



## USU Board of Trustees Regular Meeting (VIRTUAL)

Friday, March 20, 2026, at 8:00 AM - 11:20 AM MDT via Zoom:

<https://usu.zoom.us/j/89125383092?pwd=C2GXBi4qwMdOzEXsmIqOWagDCalTXr.1>

### Attendance

#### Trustees:

Tessa White, Chair

Gina Gagon, Vice Chair

Ryan Dent

Brett Hugie

David Huntsman

Luke Johnson

Kacie Malouf

Dave Petersen

Jacey Skinner

Brandon Sorensen

Clark Whitworth

#### University Representatives:

Jeff Aird

Paul Barr

Lisa Berreau

Josh Brown

Janalyn Brown

Steve Campbell

Dave Cowley

Amanda DeRito

Pam Dupin-Bryant

Crystal Giordano

Todd Griffith

Haley Klaassen

Nicole Laroque

Brad Mortensen

Burke Nazer

Kristian Olsen

Jessica Oyler

Whitney Pugh

Justen Smith

Larry Smith

Tracy Sorensen

MaKenzie Stock

Nicole Vouvalis

Cam Walker

Courtney White

Matt White

Kris Winter

#### Other:

TJ Bliss, USHE

Jacob Wright, USHE

### Agenda

#### 1. Welcome and Call to Order

8:01 AM

Presenter: Chair Tessa White

The Chair welcomed those in attendance. It was reported that a meeting had recently been held with state auditors and that the institution had been well prepared, resulting in a positive review. Appreciation was expressed to all who contributed to the preparation and support of that process.

#### 2. Closed Session

8:02 AM

##### Motion for Closed Session:

Vice Chair Gina Gagon moved that in accordance with Section 52-4-205 of the Utah Code, the Utah State University Board of Trustees enter into a closed executive session for the purpose of discussing the character, professional competence, or physical or mental health of an individual and the possible sale of real property. Motion seconded by Trustee Ryan Dent. Roll call vote

was initiated by Chair Tessa White and taken by Secretary Janalyn Brown. Voting was unanimous in the affirmative and the meeting moved to a closed session which commenced at 8:02am.

**Attendance**

**Trustees:**

Tessa White, Chair	David Huntsman	Jacey Skinner
Gina Gagon, Vice Chair	Luke Johnson	Brandon Sorensen
Ryan Dent	Kacie Malouf	Clark Whitworth
Brett Hugie	Dave Petersen	

**University Representatives Present:**

Janalyn Brown	Dave Cowley	Jessica Oyler
Brad Mortensen	Burke Nazer	

**Motion to adjourn Closed Session:**

Motion to adjourn the closed session was made by Trustee David Huntsman and seconded by Trustee Luke Johnson. Voting was unanimous and the closed session concluded at 9:09am.

**3. Strategic Plan Preview**

**9:09 AM**

Presenters: President Brad Mortensen, VP Jessica Oyler

See presentation for further details. President Mortensen introduced Burke Nazer, Justen Smith, and Pam Dupin-Bryant as new and interim members of the President’s Cabinet. An overview was then provided on the current phase of the strategic planning process, including the four guiding pillars that will direct ongoing work.

It was reported that prior institutional work will be reviewed and integrated into the process. The Board was informed that a more comprehensive update, including identified strategies and associated measures, will be provided in the coming months. Board members emphasized the importance of continued communication and opportunities for feedback. Administration noted that planning groups are structured to remain effective while still welcoming broader participation where appropriate. Smaller groups are advancing targeted initiatives to support actionable progress. Appreciation was expressed for ongoing efforts, and the Board was advised that regular updates will continue.

**4. President's Report, Legislative and Audit Updates**

**9:21 AM**

Presenters: President Brad Mortensen, VP Jessica Oyler

See President’s Report for further details. The Board received an update on the institution’s management of the legislative audit, including the creation of a system to track progress on all recommendations and related tasks. It was noted that regular follow-up will occur with the appropriate oversight committee, required updates will be submitted to external auditors at

the designated interval, and several actions have already been implemented. The tracking system will be updated continually to maintain accountability.

Questions were addressed regarding external auditors' response, and it was reported that initial feedback has been positive, with further review to occur upon submission of the institution's progress report. Board members emphasized the importance of consistent visibility into audit-related work, and it was confirmed that audit progress will be reported at each meeting.

Additional discussion addressed enrollment trends influenced by broader external factors, and it was noted that the institution is preparing appropriate measures in response. The Board expressed appreciation for the continued momentum of institutional initiatives and reaffirmed the importance of sustaining a proactive approach to audit compliance and organizational improvement.

