

**MINUTES** of the public meeting of the Uintah County Commission held **January 27, 2026** in the Commission Chambers of the Uintah County Building at 147 East Main, Vernal, Utah. The meeting commenced at 3:00 pm.

**PARTICIPANTS:** Commissioners John Laursen, Sonja Norton and Willis LeFevre.

**ATTENDANCE:** Cheyenne Reid, Kamlyn Williams, Derrick Jaramillo, Guy Collett, Mike Wilkins, Matt Wilber, Melanie Silcox, Loren Anderson, Gennie Bird, Angela Hawkins, Wendi Long, Scott Hardman, Brenda McDonald, Deanna Nyberg, Danette Brooks.

Minutes by Sheri Allen.

**WELCOME:** Commissioner Laursen, Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**PRAYER** by Derrick Jaramillo.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** by Scott Hardman.

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** January 13, January 14 work session, January 14 special session, and January 20, 2026

*Commissioner Norton moved to approve the minutes for January 13, January 14 work session, January 14 special session, and January 20, 2026. Motion passed unanimously.*

**2. APPROVAL OF WARRANTS** – Mike Wilkins, Clerk-Auditor

Warrants dated January 22, 2026 in the amount of \$1,061,015.83. Payments of note are \$215,824.80 to Uintah Basin Association of Governments (UBAOG) for Lucky acres, this also had all the contract payments for the month along with the insurance.

*Commissioner LeFevre moved to approve the warrants as presented by Mike Wilkins. Motion passed unanimously.*

**3. TAX MATTERS:**

Wendi Long, Treasurer, requested a tax abatement for the 2025 tax year for the State of Utah in the amount of \$1,673.75 on property serial number 05:031:0085. The reason for this abatement is that the State of Utah is tax exempt and the property was purchased in February of 2025. The remaining tax from February to December should be abated.

*Commissioner Norton moved to approve the abatement as presented by Wendi Long. Motion passed unanimously.*

**4. RATIFICATION OF CREATIVE AGING GRANT** - Gennie Bird, Purchasing & Grants

Gennie Bird, Purchasing & Grants, requested to ratify the Creative Aging Grant awarded to the Uintah County Library. The grant comes from the Utah Department of Cultural and Community Engagement, Arts and Museums for \$2,410.00. This grant will support the eight week Creative Aging course for seniors, 55 and older, beginning in March. The course is fully funded by this grant and covers instructional fees, advertising and student supplies for up to 12 participants, the initiative provides a cost-free opportunity for local seniors to explore new artistic mediums, creating a variety of artwork based on their interpretation of the week's prompt. Lindsay North, Uintah County Library, wrote and was awarded the grant, she will be the lead for this project. The contract was received and signed in November. Loren Anderson, Civil Attorney, has reviewed the contract.

*Commissioner Norton moved to approve the ratification of the Creative Aging Grant as presented by Gennie Bird. Motion passed unanimously.*

##### **5. STEINAKER SERVICE CANAL AGREEMENT - Scott Hardman**

Scott Hardman, Roads Department, requested approval for an easement and encroachment agreement with the Steinaker Service Canal at 337 South Aggie Boulevard. The agreement grants a 100-foot easement across the existing box culvert. Loren has reviewed the agreement.

*Commissioner Norton moved to approve the Steinaker Service Canal Agreement as presented by Scott Hardman. Motion passed unanimously.*

##### **6. ANNUAL AGREEMENT AMENDMENT WITH USU – Cheyenne Reid, USU Extension**

Cheyenne Reid, USU Extension, requested approval for the Annual Cooperative Agreement for Utah State University Extension Services. She presented a year end review of the 4-H Program. Current Enrollment in the program is 271 active youth and 49 active adult volunteers. Enrollment is expected to increase soon as the livestock program season begins. Volunteers are active in Livestock, Horse, Small Animal (dogs, rabbits, poultry), Arts, Crafts, Community Engagement, Entrepreneurship, and Family and Consumer Sciences. The Livestock team achieved significant success at Nationals, placing 5th overall out of 35 teams. They secured 1st place in Sheep and Goats, and three individuals earned High Point awards. All State 4-H Horse qualifiers performed very well at the state level, earning high placements. The 4-H program was awarded the UCORE (Utah Children's Outdoor Recreation and Education) grant for \$8,417.50, which will be used to expand our outdoor and environmental education efforts, a significant benefit for agriculture and horticulture in Uintah County. Agriculture and Horticulture provided assistance to 3,362 agricultural contacts, focusing on crop production, soil health, and nutrient management for livestock. They assisted over 1,085 homeowners with questions regarding lawns, trees, and gardens, and also launched a new drone and agriculture program. Cheyenne published a comprehensive needs assessment on the Uintah County agricultural community in a national peer-reviewed journal. The Home and Community program has secured \$237,000 for implementation and development of a new program, Building Healthy Families, a major 12-week program launching this year, and Crafting Change Empowerment Workshops which reached 425 adults and 317 youth. A Teen Council, "Real World Ready Teens," was established and completed service projects benefiting the Uintah County Animal Shelter and is currently assisting with the creation of warming kits for the Heart of the Basin warming shelter.

*Commissioner LeFevre moved to approve the Annual Cooperative Agreement for Utah State University Extension Services as presented by Cheyenne Reid. Motion passed unanimously.*

##### **7. UNTAH COUNTY FAIR CONCERT CONTRACT - Melanie Silcox, Western Park**

Melanie Silcox, Western Park, requested approval for the Uintah County Fair concert contract. She requested approval for the cost amount, noting that she and Loren are still finalizing some contract details, and would send the contract once finished. The band will charge Uintah County \$35,000 rather than the usual \$50,000, because they are headed to Denver the following day. \$36,500 is the total cost for the band; this includes \$35,000 base rate plus \$1,500 cash buyout. \$1,500 is a separate check provided to the band to cover catering (breakfast, lunch, dinner, and post-show dinner). This buyout is cheaper than arranging catering and avoids the need for caterers. Additional costs would be for lights, sound, hotel rooms, and car rental. The concert will be the kickoff night for the fair on Thursday, with the band performing at 8:30 PM, following a headliner at 7:00 PM. The band will be bussing in and bringing their own equipment, which is more cost-effective than last year when the band flew in and required rentals. The county will receive 10% of the total merchandise sales and 100% of the ticketing revenue. The amphitheater can hold around 1,100. The band does not take a portion of ticket sales unless the county exceeds this capacity. Ticket prices will be \$40 for seating and \$30 for the lawn; a \$5 increase from previous years.

*Commissioner Norton moved to approve the Uintah County Fair Concert Contract as presented by Melanie Silcox. Motion passed unanimously.*

8. PUBLIC COMMENT : none

9. CLOSED SESSION for the purpose of discussing the character, professional competence, or physical or mental health of an individual

*At 3:30 pm, Commissioner LeFevre moved to go into Closed Session for the purpose of discussing the character, professional competence, or physical or mental health of an individual in the Small Commission Conference Room and when discussion is complete, adjourn, and reconvene Commission meeting in order to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously.*

The closed session began at 3:34 pm with Commissioner Laursen, Commissioner LeFevre, Commissioner Norton, Loren Anderson, Jaymon Thomas, and Mike Wilkins in attendance. A Closed session affidavit was signed by Commissioner Laursen.

Closed session adjourned at approximately 3:47 pm.

ADJOURN: The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:48 pm.

  
JOHN LAURSEN, CHAIR

  
MICHAEL W. WILKINS, CLERK – AUDITOR

