

GOVERNING BOARD MINUTES

Utah State Developmental Center

January 8, 2026, 10:00 AM-12:00 PM



Governing Board Members

Tim Mathews, USDC Superintendent
Patrick Horrigan, Consumer Advocate
Deanna Wall, Public Member II
Scott Pingree, Family Advocate
Tonya Hales, DHHS Deputy Director

Angella Pinna, DSPD Director
Dr. Scott L. Smith, Public Appointee
Jennifer May, Family Advocate
Paul Smith, Public Appointee

Public / Presenters Present

Cynthia Church, Administrative Assistant
Shauna Bradley, Records
Kristen Cornia, Finance

Mark Forbes, Finance Manager
Bill Exeter, Projects Manager
Adam Park, Therapist

Business

Electronic Meeting:

This meeting is scheduled to take place at 895 North 900 East, American Fork Utah 84003, and will be conducted both in-person and electronically in accordance with Utah Code Ann. 52-4-202, House Bill 5002, Open and Public Meetings Act. To attend electronically, please call (US) +1 413-308-2315, listen to the prompts, and enter the (PIN: 254703178). Opinions and comments by the public may be presented as the meeting progresses or at the closing, as requested by the USDC Governing Board Chairperson.

Review and Approve Minutes

The Governing Board meeting was called to order at 10:07 AM. Scott noted one minor item, stating he didn't see his name on the minutes approval from the last meeting. Cynthia clarified this was because he wasn't present for the first vote.

Dr. Smith moved to approve the minutes from the December 4, 2025, USDC Governing Board meeting. The motion was seconded by Tim Mathews.

Minutes Approval

Yea –Angella Pinna, DSPD Director
Yea –Tim Mathews, USDC Superintendent
Yea –Dr. Scott L. Smith, Public Appointee
Yea –Patrick Horrigan, Consumer Advocate
Yea –Deanna Wall, Public Member II
Yea –Paul Smith, Public Appointee

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Yea –Jennifer May, Family Advocate

The motion passed unanimously.

USDC Finance

[Sustainability Fund Update](#)

Following interest rates, interest income is down over the last three years. However, investment gains are doing well. The State Treasurer’s Office changed their report, which now includes a line showing the loss on investments. USDC’s sustainability fund continues to be managed by a professional manager.

Other market adjustments reflect fair market value rather than actual income or losses and are included to match Mark’s accounting. The primary focus is on earnings available, which represent the principal value. Approximately \$50 million is available in the fund, with up to 5% of principal, which typically occurs only when land is sold.

Mark noted that ongoing expenditures over the past five years reflect actual costs, implying similar annual amounts due to the nature of these expenses. However, operating expenses may not have been funded from the Sustainability Fund.

One-time and ongoing funds are estimated at \$75,000 for fiscal year 2024-2025. While going over the numbers for fiscal year 2024, Angie raised questions about how to ensure necessary costs are retained in the fund, including whether \$97,000 might not be available from the Sustainability Fund, and where the \$2.8 million figure originated. In fiscal year 2024, \$64,000 was expected, while \$96,000 was spent. It was suggested that a spending threshold be established, such as a percentage of available funds, to ensure future costs are covered, and that an itemized list of ongoing expenditures be maintained. Obligated funds may include management contracts, minimum interest, and leases. Ongoing expenditures are anticipated to extend beyond a single year, and estimates will likely change over time.

The music therapy program is part-time and is still under evaluation, and the results and outcomes are currently being reviewed. One-time expenditures planned include \$2,200,000 for the riding arena/stables, \$70,000 for autism program equipment, and \$30,000 for Skill Builder program training. The autism

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request is not yet ready but may be available for the next board meeting. The board will need to determine how to allocate the \$2.8 million while considering both facility and operational priorities.

[Skill Builder Video Training](#)

Mark Forbes and Adam Park, a USDC therapist, presented as part of an effort to position USDC as a Center of Excellence, providing training and resources for both staff and the broader community. This video training supports methods, programs, and therapies for individuals with disabilities.

