MINUTES FOR THE
BUSINESS ADVISORY BOARD
Wednesday, May 14th, 2025

1. Roll Call

The following members of the Business Advisory Board were present:

Scott Lyttle, Chair
Jeff Carleton
Pook Carson
Barri Allaire
Andy Robertson
Sheridan Mordue, Vice-Chair
Jocelyn Kearl
Isaac Atencio
Brittany Reese

Also Present:

Peter Makowski, Department of Economic Development; Will Wright, Department of Economic Development; Kiara Polee, Department of Economic Development; Ibrahim Ramazani, Department of Economic Development; Anne Olsen, Young Professionals of Salt Lake City; Bryce Wurtsbaugh, Suazo; Andie Feldman, Department of Economic Development; Kristen Lavelett, Downtown Alliance; James McCormack, Building Services; Alyn Toalepai, Utah Pacific Island Chamber of Commerce**;** Laura Briefer, Public Utilities.

Absent:

Abudujaannah Soud
Alfonso Brito

1. Approval of the minutes

a. Review and Approval of March 12th, 2025, BAB Minutes.

Approval of the March meeting minutes was tabled and will be revisited at next month's Business Advisory Board meeting.

2. Briefings by the Staff

a. Report from Deputy Director.

Peter Makowski, Deputy Director of Business Development, invited Will Wright, Business Development Project Manager, to share some updates on the Economic Development Loan Fund (EDLF). Mr. Wright highlighted that Botanica, a recent EDLF recipient, has opened on 200 South near 300 West, and Policy Kings is planning to open around May 23. The next EDLF applicant expected to go before City Council is Hruska's Sugar House location. He shared that there are currently 10–11 projects in the pipeline, mostly in early stages, with a few nearing loan committee review. A visual dashboard update is expected by the next meeting.

Mr. Makowski then shared updates on other departmental efforts. He highlighted a new initiative under the Mayor's Public Safety Plan to engage downtown stakeholders—including both businesses and residents—on safety concerns, with the first meeting scheduled for May 19. Sheridan Mordue, the board's vice chair, will serve on the planning committee. Mr. Makowski also announced the relaunch of the business site visit program to assess economic conditions and support businesses facing challenges like tariffs. Workforce Development Manager Ms. Jimenez-Garcia will lead this effort. Finally, he noted that City Council approved $270,000 in additional funding for the Construction Mitigation Program to support Sugar House businesses still affected by ongoing construction, following a previous budget of $850,000.

3. Business Items

A. Public Utilities Water Rate Changes Update

Laura Briefer, Director of Public Utilities, presented updates on upcoming utility rate changes for the 2025–2026 budget year, with new rates taking effect July 1, 2025. She explained that Salt Lake City's water, sewer, stormwater, and streetlighting services operate as separate enterprise funds, meaning they are funded by utility rates rather than taxes. Key drivers for the proposed increases include major infrastructure projects—such as the $850 million replacement of the city's only sewer treatment plant and the planned rehabilitation of water treatment facilities—and the need to meet evolving safety and environmental standards. A nine-month rate study helped determine rate adjustments that reflect long-term financial needs while emphasizing fairness, affordability, and water conservation. Feedback from a Rate Advisory Committee informed the recommended rate structure changes.

The updated rates aim to simplify billing and improve equity across residential and non-residential customers. For water, block rates will still apply to residential users with a focus on affordability for low-use households, while non-residential users will switch to uniform seasonal rates. The temporary rate stabilization fee has been removed. Sewer rates have also been restructured for clarity, removing the sewer class system and introducing charges based on average winter water use for residential customers and 70% of water use for non-residential users. Stormwater rates will see modest increases, with reduced credits for on-site mitigation, and streetlighting fees will rise to support the city's master plan. Overall, the new rate structures are designed to meet financial requirements while promoting transparency and long-term sustainability.

B. Open Streets 2025 Overview

Peter Makowski, Deputy Director of Business Development, provided an overview of the 2025 Open Streets initiative to the Board. He outlined the event's goals of transforming Main Street into a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly area that fosters community connections and supports the local economy. Mr. Makowski emphasized that the 2025 version would feature enhanced programming, extended marketing efforts, and closer coordination with businesses. He also shared the updated project timeline, which includes phases such as contractor selection, stakeholder engagement, and detailed planning and development activities from November through June.

In his presentation, Mr. Makowski highlighted that the four blocks will be themed.—Family Commons, Arts Avenue, Market on Main, and Restaurant Row—each designed to offer unique experiences such as live performances, art installations, food markets, and interactive activities. He discussed how outreach efforts have engaged various community and cultural organizations, and how the marketing campaign will target both residents and visitors using a mix of earned and paid media. The presentation underscored the event's mission to energize downtown Salt Lake City and establish Open Streets as a signature community celebration.

C. Keep it Real Waterwise without compromise campaign

Mr. Wright shared a link with the Business Advisory Board introducing Salt Lake City's Keep It Real: Waterwise Without Compromise campaign. This initiative focuses on promoting water-efficient landscaping by encouraging the replacement of non-functional grass with drought-tolerant plants and sustainable landscape designs. The campaign supports both environmental responsibility and aesthetic value, aiming to help residents and businesses conserve water without sacrificing the look and feel of their outdoor spaces.

4. City Council Announcements

The following updates were provided to the Business Advisory Board.

Austin Kimmel, Public Policy Analyst for the Salt Lake City Council, provided a series of important updates to the Business Advisory Board. He announced the kickoff of Salt Lake City's FY2025-26 budget season, highlighting opportunities for public engagement through hearings and surveys. Residents are encouraged to provide feedback during two public hearings on May 20 and June 3, or through email, voicemail, or online forms, making the budget process more accessible and participatory.

Additionally, Mr. Kimmel shared that the City Council approved updates to Salt Lake City's flag standards, adopting three new flag designs that include the sego lily to symbolize resilience, acceptance, and belonging. These flags will be displayed at City Hall for various observances. He also noted that on May 13, the Council would receive an Economic Forecast presentation from Natalie Gochnour of the Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute, providing insights into the city's financial outlook as part of the broader budget planning process.

5. BAB Member Announcements

Board Chair Lyttle acknowledged the new City Flags and the creative thinking of the Administration.

Board Vice-Chair Mordue shared she will be participating on the City Safety Plan on behalf of the Business Advisory Board.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Scott Lyttle
Scott Lyttle (Oct 7, 2025 12:14:14 MDT)

Scott Lyttle, Chair

This document and the recording constitute the official minutes of the Economic Development Business Advisory Board meeting held on May 14th, 2025.