



Minutes

DEPARTMENT of PUBLIC UTILITIES
ADMINISTRATION

**Salt Lake City
Public Utilities Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
June 25, 2026**

The Public Utilities Advisory Committee (PUAC) meeting was held at 7:30 am on Thursday, June 25, 2026. Committee members that were present, Chris Shope (Chair), Tom Godfrey, Dani Cepernich, Sean McKelvie, Ted Boyer, Kathryn Floor and Kamiron Anderson. Salt Lake City Public Utilities employees present were Laura Briefer, Jesse Stewart, Tamara Prue, Stephanie Duer, Chloe Morroni, Wes Ing, Michelle Berry, Mark Christensen, Jamey West, Karryn Greenleaf, Tammy Wambeam, Jason Draper, Jacob Jorgensen, Carly Castle, Holly Lopez, Jeffrey Grimsdell, Jannet Cassel, Mark Maldonado, Crystal Chen, Bryson Bullough, John Bryan, Justin Dillon, Peyton Presnal and Elle Smith. Others present were Megan Yuill, Salt Lake City Mayor's Office; Annalee Munsee, Metro Water District, Zac Steele, Austin Kimmel, Salt Lake City Council Office.

Welcome and Introductions

Chair, Chris Shope welcomed everyone to the committee meeting. Director Laura Briefer reminded everyone that the next PUAC meeting will be in two months.

Approve Minutes of May 28, 2026, Meeting

A motion was made by Sean McKelvie and seconded by Tom Godfrey to approve minutes of the May 28, 2026, PUAC meeting. All members voted to approve.

Financial Report and Budget Update *Lisa Tarufelli, Finance Administrator*

There was no financial report presented today. However, it was noted that sewer and water rate revenue is currently lower than anticipated. This may not be unusual, as Public Utilities typically sees most of its revenue during the summer months, and the season has only just begun.

Drought and Water Conservation Update *Chloe Morroni, Crystal Chen, Stephanie Duer & Tamara Prue*

Tamara Prue provided an update on the water supply. The Great Salt Lake is currently up one foot, though levels are expected to decline by August. Due to ongoing high temperatures, lower water supply is anticipated. However, continued monsoon-style weather could help offset the impact. Overall conditions will depend heavily on the amount of rainfall received.

Chloe Morroni provided an update on media engagement related to drought conditions and conservation messaging. She reviewed several recent media events attended to support public communication, including:

- March 19 – News conference with Mayor Mendenhall announcing the Stage 2 drought declaration.
- April 6 – News conference with Metro regarding water contributions to the Great Salt Lake.
- May 21 – News conference with Governor Cox announcing a state of emergency for drought.
- June 18 – Presentation on drought conditions to City PIOs.

Chloe noted that the team prioritizes earned media to help ensure the messaging is accurate and aligns with communication goals.

Stephanie Duer provided an update on conservation efforts and effective communication strategies. Tom raised questions about messaging within the Parks Department, and Stephanie discussed ongoing collaboration with various City departments to support drought education and response needs.

Laura Briefer offered positive remarks regarding the new Public Lands Director, Kim Shelley, noting her collaborative approach and ease of working with partners. Committee Member Tom Godfrey also inquired about the effectiveness of the water checks conducted by the team, and Stephanie confirmed that they continue to be helpful.

Director Laura Briefer reported receiving numerous compliments on the department's social media presence, managed by Crystal Chen. Crystal provided an overview of current social media efforts, particularly around conservation and drought messaging. She noted that 65% of Americans receive news through social media, underscoring the importance of these platforms.

Over the past two months, the department's accounts have reached 142,200 impressions, 3,796 engagements, and gained 254 new followers. Tamara expressed appreciation to PUAC members for actively interacting with the posts.

Crystal reviewed recent content and highlighted the various departments and agencies involved in collaborative messaging. She also shared efforts to educate Council members so they can confidently create their own posts. Crystal aims to post three times per week, with daily updates in the stories, and mentioned the skits she produces to help the community connect with DPU staff and better understand who works within the department.

Stephanie provided an update on daily water use, noting that the department receives this information once or twice each week. She clarified that the data reflects water flowing through our facility daily production rather than metered customer use.

She reviewed recent temperature trends: in 2025 the hottest day was June 14 at 104 degrees; in 2024 the peak temperature reached 105 degrees in July; and in 2023 the hottest day was also in July at 106 degrees. Stephanie highlighted that, unlike previous years with measurable early-season rain, this year saw no rainfall until yesterday.



She explained ongoing discussions about appropriate watering practices for trees and vegetables, noting that these topics can be nuanced. In response to Sean's question, she confirmed that the Stage 2 drought announcement occurred on March 20. Dani expressed concern regarding the graph showing the 10-million-gallon reduction goal.

Stephanie also shared several resources included in the presentation slides. She described a collaboration with the Fire Department at Station 7 to create a "salsa garden," which is being filmed to promote awareness of low-water gardening. She noted that District 2 has raised concerns about balancing food-growing efforts with water conservation.

Current messaging emphasizes that water conserved this year becomes available for next year's supply. She also mentioned signage promoting low-water grass seed options for lawns.

SLCDPU Safety Presentation *Wes Ing, Janet Cassel & Mark Maldonado*

With approximately 490 employees, safety remains a top priority for the department. Jesse introduced the Safety Team and the Safety Committee. Wes noted that his team collaborates with every division within DPU. He highlighted that the Water Reclamation Facility (WRF) recently received NACWA's Platinum Peak Performance Award, recognizing 32 years of 100% compliance.

The team discussed ongoing safety concerns at the WRF, where employees are operating the existing plant while construction for the new facility continues around them. Due to the nature of the work, extensive training is required, and many of these trainings provide valuable skills outside the workplace. Wes shared the total number of training hours and noted the department's efforts to increase these hours over time. One challenge, he explained, is accommodating different learning styles.

In response to Tom Godfrey's question about the increase in training hours in 2025, Janet explained that this was the year of the major CPR initiative, during which weekly classes with 12–18 participants were held. They expect total training hours this year to exceed 2025 levels. Laura also addressed wildfire preparedness and recent training on safe equipment used in extremely dry conditions. She clarified that "manhours" include all hours worked, including overtime.

The department continues to invest in improved safety gear, including high-visibility uniforms, specialized chainsaw helmets, and hot-weather equipment. Safety boots are provided year-round, with the annual boot truck visit supporting ongoing needs. Laura also noted efforts to broaden the variety of gear available to meet diverse employee needs.

Bryson Bullough provided an update on behalf of the Safety Committee. With 25 members from across the department, the committee meets monthly and focuses on strengthening DPU's safety culture. Their work includes improving the ability to multitask on emerging issues and involving



other teams when needed. Two subcommittees, Inspections and Incident Review, are being aligned to support this work.

Wes outlined several department-wide safety improvements, including the Safety 101 program (which Mark noted has been highly effective for tracking training), motor vehicle reports to maintain valid driver's license records and reduce liability, and streamlined drug and alcohol testing following incidents. He emphasized that Public Utilities fosters a culture of caring.

Laura shared the safety coins created by the Engineering Team, which can be given to employees demonstrating strong safety practices in the field. She also announced that the proposed budget has been approved, and the state audit will conclude soon. She will continue communication with PUAC during the two-month recess.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Meeting adjourned at 9:22 am.

**The next PUAC Meeting will be held on Thursday, September 24th, 2026,
at 7:30 am**

