

MINUTES of the public meeting of the Uintah County Commission held **May 19, 2026** in the Commission Chambers of the Uintah County Building at 147 East Main, Vernal, Utah. The meeting commenced at 3:02 pm.

PARTICIPANTS: Commissioners Sonja Norton and Willis LeFevre. John Laursen was excused.

ATTENDANCE: Steve Labrum, Matt Wilber, Lizzy Hutchison, Les Farnsworth, Danny Harrell, Jenny Garcia, Melissa Yergensen, Monica Hill, Gennie Bird, Trinna Gardner, Wendi Long, Melanie Silcox, Angela Hawkins, Scott Hardman, Sharmane Gull, Danette Brooks, Travis Campbell, Deanna Baum, Matt Cazier, Brenda McDonald, Jess Hermann, Margie Shewell, Mike Wilkins, Katie Silcox
Minutes by Sheri Allen.

WELCOME: Commissioner Norton, Acting Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

PRAYER by Monica Hill.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE by Angela Hawkins.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: May 12, 2026 and May 13, 2026 work session

Commissioner LeFevre moved to approve the minutes for May 12, 2026 and May 13, 2026. Motion passed unanimously.

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

Warrants dated May 14, 2026 in the amount of \$2,886,299.98. Payments of note are \$33,765.00 to Aero-Graphics for the Assessor's office, \$210,983.95 to Northeastern Counseling center, \$61,703.73 to Holland Equipment for the Road Department, \$2,000,000.00 to Uintah Transportation District for the Redwash road, and \$138,870.00 to Wheeler Machinery.

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

3. TAX MATTERS: None

4. SHERIFF OF YEAR RECOGNITION -

Commissioner Norton recognized Sheriff Steve Labrum for being awarded the 2026 Outstanding County Sheriff of the Year. The award was presented on April 29, 2026, at the Utah Association of Counties conference in St. George, following a nomination by fellow sheriffs from across Utah. Commissioner Norton highlighted the Sheriff's motto, 'Make the right choice for the right reason,' noting that it serves him and Uintah County well.

5. INTRODUCTION OF MELISSA YERGENSEN HR DIRECTOR -

Commissioner Norton introduced Melissa Yergensen as the new Human Resources Director for Uintah County. Having recently joined the team, she was welcomed by the Commission and invited to share a brief introduction.

Melissa expressed her enthusiasm for joining Uintah County. She noted her ten years of service in Duchesne County and shared her appreciation for the opportunity to serve the community in her new role.

6. UTAH WORKSITE WELLNESS AWARD PRESENTATION - Jen Garcia, Human Resources

Jen Garcia, Human Resources, presented the Utah Worksite Wellness Council Platinum Award for 2026, marking the third consecutive year Uintah County has achieved this status. The County, a

medium-sized employer of approximately 330 employees, scored 93%, 218 out of 235 points, on the wellness assessment, significantly exceeding the 79% average of similar worksites. Uintah County particularly excelled in strategy, leadership, emergency preparedness, physical activity, tobacco, disease prevention, and mental/emotional health. Jen highlighted that the wellness program lowers healthcare costs through preventive measures and boosts productivity by reducing burnout.

7. POLICY 280: Employee Medical Examination Policy - Melissa Yergensen, Human Resources
Melissa Yergensen, Human Resources, requested approval for Policy 280, the Employee Medical Examination Policy, which ensures compliance with Utah State Code 34-33-102. This code requires counties to pay for medical examinations required for a position or its essential functions once a job offer has been made. Examples include fitness-for-duty exams for the Sheriff's Office or CDL medical exams for truck drivers. This policy was previously discussed during a work session.

Commissioner Norton moved to approve Policy 280: Employee Medical Examination as presented by Melissa Yergensen. Motion passed unanimously.

8. STERLING SOUND CONTRACT UTAH COUNTY FAIR - Melanie Silcox, Western Park
Melanie Silcox, Western Park, requested approval for the Sterling Sound contract for the Uintah County Fair. The contract covers two parts: \$20,000 for the concert on Thursday night, and \$6,500 for the remaining sound needs for all other events at the Conference Center and Western Park, including the Queen pageant. The request was previously presented during the work session on Wednesday.

Commissioner LeFevre moved to approve the contract with Sterling Sound for the Uintah County Fair as presented by Melanie Silcox. Motion passed unanimously.

9. CONTRACT WITH REVCO LEASING - Trinna Gardner, Purchasing & Grants
Tabled

10. CIVCO 5th North CONTRACT - Scott Hardman, Road Department
Scott Hardman, Road Department, requested approval for the CIVCO Engineering agreement contract, which was reviewed by Loren Anderson, Civil Attorney. The contract covers the design and construction management for the 5th North project from 5th East to 1500 East. The project scope is a mill and fill, including shoulder work but no widening, and is not a full reconstruction. The total contract price is \$100,000, with \$45,000 for engineering design and \$55,000 for construction management.

