FIVE COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

Steering Committee Meeting

MINUTES

Date:	June 10, 2026
Time:	1:06 PM
Location:	Hybrid meeting — in person and online
Presiding:	Darin Bushman, Executive Director

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

The Steering Committee meeting was called to order at 1:06 PM on June 10, 2026. Introductions were conducted around the room and with online participants.

Members / Representatives Present

- Paul Cozzens, Iron County Commissioner
- Jerry Taylor, Garfield County Commissioner
- Wade Hollingshead, Beaver County Commissioner
- Celeste Meyeres, Kane County Commissioner
- Mayor Nolan Davis, Milford (Beaver County Mayors)
- Curtis Barney, Garfield County School District
- Commissioner Gil Almquist, Washington County (online)
- Jean Krause, Mayor of Virgin (online)
- Mayor Mollie Halterman, Parowan (Iron County Mayors)
- Brad Last, Utah Tech University

Staff Present

- Darin Bushman, Executive Director, Five County AOG
- Allison McCoy, CFO, Five County AOG
- Michael Johnson, Five County AOG
- Kevin Smedley, Five County AOG
- Roger Carter, Local Administrative Advisor, Five County AOG

Guests Present

- Casey Garnett, IDM International (Hazard Mitigation Plan consultant)
- Gary Webster, Office of Senator Mike Lee
- Sam Harvey, Office of Congresswoman Celeste Maloy

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Jerry Taylor led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Approval of May 28, 2026 Special Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

The draft minutes from the May 28, 2026 Special Steering Committee meeting were presented for review and approval.

Motion:	Approve the May 28, 2026 Special Steering Committee meeting minutes as presented.
Moved by:	Commissioner Taylor
Seconded by:	Mayor Davis
Vote:	Approved unanimously

4. HR / Staffing Report

Executive Director Darin Bushman presented the staffing report in place of HR Director Jen Wong, who was conducting a benefits open enrollment session.

Administration

- CFO Allison McCoy announced her retirement effective September 30, 2026, following many years of service with Five County AOG. The committee expressed appreciation for her contributions.
- The CFO position will be posted. The FY2027 budget includes an overlap period to allow the new CFO to work alongside McCoy through fiscal year-end close and the annual audit process.

Area Agency on Aging (AAA)

- One case manager position is currently open and being recruited.

Child Care / Community Economic Development

- No changes or open positions.

Community Support Services (CSS)

- One position open following a recent departure. Posting on hold pending confirmation of Circles grant renewal.
- The Circles grant (poverty mitigation program) has not been confirmed for continuation into FY2027. Status is uncertain pending state notification.

5. Adoption of FY2026 Final Budget Amendments

CFO Allison McCoy presented the FY2026 final budget amendments, as recommended by the Finance Committee at its meeting earlier that morning.

- Beginning FY2026 adopted budget: $13,278,490
- Total revision: +$148,991
- Final amended FY2026 budget: $13,427,481
- Programs ending at zero balance (not carrying forward to FY2027): Utah Driver grant ($27,000) and TANF poverty mitigation funding.
- State consolidated Local Area Administrator and Community Planner grants under a single Community Advisor grant (line 77). Net budget effect is neutral; shown as negative on former lines and positive on line 77.

Motion:	Adopt the FY2026 Final Budget Amendments as presented, reflecting a total amended budget of $13,427,481.
Moved by:	Mayor Nolan Davis (Milford)
Seconded by:	Commissioner Jerry Taylor
Vote:	Approved unanimously

6. Adoption of FY2027 Consolidated Budget

CFO Allison McCoy presented the proposed FY2027 consolidated budget (July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027) for Steering Committee adoption. The Finance Committee reviewed and recommended approval at its earlier meeting.

Note: A corrected version of the budget spreadsheet was distributed during the meeting; two mathematical errors in the packet version were corrected. All figures below reflect the corrected version.

Budget Summary

- FY2026 final amended budget: $13,427,481
- Proposed FY2027 budget: $13,031,823
- Net decrease: $395,658