## **5. Approve: 2026-2027 Tuition Rate and Fee Adjustments**

**9:30 AM**

Presenters: Trustee Brandon Sorensen, President Brad Mortensen, VP Dave Cowley, VP Cam Walker

### **5.1. Comprehensive Review of General Student Fees**

Presenters: Trustee Brandon Sorensen, VP Dave Cowley

### **5.2. Modification of Student Fees**

Presenters: Trustee Brandon Sorensen, VP Dave Cowley

See presentation for further details. The Board received an overview of tuition and fee proposals, including anticipated system-wide recommendations and planned adjustments to maintain affordability. It was reported that tuition remains a comparatively small portion of overall funding due to strong state support, and that several tuition categories will be held flat while others undergo further review. Differential tuition will be frozen for the year, and certain student fees will be consolidated into tuition to align with policy requirements.

The tuition and fee proposal presented includes a 3.36% tuition increase at Utah State University, excluding differential tuition and the College of Veterinary Medicine, as well as the transition of \$88.73 from student fees to tuition. These changes create different impacts depending on student type. The increase does not apply to students at statewide campuses, except those in Price, Moab, and Blanding, who have completed 65 or fewer credits. Proposed student fee changes include small increases on the Logan campus, a onetime Athletics fee, and moving several fees into tuition, resulting in a 9.77% overall decrease in student fees. Additional transitions of fees into tuition are proposed for USU Eastern, statewide and Blanding campuses, and for Technical Education programs.

Administration addressed questions regarding state funding processes, budget submissions, and compensation adjustments, noting that guidance on salary increases varies annually. Clarification was provided on the ongoing nature of promotion-related funding and the state's evaluation of base budgets.

The Board received a summary of the required five-year fee review, during which some existing fees were identified as inconsistent with updated policy expectations and will therefore be reclassified. Discussion followed regarding proposed fee adjustments, including those related to student activities and athletics. Administration described the institutional model for student access to athletic events and its connection to campus engagement, retention, and overall student experience. The Board discussed the importance of clear communication about this model and its distinction from practices at other institutions.

Further discussion highlighted priorities for student well-being, including mental health and nutrition services, and the potential use of fee revenues to expand student opportunities and experiences. Comparative information was provided regarding tuition and fee levels across the state, with the Board noting the importance of situating proposals within the broader higher education landscape.

The Board emphasized the importance of transparency, alignment with policy, and maintaining a student-focused approach in tuition and fee decisions.

**Motion:**

Trustee Brandon Sorensen moved that the Utah State University Board of Trustees approve the proposed 2026–2027 tuition rates and fee adjustments as presented. Trustee Luke Jonson seconded the motion. Voting was unanimous in the affirmative. Motion passed.

## **6. Reports**

### **6.1. Trustee Committee Reports**

**10:18 AM**

#### **6.1.1. Executive**

Presenter: Chair Tessa White

See report.

#### **6.1.2. Audit, Risk, and Compliance**

Presenter: Trustee Ryan Dent

See report.

#### **6.1.3. Research and Academic Approval**

Presenter: Vice Chair Gina Gagon

See report.

## **6.2. Faculty Senate**

**10:29 AM**

Presenter: Todd Griffith

See report.

## **6.3. USU Foundation Board**

**10:39 AM**

Presenter: Vice Chair Gina Gagon

The Board received an update on fundraising, noting that fundraising is one of the Board's defined responsibilities and that efforts are underway to strengthen alignment with the USU Foundation Board to leverage shared resources. It was reported that the June 2026 USU Board of Trustees meeting will be coordinated with a USU Foundation Board meeting to support this collaboration and provide training.

Administration noted that current staffing levels support fundraising at the institution's present scale and that increased fundraising goals would require additional advancement capacity or expanded advancement strategies.

## **7. Consent Agenda**

**10:44 AM**

### **7.1. 2026-2027 Board of Trustees Regular Meeting Schedule**

### **7.2. 1.16.26 USU Board of Trustees Regular Meeting Minutes**

### **7.3. Academic Approvals**

#### **7.3.1. Approve: New Administrative Unit**

##### **7.3.1.1. COE-BE-Department of Biological and Chemical Engineering**

#### **7.3.2. Approve: Name Changes and Restructures**

##### **7.3.2.1. CAS-COMM-Public Relations, Social Media, and Journalism Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science Name Change**

##### **7.3.2.2. CEHS-KHS-Health Science Bachelor of Science Name Change**

##### **7.3.2.3. CEHS-TEAL-Early Childhood Elementary Education Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science Name Change**

