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DAVIS COUNTY BUDGET COMMITTEE MINUTES

Davis County Budget Committee Minutes
Monday, October 5, 2026

The Davis County Budget Committee met for its regularly scheduled meeting at 9:00 AM on October 5, 2026, in room 306 of the Davis County Administration Building, 61 South Main Street, Farmington, Utah. Required legal notice of this meeting was given.

Disclaimer: The meeting was an open dialogue. All documents from this meeting are on file in the Davis County Controller's Office. The agenda for this meeting is incorporated into the minutes as item headers.

Following the approved Davis County policy, artificial intelligence (AI) was utilized in the preliminary creation of these minutes. The final minutes were edited and completed by Davis County Controller's Office staff.

Note: The Budget Committee is not a governing body but makes recommendations. These recommendations must then go through the Commission for formal action.

The meeting commenced at 09:02 AM.

OPENING

1. **ROLL CALL**

Find Roll Call information in each agenda item.

2. **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

AGENDA ITEMS

3. **State of Finances - 9:00 AM** - *recommended by Scott Parke, County Controller*

Committee Members Present	Commissioner Bob Stevenson, Commissioner Lorene Kamalu, Commissioner John Crofts, Controller Scott Parke
Committee Members Not Present	Excused: ; Absent:
Other Staff Present	Juli Beesley Controller's Office, Chief Deputy Controller Andrew Driggs, Human Resources Director Shawn Choate, Library Director Josh Johnson, Human Resources Deputy Director Ric Higbee, Dawn Tolson Human Resources, Mindy Adams Human Resources, Marina Brito Human Resources, Anthony Archuleta Commission Office, Information Systems Director Jeff Hassett, Cindi Garrick Controller's Office, Director of Health Brian Hatch
Public Attendance	Bret Millburn, Kendalyn Harris, Susan Lee

The Davis County Budget Committee convened on Monday, October 5, 2026, at 9:02 AM in Room 306 of the Davis County Administration Building located at 61 South Main St. Controller Parke called the meeting to

order and provided opening administrative context, clarifying that the Budget Committee operates as an advisory body to the Davis County Commission pursuant to statutory guidelines. Controller Parke explained that the advisory body consists of the elected County Controller alongside the three County Commissioners, supported by technical staff experts invited to advise on specific functional areas. Controller Parke confirmed that the meeting was open to the public and reviewed standard administrative procedures for entering closed executive sessions if necessary.

Controller Parke presented the State of Finances, opening with an assessment of fund balance health measured as a percentage of operational expenditures. A target reserve of two to four months of operating expenses (16% to 33%) is recommended to shield the County against unforeseen litigation, judgments, or capital project cost overruns. At the end of 2025, the General Fund balance stood at 26%, but is projected to decline to approximately 22% by the end of 2026, placing the General Fund near its minimum recommended reserve threshold. In contrast, non-General Fund accounts remain well-reserved, including Animal Care at 84%, Municipal Services at 66%, Health Department at 42%, and Library at 39%. Controller Parke emphasized that while non-General Fund percentages appear high, their underlying fund sizes are significantly smaller—such as Animal Care at $4 million and Library at $10 million—compared to the $120 million General Fund.

Reviewing regional macroeconomic indicators from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Controller Parke highlighted that employment cost increases in the mountain region have moderated to 3%, while the local labor market remains tight with a 3.3% unemployment rate in Davis County. Regional inflation averaged 3.1% over the prior twelve months, establishing the baseline cost increase for County operations. Controller Parke demonstrated a structural shift in General Fund tax composition between 2015 and projections for 2027, with property tax declining from 76% to 64% of total tax revenue, while sales tax expanded from 24% to 36%. For the 2027 budget year, sales tax revenue is projected to grow by 4.2%, (nearly $2 million in new General Fund revenue), whereas property tax revenue is projected to increase by 2.7% ($1,028,000 in new revenue). Controller Parke noted that $210,000 of the property tax growth results from expiring Clearfield Redevelopment Agency (RDA) areas, without which organic property tax new growth would stand at 1.9%. When adjusted for 3.1% inflation, property tax purchasing power is eroding at -1.2% real growth, indicating that property tax growth fails to keep pace with government operational costs.

