



Utah Transit Authority

Local Advisory Council

MEETING MINUTES - Draft

669 West 200 South
Salt Lake City, UT 84101

Wednesday, February 18, 2026

11:00 AM

FrontLines Headquarters

Present: Chair Bob Stevenson
Vice Chair Natalie Hall
Council Member Dirk Burton
Council Member Karen Cronin
Alternate Council Member Dan Dugan
Council Member Brad Frost
Council Member Russ Porter
Council Member Paul Binns
Alternate Council Member Lynn Jacobs

Excused: Council Member Erin Mendenhall
Council Member Troy Walker
Alternate Council Member Ben Nadolski
Alternate Council Member Jared Gray

Also attending were UTA staff and interested community members.

1. **Call to Order & Opening Remarks**

Chair Bob Stevenson welcomed attendees and called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. Chair Stevenson asked the new Local Advisory Council members and alternates to introduce themselves.

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**

Attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. **Safety First Minute**

Viola Miller, UTA Chief Financial Officer, delivered a brief safety message.

4. **Public Comment**

In Person/Virtual Comment

No in person or virtual comment was given.

Online Comment

No online comment was received.

Dan Dugan joined the meeting at 11:05 a.m.

Brad Frost joined the meeting at 11:06 a.m.

5. Oath of Office

a. Oath of Office: New UTA Local Advisory Council Members and Alternates

Cathie Griffiths, UTA Board Administration Manager, administered the oath of office to the following new and alternate council members:

- Russ Porter, council member representing Weber Area Council of Governments (WACOG)
- Brad Frost, council member representing Utah County Council of Governments (COG)
- Paul Binns, council member representing Utah County COG
- Lynn Jacobs, alternate council member representing Salt Lake City

Dirk Burton joined the meeting at 11:11 a.m.

12. Resolutions Part 1

a. AR2026-02-01 - Resolution of the Local Advisory Council of the Utah Transit Authority Appointing Council Officers for the Year 2026

Resolutions discussion part 1 moved up on the agenda to accommodate a conflict Chair Stevenson had later in the meeting.

Jana Ostler, Director of Board Governance, explained some of the requirements of officer appointments. Utah Transit Authority Bylaws (Article III, Section 4) require that the UTA Local Advisory Council annually elect three officers including a Chair, a Vice-Chair, and a Second Vice-Chair from the membership of the Advisory Council. During 2025, Bob Stevenson served as Chair, Natalie Hall served as Vice-Chair, and Neal Berube served as Second Vice-Chair. Neal Berube is no longer serving on the council.

Since there may be only one other meeting before this council is dissolved, it was decided that Bob Stevenson would remain as Chair and Natalie Hall would remain as Vice-Chair. No second vice-chair would be appointed. A vote was taken later in the meeting.

6. Consent

- a. Approval of the November 5, 2025 Local Advisory Council Meeting Minutes
- b. Constituent and Customer Service - 2025 Annual Report

A motion was made by Council Member Cronin, and seconded by Council Member Porter, to approve the consent agenda. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

7. Discussion

a. Legislative Update on Senate Bill 197

Paul Ray, UTA Government Relations Director, gave a report on transit-related legislation that lawmakers have proposed during the 2026 General Legislative Session now in progress. Ray addressed Senate Bill 197 Transportation Funding and Governance Amendments sponsored by Wayne Harper. A question was raised regarding whether the UTA Trustees were asked to provide feedback prior to the bill's release. They were not.

Other bills discussed:

- Senate Bill 242 Transportation Amendments from Senator Wayne Harper
- Senate Bill 586 Transportation Funding Amendments from Representative Calvin Robe
- House Bill 481 Transportation Modifications from Representative Kay Christofferson

b. Open Dialogue with the Board of Trustees

Carlton Christensen, Chair of the UTA Board of Trustees, engaged in an informal discussion with the council members. Christensen reassured the council members, if S.B. 197 is signed, the trustees want to finish out their term strong.

12. Resolutions Part 2

a. AR2026-02-01 - Resolution of the Local Advisory Council of the Utah Transit Authority Appointing Council Officers for the Year 2026

A motion was made by Council Member Cronin, and seconded by Council Member Porter, to approve keeping the Chair and Vice-Chair as currently organized. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

8. Transit Oriented Development

a. Consultation on Central Pointe and South Salt Lake City Station Area Plan ("South Salt Lake Downtown Connect")

Paul Drake, UTA Director of Real Estate & Transit-Oriented Development, was joined by Valarie Williams, UTA TOC Project Specialist I, Cherie Wood, Mayor of South Salt Lake City, and Jonathan Weidenhamer, Community and Economic Development Director of South Salt Lake City, to discuss the proposed South Salt Lake Downtown Connect Station Area Plan. The plan will better position UTA and South Salt Lake to coordinate redevelopment of the station area. This aligned coordination will promote future transit-oriented development in an efficient and fiscally responsible manner.

Mayor Wood talked about how in 2011 they decided to build South Salt Lake downtown consisting of a vibrant community, lively districts and a connected network.

There will be affordable housing, walkable areas and transit options, specifically connecting to the S-line. While transportation-related project goals will help to maximize staging and circulation, progress and improvement are evident in that area.

Discussion followed. Chair Stevenson noted that Utah is a strong example of collaboration and partnership. A question was raised regarding the timeline, with clarification that some components will be ready within five years. Vice-Chair Hall emphasized that cities should begin planning now with a 15-20-year horizon in mind. Additional questions were posed by council members and addressed by staff.

Chair Stevenson left the meeting at 11:50 a.m. Vice-Chair Hall assumed responsibility for chairing the remainder of the meeting.

