

SALT LAKE COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Approved by the Board on January 26, 2026

December 8, 2025 – Administration / West Jordan Branch

Board Attendees:	Board Attendees:	Virtual Board Attendees:
Spencer Romney, Chair	Anastasia Morgan, Vice Chair	Jessica Strong
Ann Engar (left at 1:18 pm)	William (Bill) Scarber	Excused Board Members:
Kaati Tarr	Lindsay Vargo	Councilmember Natalie Pinkney
		Steven Sokol

Other Attendees:		
Joey McNamee	Anneliese Booher	Alexis Alires
Amy Watson (public)	Brad Kendrick	Carrie Hackworth
Christa Warren	Jené Mortensen	Jennifer Fay
Luke Rasmussen	Melissa Haslam	Sara Neal
Shaun Dimick	Rob Harrop (public)	Vern Waters

Other Virtual Attendees:		
Brent Roberts (Help Desk)	Robin Chalhoub	Isaac Higham
Bonnie Bradford	Erin Rigby	Kim Welch
Maggie Mills	Pamela Park	Steph Tilt

Spencer Romney, Board Chair, called the board meeting to order at 12:31 PM

WELCOME – Joey McNamee, Library Director

I am astonished this is the last meeting of the year. We are excited about a few agenda items, but at a more leisurely pace.

APPROVE MINUTES: October 27, 2025 – Spencer Romney, Board Chair

Bill Scarber made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 27, 2025 Library Board Meeting. Anastasia Morgan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Board Member:	Vote:
Councilmember, Natalie Pinkney	n/a
Anastasia Morgan	Aye
Ann Engar	Aye

Bill Scarber	Aye
Jessica Strong	Aye
Kaati Tarr	Aye
Lindsay Vargo	Aye
Spencer Romney	Aye
Steve Sokol	n/a

PUBLIC COMMENTS – Spencer Romney

Steve Van Maren, stated there has been remodeling at the hosting library and he will have to take the tour again. He appreciated being involved in the meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE – Joey McNamee

In recent in-branch surveys, respondents shared positive feedback about the Teen and Young Adult staff at Taylorsville, expressing strong appreciation for their service and support. This reflects the excellent work happening across all branches. Some respondents also had questions about how to access 3D printing and Create Spaces, indicating a need for clearer communication about these services. In addition, one comment noted that some individuals appeared to be staying at the library for extended periods. The library welcomes everyone and remains committed to maintaining a safe and comfortable environment for all patrons and staff.

AGENDA ITEMS

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEST JORDAN BRANCH – Vern Waters, Manager and Alexis Alires, Circulation Supervisor

Welcome to the West Jordan branch. The branch is located in a shared building with Library Administration and the Viridian Event Center, which finished construction in 2012, replacing the old building from the 1980s. The branch is surrounded by community resources, including TRAX lines, a senior center, a memorial playground, and other nearby county amenities. This central location helps make West Jordan one of the busiest branches in the system, consistently ranking second in door count just behind Sandy.

The branch is supported by a dedicated team of 22 staff members, along with a strong volunteer corps of about 35 individuals contributing over 600 hours each year. Staff roles are integrated rather than separated, with circulation and librarians working closely together. West Jordan also serves as a training branch for new staff and participates in dozens of committees and workgroups across the system.

Inside the building, the collection is thoughtfully organized with an emphasis on accessibility and ease of use. For example, large print and genre fiction titles have been shifted closer to the front so that patrons—especially older adults—do not have to walk as far to find what they need. Displays throughout the branch help patrons discover new titles quickly, especially those who are stopping in while using other nearby county services.

West Jordan is known for its creative programming and its sense of humor. The branch offers weekly storytimes, science nights, paint nights for adults, teen art kits, monthly scavenger hunts, spice and recipe clubs, senior book clubs, school outreach, and seasonal programs. The branch also partners with community organizations, such as West Jordan High School's DECA program, to support projects like food drives that fill multiple large bins with donations.

The library's playful side shines on [social media](#), where staff share "Sunday puns" and lighthearted videos. Some of these posts have reached millions of views, including a crow-themed pun and a cottage cheese joke that became unexpected favorites. Filming these segments often involves a lot of laughter and retakes, and that sense of fun carries over into the branch atmosphere.

Outside, visitors can enjoy the "kindness rocks" in the plaza. This project began when Westlake Elementary School approached the branch with the idea of donating painted rocks—and arrived with a full pickup truck instead of just a box. These rocks offer a colorful, uplifting welcome and are a visible reminder of the strong connection between the branch and its community.

Together, these elements reflect West Jordan Library's holistic approach to service: combining accessible collections, dynamic programs, community partnerships, and a welcoming, good-humored environment for patrons of all ages.

INTRODUCTION TO JENE MORTENSEN – Joey McNamee

Jené has joined the team as the new Associate Director and will be supporting the Facilities team as well as working on construction projects, the system-wide safety plan, and other major system-wide initiatives. She comes to the Library from Aging Services.

