



Approved Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: August 13, 2025

Time: 12:30 PM

Location: Festival Hall, Cedar City, Utah

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Paul Cozzens. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. Roll Call / Introductions

Attendees introduced themselves, including representatives from:

- Five County AOG (Administration and staff) Darin Bushman, Andrea Escobar, Carrie Schonlaw, Jody Motavao, JayCee Finicum, Cody Christensen, Kim Cooper, Melissa Brown, Nathan Wiberg, Carrie Sigler (Virtual)
- Local elected officials (mayors, commissioners, and school district representatives from Beaver, Iron, Garfield, Kane, and Washington Counties) Jerry Taylor, Paul Cozzens, Nanette Billings, Wade Hollingshead, Celeste Meyeres, Gil Almquist, Stephanie Hill, Melani Torgersen, Lyle Goulding, Tyler Fails, Burke Staheli, Curtis Barney,
- Partners (Utah State University Extension, Federal Delegation staff, and state agency representatives) Gary Webster, Jeff Raiser

3. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the June 11, 2025 meeting were reviewed.

- **Action: Motion to approve the minutes by Commissioner Meyers, Seconded by Commissioner Almquist, unanimously approved motion carried.**

4. Executive Director's Report (Darin Bushman)

- Update on first five weeks in office.
 - One-on-one meetings with directors and staff.
 - Staff praised for dedication; noted challenges with historic contracts.
 - Discussed the differences of our AOG comparative to other AOG's.
 - Circles program highlighted (operating in Washington County, expanding to Iron County).
 - Identified budget challenges and financial encumbrances.
 - Discussed the large number of small funding sources.
 - Discussed branding and county-neutral apparel for AOG identity.
- Proposed Clearinghouse Review process for board documents and circulated documents for awareness and recognition that they were received by the board. No objections by the committee.



5. Human Resources Report – Jen Wong

- 75 current employees.
- Open positions: Washington CAP case manager, transportation planner, weatherization staff (Iron County). One seasonal HEAT program position is expected to open this fall.
- Two recent resignations.

6. Presentation – Utah State University Extension: Rural Online Initiative (ROI)

Presenter: Mike Sarles

- Program launched in 2018, permanent funding secured.
- Courses: Certified Remote Professional, Certified Remote Leader, Remote Sales Professional, E-Commerce Accelerator.
- 642 job placements since inception; goal of 742 this year nearly met.
- Reduced unemployment in rural counties.
- Success stories shared (including visually impaired participant).
- A new program for Ag/Ecommerce supports small businesses with online sales growth, trying to get permanent and additional funding this legislative session.

7. Community Action Partnership (CAP) Needs Assessment

Presenter: Kim Cooper

- Surveys, forums, and data collected across five counties.
- Top needs: Housing, income stability, education, employment, health care, transportation, food security.
- Current responses: rental/utility assistance, Circles poverty reduction program, benefit navigation grant, food network partnerships.
- **Action: Motion made by Commissioner Meyers and seconded by Mayor Goulding to approve CAP Needs Assessment. Motion carried unanimously.**

8. CIB Project Review – Town of Henrieville

- Application for culinary water improvements (secondary well).
- Funding request: ~\$2.97M (anticipated 70% grant / 30% loan).
- Importance of communities maintaining updated project lists emphasized.
- **Action: Motion to support Henrieville's CIB application made by Mayor Torgersen, seconded by Burke Staheli, passed unanimously, motion carried.**

9. CDBG FY2026 Rating and Ranking Policies

- Reviewed with only date updates from the prior year.
- **Action: Motion to approve made by Commissioner Almquist, seconded by Commissioner Hollingshead, passed unanimously, motion carried.**

10. CDBG Project Request for Qualifications

- Reviewed RFQ for a Real estate Professional
- **Action: Motion to approve made by Commissioner Taylor, seconded by Mayor Billings, passed unanimously, motion carried.**



11. Catastrophic Wildfire Resolution

- Commissioner Pollock raised the need for a resolution and letter on wildfire impacts.
- Draft resolution reviewed, to be finalized and circulated.
- **Original Action: Motion to support made by Commissioner Taylor with a second by Commissioner Gil Almquist, motion passed with one nay by Commissioner Meyers.**
- Further discussion regarding adding a second resolution regarding the North Rim Bravo Fire resolution based upon the Kane County Resolution.
- **Second Action: Motion to add a North Rim Bravo Fire Resolution made by Commissioner Taylor with a second by Commissioner Hollingshead, motion passed unanimously, motion carried.**

12. Program Risk Discussion Review

- Deputy Director Carrie Schonla presented the program risk assessments.

13. Credit Card Policy Review

- Presented the revised credit card policy to the Steering Committee.
- **Action: Motion to approve made by Commissioner Almquist with the revision to include “or their relatives” to the limitations in the policy, seconded by Commissioner Meyers, passed unanimously, motion carried.**

14. Procurement Policy Discussion

- Presented the research on the revised procurement policy
- The Steering Committee was comfortable adopting the state procurement policy limits.
- **Action: Motion was made to “draft a policy that follows the state procurement policy standards” by Commissioner Meyers, with a second by Commissioner Almquist, passed unanimously, motion carried.**

15. Fraud Risk Assessment

- Fraud Risk Assessment was prepared and submitted to the steering committee. Mayor Billings suggested that we formalize on our internal audit functions, create a policy or standard, and do it. Director Bushman to research and review.
- **Action: Motion to approve made by Mayor Billings with a second by Commissioner Meyers, with the addition to work on formalizing the internal audit function, motion passed unanimously, motion carried.**

16. Year-End Financial Report

- Year-end financial report presented by Allison McCoy
- **Action: Motion to approve the year-end financial report was made by Commissioner Taylor with a second by Tyler Fails, motion passed unanimously, motion carried.**



17. Information Only – Fleet Status

- Director Bushman presented the fleet report to the Steering Committee, indicating the poor condition and need for replacement of some vehicles. Discussed the need for a vehicle strategy.

18. Congressional Staff Updates

- Gary Webster presented on behalf of Senator Lee's office.

19. Congressional Staff Updates

- Gary Webster presented on behalf of Senator Lee's office.
- Stephanie Hill presented that congressional staff and the Cedar Mountain Sheep Producers are meeting with USTR Jamieson Greer tomorrow in Tooele.
- Celeste Meyers presented that the National Park Service is now required to coordinate with local gateway communities, similar to the BLM and Forest Service. She also stated that their county had declared a declaration of economic disaster for the North Rim fires.

20. Next Meeting

Next Meeting will be on October 1, 2025

21. Closed Session

- A motion was made by Commissioner Taylor to enter a closed meeting session to discuss character and competency of personnel, a second was made by Mayor Torgersen. A roll call vote was conducted, and the motion passed unanimously.
- The regular session was resumed without any action taken.

22. Meeting adjournment

- Meeting was adjourned at 3:45pm

These minutes were approved by the Steering Committee at their meeting on October 1, 2025 meeting.