Adam has been using the video equipment received in April to create high-quality training videos for staff. Funding is requested to continue this work over the next 18 months (January 2026 – June 2027) as a one-time expenditure; to classify it as ongoing, it would need to be funded over a two-year period.

Adam requested continued funding to work with Target River, a state-contracted video company, for filming and editing training videos over an 18-month period. Since June 2025, accomplishments include the approval and setup of the USDC YouTube channel, which allows staff and the community to access training content, and the filming of four of Dr. Matt Draper's trainings for trauma-informed care. The Skill Builders program currently includes 28 evidence-based skills, with eight training videos and two example videos completed. The funding request includes \$15,000 for Target River services and \$15,000 for outside speakers or trainers, though the latter is under review. Expected outcomes include expanding outreach through YouTube, developing at least six additional training videos, extending Skill Builder training to all direct staff, and training staff to produce and manage videos in-house. Staff would log in to view videos, with in-person instruction provided by presenters, and QR codes link videos to scripts for practical application. Videos also support individuals transitioning out of USDC and their caregivers.

A question was raised about how the effectiveness of the videos is being evaluated. Specific measures are included, such as ensuring 100 percent of USDC employees complete the training, with the videos helping to achieve this. Staff are required to log in to watch the videos, and in-person instruction is also provided by Dr. Matt Draper and other outside presenters. Trainings can be livestreamed across USDC using the YouTube channel and broadcast to the broader community. The Skill Builders videos provide visual demonstrations of different skills for individuals with

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IDD. QR codes link back to the scripts, allowing staff to reference the videos and apply the skills in practice.

The videos also support individuals transitioning out of USDC, giving them and their caregivers continued access to the skills. All Skill Builders are evidence-based and simplified for the USDC population. The goal is to expand the video library and involve other instructors to teach a wider variety of skills.

Scott Pingree noted that USDC had previously discussed becoming an IDD training center for the state and asked whether this video training could be part of that effort. He observed that having staff provide training themselves had been cumbersome in the past and emphasized the need to find the most efficient way to improve these services.

Deanna Wall, who works at the Utah Parent Center providing public information and resources, shared her perspective. She noted that the Parent Center posts hundreds of videos but does not typically use a professional crew for editing, whereas Utah State occasionally does. She questioned the cost of professional video editing and asked how much had already been spent on equipment. Deanna explained that crews often bring their own filming equipment and offered to assist in developing materials. She suggested obtaining a quote from DHHS's marketing team and encouraged exploring multiple options before committing to outside vendors. Deanna also noted that she could provide speakers from Utah State and DHHS, pointing out that hiring outside trainers can be expensive unless there is a clear need. She expressed interest in seeing a detailed breakdown of costs and asked what other approaches had been explored.

Mark Forbes responded that several sources had been considered for equipment, and that he had personally consulted with someone in charge of the media program at UVU for guidance. He noted that \$15,000 was budgeted for outside speakers, but other options were open for consideration.

Deanna offered to come on-site to provide support and asked about the \$4,000 already paid to Target River. Adam Park explained that Target River had filmed two of Dr. Matt Draper's trainings; the Christmas talent play (not posted online), a new Skill Builder video, and a two-hour NEO training. Target River charges \$55/hour for editing and \$65/hour for filming and uses USDC's equipment. Adam emphasized

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that the goal is for USDC to become self-sufficient in video production and noted that previous in-house videos had been low quality.

Jennifer May asked for clarification on who Dr. Matthew Draper is, who is a licensed psychologist, professor, and consultant specializing in trauma-informed care and the intersection of mental health and spirituality. Dr. Draper integrates over 20 years of clinical experience with academic research to provide a holistic approach to trauma recovery.

The board discussed funding priorities for the video training. While the videos are essential, it was questioned whether \$15,000 should be spent on outside speakers and what specific training needs should be prioritized. It was suggested that this decision be revisited after identifying training priorities. Reviewing videos available from Utah State (IDRPP) and the Utah Parent Family Center was recommended, as well as looking at other agencies that are considered Centers of Excellence use to curate content.

