Utah Board of Tourism Development
Board Meeting Minutes – September 11, 2026
virtual

Board Members Present – Lesha Coltharp, Kaitlin Eskelson, Joanie Hammer, Victor Iverson, Jessica Merrill, Jason Murray, Graydon Pearson, Nathan Rafferty, Harold Simpson, Melva Sine, Jordan Smith, Kevin Smith, CJ Wade, Jennifer Wesselhoff, Shayne Wittwer

Staff – Tera Atwood, Jenica Barber, Emma Checketts, Ben Cook, Rachel Creer, Todd K. Jenson, Denise Jordan, Carli Mahas, Derek Mellus, Virginia Pearce, Natalie Randall, Laici Shumway, David Williams, Heather Zang, Stacey Zoller

Others – Raelene Davis, Tina Grange, Erin Judd, Jeanette Peatross, Mick Soleta, Allison Yamamoto-Sparks, Matt Sterzer, Cortney Yazzie

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Welcome and Introductions
Board Chair **Nathan Rafferty** called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone and asked everyone to update their name and organization on their Zoom screen.

MOTION: Nathan Rafferty motioned to approve the August 14, 2026, board meeting minutes. All board members were in favor.

Utah Film Commission
Film Incentive Program
Virginia Pearce

- Joining from Toronto Film Festival and attended the screening of *Wild Horse Nine*. It was partially filmed in Utah last year and is getting standing ovations on the festival circuit. It will be released in theaters in November and encourage everyone to see it.
- Projects premiering in September include *Guarded*, *Edie Arnold is a Loser*, *Dusty Bluffs*, *Halloween Wars* (season 16) and *The Real Housewives of Salt Lake City* (season 7).
- Currently have many projects shooting throughout the state, including Marshals (season 2) that is filming in Morgan, Salt Lake, Summit and Weber counties.
- Have awarded $9.9M of the FY27 film incentive and those projects are creating almost $88M of economic impact.
- Funding for the program equals $11M for FY27.
    - $1.4M cash for the community film incentive program
    - Tax credit of $6.79M for motion picture incentive program
    - $3M for rural film incentive program

Production	Estimated Utah Spend	Incentive Amount Per Production	Locations (Counties)
Prepare for the End	$214,101	$42,820 (20%)	Summit
Houseboat Heroes	$289,832	$57,966 (20%)	Emery, Grand, Kane & Washington
	$503,933 TOTAL Spend	**$100,786 TOTAL Incentive**	

MOTION: Jennifer Wesselhoff motioned to approve $100,786 for incentives for the two productions presented which have met the criteria defined by statute. Victor Iverson seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Announcements

- **Joanie Hammer** reminded everyone that registration for the Utah Tourism Conference is open. It is October 13-16 at the Grand Hyatt Deer Valley. Please register and make hotel reservations.
    - Also consider donating to UTIA's silent auction.
- **Joanie Hammer** also shared that Box Elder's Peach Days are going on currently.
- **Jason Murray** shared that Washington county is hosting the western regionals for the National Interscholastic Cycling Association (NICA) championships in November.
- **Victor Iverson** shared that Heath Hansen is replacing Britany McMichael as the tourism director at Greater Zion.
- Congratulations to Mick Soleta and Ali Harford and the Moab Office of Tourism for winning the prestigious ESTO Marketing Momentum Award - Campaign of the Year for "Discover Moab: On the Edge."

The meeting adjourned