Jordan River Commission
Governing Board Meeting

August 6, 2026 | 10:00 a.m.

Meeting Location

Education Center at Conservation Garden Park
Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District
8275 South 1300 West, West Jordan, UT 84088

And remotely via Zoom.

Meeting Attendees

Governing Board Members

City
Councilmember Mackey Smith, Bluffdale
Councilmember Bryn Johnson, Draper – Vice Chair
Councilmember Emily Lockhart, Lehi
Todd Munger, Lehi (Alternate)
Councilmember Silvia Catten, Millcreek – Past Chair
Bruce Holyoak, Murray (Alternate)
David Jellen, Saratoga Springs (Alternate)
Councilmember Don Shelton, South Jordan – Chair
Colby Hill, South Jordan (Alternate)
Councilmember Ray deWolfe, South Salt Lake
Sharen Hauri, South Salt Lake (Alternate)
Mayor Kristie Overson, Taylorsville
Councilmember Cindy Wood, West Valley City

County
Lisa Hartman, Salt Lake County (Alternate)

State
Ajla Hadzialijagic, Utah Governor's Office (Alternate)
Senator Lincoln Fillmore, Utah Legislature
Ben Stireman, Utah Division of Forestry, Fire & State Lands
Nathan Lee, Utah Department of Transportation

Special District
Shazelle Terry, Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District
Benn Buys, Utah Fairpark Area Investment & Restoration District

Partner/Ex-Officio
Betty Naylor, Gardener Heritage Farm
Scott Peters, Jordan River Foundation (Alternate)
Heidi Hoven, National Audubon Society
Councilmember Bradley Parry, Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation
Tim Brown, Tracy Aviary
Liz Larsen, Utah's Hogle Zoo
Michael Horrocks, Wasatch Rowing Foundation

Commission Staff

Soren Simonsen, Executive Director & Secretary
Rachel Lyn, Communications & Outreach Manager
Caroline Johnston, Volunteer & Event Coordinator
Jens Ammon, Restoration Coordinator
Amelia Miller, Administrative, Finance & Grant Specialist
Audrey Zietz, Communications Intern
Frances Schneider, Education Program Intern

Visitors and Guests

Emily Andrea, Utah Division of Forestry, Fire & State Lands
Rachel Ellingson, Office of Congresswoman Celeste Maloy
Jon Glenn, Event Advisory Committee
Anna Habben, Mighty Penguin – Get to the River Festival Consultant
Keith Hambrecht, Utah Division of Forestry, Fire & State Lands
Liz Hamilton, Utah Department of Agriculture & Food
Eric Kraan
Ann Lindsey
Eric McCulley, McCulley Watershed Consulting Services
Michael Miller
Magnus Nichols
Marisa Weinberg, Great Salt Lake Sentinel Landscape

Meeting Minutes

Don Shelton, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM.

1. Welcome & Introductions

Chair Shelton welcomed Governing Board members and other meeting participants, and asked them to use the link provided to indicate meeting attendance.

Councilmember Cindy Wood, the new Representative for West Valley City, introduced herself to the board. She indicated that Councilmember Lars Nordfelt is the new Alternate..

2. Public Comments

Ann Lindsey, a resident of Bluffdale, expressed concerns regarding the enforcement of laws restricting motorized vehicles along the Bluffdale portion of the Jordan River Parkway (Note: this comment was given later in the meeting agenda during Commission business, but is included here to follow the agenda).

3. Commission Business

a. Event Advisory Committee Updates (*00:05:20 on audio recording*)

Jon Glenn, Past Chair, provided a brief Committee update. Since the last report, the Committee has provided oversight of several spring events, including the City Nature Challenge and Earth Day activities in April, and the Golden Spoke Ride event in May. The Committee is also working with the Staff and Mighty Penguin to raise funds and organize the upcoming Get To The River Festival in September. He indicated that the next upcoming Committee meeting is to be held on August 13. Jon introduced Anna Habben, who provided the Get To The River Festival preview.

b. Get to the River Festival Preview (*00:09:28 on audio recording*)

Anna Habben, Client Manager with Mighty Penguin Consulting, is a contractor assisting with Festival planning, management and fundraising. She shared an overview of the Get To the River Festival happening throughout the month of September. She highlighted the sponsors contributing to this year's festival.