Controller Parke outlined the General Fund expenditure structure, noting that employee compensation (wages and benefits) accounts for $73.5 million of the budget, followed by operating expenses ($21.2 million), interdepartmental charges ($12.7 million), inmate medical care ($5.5 million), capital outlay ($4.6 million), legal defender costs ($3.9 million), professional services ($2.9 million), and travel and training ($500,000). Recapitulating prior fiscal adjustments, Controller Parke noted that last year's $12 million deficit was addressed through a $6 million property tax increase and $3 million in spending cuts, leaving a starting baseline deficit of $2.835 million. For the 2027 budget, $3.022 million in new combined tax revenues is offset by a 9.3% health insurance cost increase ($845,000 General Fund portion of a $1.2 million total County increase), a $720,000 reduction in interest earnings from fund balance drawdowns, and $110,000 in net operational adjustments, resulting in a baseline operating deficit of $1.488 million. Controller Parke explained that an ongoing deficit of approximately $1.5 million represents a balanced operational posture, as it is historically absorbed by ongoing annual budget turnback estimated between $1.5 million and $2 million.

Addressing new funding requests, Controller Parke reported $2 million in requested full-time equivalent (FTE) additions—comprising 15 public safety FTEs across Corrections, Sheriff, Attorney's Office, and Victim Services, along with 2 administration FTEs—and $2.4 million in other General Fund departmental requests, led by Corrections ($1.357 million) and the Sheriff's Office ($621,000). A 1% County-wide compensation increase

carries a total cost of approximately $1 million ($1.231 million General Fund cost for a 2% Cost of Living Adjustment [COLA]). To address funding needs without destabilizing the General Fund, Controller Parke proposed allocating the new 0.05% "fifth fifth" sales tax revenue stream, which yields $4 million annually in ongoing public safety and transportation funding. Under the proposal, $2 million of ongoing revenue would cover ongoing public safety expenses—including $843,000 for a 2% public safety COLA, $565,000 for public safety health insurance increases, and $592,000 set aside for new public safety FTEs or inmate medical costs. The remaining $2 million of ongoing revenue would be treated as one-time funding in 2027 to cover a 2% one-time merit bonus ($843,000), Sheriff radio replacements ($571,000), and public safety equipment ($586,000), thereby preserving future ongoing revenue capacity to service debt or support a proposed $30 million Attorney's Office public safety facility. Combining a 2% ongoing COLA with a 2% one-time merit bonus maintains market salary benchmarks near the target 95% threshold while preserving a balanced $1.5 million General Fund operating deficit.

Controller Parke reviewed the upcoming budget decision calendar, adjusting the first wrap-up decision meeting to Friday, October 9 at 11:00 AM to accommodate Commissioner scheduling constraints. Subsequent milestones include a second wrap-up meeting on October 21, tentative budget submission on October 27, a public hearing on December 8 at 6:00 PM, and final budget adoption scheduled for December 15.

Concluding the presentation, Controller Parke described a standardized internal cost allocation model implemented across all County departments and funds to reflect true operational costs for administrative, IT, HR, and accounting services. To ensure budget stability during model implementation, non-General Fund departments—such as Library, Health Department, and Animal Care—will be held harmless with offsetting financial transfers for two years while baseline data is refined. Commissioner Kamalu commended each department’s budgeting abilities and reiterated historical institutional knowledge regarding the importance of maintaining competitive compensation to prevent employee turnover. Following the discussion of internal cost allocations, Controller Parke called for any final questions from the Commissioners and adjourned the meeting, ending the official recording at 9:48 AM.

4. **State of Human Resources/ HR Department - 9:45 AM** - *recommended by Shawn Choate, Director*

Committee Members Present	Commissioner Bob Stevenson, Commissioner Lorene Kamalu, Commissioner John Crofts, Controller Scott Parke
Committee Members Not Present	Excused: ; Absent:
Other Staff Present	Juli Beesley Controller's Office, Chief Deputy Controller Andrew Driggs, Johnnie Blackmon Pretrial Services, Human Resources Director Shawn Choate, Todd Utzinger Legal Defenders, Deputy Director Human Resources John Robinson, Library Director Josh Johnson, Deputy Director Human Resources Ric Higbee, Dawn Tolson HR, Mindy Adams HR, Marina Brito HR, Beate Engelhardt HR, Information Systems Director Jeff Hassett, Cindi Garrick Controller's Office, Director of Health Brian Hatch, Sarah McCarey Legal Defenders, Susana Arreola Legal Defenders, Tony Summers HR
Public Attendance	Bret Millburn, Kendalyn Harris, Susan Lee

The State of Human Resources and Human Resources Department Budget Committee Meeting of Davis County was officially called to order at 9:50 AM, beginning with a roll call to record attendance.

Director Choate presented the State of Human Resources and Human Resources Department budget overview, emphasizing that employees represent the primary asset and largest expense for Davis County as a service organization. Reviewing the 2026 compensation summary, Director Choate reported that market wage adjustments effective January 1, 2026, included a 1% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for all non-seasonal employees, paired with a 1% merit decrease offset under a modified pay-for-performance structure that reduced maximum merit increases from 3.5% to 2.5%. Furthermore, a 2% pay increase was implemented to offset a 2% decrease in the County 401(k) contribution, shifting those funds directly into employee compensation, while pay scale ranges expanded by 4% and health insurance costs rose by 10%.