Key Budget Notes

- Salaries and wages: net decrease of approximately $42,000. Positions not replaced include an accountant, administrative assistant, and three CSS staff (including a director). Offset by COLA/merit increases and new hires in aging and CSS.
- Fringe benefits: significant decrease. Drivers include more employees on single-coverage HSA plans (lower premiums), reduced workers' compensation and unemployment insurance rates (unemployment: 0.03 to 0.002), and URS retirement rate reductions (Tier 1: 15.97% to 14.97%; Tier 2: 14.19% to 13.19%).
- Travel: slight decrease. Weatherization: increase (more jobs and higher material costs).
- Aging contracts, congregate meals, home-delivered meals: slight increases.
- Contract pass-through and financial assistance: $2,150,000.
- Operating expenses: decreased approximately $86,000 through cost-control measures.
- Equipment and tools: slight increase.
- Federal contracts revenue: slight increase (aging program enrollment).
- State contracts revenue: decrease of approximately $284,000, primarily from loss of TANF poverty mitigation program (~$293,000); other state programs net +$10,000.
- Local participation revenue: down approximately $16,000. Includes MPO vote shares ($50,000), program matches, mobility management, CHISPA, and approximately $55,000 toward the building lease match.
- Indirect revenue: gross amount $680,000 (indirect cost rate increased from 13.51% to 15%); budgeted at $625,000 after ~8% discount for anticipated salary and fringe underspending. This is a more conservative and realistic approach than prior years.
- Building lease: state-covered through December 31, 2026. FCAOG assumes responsibility from January 2027; approximately 7.5 years remain on the lease. Not yet included in FY2027 budget.

- Budget does not include the increased local participation model being negotiated with cities, towns, and school districts. A mid-year revision will be brought forward once those agreements are finalized.
- Budget must be submitted to the state by the end of June 2026.

Motion:	Adopt the FY2027 Consolidated Budget of $13,031,823 for the period July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027.
Moved by:	Mayor Halterman
Seconded by:	Mayor Davis
Vote:	Approved unanimously

7. CIB Project Reviews

Michael Johnson presented an overview of the current CIB funding landscape before proceeding to the six project reviews.

CIB Funding Context

- Average project size over the past five years: $2.4 million.
- Previous June cycle (statewide): 23 applications requesting $27.9 million ($23.9M grants, $3.9M loans).
- Current June cycle (Five County region only): 6 applications requesting $39 million ($14M grant, $24.9M loan).
- Statewide current trimester: approximately 28 applicants requesting $90 million.
- Available funding cannot accommodate all requests. Scope reductions and prioritization are expected.

The committee reviewed and voted on each application individually. All six projects met the June 1, 2026 submission deadline. Steering Committee recommendations will be forwarded to CIB as part of the process for reaching the CIB board agenda.

a. Apple Valley — Culinary Water Master Plan Update

- CIB request: $20,000 grant (50% match). Apple Valley contribution: $20,000. Total: $40,000.
- Planning grants at or below $150,000 are reviewed by CIB staff; Apple Valley should receive a response within approximately 60 days.
- Public hearing: held recently; documentation not yet submitted to CIB at time of review.

Motion:	Support the Apple Valley Culinary Water Master Plan Update 2026 application.
Moved by:	Commissioner Almquist
Seconded by:	Commissioner Meyeres
Vote:	Approved unanimously

b. Beaver City — City Hall Renovation and Addition

- Total project cost: $12,100,000. CIB request: $10,100,000 ($5,050,000 grant + $5,050,000 loan at 1% for 30 years). CIB would fund approximately 83%.

- External funding secured: Utah Outdoor Recreation Grant ($200,000); federal grant ($157,000); applicant cash ($942,000).
- Scope: demolish a damaged wing; construct addition for city administration, council chambers, security upgrades, and renovations.
- Discussion: Request far exceeds the five-year average project size. In the current funding environment, loans are more accessible than grants. Committee encouraged Beaver City to clarify its maximum debt capacity and explore project phasing when appearing before the CIB board.

Motion:	Support the Beaver City City Hall Renovation and Addition application.
Moved by:	Mayor Davis
Seconded by:	Commissioner Cozzens
Vote:	Approved unanimously

c. Garfield County — Public Access Road Easement Acquisition (Sigler)

- CIB request: $203,000 grant.
- Purpose: acquisition of easements for a public access road in Garfield County.
- Precedent: CIB has funded similar easement acquisitions in Wayne, Emery, and San Juan Counties.
- Public hearing: held recently; documentation not yet submitted to CIB.

Motion:	Support the Garfield County Public Access Road Easement Acquisition application.
Moved by:	Commissioner Meyeres
Seconded by:	Mayor Davis
Vote:	Approved unanimously

d. Hatch — Water Capital Improvement Project

- CIB request: $2,000,000 grant (100% CIB funded; no applicant match).
- Scope: water storage tank and distribution line connecting tank to existing water system.
- Public hearing: completed.

Motion:	Support the Hatch Water Capital Improvement Project application.
Moved by:	Commissioner Meyeres
Seconded by:	Mayor Davis
Vote:	Approved unanimously

e. Hurricane City — New Police Station

- Total project cost: $21,375,000 (application contained a typographical error; corrected amount is $21,375,000).
- CIB request: $21,375,000 ($1,500,000 grant + $19,875,000 loan at 1% for 25 years). In-kind contribution: $3,500,000 (sale of existing station).
- Discussion: The grant request alone would equal the entire statewide grant allocation from the prior cycle. Washington County ranks 17th on the CIB rainbow sheet. The committee

acknowledged the genuine need but noted the project faces significant funding headwinds. Hurricane should enter the CIB process with realistic expectations and a clear understanding of its debt capacity.

