

Convention Facilities Advisory Board

March 10, 2026, Meeting Minutes

ATTENDANCE

Board Members Present

Steven Fukumitsu – Community Representative
Jeff Gwilliam – SLCo Arts Representative
Scott Phillips – Hospitality Representative
Brandon Beckstead – Chair / Facility Stakeholder
Cyndi Sharkey – Sandy City Representative
Taylor Vriens – Vice Chair / Facility Stakeholder
Scott George – Hospitality Representative
Pina Purpero – Hospitality Representative
Garrett Parker – Hospitality Representative
Kaitlin Eskelson – President, Visit Salt Lake

Board Members Absent

Laurie Stringham – Council Member, SLCo
Erin Litvack – Deputy Mayor, SLCo
Craig Wangsgard – Attorney, SLCo District Attorney's Office
Brittani Forbush Holbrook – Community Representative

Staff Present (County / Venue Leadership)

Josh Ambrose – General Manager, Legends Global
Bart Allen – Assistant General Manager, Legends Global
Rick Medina – MAEC Facility Director, Legends Global
Nikki Taylor – Director of Sales, Legends Global
Jed Hansen – Director of Events, Legends Global
Courtney Strong – Assistant Director of Events, Legends Global
Heidi Baird – Director of Event Technology, Legends Global
Devon Shaughnessy – Director of Finance, Legends Global
Monica Ortega – Assistant Director of Operations, Legends Global
Scott White – Director of Public Safety, Legends Global
Trish Beagley – Communications Manager / Board Coordinator, Legends Global
Kayla Court – Communications Specialist, Legends Global
Helen Schroeder – Attorney, SLCo District Attorney's Office
Arlyn Bradshaw – Associate Deputy Mayor, SLCo

External Partners / Guests

Tyson Lybbert – Chief Sales Officer, Visit Salt Lake,
Kris Larson – Owner's rep
Lisa McKell – Owner's rep

AGENDA

- 1) Roll Call and Agenda Review Brandon Beckstead
 - a) Chair Brandon Beckstead called the meeting to order. Attendees introduced themselves and reviewed the agenda.

- 2) Review of Public Comments
The Salt Lake County Convention Facilities Advisory Board (CFAB) will accept public comment in the following formats:
 - a) Written comments may be submitted to the Salt Palace Convention Center SMG Administration Office, 100 South West Temple, Salt Lake City, UT 84101 no later than two hours prior to the meeting start time on the day of the meeting. All written comments must contain the first and last name and city of residence of the person submitting the comments.
 - b) Verbal comments of three minutes or less will be accepted at the CFAB meeting. Attendees wishing to comment must identify themselves by first and last name and indicate their city of residence.
 - i) No public comments were received prior to or during the meeting.

- 3) Approval of Minutes from Nov 17, 2025, Meeting (Action Required)..... Brandon Beckstead
 - a) The minutes from the November 17, 2025 meeting were reviewed. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

- 4) New Leadership Introduction..... Josh Ambrose
 - a) Josh Ambrose introduced himself as the newly appointed General Manager and shared remarks regarding the team’s continued performance and commitment to navigating future opportunities and challenges.
 - b) Carlos Hernandez introduced himself as Executive Director overseeing the Salt Palace reconstruction project and the broader sports and entertainment district development.

- 5) Convention Facilities Advisory Board Positions..... Brandon Beckstead & Taylor Vreins
 - a) The board discussed two open positions: one representing Salt Lake City government and one representing the State of Utah. Members were encouraged to provide recommendations for potential candidates through the Mayor’s office.
 - b) The board also discussed the need to identify a new Chair and Vice Chair. Members were invited to consider the roles and express interest at a future meeting.

- 6) IAVM Research Study..... Josh Ambrose
 - a) Josh Ambrose presented highlights from the IAVM utilization study. The Salt Palace exhibit hall utilization is approximately 80%, exceeding the national average of roughly 60%. The Mountain America Expo Center utilization rate is approximately 77%, also above national averages.
 - b) The study confirmed strong demand for event space across both facilities. Discussion included consideration of future booking policies and strategies to balance demand between the Salt Palace Convention Center and the Mountain America Expo Center.

- 7) 2025 Year-End Financials Review Devon Shaughnessy & Josh Ambrose
 - a) Devon Shaughnessy presented the 2025 financial results for both facilities.

- b) Salt Palace Convention Center:
 - i) Revenue exceeded budget, reaching approximately \$22.3 million, representing a 6% increase from the prior year. Primary revenue sources included food and beverage services, facility rent, and technology services. Expenses remained below budget.
 - c) Mountain America Expo Center:
 - i) Revenue exceeded budget at approximately \$7.2 million, while expenses remained below budget. Leadership noted continued revenue growth and strong recovery in event attendance following pandemic-related declines.
 - d) County representatives noted that most convention centers nationally operate at a deficit, making the financial performance of these facilities notable.
- 8) AGM Updates..... Bart Allen
- a) Bart provided operational updates. These included ongoing coordination with city and county partners regarding First Amendment activity at the venue and review of policies related to time, place, and manner regulations.
 - b) The need to review booking policies in the future in relation to anticipated construction impacts and evolving venue utilization strategies was discussed.
- 9) SPCC Construction Update..... Carlos Hernandez
- a) Carlos provided an update on the Salt Palace reconstruction project. The Utah Legislature approved funding to support the project and address prior revenue gaps.
 - b) The project is expected to move into Phase 2 design in the coming weeks. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2027 with a projected completion in 2031.
 - c) The Convention Center is expected to remain partially operational during construction, with approximately 50% of the facility available for events. The project aims to rebuild with equal or improved usable square footage while enhancing functionality and guest experience.
 - d) Project goals include improved contiguous exhibit space, enhanced ballroom utilization, and stronger connectivity within the downtown district.
 - e) Safety during construction operations was emphasized as the top priority.
- 10) Adjournment Brandon Beckstead
- a) With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:30 PM