Jené has worked for Salt Lake County for 18 years. Earlier this year, she completed a six-month career mobility assignment with the library, shadowing Leslie Webster and working with Recreation and Aging Services. She found the six-month career mobility experience very valuable and is excited to return to the library in an official capacity. She looks forward to contributing to current and special projects.

Coming from elsewhere in the County, Jené brings strong connections and valuable experience that will benefit the library. They are excited to have her on the team.

WRITE-OFF POLICY – Joey McNamee, Brad Kendrick, Associate Director

Over the past several months, record retention has become a focus area, particularly with the implementation of GDPR and the change in fiscal management. Because privacy is a core value for the library, this is an appropriate time to align our practices with GDPR requirements.

This discussion relates specifically to bad debt and uncollectable fines and fees. The library has been tracking this since 1987 and has not had a formal policy for how to handle the bad debt. A countywide policy states that individual agencies need to develop their own policies for writing off bad debt. This policy will bring us into compliance with countywide policy.

The proposed Write-Off Policy would formally authorize writing off outstanding debt after three years. By that point, accounts are inactive and collection is highly unlikely. Some accounts are referred to the District Attorney's Office for collection, but we have not been writing off those balances internally.

Since 1987, the average annual amount of bad debt has been approximately \$185,000, though this figure has decreased in recent years, in part due to the work of collection agencies before accounts are sent to the DA's Office. The library's revenue budget is based on the actual amount expected to be received and this policy will not affect the budget or financial statements. The bad debt is recorded on an internal ledger and is not rolled up to the library's financial statements.

This policy also intersects with the elimination of fines on children's materials and is intended to align with standard fiscal and county procedures. Under current library guidelines:

- Library debt of \$25 triggers an account hold.
- Debt of \$50 is referred to an outside collection agency for up to 120 days.
- Larger balances above \$300 and accounts with prior internal collection efforts are referred to the DA's Office.

The collection agency used for lower-level debt works specifically with libraries and is expected to treat patrons respectfully. Our goal is to recover materials and funds when possible while recognizing that we provide an essential public service.

Under the proposed process, if a debt remains unpaid for three years, it will be written off, and the related patron information will be purged. At that point, the patron's record is effectively cleared, and they may start fresh. While there is some risk that a small number of patrons could abuse this policy, most cases involve modest fees—such as a lost set of children's books. We do not want long-standing debt to create a disproportionate hardship, but we must also act as responsible stewards of public resources. A three-year window is considered a reasonable balance, as collection is unlikely beyond that period.

Situations such as house fires or serious accidents are addressed under a separate waiver policy, and each case is reviewed individually.

A draft of the formal policy will be distributed prior to the next meeting, when it will be presented for a vote.

ROUNDING FOR CASH TRANSACTIONS – Brad Kendrick

As penny production ends, the library will round cash transaction totals to the nearest five cents. This rounding may be up or down, depending on the amount due. The change is planned for implementation in January, though final details are still pending.

STRATEGIC PLAN – Joey McNamee

Over the past year, the leadership team has been engaged in a strategic planning effort. During November and December 2024, staff participated in eight SWOT-analysis sessions, each with 30–40 attendees, representing different parts of the organization. These conversations helped identify major upcoming projects, what remains new or unclear, and what is most important to staff and patrons going forward.

Following these sessions, the leadership team worked to organize and refine this input. Through additional meetings, they narrowed the scope of the plan and clarified priorities. To support clear communication, the resulting framework was designed to be simple enough to fit on a poster and to be easily shared and understood.

Mission

Make a positive difference in the lives of our community by inspiring imagination, satisfying curiosity, and providing a great place for everyone to visit, which includes:

- Providing welcoming, attentive service and eye contact
- Ensuring patrons receive the help they need, including assistance with self-checkout
- Helping patrons find what they need on the website and other platforms, even when those platforms are not fully under the library's control
- Maintaining collections that are responsive and available

Core Values

The team identified values that align with both library-industry standards and Salt Lake County's values. These include:

- **Access:** We provide all members of our community with equal access to technology, spaces, and information for learning, growth, and entertainment.
- **Intellectual Freedom:** We encourage people to read, watch, and listen to whichever materials they choose, without restrictions or censorship.
- **Privacy:** We safeguard the confidentiality of what people read, watch, and listen to.
- **Welcoming:** We approach each interaction with courtesy, openness, and respect.

These values, often referenced through the "RICE" framework (Respect, Integrity, Caring, and related ethical principles), guide decision-making and daily practice.

Strategic Pillars

These values and conversations led to the development of four strategic pillars that shape priorities and activities:

- **Engaged and Empowered Staff:** Staff are supported, pursuing excellence, and connecting the community.
- **Responsible Stewardship:** We have robust finance, technology, and facility plans, and accountable practices.
- **Patron-Centered Approach:** Patrons can find relevant materials, programs, resources, and services.
- **Cohesive Vision:** Our team is unified, informed, and motivated through collaboration and shared purpose.