Motion:	Remain neutral on the Hurricane City New Police Station application.
Moved by:	Mayor Davis
Seconded by:	Commissioner Meyeres
Vote:	Approved

f. Paragonah, Iron County — Road Pavement Improvement

- Total project cost: $3,000,000. CIB request: $1,875,000 grant (61%). Town funds: $150,000. USDA Rural Development Grant (secured): $1,000,000.
- Scope: pavement rehabilitation addressing deterioration, alligator cracking, and drainage deficiencies via chip seal and related repairs.
- Discussion: Strong community contribution (~40% non-CIB); USDA grant already secured. Committee recognized the history of state-imposed road funding caps on rural counties and the ongoing maintenance backlog. Garfield County provides chip-seal crews to communities as a cost-sharing arrangement where capacity allows.

Motion:	Support the Paragonah community road pavement improvement application.
Moved by:	Commissioner Cozzens
Seconded by:	Mayor Halterman
Vote:	Approved unanimously

CIB Process — County Prioritization Meetings

Michael Johnson noted that Five County AOG would like to reinstate county-level prioritization meetings prior to future CIB cycles. These pre-deadline meetings allow communities within each county to prioritize competing applications and develop realistic expectations about available CIB funding. The committee supported this approach.

8. Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

Casey Garnett, Project Manager with IDM International, presented an update on the Five County multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) update.

Background and Purpose

- FEMA defines hazard mitigation as long-term, sustainable efforts to reduce disaster losses. Research shows every $1 spent on mitigation saves approximately $6 in future losses.
- The current Five County HMP expires July 2027. An active FEMA-approved plan is required for jurisdictions to be eligible for FEMA hazard mitigation grant programs, including BRIC (Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities). A new BRIC NOFA is anticipated soon.

Status and Timeline

- Kickoff meetings held in Panguitch and Cedar City. Kane County mayors meeting scheduled June 16, 2026.
- Risk assessment meeting: scheduled June 30, 2026.

- Plan completion target: end of 2026. Adoption target: spring/early summer 2027.
- Identified hazards are consistent with the prior plan (flooding, drought, earthquake, wildfire, etc.).

Key Change: School District Participation

- Updated FEMA guidance allows school districts to participate as full plan participants, making them eligible to apply directly for FEMA hazard mitigation grants. This is new from the prior plan cycle.
- School districts wishing to participate must formally contact IDM. All participating jurisdictions must formally adopt the completed plan.

Jean Krause (Virgin) confirmed her understanding of the July 2027 plan expiration and the adoption timeline. No further questions.

9. Local Administrative Advisor (LAA) Program Presentation

Roger Carter, FCAOG Local Administrative Advisor, presented an overview of the LAA program, joined by Kevin Smedley (Planning Advisor) and Michael Johnson (Funding Advisor).

Program Overview

- State-funded program assisting communities under 10,000 population that lack full-time administrative staff.
- Roger brings more than 20 years of city management experience and teaches in the SUU Public Administration Program.
- Approximately 21 LAA-eligible communities in the region. Under Director Bushman's direction, the team now serves 38 communities total by assigning all communities a designated point of contact.
- No cost to communities.

Team Structure

- Each advisor maintains their specialty: Roger (administration), Kevin (land use/planning), Michael (funding).
- Every community has a designated point of contact; bi-weekly team coordination calls ensure cross-pollination of expertise.

SUU Partnership

- Graduate students from SUU's Public Administration Program complete projects in local communities — unique among Utah AOGs.
- Recent examples: student-developed emergency response plans for Minersville and Orderville (first-ever for each community), coordinated with county plans.

Services Provided

- Administration: procurement, governance, meeting procedures, budget processes.
- Land use: general plan updates, ordinance assistance, state mandate compliance.
- Funding: CIB, CDBG, EDA, Outdoor Recreation Initiative grants, and other programs. Five County AOG has one of the largest CIB applicant pools in the current cycle.
- EDA quarterly report completed by Michael Johnson; received strong EDA staff feedback. Supporting Beaver City and Parowan EDA applications.

Commissioner Taylor noted he has invited Director Bushman to present to the Garfield County Commission on July 13, 2026, to discuss Five County AOG services and return on investment for member counties.

