FIVE COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

Joint OPMA and GRAMA Training Meeting

MINUTES

Date:	October 14, 2026
Time:	11:30 AM (called to order at approximately 11:38 AM)
Location:	Festival Hall Conference Center, Rooms 5 & 6, 96 North Main St., Cedar City, Utah (Hybrid)
Participating Bodies:	FCAOG Steering Committee; FCAOG Human Services Council; FCAOG Area Agency on Aging Advisory Board; Southwest Utah Public Health; Southwest Behavioral Health
Presiding:	Commissioner Gil Almquist, Washington County (presiding in the absence of Chair Hollingshead)
Presenter:	Johnnie Miller, Chief Executive Officer, Utah Counties Indemnity Pool (UCIP)

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1. Welcome and Introductions

Commissioner Almquist called the joint training meeting to order at approximately 11:38 AM and noted that he was presiding on behalf of Chair Wade Hollingshead.

Attendance below is taken from the training sign-in form and the Microsoft Teams attendance report. Attendees who did not sign in and were not online are not listed.

FCAOG Steering Committee Members

- Gil Almquist, Washington County Commissioner (Presiding)
- Celeste Meyeres, Kane County Commissioner
- Jerry Taylor, Garfield County Commissioner (online)
- Melani Torgersen, Mayor, City of Escalante
- Stephanie Hill, Iron County School District
- Donna Law, Southern Utah University
- Nolan Davis, Mayor, Milford City

Aging Services Advisory Board and Council on Aging Representatives

- Janet Nelson, Five County Board Member, Beaver County
- Maby Amezcua, Council on Aging Coordinator, Beaver County (online)
- Stephanie Rainey, Director, Iron County Council on Aging (online)
- Linda Liebhardt, Iron County Senior Citizen Advisory Board
- Lori Slinn, Iron County Council on Aging Advisory Board
- Terry Nielsen, Iron County Council on Aging Advisory Board
- Victoria Garcia, Administrative Assistant, Cedar Senior Center, Iron County Council on Aging

Southwest Utah Public Health and Southwest Behavioral Health

- RuthAnne Watt, Assistant Deputy Health Officer, Southwest Utah Public Health Department
- Michael Deal, Executive Director, Southwest Behavioral Health Center
- David Blodgett, MD, MPH — Health Officer / Director

Other Partner Agencies

- Kaden Figgins, Director, Planning and Economic Development, Garfield County
- Richard Wilson, Director of Engineering, Iron County (online)
- Todd Edwards, Dixie MPO DTAC Member, Washington County (online)
- Blake Fonnesbeck, Public Works Director, Washington City (online)
- Casey Stratton, Public Works Director, Santa Clara City (online)
- Chris Pearson, Transit Manager, City of St. George SunTran (online)
- Catherine Hasfurther, Engineering Manager, City of St. George (online)
- Jason Scheuer, Executive Director, Beaver City Housing Authority (online)
- James Jetton, Executive Director, Iron County Care and Share (online)
- Jillian Penhale, Executive Director, DOVE Center (online)
- Beverly Dinsmore (online)

Staff Present

- Darin Bushman, Executive Director
- Carrie Schonlaw, Deputy Director
- Andrea Escobar, Director
- Alyshia Jenkins, Program Manager
- Jody Matavao, Assistant Director, Community Support Services
- Minerva Marquez, Supervisor, Community Support Services
- Michael Johnson, CED Program Manager (online)
- Kevin Smedley, Associate Planner (online)
- Nathan Wiberg, Transportation Deputy Director (online)
- Scott Buys, Senior Transportation Planner, MPO (online)
- Sheri Reber, HCBS Director (online)
- Kelly Reeder, Assistant Director, Area Agency on Aging (online)
- Carrie Sigler, Child Care Resource Agency (online)

2. Procedural Items

Executive Director Darin Bushman asked attendees to register through the sign-in form shown on screen and posted in the meeting chat. Registered attendees will receive a training certificate they can use for the other boards they serve on, which was the purpose of holding the training jointly. Steering Committee members were asked to list their elected title on the form.

3. Open and Public Meetings Act (OPMA) Training

Johnnie Miller of UCIP presented the training, which had been updated to reflect recent changes in law. Key points:

Training Requirement and Recent Litigation

- The presiding officer of each public body must provide Open Meetings Act training to its members at least once a year. Options include the presentation slides (available through Director Bushman), an in-person presentation by UCIP, or the State Auditor's online video and certificate.
- Numerous OPMA lawsuits have been filed in recent months, many by one attorney reviewing the state public notice website for technical errors. In one example, a city was sued after its agenda posted six minutes short of the 24-hour notice requirement; that attorney filed 40 lawsuits in a single day.

