that any reduction in compensation, such as eliminating COLA or merit increases, would be "**devastating**" to the office's ability to recruit and retain staff, especially as other counties actively try to hire his prosecutors.

2026 Budget Requests

- **Fund Compensation:** The primary request is to fully fund **COLA and merit increases** to remain competitive and retain experienced staff.
- **Software Upgrade:** A one-time request for **\$40,000** is needed to upgrade the E-Prosecutor software and improve efficiency, thereby complying with new, complex state-mandated reporting requirements (HB 354) without adding significant manual labor.
- **New Part-Time Position:** A request for a part-time, non-benefited **Office Specialist** costing **\$21,500**, to provide essential coverage for the front reception desk.
- **Victim Services:** There were no requested increases for Victim Services; its budget is flat.

(See Attachments D1-D6.)

1:30- 2:00 p.m. Justice Court —Presented by Judge JC Ynchausti and Jennifer Nicholas, Justice Court Admin

Jennifer Nicholas-Bingham, Justice Court Administrator, was with Judge Ynchausti to present the budget requests for 2026. They are **not requesting any budget increases for 2026**. Judge Ynchausti stated that the court is operating successfully and is satisfied with its current funding for staffing and equipment. He noted that while they had requested an increase for interpreter services last year, the costs have stabilized, and no additional funds are needed now. It was also clarified that a previous \$1,000 reduction in the travel and training budget is manageable because the state covers conference costs for the Judge and Administrator due to their roles on statewide education committees. The court is now fully staffed, with new clerks performing well. (See Attachments E1-E3.)

2:00- 2:30 p.m. Opioid Settlement Funds —*Presented by Todd Utzinger, Troy Rawlings, Johnnie Blackmon, and Sheriff Kelly Sparks*

The committee discussed the best way to utilize the \$17.3 million in Opioid Settlement Funds the County is set to receive over the next 18 years to have the greatest impact. Scott emphasized the need for a sustainable plan to avoid creating a long-term "funding cliff," similar to what the County faces with expiring ARPA funds. If all proposed ongoing programs were fully funded, the settlement money would last approximately 15 years, after which an estimated **\$2.5 million annual tax increase** would be required to sustain them.

A multi-department proposal developed by criminal justice stakeholders was presented, which included several key requests.

High-Priority, One-Time Requests

- A **\$200,000 body scanner** for the jail to prevent drugs from being smuggled in.
- An initial **\$25,000** for Narcan kits to reverse opioid overdoses.

Proposed New Programs & Positions

- A new **Substance Use and Mental Health Disorders Division** within the County Attorney's office to screen cases and divert individuals to treatment programs like drug court or mental health court early in the process.
- A **Forensic Social Worker** program in the Legal Defender's office to assist clients.
- An **Inmate Re-entry** specialist and a **Jail Screening Unit** to help individuals transition from jail back into the community.

Key Discussion Points & Alternative Proposals

- **Davis Behavioral Health (DBH)** noted that it was not included in the initial proposal. They highlighted a significant funding gap for **Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT)** for drug court participants, needing approximately **\$100,000 annually** against a current budget of only \$19,000. They also face the potential loss of a separate \$500,000 federal opioid grant in the near future.
- Troy suggested a more efficient use of funds for his proposed new division. Rather than hiring three new employees funded 100% by opioid money, he proposed using a mix of opioid and General funds. This would allow the new staff to handle both opioid-related cases and other general duties, preventing a "waste of taxpayer money" and freeing up settlement funds for other priorities. *(See Attachments F1-F23.)*

2:30- 3:00 p.m. Legal Defenders—*Presented by Todd Utzinger, Legal Defender Coordinator*

Susana Arreola, Legal Defenders Administrator, was with Todd to present the Legal Defenders' 2026 budget. The budget included several significant requests driven by contractual obligations and the upcoming expiration of federal funds.

Major Budget Requests & Issues

- **The "SLFRF Cliff"**: The most critical issue is the loss of one-time SLFRF (ARPA) funds. Three contract attorney positions are currently funded by this source, which expires at the end of 2026. Continuing these essential positions will require **\$314,000 in new, ongoing General Fund money**.

- **Defender Contracts:** A significant increase was requested to meet the terms of the current multi-year contract, which aims to close the pay gap between public defenders and prosecutors. The contract includes a **4% increase plus the employee COLA**.
- **Appeals:** A **\$75,000 increase** is needed to cover the rising cost and volume of appeals, which are often outsourced to external legal counsel.
- **Continuing Legal Education (CLE):** A request for **\$3,600** to cover CLE training costs, an expense that Todd had been paying for personally for several years.

The discussion highlighted that even with current staffing, public defender caseloads are approximately **double the recommended national standards**. The central challenge for the committee is to identify a sustainable and ongoing funding source for the positions currently supported by one-time federal aid. *(See Attachments G1-G36.)*

3:00- 3:30 p.m. Pre-trial Services —*Presented by Johnnie Blackmon, Pre-trial Services Coordinator*

Johnnie informed the committee that the department is not requesting any additional funds for the upcoming year. He noted that while future requests for additional positions may be possible as the program grows, none are currently needed.

Key points from the presentation include:

- **Department Status:** Pre-Trial Services is now fully staffed, with a team comprising five case managers, a supervisor, a legal tech, and a director. They have also recently improved their office space by converting a copy room into an additional office and adding a resource stand for clients in the waiting area.
- **Performance Metrics:** The department reported a 79% court appearance rate, a 75% success rate (with no new charges filed while under supervision), and a 95% safety rate (with no new high-level crimes committed while under supervision).
- **Caseload:** The department receives approximately 55 referrals per month, with case managers averaging 62 clients on their caseloads. The department's legal tech has processed 954 referrals so far this year and is projected to surpass 1,000 by year's end. Over 700 individuals will have been supervised by the end of the year.
- **Public Safety Assessment (PSA):** The department has improved the quality and accuracy of the information it provides to judicial officers through the PSA tool. This has resulted in judges releasing individuals who can be supervised safely in the community. Johnnie suggested that Opioid Settlement funds could be a potential solution to help pay for court-ordered services like drug testing and mental health evaluations.
- **Cost-Effectiveness:** The daily cost to supervise a client in pre-trial services is \$3.28, compared to an average daily cost of \$48 for incarceration.
- **Future Focus:** The department remains committed to staff training and professional development, including required BCI compliance training and participation in the National Association of Pre-trial Services Agencies (NAPSA) conference. Future budget requests may include funding for a screening position to assess individuals at the time of their booking into jail.

The Commission praised the department's performance and noted that Davis County's pre-trial program is considered a leader in the state, with other counties seeking its guidance and expertise.

(See Attachments H1-H4.)

Davis County Budget Committee

Meeting Minutes

September 30, 2025

The meeting adjourned at 3:25 p.m.

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

A1-A3	Treasurer 2026 Department Budget Summary and Additional Requests
B1-B2	Recorder 2026 Department Budget Summary
C1-C3	CJC 2026 Department Budget Summary and Additional Requests
D1-D6	Attorney_Victim Services 2026 Department Budget Summary and Additional Requests
E1-E3	Justice Court 2026 Budget Summary
F1-F23	Opioid Settlement Funds Proposal
G1-G4	Legal Defenders 2026 Budget Summary and Additional Requests
H1-H4	Pre-Trial Services 2026 Department Budget Summary

Minutes prepared by:

Shairise Bills

Deputy Controller

Minutes approved on: 10/27/2025

/s/ Scott Parke

Scott Parke

Controller— Budget Officer