10. Legislative Reports

a. U.S. Senate — Gary Webster, Office of Senator Mike Lee

- Colorado River Compact: Senator Lee participated in an Energy and Natural Resources hearing. Upper basin states (Utah, Wyoming, Colorado) are aligned. Arizona has retained counsel. Nevada/Arizona/California desalination cost-sharing discussions ongoing; upper basin states not currently aligned. States filing lawsuits against other states risk loss of federal funding.
- CIB funding: energy royalties from Utah resource production are a key CIB funding source. Senator Lee met with an operator of 900 Utah wells.
- Farm bill: Senate negotiations underway; hang-ups on ethanol, pesticides, SNAP amounts. Outcome will significantly affect rural counties.
- DHS/ICE funded for three years via Reconciliation 2.0.
- Road Listen Rule: Senator Lee working to rescind through Energy and Natural Resources Committee.
- SAVE Act (citizenship verification for voting): needs 60 Senate votes; Senator Lee pushing for continued debate.
- Land transfers/conveyances: Senator Lee's office can assist municipalities with federal land conveyances.
- NGO transparency: discussion on preventing grant recipients from suing the federal government and requiring public disclosure of grant amounts.

b. U.S. House — Sam Harvey, Office of Congresswoman Celeste Maloy

Sam Harvey introduced himself as new staff covering Washington and Kane Counties, alongside District Director James Leavitt.

- Clear Act (HR 6802): nullifies Forest Service Criminal Prohibitions rule. House Agriculture Committee hearing scheduled; Garfield County Sheriff Glover to testify.
- Geothermal Energy Enhancement Act (HR 5631): passed House Natural Resources Committee under suspension of the rules; moving to Senate. Includes Congresswoman Maloy's GEO Act provisions.
- Cedar City water reuse/reclamation: Congresswoman Maloy pursuing $3 million appropriation.
- Grand Staircase-Escalante Monument RMP: challenges with Senate parliamentarian; updates pending.

11. Director's Report

Executive Director Darin Bushman provided the following updates:

Communications

- New website launched. Minor cleanup items remain. Committee feedback: positive.
- Weekly Briefing: 8-9 issues published; committee feedback very positive. Reviews ~100 policy items per issue to select 8-10 most relevant to the region. Members encouraged to reach out with questions or suggestions.
- Social media: communications team actively posting.
- Packet distribution: packets now attached to the meeting calendar invite. Committee confirmed this approach works well.

Staff and Operations

- Staff picnic held; Commissioner Cousins attended.
- Remote leadership training: all staff enrolled; positive reception.
- Iron County facility: no suitable property identified; CDBG funds ineligible for the building previously reviewed. CIB remains an option but would add to an already competitive applicant pool.

Conference Attendance

- Director Bushman raised the question of NACO and NADO conference attendance given costs (~$800 registration + ~$2,000 travel per event; NACO holds three conferences per year).
- Commissioner Taylor expressed strong support, citing representation on national policy committees and past program innovations discovered through NACO (e.g., the tax diversion/debt recovery program now implemented in Utah through UAC).
- General committee consensus: participation is worthwhile. No formal vote taken.

Economic Development / EDA

- EDA NOFA released for AI skill-set building projects. Communities with relevant projects should contact Director Bushman.
- Beaver City: pursuing EDA application for $10 million electrical substation; Five County AOG facilitating.
- Parowan: $5.8 million EDA application for airport road and industrial/manufacturing infrastructure (inland port area) is through review and awaiting the Secretary's signature.
- Cedar City: continuing EDA work under 2023-2024 disaster declaration funding opportunity.
- Quarterly EDA report by Michael Johnson received strong positive feedback from EDA.

12. Closed Session — Executive Director Performance Review

Director Bushman noted that a merit increase is included in the adopted FY2027 budget and that the committee may conduct his annual performance evaluation in closed session pursuant to Utah Code § 52-4-205(1)(a).

Motion:	Enter closed session to discuss the performance of the Executive Director.
Moved by:	Commissioner Taylor
Seconded by:	Mayor Davis
Vote:	Approved by roll call vote: Paul Cozzens — Aye; Jerry Taylor — Aye; Wade Hollingshead — Aye; Celeste Meyeres — Aye; Mayor Davis — Aye; Curtis Barney — Aye; Commissioner Gil Almquist — Aye

Recording was stopped. Non-Steering Committee members were excused.

13. Return to Open Session — Executive Director Compensation Action

The Steering Committee returned to open session following the closed session. The Committee made a recommendation to approve a compensation adjustment for Executive Director Darin Bushman: Considering the Director received approximately a 1% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) consistent with the distribution method approved by the Committee. The COLA is in the FY2027 budget, plus a 3% merit increase is also in the budget. The Committee recommended a 3% merit increase based upon the Committee's performance evaluation. Effective July 1, 2026.

14. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.