Anna reviewed the Festival budget, noting an increase of funding over the prior year. This will result in an increase to the Mini Grants available to Festival partners. She noted additional seasonal Commission staff will help support events and activities. She suggested that Board members save the date for the Festival Kick Off, scheduled for August 27 at 10:00 AM, at the Little Cottonwood Creek Confluence Trialhead. The Commission plans to feature the Love Your Watershed Initiative.

Soren Simonsen added that the Commission is organizing a "Mayors Challenge" to support this water quality initiative, and use this opportunity to help promote the Festival.

Anna provided an overview of the Festival schedule, highlighting planned events and potential opportunities for Board members to get involved. She announced that the annual Jordan River Friends Celebration & Recognition event is scheduled to take place at Utah's Hogle Zoo on the evening of September 24.

Liz Larsen added that the Zoo is looking forward to hosting this special event.

Soren expressed gratitude to Anna Habben and Cindy Kindred with Mighty Penguin Consulting for their successes with fundraising, and all their efforts to help organize and plan the Festival. He recognized the dedicated efforts of Commission Staff in preparing for the Festival, and organizing numerous events and activities as well.

c. Event Advisory Committee Appointments (*00:33:10 on audio recording*)

Soren Simonsen presented to the Board the proposed three-year appointments of Eric Kraan, Hillary Whittaker, and Will Freund to the Event Advisory Committee. Eric was present to introduce himself. Will and Hillary had conflicts and could not attend, but Soren read statements that each provided. Eric Kraan immigrated to the U.S., and has been a Utah resident for 26 years. He is a former competitive speed skater, and a business owner of sport and recreation equipment, and is enthusiastic about the opportunity to serve on the Committee. Hillary Whittaker is the manager of a community garden program in Utah County. Will Freund is a photographer and videographer, and manages education programs at the Loveland Living Planet Aquarium in Draper.

Ben Stireman moved to appoint Eric Kraan, Hillary Whittaker, and Will Freund to the Event Advisory Committee. Scott Peters seconded the motion.

There was no further discussion of the motion.

Voting was unanimous in favor of the motion by Governing Board members present.

d. Technical Advisory Committee Update (*00:43:30 on audio recording*)

The Committee chair and vice chair were not able to participate, and Soren Simonsen provided a brief Committee update as Secretary. The May meeting was a Commission and Watershed Council field trip to the Jordan River Migratory Bird Reserve in South Jordan, which is owned and managed by the Utah Reclamation, Mitigation & Conservation Commission. Several Committee and Governing Board members participated. Soren thanked Eric McCulley and Caroline Johnston, who led the field trip.

At the June meeting, the Committee received a detailed presentation regarding PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, or "Forever Chemicals") that are being studied in the waste stream of water treatment facilities, and considered for rulemaking with the Utah Water Quality Board.

Soren announced that the Committee will host the Jordan River Commission and Watershed Council field trip for its September meeting. The field trip will be a bicycle tour of the Jordan River Parkway in Lehi, and will highlight riparian protections around the Jordan River, and a growing active transportation network of trails

and paths. The field trip is promoted to the public as a Festival education event, and the Commission has arranged for several bicycles that can be borrowed for the tour if participants are not able to bring their own.

e. Pollinator Habitat Program Update (*00:51:25 on audio recording*)

Liz Hamilton, Pollinator Habitat Program Manager with the Utah Department of Agriculture & Food, shared an overview and update of the Utah Pollinator Habitat Program. This is a relatively new program, approved and funded by the Utah Legislature, and working in partnership with the Utah Department of Corrections nursery at the State Prison in Salt Lake City, to supply native Utah plants for habitat restoration on public lands and private properties around the state.