Task Forces and Key Initiatives

To move this work forward, several task forces and projects have been created. A few examples include:

- **Career Development Task Force:** Expand career development opportunities to offer insight into all the positions available at the County Library. This would feature a variety of assignments, mentorship opportunities, and projects that supplement successful programs we have already implemented.
- **Building Design:** Updates building and construction guiding documents, including the library facilities master plan and the new building cookbook, to incorporate our best practices and share information with staff.
- **Every Visit Matters Task Force:** Develop an extensive customer service training around the vision Every Visit Matters, including onboarding, ongoing training, and consistent and cohesive messaging.

Some task force efforts focus on internal staff needs, while others focus on external community engagement. Each task force has a defined start and end point.

Communication and Feedback

During the planning process, staff emphasized the need for fewer, clearer communication channels to reduce overload and improve consistency. The strategic plan is intended to:

- Provide an organizing framework for projects and priorities
- Demonstrate that staff input was heard and incorporated
- Support ongoing conversation about how individual and team efforts connect to the plan

Community and Board Involvement

While the initial work has been largely staff-driven, future stages will include input from the community and the Library Board. The aim is to balance meaningful engagement with avoiding survey fatigue.

Board members bring valuable expertise. They will receive periodic updates and have opportunities to provide feedback, either individually or as a group, especially when the team encounters challenges or key decision points. The goal is to make use of the Board's guidance without creating unnecessary administrative burden.

Plan Duration

The previous strategic plan lasted approximately ten years. The current plan is expected to have a lifespan of three to five years, allowing for more frequent reassessment and adjustment.

Visual Communication

The marketing team created a poster to present the mission, vision, values, and pillars in an accessible, visually engaging format. The poster is intended to:

- Share the core elements of the strategic plan at a glance
- Serve as a tool for reinforcing priorities in daily work
- Be displayed in strategic locations throughout branches to keep the plan visible and relevant

Staff engagement throughout this process has been strong, and colleagues across the system have been forthcoming with ideas and feedback. This input has been vital in shaping a strategic plan that reflects shared priorities and supports the library's mission to inspire imagination.

STAFF REPORTS

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Joey McNamee

The County Council will approve the final county budget in their next meeting. This budget requests a Construction Manager position and a two-year, time-limited full-time fundraising position, with the understanding that staff will work to demonstrate its value within the next several months before it is reviewed for extension. A requested safety position was not funded; in response, staff will continue educating the Council about branch safety efforts and gather additional data to support a stronger request next year. It was noted that the general county property tax increase does not include the library, which appears as a separate line item and may benefit future funding requests. The Council approved a land purchase in Midvale, allowing that project to move forward with closing anticipated by year's end.

Governor Spencer Cox delivered a budget speech at the Kearns branch, where he and First Lady Abby Cox emphasized support for early literacy and concern about children not reading at grade level by third grade; the event also showcased the KEA Library space and modern library services to state and county partners.

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS – Sara Neal, Manager

The recent government press conference at Midvale was highly successful and generated significant media coverage at both the county and city levels. The #SundayPunday social media feature, which has run for about a decade, was recently refocused by Marketing from a variety of language-related posts to a single joke format with accompanying reels. This change has substantially increased engagement, with reels reaching between 5,000–6,000 views and up to over 1 million views on occasion, and the overall audience has doubled in the past eight months. Key upcoming events include weekly Monday classic movie nights at Viridian, an adults' New Year's Eve gala (registration opened last week), a Noon Year's Eve countdown event for children, and the upcoming announcement of Tiny Art Show winners.

FACILITIES & SAFETY – Jené Mortensen, Associate Director

Jené reviewed construction and capital improvement projects. Draper's HVAC replacement has a selected contractor and equipment is expected around September 2026. South Jordan's HVAC has been bid with a contractor identified and a pre-construction meeting planned for March 2026, noting equipment lead-time concerns. A system-wide xeriscape initiative is underway, with projects at Bingham Creek and South Jordan, where we received \$27,000 in rebates through partnerships with Utah Water Savers and Jordan Valley Water District. The Taylorsville remodel will begin with a closure starting January 5 for about six months to reconfigure the front entrance and improve weather protection. The operations building is in schematic design with seismic evaluation in progress and an anticipated completion in summer 2027.

For the West Valley branch, Taylorsville will serve as the alternate service site, with the boiler at West Valley expected to last through this transition; the Taylorsville closure is planned for roughly five months plus buffer for weather, with the goal to reopen before summer. There is a plan to brief the County Council the week after next Tuesday regarding future West Valley plans.

WRAP UP AND TOUR – Spencer Romney

Anastasia Morgan made a motion to close the Salt Lake County Library Board Meeting. Lindsay Vargo seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Board Member:	Vote:
Councilmember, Natalie Pinkney	n/a
Anastasia Morgan	Aye
Ann Engar	n/a
Bill Scarber	Aye
Jessica Strong	Aye
Kaati Tarr	Aye
Lindsay Vargo	Aye
Spencer Romney	Aye
Steve Sokol	n/a

The meeting ended at 1:37 PM. Vern Waters and Shaun Dimick, Facilities Manager, took interested parties on tour of the West Jordan branch.