Public Bodies, Relevant Matters, and Meetings

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- Interlocal entities are public bodies under the Act. Advisory committees created by an organization may also become public bodies; committees that only study issues and provide reports, without recommendations, generally do not.
- Only discussions of "relevant matters," those within the body's authority, must occur in an open meeting. For bodies with both legislative and executive duties, purely managerial or operational matters are excluded.
- A meeting is a gathering of a quorum, convened under the body's adopted process, to receive public comment on, deliberate, or act on a relevant matter. Bodies should adopt a policy on how meetings are convened and who may convene them, ideally in their rules of order and procedure.
- A quorum may not act together outside a meeting to predetermine how the body will vote on a relevant matter. Action taken in violation can be voided by a court.

Closed Sessions

- A closed session may only be held during a properly noticed open meeting, requires a two-thirds vote of members present, and must cite the specific statutory reason on the recording and in the minutes.
- All closed sessions must be recorded, except discussions of security personnel, devices, or systems, or of an individual's character, professional competence, or physical or mental health; for those, the presiding officer signs an affidavit. Discussion must stay within the stated reason, or a court may release the recording.
- When closing for more than one reason, the presenter recommended a separate closed session for each. Violating closed-session requirements is a Class B misdemeanor for the individual.
- The nine permitted reasons include an individual's character, professional competence, or physical or mental health; collective bargaining strategy; pending or reasonably imminent litigation; purchase, exchange, lease, or sale of the entity's real property; deployment of security personnel, devices, or systems; investigations of alleged criminal misconduct; certain confidential commercial information from a property taxpayer; and consideration of a loan application. "Personnel" is not a valid reason to close a meeting.

Meeting Requirements

- Each body must adopt rules of order and procedure, make them available at meetings, and post them on its website. It must also adopt a policy authorizing electronic meetings, or its electronic meetings are out of compliance.
- Bodies must notice an annual meeting schedule, post each agenda at least 24 hours in advance with reasonable specificity, and make meeting materials available to the public at the meeting.
- Fully electronic meetings are permitted if noticed as such, but an anchor location must be provided if requested. The public has no legal right to speak, though bodies may allow public comment with reasonable limits. The chair may remove a person who willfully disrupts a meeting.

Minutes and Recordings

- Minutes must include the date, time, place, members present and absent, the substance of all matters discussed (including public comment), and public materials distributed. Recordings with time-stamped links to each item may serve as minutes.
- Elected bodies must record every vote by roll call. Non-elected bodies, such as interlocal boards, need show roll call only for non-unanimous votes. Votes are recorded as for, against, or absent; there is no abstention. A member with a conflict may leave the room and be recorded as absent.
- Draft minutes should be available within a reasonable time, about 10 days. Approved minutes must be posted within three days of approval. Complete, unedited, properly labeled recordings must be available within three days of the meeting.

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4. Government Records Access and Management Act (GRAMA) Training

- GRAMA balances the public's right of access to government records against individuals' right to privacy, even for protected records.
- Its four main features are classifying records, maintaining them under an approved retention schedule, providing public and media access, and providing an appeal process. Appeals are now decided by a director rather than the former records committee. Each agency's records officer must complete annual training from the state.
- The Governmental Data Privacy Act now governs how entities collect and use personal data, while GRAMA governs access to those records. Where a more specific or restrictive law applies to a type of personal data, that law controls.
- Under the GDPA, entities may collect only the minimum personal data needed for a specified, lawful purpose, must give a privacy notice explaining the purpose, and may use the data only for that purpose. Entities should review every form and web page that collects personal data.
- Attendees were encouraged to consult their legal counsel on GRAMA requests involving personal data.

5. Questions and Comments

- Attendees asked for sample rules of order and procedure and electronic meeting policies. The presenter will provide samples through Director Bushman and offered help adapting them.
- In response to questions, the presenter clarified that closed-session reasons should be cited from the statute rather than describing the specific matter. Members noted that listing the permitted reasons with each agenda is helpful.
- Members discussed conflicts of interest. The presenter explained that once a conflict is disclosed under the ethics law, the member may vote, or may leave the room and be recorded as absent.
- Starting a meeting late is not a violation of the Act, and a body may delay its start to meet the 24-hour notice requirement.

Commissioner Almquist and Director Bushman thanked the presenter for the training.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:29 PM.

Motion:	Adjourn the meeting.
Moved by:	Commissioner Paul Cozzens
Seconded by:	Commissioner Celeste Meyeres
Vote:	Approved unanimously

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