Commissioner LeFevre moved to approve the CIVCO Engineering Contract as presented by Scott Hardman. Motion passed unanimously.

11. ACCEPTANCE OF PROPERTY FOR FUTURE ROAD - Deanna Baum, Community Development
Deanna Baum, Community Development, requested approval to accept a 46-foot right-of-way (ROW) from property owners Devin and Felicia Cook. The acceptance is required as the property is being divided into four lots under the flag law ordinance, which mandates the dedication of a ROW for future development along 5300 South, a Class D road. Deanna clarified that due to a recent change in Utah Code, all property conveyed to the County by deed must now be formally accepted by the Commission. Matt Cazier, Community Development Director, explained that the 46-foot ROW standard, which allows for a 32-foot drivable surface, originated from a recent state-level change to subdivision road width specifications. Mike Wilkins, Clerk-Auditor, confirmed that the county is accepting the property as a future ROW but will not be responsible for maintenance, as the Class D road is currently unmaintained, and the developer must bring it up to county specifications before the county accepts it for maintenance.

Commissioner Norton moved to approve the acceptance of the property for a future road, as presented by Deanna Baum. Motion passed unanimously.

12. UTAH OUTDOOR RECREATION GRANT: Ashley Gorge Via Ferrata Phase 2 - Gennie Bird, Purchasing & Grants

Gennie Bird, Purchasing & Grants, requested approval for a grant agreement with the Utah Division of Outdoor Recreation for the Ashley Gorge Via Ferrata Phase 2. The total project cost is \$985,919.65, funded by a \$590,030 grant from the Utah Division of Outdoor Recreation, a \$363,470 cash match from Access Utah, and a \$32,419.65 in-kind match from Uintah County for public parking lot construction. The scope of work for Phase 2 includes parking lot development, two restrooms, a new pedestrian foot bridge over Ashley Creek, two new access hiking trails above Ashley Gorge connecting to the existing trail system, route expansions of the Raptor Ridge and the Finwall maze, and a new optional exit route near the terrace section. The contract was reviewed and approved by Loren Anderson, Civil Attorney.

Commissioner Norton moved to approve the Utah Outdoor Recreation Grant as presented by Gennie Bird. Motion passed unanimously.

13. FRAUD RISK ASSESSMENT - Mike Wilkins, Clerk-Auditor

Mike presented the annual Fraud Risk Assessment, which is submitted to the State Auditor's office and now requires public approval. The assessment serves as a scorecard covering good practices for fraud prevention, such as separation of duties, procurement policy, ethical behavior, reporting of fraud and abuse, and a travel policy. Uintah County achieved a score of 355 out of a maximum possible 395, which is considered a very low level for fraud.

Commissioner LeFevre moved to approve the Fraud Risk Assessment as presented by Mike Wilkins. Motion passed unanimously.

14. RECESS FOR BOARD OF EQUALIZATION

Commissioner Lefevre moved to recess for the Board of Equalization and once it is finished adjourn the BOE and reconvene the Commission meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

15. BOARD OF EQUALIZATION

A. Approval of Hearing Officer

Mike Wilkins, Clerk-Auditor, requested approval of the annual agreement for the Board of Equalization (BOE) Hearing Officer for the 2026 appeal season. He noted that a Hearing Officer is required by law to hear appeals for locally assessed and personal property. The agreement sets the officer's fee at \$65 per hour, up to 50 hours. The Hearing Officer presents recommendations to the BOE for final approval.

Commissioner Norton moved to approve the Hearing Officer's agreement as presented by Mike Wilkins. Motion passed unanimously.

B. Approval of Hearing Officer's recommendation of Personal Property Appeals

Mike also presented the recommendations for the 2026 mobile home personal property appeals, which included six appeals stipulated by the Assessor and the appellant, and three appeals reviewed by the Hearing Officer. The total value reduction recommended was \$687,272, bringing the total adjusted value to \$674,398 from an original value of \$1,361,670. Mike noted that these adjustments were made after appellants provided more information regarding properties of mobile homes not affixed to land that are typically evaluated only from the exterior.

Commissioner LeFevre moved to approve the Hearing Officer's recommendation of Personal Property Appeals as presented by Mike Wilkins. Motion passed unanimously.

16. ADJOURN BOE and RECONVENE COMMISSION MEETING

13. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Commissioner Norton read a welcoming announcement for Melissa Yergensen, the new Human

Resource Director, who brings over a decade of experience in strategic operations across local government and the private sector. The announcement noted her advanced education, including a Master of Science in Human Resources, ongoing completion of a Master of Science in Legal Studies, and holding SPHR (Senior Professional in Human Resources) and IPM SCP (International Public Management Senior Certified Professional) certifications. Commissioner Norton also recognized Jen Garcia and April Steele for their high level of service and composure while taking on additional responsibilities during the transition period.

ADJOURN: The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:43pm.



SONJA NORTON, ACTING- CHAIR



MICHAEL W. WILKINS, CLERK – AUDITOR