9. Finance and Budget

a. Consultation on Bond Issuance Strategy for Potential Refinancing Opportunity

Viola Miller, UTA Chief Financial Officer, was joined by Brian Reeves, UTA Associate Chief Financial Officer. Staff proposed a bond refinancing opportunity and encouraged feedback. The financing opportunity includes the potential to refinance existing debt at a lower cost, enabling the organization to capture significant savings.

UTA has approximately \$2 billion bonds currently outstanding. UTA's bond rating is good. Christensen commented that a focus of the board has been to pay down and restructure debt to put the agency in a better financial position. Further comments were made regarding the growth that all cities are experiencing, which brings a need for more funds to help keep up with the transit needs of these areas. The timeline for completion of the bond refunding is April 2026. Other questions from the council members included inquiries about UTA's bond ratings and planned uses for the savings gained through refinancing.

b. Consultation on Proposed 2026 Operating Budget Amendment

Viola Miller stated the proposed budget amendment will increase 2026 Operating Budget expenses by \$1,924,000 to add microtransit service to Utah County. This increase in expense will be funded by new funds from the Utah Department of Transportation and Utah County.

c. Consultation on Proposed 2026-2030 Five-Year Capital Plan Amendment

Viola Miller was joined by Daniel Hofer, UTA Director of Capital Design & Construction, to consult regarding the amendment to the Five-Year Capital Plan. The amendment will include an overall increase of \$42,487,000 to the total Five-Year Plan, increasing expenditures from \$1,069,129,000 to \$1,111,616,000. The additional funds will be used to purchase 52 new compressed natural gas and clean diesel buses. This increase in expenses will be offset by incorporating \$41,805,200 in new federal grant funds and \$681,800 in matching UTA funds. Alternate Council Member Dan Dugan asked

whether the new buses were to replace existing buses or add to the bus fleet. Miller confirmed that the buses were for replacement only.

10. Fares**a. Consultation on Fare Rate**

Brian Reeves was joined by Monica Howe, UTA Fares Director, to consult with the Local Advisory Council and provide feedback on proposed fare rate changes. Rates have not changed since 2013. Reeves stated the fare payment process should be easy and intuitive, and noted it shapes the rider experience.

Reeves provided a comprehensive review of the fare rate analysis including:

- Governance of fare rates
- Elements of UTA fare rates
- Peer agencies comparison group
- Fare change recommendation: one-way fare raise from \$2.50 to \$3.00.

Discussion with Council Members followed regarding riders using cash vs. card, rider surveys, fare elasticity, institutional and partner fare contracts, and ridership.

11. Discussion**a. Facility Strategic Assessment and Implementation Plan**

Paul Drake was joined by Sean Murphy, UTA Facility Development Supervisor, and Matthew Duncan, UTA Facility Development Strategist, to lead the discussion on the Facility Strategic Plan: Implementation Plan (FSP-IP), which builds on the May 2025 Facility Strategic Plan: Condition Assessment (FSP-CA). The FSP-IP includes: \$287 million in facility replacement costs, and \$827 million in total project costs.

Drake explained that the report illustrates a fiscally unconstrained vision for:

- Addressing capital facility projects identified in the condition assessment
- Expanding or replacing select facilities as required due to service growth
- Prioritizing capital upgrades according to measurable risk and need

Vice-Chair Hall encouraged the council and the public to refer to the plan document included in the meeting packet.

13. Reports**a. Executive Director Report**

- **UTA 2025 Highlights**
- **April Change Day**

Jay Fox, UTA Executive Director, reported on various topics including:

- Milan Cortina 2026 Olympics. The Utah Olympic committee invited partners outside of the local Olympic committee to participate in an observation trip to Italy. Utah leaders learned that Utah is ahead of other host cities in Olympic preparations.

- UTA 2025 Highlights
 - APTA Outstanding Public Transportation Award
 - Accelerated launch of the Midvalley Express (MVX) ahead of schedule
 - Opened South Jordan Downtown TRAX Station
 - April Change Day 2025 - 1 million service miles added, launched West Provo/Orem On Demand
 - Approved purchase of 20 new TRAX cars, built in Utah by Stadler
 - Opened BYU Central Campus Station - new station on Utah Valley Express (UVX) line
 - Awarded two Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Grant Awards totaling \$41 million to upgrade the UTA bus fleet
 - Approved the S-Line extension: construction begins early 2026, service to begin in 2027
- Ridership Highlights
 - Overall ridership exceeded 40 million for second year in a row
 - FrontRunner = more than 4 million
 - TRAX = 13 million
 - COVID ridership recovery for bus at 100%
 - Vanpool ridership = 1.3 million, +15.7%
 - On Demand ridership = 645,000 + 13.6%
 - Ski Bus ridership up 3% with more than 400,000 boardings
- April Change Day
 - Launch of the Midvalley Express (MVX)

14. Other Business

- a. Next Meeting: Wednesday, May 6, 2026 at 11:00 a.m.

15. Adjourn

A motion was made by Council Member Binns, and seconded by Alternate Council Member Jacobs, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Transcribed by Cherilyn Bradford
Executive Assistant to the Board
Utah Transit Authority

This document is not intended to serve as a full transcript as additional discussion may have taken place; please refer to the meeting materials or audio located at <https://www.utah.gov/pmnn/sitemap/notice/1057997.html> for entire content. Meeting materials, along with a time-stamped video recording, are also accessible at https://rideuta.granicus.com/player/clip/433?view_id=1&redirect=true

This document along with the digital recording constitute the official minutes of this meeting.

Approved Date:

Bob Stevenson
Chair, Local Advisory Council