

## UTAH STATE LIBRARY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, March 11, 2026 · 10:00 – 11:00 AM

---

### State Library Board Attendees:

Josh Johnson, Chair; Marguerite Mower; Dan Mauchley; Diane Wanamaker; Megan Mullins; Steve Winn; Davina Sauthoff; Marissa Bischoff; Shannon Thoman-Black

### Utah State Library (USL) Staff:

Cara Rothman, State Librarian/Division Director; Lisa Nelson, Blind and Disabled Program Manager; *Merrily Cannon, Library Development Program Manager (excused)*; Marie Hyatt, Library Resources Program Manager; Jami Carter, Bookmobile and Rural Services Manager; Amanda Rock, Marketing & Outreach Manager; Gabrielle Barker, Administrative Assistant

### Guests:

Katherine Potter, Department of Cultural & Community Engagement Deputy Director; Rachel Lenahan, Library Development; Sam Dutton, Library Development; Marisa Bell, Library Development; Melanie Boyd, Library Development

---

### Call to order: Welcome and Roll Call – *Chair, Josh Johnson*

Josh welcomed everyone and performed the roll call.

### Approve: Board Meeting Minutes from December – *Chair, Josh Johnson*

Motion to approve: Daniel Mauchley, seconded by Marguerite Mower. The entire board concurred.

### Update: Library Division – *State Librarian, Cara Rothman*

Cara provided the following updates:

- Two new full-time employees at USL - Marisa Bell, Youth Services Coordinator; Gabrielle Barker, Administrative Assistant. One new part-time employee at USL - Eman Alhasnawy, Grants Reimbursement Specialist. This position is fully funded by LSTA.
- One Bookmobile relief driver resigned.
- Multistate Director Joe Ballard resigned, and Myke Evans-Cormany (former Multistate Deputy Director) accepted the position in his place. There is currently a hiring freeze, so the search to fill Myke's previous position is on hold.
- FY27 saw a budget cut of \$108,000, LSTA funding is secured through 9/27.
- IMLS is hosting America250 for rural librarians, focused on programming.
- Multiple sister divisions within CCE are moving their offices from Highland to the tax commission building. Updates will be completed by June, hopefully.
- Our 5 year strategic plan expires in 2027, we hired a consultant to evaluate our current plan, and to help us formulate a new plan for 2028-2032.
  - Cara will update the board as this progresses.
- 2 key outreach events for this quarter: Cultural Industry Advocacy day (educating legislators on how our services benefit their communities), StoryCon (sharing info about services and programs).

Update: Dept. of Cultural & Community Engagement – *CCE Deputy Director, Katherine Potter*

Kat provided the following updates:

- The end of the legislative session brings updates on its impacts on our department and division. It was a lean budget year for ongoing funds, a lot of agencies received cuts including CCE. Over 1,000 bills were proposed, about 550 of them passed.
- 2-3% cuts are what we've been seeing, which is less than we expected. The STEM Action Center saw a 6% cut, which is the largest of everyone.
- The Volunteer for Good program within UServe received one-time funding of \$100,000 to expand their program.
- America250 Great American State Fair received funding.
- CCE received a one-time, \$500,000 passthrough fund, which will go to the first lady's initiatives on literacy. A lot of the projected moves will be through our guidance and suggestions, reaching communities across the state including rural.
- SB-241 passed, which has a focus on early literacy. 3rd grade reading levels are the goal to increase to 70% from the current 53%. The national goal is to reach the 80th percentile by 2030. This also funds paraprofessionals in the classroom to support literacy initiatives.
- Branding
  - Statewide logos have been disparate, so new branding has been created to standardize the image across agencies. Our marketing team will provide a branding/style guide.
  - The Governor's Communication Office worked directly with a consulting agency to research Utah values and symbols. An old watercolor painting that was done of the state seal acted as inspiration for the new logo. It's a beehive on a table with the word "utah" or "industry" above it, depending on the department, and year of the statehood under the beehive.

Introduction: Removing [Public Library Benchmarks](#) as Recertification Requirement

*State Librarian, Cara Rothman on behalf of Dev. Manager, Merrily Cannon*

Cara shared the proposed removal, citing that the benchmark targets for recertification vary too drastically to yield an effective and fair comparison among libraries. Since each location operates with consideration for the unique needs of their community, using benchmarks to weigh success may hinder libraries from effectively supporting patrons.

Presentation: New Data Dashboard: Public Library Service Evaluation

*State Data Coordinator, Sam Dutton*

Sam provided a visual representation of benchmarking and the vast operational variance among libraries from year to year, pointing to the fact that libraries have no way of projecting where they will land on the scale until the figures are processed. It's currently graded on a curve, all libraries' benchmarks are weighed based on percentiles, which may not appropriately measure success.

**Vote:** Removing [Public Library Benchmarks](#) as Recertification Requirement

**Daniel motions to remove benchmarks. Josh seconds. Affirmative votes are cast unanimously.**

Update: Blind & Disabled Program

*Program Manager, Lisa Nelson*

## *Approved minutes*

Lisa provided the following updates:

- America250 book discussion is happening quarterly, and will be sent in six month intervals. This is for adults, in all of the states we serve.
- We are planning summer reading events for our braille states, and the other states we serve. A craft will be mailed to kids, then there will be in-person storytime for kids that live locally.
- We've had a change in staff assignments, Faye Fischer will be working with the blind and prison libraries.

Update: Library Resources Program

*Program Manager, Marie Hyatt*

Marie provided the following updates:

- Brian Tober has completed a full year of statistical compilation using a tool that allows library staff to view usage statistics for individual databases.
- Year-End Review for Beehive Library Consortium
- We lost one staff member in Dec, and have not replaced her yet.
- We renamed the Beehive Library Consortium to the Juniper Library Consortium, mirroring interconnectivity and resilience.
- Libraries are migrating quickly, statistical compilation is coming together, we are updating sites to ADA standards, Overdrive contract is ending. We are currently working with purchasing to renew the Overdrive contract for another 5 years.

Update: Library Development Program

*State Librarian, Cara Rothman on behalf of Dev. Manager Merrily Cannon*

Cara provided the following updates on Merrily's behalf:

- Sam Dutton has been working on the dashboard mentioned earlier, and helping update our Community Library Enhancement Fund (CLEF). Sam attended the national conference for all state data coordinators.
- We hired our new Youth Services Coordinator, Marisa Bell. They have been working on summer reading training, my529 bookmarks, and reactivated our Utah Kids Ready to Read program.
- Melanie closed out the federal FY24 and completed the IMLS state program, which is a LSTA funding requirement. Uplift KFT and tech enhancements grants are underway.
- Rachel has been planning summits, kaizen, and many other training opportunities for library staff across the state. She also secured a venue and dates for the annual director's summit. It will be held at the Provo Marriott from Sept 30 - Oct 1.

Update: Bookmobile and Rural Services

*Program Manager, Jami Carter*

Jami provided the following updates:

- Interbranch lending has been an exceptionally successful service since its launch in January. The inter-bookmobile loan program connects our 8 physical outlets across 7 counties and 2 individual cities.
- Key results from this enhancement include:
  - Patron Service: In just 5 courier runs, 377 items have been swiftly shared between bookmobile locations, resulting in faster service for our patrons.

*Approved minutes*

- Operational Efficiency: This initiative has reduced our reliance on traditional interlibrary loans and the expense associated with mailing items. Collection purchasing can be done more strategically to leverage shelving real estate between all locations.
- Team Culture: The direct support provided by the courier system, which has also been used to transport equipment and even baked goods, is significantly improving team connection and overall staff culture.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 am.