



USU Board of Trustees Regular Meeting

Friday, November 7, 2025, 8:30 AM MST to 12:10 PM MST

USU Logan Campus and via Zoom:

<https://usu.zoom.us/j/85855332181?pwd=uL7phtuUtEpbQOWx0nIoLGnuxIIQEy.1>

Attendance

Trustees:

Tessa White, Chair

Gina Gagon, Vice Chair

Ryan Dent

Brett Hugie

Luke Johnson

Kacie Malouf

Dave Petersen

Jacey Skinner

Brandon Sorensen

Clark Whitworth

David Huntsman (absent)

University Representatives Present:

Max Alder, USUSA

Paul Barr

Lisa Berreau

Janalyn Brown

Steve Campbell

Dave Cowley

Amanda DeRito (virtual)

Jared Gerreau

Crystal Giordano (virtual)

Collin Hastings, USUSA

Janna Hawkins

Haley Klaassen

Nicole Laroque

Mica McKinney

Brad Mortensen

Kristian Olsen (virtual)

Jessica Oyler

Bill Plate

Marissa Questereit, SILC

Larry Smith

Al Smith

Brian Steed

MaKenzie Stock

James Taylor (virtual)

Kennedy Thurgood, SILC

Cam Walker

J.J. Watts, USUSA

Matt White

Courtney White

Ken White

Kris Winter

Devin Wiser

Linda Zimmerman

Other:

Kent Alder

Andrea Brandley

Angie Stallings, USHE
(virtual)

Courtney Tanner (virtual)

Agenda

1. Call to Order

8:34 AM

Presenter: Chair Tessa White

Tessa White welcomed all attendees, including USU's new president, chief of staff, and athletic director, and reviewed the three guiding principles she believes are essential for the trustees to remember: 1) transparency, 2) partnerships, and 3) timeliness.

1.1. Welcome: Brad Mortensen, USU's 18th President

8:36 AM

1.2. Welcome: Jessica Oyler, Vice President and Chief of Staff

8:41 AM

1.3. Welcome: Cam Walker, Vice President and Athletic Director

8:42 AM

2. Resolution of Commendation and Appreciation for Trustee Kent Alder (see commendation) **8:46 AM**
Presenter: Chair Tessa White

3. Student Resolution of Commendation (see commendation) **8:52 AM**
Presenter: Trustee Brandon Sorensen

Recognition of Interim President Al Smith **8:57 AM**
Presenter: Board of Trustees

Each member of the Board of Trustees shared remarks expressing appreciation and admiration for Interim President Smith and his leadership during a challenging period for the university. Trustees conveyed their gratitude for his steady guidance and willingness to serve. The comments concluded with a standing ovation from all in attendance and a formal expression of thanks for President Smith's service.

4. President's Report (see report) **9:08 AM**
Presenter: President Al Smith

5. Committee Reports **9:11 AM**

5.1. Executive (see report)

Presenter: Chair Tessa White

5.2. Audit, Risk, and Compliance (see report)

Presenter: Trustee Ryan Dent

5.3. Student Success (see report)

Presenter: Trustee Kacie Malouf

5.4. Honorary Degrees (see report)

Presenter: Trustee David Petersen

5.5. Research and Academic Approval (see report)

Presenter: Vice Chair Gina Gagon

5.6. Statewide Mission and Campus Oversight (see report)

Presenter: Vice Chair Gina Gagon

5.7. Strategic Partnerships and Fundraising (see report)

Presenter: Trustee Jacey Skinner

6. STRATEGIC AGENDA

6.1. USU Economic Impact (see presentation)

Presenter: Andrea Brandley

9:46 AM

The Board received an update on USU's statewide impact, including economic contributions and the reach of university programs. Members discussed the importance of clearly communicating USU's value, noting the need for strong, consistent messaging supported by both data and real stories. The Board emphasized sharing this information with a broad audience, including students and younger communities, to illustrate the benefits of higher education. It was also noted that USU graduates earn higher incomes than the state average.

7. BREAK

10:21 AM

8. ACTION AGENDA

8.1. Approve: Construction of Phase II of the James D. Ballif Building (previously named the SMASH Lab)

10:36 AM

Presenter: Vice President Dave Cowley

The Board received an update on the proposed construction of Phase II of the James D. Ballif Building (formerly the SMASH Lab). This phase will include the addition of a state-funded shake table that will support earthquake research, training, and preparedness efforts statewide. Existing equipment will be relocated to the new addition to accommodate the installation, allowing the facility to operate as Utah's only dedicated earthquake education center. Funding for Phase II includes state support, a major gift from the Ballif family, and resources from the College of Engineering, which has been building reserves and continuing fundraising efforts to support the project.

Motion:

Pursuant to USHE Rule 702, Trustee David Petersen moved that the Utah State University Board of Trustees approve the construction of Phase II of the James D. Ballif Building (formerly known as the SMASH Lab), as presented. Trustee Luke Johnson seconded the motion. Voting was unanimous in the affirmative. Motion passed.