##### **7.3.2.4. HSB-MSLE-MBA- Entrepreneurship Specialization Master of Business Administration Name Change**

##### **7.3.2.5. QANR-ADVS-Animal-Assisted Interventions Certificate Name Change**

##### **7.3.2.6. QANR-ADVS-Animal-Assisted Interventions Post-Bachelor's Certificate Name Change**

##### **7.3.2.7. QANR-ADVS-Equine Science Minor Name Change**

##### **7.3.2.8. QANR-APEC-Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics Name Change**

##### **7.3.2.9. QANR-APEC-Ranch Management Economics Bachelor of Science Name Change**

- 7.3.2.10. CEHS-SHS-Speech-Language Pathology Assistant Certificate Restructure
- 7.3.2.11. QANR-AVTE-Master of Aviation Science Restructure
- 7.3.2.12. QANR-WATS-Climate Adaptation Science Specialization Program Change
- 7.3.3. Approve: Transfers
  - 7.3.3.1. QANR-ADVS-Master of Public Health-Veterinary Public Health Specialization Transfer
  - 7.3.3.2. QANR-ENVS-Geographic Information Science (GIS) Post-Bachelors Certificate Transfer
- 7.3.4. Approve: Discontinuations and Suspensions
  - 7.3.4.1. CEHS-HDFS-Family Finance Emphasis Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science Discontinuation
  - 7.3.4.2. CEHS-HDFS-Family Finance Minor Discontinuation
  - 7.3.4.3. CEHS-HDFS-Marriage and Family Therapy Specialization Master of Science Discontinuation
  - 7.3.4.4. CEHS-KHS-Coaching Certificate Discontinuation
  - 7.3.4.5. CEHS-KHS-Community and Public Health Emphasis Bachelor of Science Discontinuation
  - 7.3.4.6. CEHS-KHS-Health Education Teaching Minor Discontinuation
  - 7.3.4.7. CEHS-KHS-Physical Education Teaching Emphasis Bachelor of Science Discontinuation
  - 7.3.4.8. CEHS-KHS-Physical Education Teaching Minor Discontinuation
  - 7.3.4.9. CEHS-TEAL-Education Paraprofessional Certificate Discontinuation
  - 7.3.4.10. QANR-ADVS-Animal Biotechnology Minor Discontinuation
  - 7.3.4.11. QANR-ADVS-Biotechnology Bachelor of Science Discontinuation
  - 7.3.4.12. QANR-ADVS-Biotechnology Certificate Discontinuation
  - 7.3.4.13. QANR-ADVS-Toxicology-Animal, Dairy and Veterinary Sciences Master of Science Discontinuation
  - 7.3.4.14. QANR-ADVS-Toxicology-Animal, Dairy and Veterinary Sciences Doctorate Discontinuation
  - 7.3.4.15. QANR-NDFS-Dietetic Internship Post-Bachelor's Certificate Discontinuation
  - 7.3.4.16. CEHS-HDFS-Child Development Emphasis Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science Suspension
  - 7.3.4.17. CEHS-HDFS-Family and Community Emphasis Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science Suspension
  - 7.3.4.18. CEHS-HDFS-Human Development Emphasis Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science Suspension
- 7.3.5. Approve: New Emphases and Minors
  - 7.3.5.1. CAS-THEA-Theatre Arts Costume Design Bachelor of Fine Arts Emphasis
  - 7.3.5.2. CAS-THEA-Theatre Arts Lighting Design Bachelor of Fine Arts Emphasis

- 7.3.5.3. CAS-THEA-Theatre Arts Scenic Design Bachelor of Fine Arts Emphasis
- 7.3.5.4. CAS-THEA-Theatre Arts Technical Production Bachelor of Fine Arts Emphasis
- 7.3.5.5. QANR-PSC-Climate Science Climate System Emphasis Bachelor of Science Emphasis
- 7.3.5.6. CAS-THEA-Elementary Theatre Endorsement Minor
- 7.3.5.7. CAS-THEA-Secondary Theatre Endorsement Minor
- 7.3.6. Approve: New Programs
  - 7.3.6.1. QANR-AVTE-Aviation Technology Unmanned Aircraft Systems Associate of Science
  - 7.3.6.2. QANR-LAEP-Environmental Design Associate of Science
  - 7.3.6.3. QANR-TDTE-Product Creation Associate of Science
  - 7.3.6.4. QANR-TDTE-Robotics, Automation, and Control Systems Bachelor of Science
- 7.3.7. Approve: New Certificates
  - 7.3.7.1. QANR-NDFS-Nutrition and Healthy Living Certificate
  - 7.3.7.2. QANR-PSC-Organic Agriculture Certificate
  - 7.3.7.3. QANR-PSC-Residential Landscape Design Certificate
  - 7.3.7.4. QANR-WATS-Marine Biology Certificate
  - 7.3.7.5. QANR-WILD-Human-Wildlife Interactions Certificate
  - 7.3.7.6. QANR-WILD-Human-Wildlife Interactions Post-Bachelor's Certificate
  - 7.3.7.7. QANR-WILD-Plant Identification and Applied Botany Certificate
  - 7.3.7.8. QANR-WILD-Wildland Fire Science Certificate
- 7.4. Approve: Policies
  - 7.4.1. Policy 2204: Student Aid Fraud Prevention
  - 7.4.2. Policy 4205: Residency for Tuition Purposes

**Motion:**

Trustee David Huntsman moved that the Utah State University Board of Trustees approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Vice Chair Gina Gagon seconded the motion. Voting was unanimous in the affirmative. Motion passed.

