



DRAFT MINUTES

HIGHER EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

Friday, January 30, 2026 | 8:00 a.m. | 110 Senate Building

Members Present:

Sen. Ann Millner, Senate Chair
Rep. Karen M. Peterson, House Chair
Rep. Jill Koford, Vice Chair
Sen. John D. Johnson
Sen. Karen Kwan
Sen. Kathleen A. Riebe
Sen. Evan J. Vickers
Rep. Katy Hall
Rep. Michael J. Petersen
Rep. Mark A. Strong
Rep. Ryan D. Wilcox

Members Absent:

Sen. Keith Grover
Sen. Michael K. McKell
Sen. Chris H. Wilson
Rep. Sahara Hayes
Rep. Trevor Lee
Rep. R. Neil Walter

Staff Present:

Joseph Fitzgerald, Finance Officer
Ben Leishman, Finance Manager
Lorna Wells, Committee Secretary

Note: A copy of related materials and an audio recording of the meeting can be found at www.le.utah.gov.

1. Call to Order and Approval of Minutes - January 26, 2026

Chair Karen Peterson called the meeting to order at 08:09 AM.

2. Uintah Basin Technical College Presentation

Joseph Fitzgerald gave a brief overview about Uintah Basin Technical College.

[2a. Uintah Basin Technical College Budget Introduction](#)

Aaron Weight, President, Uintah Basin Technical College gave a presentation about the college.

[2b. Uintah Basin Technical College Presentation 26GS](#)

Taylor Harrison, Uintah Basin Student of the Year 2025, discussed her experiences at Uintah Basin Technical College.

Sen. Vickers asked Taylor Harrison about her path from high school to Uintah Basin. Taylor Harrison responded.

MOTION: Rep. Koford moved to approve the minutes of the January 28, 2026 meeting. The motion passed with a vote of 9 - 0 - 8.

Yeas - 9

Rep. J. Koford
Sen. K. Kwan
Sen. A. Millner
Rep. M. Petersen
Rep. K. Peterson
Sen. K. Riebe
Rep. M. Strong
Sen. E. Vickers
Rep. R. Wilcox

Nays - 0

Absent - 8

Sen. K. Grover
Rep. K. Hall
Rep. S. Hayes
Sen. J. Johnson
Rep. T. Lee
Sen. M. McKell
Rep. R. Walter
Sen. C. Wilson

3. Tooele Technical College Presentation



Joseph Fitzgerald gave a brief overview about Tooele Technical College.

[3a. Tooele Technical College Budget Introduction 26GS](#)

Kent Thygerson, Interim President, Tooele Technical College gave a presentation about the college.

[3b. Tooele Technical College Presentation 26GS](#)

Sen. Miller commended Pres. Thygerson on the improvement in timely completion. Interim Pres. Thygerson responded and continued the presentation.

Chair Karen Peterson mentioned hearing of concerns from Tooele residents about some recommendations relating to Tooele Technical College. She wanted to assuage any fears about the future status of Tooele Technical College. The Committee recognizes the importance of Tooele Technical College to the community. Pres. Thygerson responded.

4. Davis Technical College Presentation

Joseph Fitzgerald gave a brief overview of Davis Technical College.

[4a. Davis Technical College Budget Introduction 26GS](#)

Sen. Millner assumed the chair.

Chair Millner mentioned that the LFA's office was asked to come up with some possible solutions. She also wanted to confirm the importance of both Tooele Technical College and Davis Technical College to their respective communities.

Darin Brush, President, Davis Technical College gave a presentation about the college.

[4b. Davis Technical College Presentation 26GS](#)

Sen. Riebe mentioned the very positive experience she had at the prison graduation and congratulated all of the technical colleges on the great work that is done.

Sen. Kwan mentioned that all of the programs at Davis Technical College are phenomenal. She expressed appreciation for the collaboration with the correction facilities as well as with the other USHE institutions.

Chair Millner thanked Pres. Brush for his leadership and for the cooperation among all of the technical colleges.

5. Strategic Reinvestment Year 2 Outlook

Chair Millner gave some preliminary information about the strategic reinvestment initiative.

Geoff Landward, Commissioner, Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) discussed the strategic reinvestments at the system level.

[5a. USHE Strategic Reinvestment Year 2](#)

Nate Talley, USHE CFO, gave more details about the reinvestment plans. Geoff Landward continued the presentation.

Sen. Kwan asked for clarification about receiving input from students, faculty and staff. Geoff Landward responded.



Sen. Riebe congratulated USHE on creating accessible, affordable opportunities throughout the State. Geoff Landward responded.

Chair Millner gave some concluding remarks about the legislative support for USHE.

Chair Millner recognized the student leaders from the USHE institutions throughout the state who were in attendance.

6. Utah Valley University Presentation

Chair Millner mentioned that it is bittersweet to welcome to Pres. Tuminez to the meeting in light of her decision to leave the university and thanked her for her tremendous leadership and contributions to the State.

Joseph Fitzgerald gave a brief overview about Utah Valley University.

[6a. Utah Valley University Budget Introduction 26GS](#)

Astrid Tuminez, President, UVU, gave a presentation about the university.

[6b. Utah Valley University Presentation 26GS](#)

Sen. Kwan wanted to extend gratitude and love to Pres. Tuminez for her wonderful personality, leadership, compassion, and love for UVU.

Sen. Riebe expressed her appreciation for Pres. Tuminez for her leadership, service and inspiration.

Chair Millner mentioned her personal conversations and connection with Pres. Tuminez. She thanked Pres. Tuminez for her dedication, willingness to listen, hard work and tremendous leadership at UVU.

Pres. Tuminez was given a standing ovation.

MOTION: Sen. Kwan moved to adjourn. The motion passed with a vote of 7 - 0 - 10.

Yeas - 7

Rep. J. Koford
Sen. K. Kwan
Sen. A. Millner
Rep. M. Petersen
Sen. K. Riebe
Rep. M. Strong
Sen. E. Vickers

Nays - 0

Absent - 10

Sen. K. Grover
Rep. K. Hall
Rep. S. Hayes
Sen. J. Johnson
Rep. T. Lee
Sen. M. McKell
Rep. K. Peterson
Rep. R. Walter
Rep. R. Wilcox
Sen. C. Wilson

Chair Millner adjourned the meeting at 10:07 AM.