Dr. Smith asked if the initial \$15,000 would cover the next 18 months and if the board could approve a smaller amount to maintain coverage while other options are explored. Deanna Wall objected to the full \$15,000 for outside speakers and suggested using Target River for the next six months while evaluating alternatives, possibly around \$5,000. Mark said that Target River is on a state contract, so USDC can use their services for as long as needed. Adam explained that the bidding process had been extensive, with bids up to \$250,000 considered, all within state requirements. He noted that Target River appears to be the most cost-effective option and confirmed that USDC remains open to engaging outside speakers if appropriate.

Angie asked Deanna to explain her role and background. Deanna shared that she has a son with special needs and was an influencer for many years, during which she built a large following and developed strong skills in content creation and outreach. She works full time at the University of Utah in the Department of Psychology with Debbie Builder and is actively engaged in the community. Deanna explained that she understands the technical and behind-the-scenes aspects of this work, has established connections at the University of Utah, and would like to see USDC develop into a Center of Excellence.

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Dr. Smith moved to approve \$5,000 from the Sustainability Fund to cover the next six months of work with Target River. Deanna Wall seconded the motion.

Motion Approval

Yea –Angella Pinna, DSPD Director

Yea –Tim Mathews, USDC Superintendent

Yea –Dr. Scott L. Smith, Public Appointee

Yea –Patrick Horrigan, Consumer Advocate

Yea –Deanna Wall, Public Member II

Yea –Jennifer May, Family Advocate

Yea –Scott Pingree, Family Advocate

The motion passed unanimously.

USDC Projects

USDC Maintenance and Projects Report

The Willowcreek HVAC upgrade and remodel is moving forward. A pre-abatement construction meeting was held yesterday, and work is scheduled to begin on February 9. The project includes HVAC upgrades, as well as painting the building and installing new windows.

Repairs to the condensate steam line are progressing well and the generator project at Quailrun, Sunset, and Oakridge is winding down. The transformer was initially overlooked and had a 16-week lead time; a transformer was located in Idaho and is expected to arrive next week. Installation is anticipated to take approximately 15 days.

Old Administration Building

Remodels to the old administration building are running slightly behind schedule due to an expanded scope. Bill met with the architects yesterday and discussed rearranging the basement to improve functionality. He requested a few design options and is working to avoid changes to exterior walls to prevent extended abatement. The design for the upstairs is complete.

Angie asked whether, given the variety of people who will be using the space, there would be representation from behavior therapy and nursing, and how the space

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should look and function as a therapeutic environment, including the functional use of the day room. It was explained that the space includes a kitchen, eating area, office spaces, nursing areas, male and female showers, and 12 bedrooms. Space is limited, and while a third shower is being considered, there is not currently much room available for dedicated therapeutic space. These considerations will be explored further during the design phase, and the interior layout of the rooms has not yet been finalized.

Tim requested that Bill share the proposed plans with the board before moving into the next phase so members can see what the space will look like and provide input. Bill is scheduled to meet with the architects in two weeks and will bring the plans to the board at that time. It was also noted that funds will need to be obligated within the current year.

Riding Arena Update

Bill is currently working with an engineer, and the project is moving forward.

Therapies Building

The punch list is nearly complete, and the doors are now functioning properly. An issue was identified with the pool being connected to the soft water system, which has affected chemical balance. The soft water line will be disconnected and a new hard water line installed beginning next week.

Jennifer noted that the doors did not appear very wide; it was clarified that they are ADA compliant. Automatic doors were not installed on both entrances as a cost-saving measure; it was later discovered that the need for automatic door openers on both entrances is needed.

Jennifer raised concerns about inconsistent temperatures in rooms and asked whether staff know how to adjust the temperature. Bill explained that one contributing factor is doors being left open, and staff have been instructed not to leave doors open when temperature issues occur. Jennifer also shared concerns raised by janitorial staff about wheelchairs being used on the court and in hallways and wanted to confirm that they understand it is appropriate to use hallways for therapy. She is worried that janitorial staff may be communicating otherwise to staff.