**8. Action Agenda**

**8.1. Approve: Policy 4001: Faculty Senate and Its Committees**

**10:46 AM**

Presenter: Executive Vice Provost Paul Barr, President Brad Mortensen

The Board received an update on revisions to the policy, which were described as aligning the policy with current legal requirements and reinforcing shared governance principles. It was noted that the policy clarifies the advisory role of faculty and promotes transparency and

collaboration across the institution. The revised structure is intended to support more consistent and cooperative governance practices.

**Motion:**

Trustee Jacey Skinner moved that the Utah State University Board of Trustees approve Policy 4001 regarding the Faculty Senate and its committees as presented. Trustee Ryan Dent seconded the motion. Voting was unanimous in the affirmative. Motion passed.

**8.2. Approve New Center: Utah Earthquake Engineering Center**

**10:48 AM**

Presenter: Executive Vice Provost Paul Barr

This issue is critically important to Utah State University because the state has formally tasked USU with creating a center that will help Utah prepare for a major seismic event. Approximately 80% of Utah residents live within fifteen miles of the Wasatch Fault line, which runs from Brigham City to Nephi, and the Salt Lake segment alone is expected to generate an estimated \$33 billion in economic loss during a major earthquake. Given these significant risks, the Board received an update on the projected impact of such an event. To support this statewide responsibility, the University has received legislative funding as well as a generous donation from alumnus James D. Ballif to establish a center dedicated to education, training, and research in seismic preparedness. The ongoing operation and maintenance of the facility will be supported by the College of Engineering.

**Motion:**

Trustee Clark Whitworth moved that the Utah State University Board of Trustees approve the establishment of the Utah Earthquake Engineering Center. Trustee Brett Hugie seconded the motion. Voting was unanimous in the affirmative. Motion passed.

**8.3. Accept: External Audit Reports**

**10:53 AM**

Presenter: VP Dave Cowley

It was reported that the Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee received ten external audit reports and conducted a review of each one.

**Motion:**

Trustee Dave Petersen moved that the Utah State University Board of Trustees accept the external audit reports as presented. Vice Chair Gina Gagon seconded the motion. Voting was unanimous in the affirmative. Motion passed.

**8.4. Approve: Lease with Purchase Option in Price, UT**

**10:54 AM**

Presenter: VP Dave Cowley

The Board received an overview of a proposed public-private partnership (P3) to develop new student housing. The proposal involves a privately owned parcel where a developer would construct a 96-bed facility. The University would enter into a two-year lease, after which it would have the option to purchase the property at a predetermined amount established in the contract.

Administration reported that early projections indicate the building could become financially self-supporting within a short period. A potential donor has expressed interest in contributing to the project, though donor funding has not been included in current financial modeling and would be incorporated later if secured.

Approval was requested to engage professional services needed to obtain final cost estimates, which will require initial expenditures. Administration noted that the project will return to the Board for further review once complete financial details are available.

**Motion:**

Trustee Luke Johnson moved that the Utah State University Board of Trustees approve the lease with a purchase option for the property located in Price, Utah, as presented. Vice Chair Gina Gagon seconded the motion. Voting was unanimous in the affirmative. Motion passed.

## **9. Information Agenda**

### **9.1. Upcoming Board of Trustees Meetings**

**9.1.1. Friday, April 10, 2026, 8:00am-10:00am VIRTUAL Meeting (Promotion & Tenure)**

**9.1.2. Wednesday, April 29, 2026, 8:00am-12:30pm Regular Meeting (Commencement)**

**9.1.3. Friday, June 5, 2026, 1:00pm-3:30pm Regular Meeting (USU Eastern Campus, Price, UT)**

### **9.2. Interim Policies**

**9.2.1. Interim Policy 2102: Title IX Sexual Misconduct in an Employment or Education Program or Activity**

**9.2.2. Interim Policy 2103: Non-Title IX Sexual Misconduct**

**9.2.3. Interim Policy 2101: Discrimination based on Protected Characteristics**

### **9.3. Differential Tuition and HB264 Restructuring**

### **9.4. November 2025 Report of Investments**

## **10. Adjourn**

**11:04 AM**

**Motion:**

Trustee Dave Petersen moved to adjourn the meeting. Trustee David Huntsman seconded the motion. Voting was unanimous in the affirmative. Meeting adjourned.

*Tessa White*

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Tessa White, Chair

*April 29, 2020*

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Date Approved

*Janalyn Brown*

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Janalyn Brown, Secretary