8.2. Approve: Utah Forest Restoration Institute

10:47 AM

Presenter: Executive Vice Provost Paul Barr

The Board received an update on the proposed Utah Forest Restoration Institute, which is being advanced following recent federal legislation expanding the Southwest Forest Health and Wildfire Protection Act to include Utah. Establishing this institute is a requirement for the state to be eligible for associated federal funding. USU has been working closely with state agencies to ensure alignment with statewide priorities, and the institute is designed specifically to address Utah's unique forest health and wildfire mitigation needs. The state has expressed strong support for the institute's creation, and USU is seeking approval for its formal naming.

Motion:

Trustee Brett Hugie moved that the Utah State University Board of Trustees approve the establishment of the Utah Forest Restoration Institute, as presented and recommend that

Institute be submitted to the Utah Board of Higher Education for approval. Trustee Kacie Malouf seconded the motion. Voting was unanimous in the affirmative. Motion passed.

9. CONSENT AGENDA

10:56 AM

9.1. Approve: 9.26.25 USU Board of Trustees Regular Meeting Minutes

9.2. Approve: Capital Improvement Priority List for FY27

9.3. Approve: Report of Institutional Discretionary Funds for FY25

Motion:

Trustee Clark Whitworth moved to conditionally approve item 9.2 (Approve: Capital Improvement Priority List for FY27) pending the President's review, and to remove item 9.3 (Approve: Report of Institutional Discretionary Funds for FY25) from the consent agenda so that President Mortensen and Dave Cowley can review it further and bring it back for approval at the next board meeting. Trustee Brandon Sorensen seconded the motion. Voting was unanimous in the affirmative. Motion passed.

9.4. Approve: Academic Program Name Change

9.4.1. Communicative Disorders (online 2nd Bachelor of Science Degree)

9.4.2. Speech and Hearing Sciences Bachelor of Arts Bachelor of Science

9.5. Approve: Academic Restructure

9.5.1. World Languages and Cultures Bachelor of Arts

9.6. Approve: Academic Discontinuation

9.6.1. Communicative Disorders Bilingual and Bicultural Emphasis Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science

9.6.2. Deaf Education American Sign Language English Teacher Training Program Emphasis Bachelor of Arts

9.7. Approve: Policy

9.7.1. Policy 1220 (previously 5007): General Expenditures

9.7.2. Policy 1221 (previously 5001): Procurement

9.7.3. Policy 1222 (previously 5302): Travel

9.7.4. Policy 1223 (previously 5304): Meals & Entertainment

9.7.5. Policy 1225 (previously 5005) Charitable Donations

9.7.6. Policy 3311: Employee Gifts & Awards

Motion:

Trustee Jacey Skinner moved that the Board of Trustees approve the Consent Agenda as presented, with the exception of item 9.3 Approve: Report of Institutional Discretionary Funds for FY25, which will be discussed further. Trustee Ryan Dent seconded the motion. Voting was unanimous in the affirmative. Motion passed.

10. CLOSED SESSION

11:07 AM

Motion for Closed Session:

Vice Chair Gina Gagon moved that in accordance with 52-4-205 of the Utah Code that the Trustees go into a closed Executive Session for the sole purpose of discussing the character, professional competence, physical or mental health of individuals, pending or reasonably imminent litigation, and the possible sale of real property. Motion seconded by Trustee Brett Hugie. Roll call vote was initiated by Chair Tessa White and taken by Secretary Janalyn Brown. Voting was unanimous in the affirmative and the meeting moved to a closed session which commenced at 11:07am.

Attendance

Trustees:

Tessa White, Chair	Luke Johnson	Brandon Sorensen
Gina Gagon, Vice Chair	Kacie Malouf	Clark Whitworth
Ryan Dent	Dave Petersen	David Huntsman (absent)
Brett Hugie	Jacey Skinner	

University Representatives Present:

Janalyn Brown	Burke Nazer
Brad Mortensen	Al Smith

Others:

Jacqueline Peterson	Rachel Terry	Joseph Adams
---------------------	--------------	--------------

Motion to adjourn Closed Session:

Motion to adjourn the closed session was made by Vice Chair Gina Gagon and seconded by Trustee Luke Johnson. Voting was unanimous and the closed session concluded at 12:37pm.

11. INFORMATION AGENDA

11.1. Leased Space Report

11.2. Report of Investments for July 2025

11.3. Year-End Reports of Auxiliaries and Service Enterprises FY25

11.4. Next: Friday, December 5, 2025, Board of Trustees Strategy Meeting (Logan Campus, 11:00am-2:00pm)

11.5. Upcoming: Friday, January 16, 2026, Board of Trustees Regular Meeting

12. Adjourn

12:37 PM

Motion:

Vice Chair Gina Gagon moved to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Clark Whitworth seconded the motion. Voting was unanimous in the affirmative. Meeting adjourned.

Tessa White, Chair

Janalyn Brown, Secretary

Date Approved

DRAFT