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Jennifer also asked how low the basketball hoop can be adjusted. Bill clarified that it can be lowered to 8 feet and is controlled by a button, and that the recreation team can direct staff on where to find the controls.

One rooftop unit in the physical therapy area was also reported to be having issues, which is currently being addressed.

Additional Updates

With additional funding from the division, there are approximately 14 projects underway, many of which are functional in nature, such as the wellhouse. One project addresses ongoing water issues in Aspen. Bill noted that this is primarily related to a valve rather than water storage, and sensors are being installed to help manage the system. Showers may occasionally produce cold water, which can affect the health of individuals. One contributing factor is poor design: the system relies on recirculation, requiring water to travel a long distance from one side of the building to the other.

Sunshades are scheduled to be installed in Pine and Aspen on Monday. Quailrun and Sunset will be under contract by Friday. Installation at all sites will occur in the spring due to current temperatures.

RFI/Farm Property Discussion

DFCM does not have a formal process for issuing a Request for Information (RFI), so Bill will be handling this effort. He plans to send invitations to development companies, similar to the approach used for the master plan, with the goal of gathering information and seeing what interest and ideas come back. The invitations are expected to go out on Monday.

Jennifer Adams at DFCM and her supervisor, Lee Fairbourne, are aware of what is being done and why. They are also aware of inquiries related to the land and understand that USDC is moving forward with the RFI process. The RFI document that will be sent to development companies will also be shared with the board on Monday so members are aware of the criteria being used and the options under consideration. It was noted that any commercial development would likely seek associated housing to support the business, despite more than 600 homes already having been built in the surrounding area.

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Scott Pingree asked whether there was an existing RFI question template and whether board members would have an opportunity to provide input. He also inquired whether the RFI would outline what the board is seeking and specify the number of acres targeted for the first phase of development, noting that approximately 128 acres remain undeveloped, with 45 acres identified as an initial objective. Bill responded that the RFI would reference the master plan and that he has sufficient information to draft it. He confirmed that the RFI will be shared with the board for review before being distributed. It was noted that there is limited interest in office space in the current market, which may make it challenging to find developers willing to build it. This is largely due to the high demand for housing, including affordable housing.

Bill shared information on Governor Cox's housing initiative, which aims to support the construction of 150,000 new housing units in Utah by 2028. Of these, 35,000 are designated as starter homes, defined as homes under 1,400 square feet and priced below \$350,000. The initiative also includes a regional focus targeting 40,000 units, with designated regional centers located on underutilized state-owned land. Bill noted that developers are struggling to find available land and funding necessary for infrastructure, which makes participation challenging. USDC's land is considered prime real estate, and while it is unlikely that 1,400-square-foot homes on this property would sell for under \$350,000, developers may be able to offset costs through access to low-interest bonds. These bonds can be used to fund infrastructure improvements, significantly reducing overall development costs and, in turn, the price of homes. The loans tied to these bonds are retired when the homes are sold.

USDC has recently completed significant development and has already contributed substantially to housing. The remaining land is intended for people with disabilities and is a finite resource. In addition to water availability, traffic congestion is also a concern. If a municipality is unwilling to rezone land for high-density or low-income housing, the state can rezone it instead.

Ohana Communities

Ohana Communities, which originated in Oregon, is an initiative being developed to address the need for housing, community, and stability for families of adults with developmental disabilities and their caregivers. Jennifer shared that the model focuses on building pocket neighborhoods of small single-family homes alongside a

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group home, allowing parents or caregivers and their adult child with developmental disabilities to live near one another. Individuals could transition from the family home to the group home, or begin in the group home, while remaining close to their support system. Ohana is now exploring expansion into Utah. Jennifer will look into the program further and provide additional information to Bill.

USDC Community

No members of the community were present.