This program is being used to supply plants for restoration around Utah Lake and the Jordan River, and across the Jordan River Watershed. Residents, businesses and public agencies can apply for planting "kits" each year in the spring. The program also provides plants directly to the Department of Natural Resources for their wildlife habitat and sovereign lands restoration programs. Additional program information is available at *https://ag.utah.gov/conservation/utah-pollinator-habitat-program*.

f. Love Your Watershed - Stormwater & Water Quality Initiative Update (*01:08:50 on audio recording*)

Rachel Lyn, Communications & Outreach Manager of the Jordan River Commission, shared a program update and upcoming activities related to the Commission's Love Your Watershed stormwater and water quality initiative. She indicated that the commission's goal is to encourage the public to become proud and protective of their watershed and pass along the message. (additional program information is at *LoveYourWatershed.org*)

Lisa Hartman suggested that integrating the Love Your Watershed program with the Salt Lake County stormwater coalition would be a valuable connection. Soren Simonsen responded that he and Rachel had recently presented updates to the stormwater coalitions in Utah, Salt Lake, and Davis counties, and is working to coordinate and integrate with their education and outreach efforts.

g. Meeting Minutes Review & Adoption (*01:31:50 on audio recording*)

Bryn Johnson moved to adopt the February 5, 2026, April 2, 2026, and June 4, 2026, Governing Board meeting minutes. Bruce Holyoak seconded the motion.

There was no further discussion of the motion.

Voting was unanimous in favor of the motion by Governing Board members present.

h. Executive Director's Report (*01:34:00 on audio recording*)

Soren Simonsen noted that the Fiscal Year 2026 4th Quarter Financial Report is not yet completed, and would be shared at a later time.

Don Shelton noted that a member of the public arrived after the public comment period concluded, but invited them to share their comments (see remarks noted in the Public Comments section above).

Soren Simonsen indicated that an update on public safety guidelines is expected during the October Governing Board meeting. He also indicated interest in convening law enforcement agencies for a joint training session focused on coordination of Jordan River Trail rules and regulations.

i. Upcoming Commission Meeting Schedule (*01:45:00 on audio recording*)

Don Shelton briefly reviewed upcoming Commission meetings and events. A field trip tour of the Utah Pollinator Habitat Program nursery at the Utah State Prison will happen on the mornings of September 1 and 2. The next regular meeting of the Jordan River Watershed Council will be September 3, at 10:00 AM. That evening the Event Advisory Committee and Jordan River Foundation are hosting a film screening of the documentary *The Lake* at Saratoga Springs City Hall. A Commission and Watershed Council Field Trip is

scheduled for September 17 at 2:00 PM. The Jordan River Friends Celebration & Recognition Event hosted by the Commission will be on September 24 at Utah's Hogle Zoo. The next regular Governing Board meeting will be on October 1 at 10:00 AM.

4. Presentations & Discussion

a. Utah BUILD Coordinating Council Update (*01:47:00 on audio recording*)

Ajla Hadzialijagic, Budget & Policy Analyst with the Utah Governor's Office of Planning & Budget, provided an overview and update of the Utah BUILD Coordinating Council initiative that has been carried out over the past year. This is an initiative to tackle some of Utah's big challenges across sectors like housing, employment, recreation, public lands, infrastructure, and natural resources, among others. It is being directed by and involves many Commission partner agencies and organizations, and every Commission partner will play a role in its implementation. Ajla summarized an annual report that was included in the meeting packet. Additional information is at *https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/a6360b8850174346ad386070bd36e517* and *https://governor.utah.gov/build*.

b. Commission Roundtable Discussion

This item was not discussed due to time constraints.

5. Adjourn

Bryn Johnson moved to adjourn the meeting. Michael Horrocks seconded the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 PM.

A meeting recording, presentation, handout materials, and meeting minutes are available at https://www.utah.gov/pmn/sitemap/notice/1097957.html

Meeting minutes prepared by Amelia Miller and Soren Simonsen, Secretary.

Adopted on October 1, 2026.