Analyst Brito completed an annual benchmark compensation analysis across 98 positions, revealing that Davis County lagged behind public sector market competitors in four of the past five years. In 2026, the competitive market average compensation increase was 5.1% combining COLA and merit, whereas Davis County provided a 3% total increase. Currently, 21 benchmarked positions lag behind market rates, requiring $276,000 across all funds, including $144,000 in Fund 10, to bring them to market competitiveness. Regarding elected official compensation, Director Choate noted that 2026 increases were based on COLA plus the average merit increase given to employees, which stands at 2.3% year-to-date, and requested that the Commission decide whether to maintain this practice or return to historical practices of granting COLA increases only.

Looking ahead to the 2027 compensation structure, Director Choate stated that the County strategy remains targeting a range midpoint of at least 95% of the market average, with pay structures adjusting by the market COLA rate and no changes anticipated for Utah Retirement Systems (URS) rates. Health insurance premiums are projected to increase by 9.3%, which was negotiated down from an initial 15% quote and remains below industry average double-digit increases of 11% as well as peer counties like Cache County at 34%. Between January and June 2026, total healthcare plan expenses of $7.65 million exceeded collected premiums of $6.87 million by $777,000. Additional benefit updates for 2027 include flat rates for dental and vision, a 2.4% increase in Medicare supplement rates paired with a 30% decrease in Part D plans, an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) increase from $1.48 to $1.60 per employee per month, and adjusted Health Savings Account (HSA) contributions tied to deductible policy. Furthermore, $2500 remains in a historical employee Health Assessment Account, which can be distributed to full-time employees or applied toward wellness incentives.

Addressing workforce metrics, Director Choate reported 80 current position vacancies across Davis County, noting significant recruitment and retention efforts in the Sheriff's Office where vacancies reflect broader law enforcement staffing shortages. To optimize budget management, overtime in the Sheriff's Office is no longer pre-budgeted but is funded through payroll savings generated by vacant positions. The County turnover rate stands at 15%, and Human Resources is collaborating with Director Hassett on an IT data dashboard for department heads to analyze turnover, employee demographics, compensation, and retirement eligibility for enhanced succession planning. Sourcing data indicates the majority of job applicants apply via Indeed, while employee referrals account for 4.1%, prompting plans to expand referral programs due to higher retention and satisfaction among referred staff.

Director Choate reviewed the Human Resources Department's mission to support, develop, and empower employees, highlighting recent cost reductions including $3,000 in public notices, $6,000 in advertising, $16,000 in employee awards, and $3,000 in office supplies. HR successfully held an Employee Appreciation Event at Western Sports Park during working hours, completed 1 round of leadership training, 3 supervisor trainings, and 10 employee development trainings, established an internal HR subcommittee, and prepared a new performance evaluation process for Commission approval. To generate approximately $200,000 in

ongoing operational payroll savings, HR is eliminating a vacant Deputy Director position, downgrading an HR Business Partner role to a full-time Recruiter, downgrading an HR Technician to an HR Assistant, reclassifying Payroll and Benefits Administrators to HR Business Partners, and reclassifying a Compensation Analyst to Compensation & Benefits Manager. Additional HR initiatives include evaluating Human Resources Information Systems (HRIS) to replace or complement Munis, conducting a County culture survey, launching a Security Committee, evaluating the Risk Management Administrator role, and overseeing the Accident Review Committee. Overall, HR recommends restoring merit increases to at least 3%, maintaining a 2% COLA, prioritizing market benchmark adjustments, expanding flexible work arrangements, and advancing leadership development.

Director Blackmon presented the budget report for Pretrial Services, confirming that the department is submitting no new funding requests for 2027. Commissioner Kamalu commended Pretrial Services for its state and national recognition, highlighting a 95% public safety rate for supervised releases and a 75% court appearance rate. Director Blackmon detailed that supervising an individual on Pretrial Services costs $3.25 per day compared to approximately $100 per day for jail custody, while linking individuals to community resources to maintain employment and productivity, leading other municipalities and Counties to model programs after Davis County.

Director Utzinger presented the Legal Defenders budget, reporting that the department receives $472,500 annually from the Utah Indigent Defense Commission (IDC), though state IDC funding has remained flat for four years despite rising defense costs statewide. Davis County contributes $175,000 annually to the state Aggravated Murder Defense Fund, but Director Utzinger warned that statewide allocation assessments will likely increase significantly due to extraordinary capital defense costs in Utah County, such as the $1.8 million Tyler Robinson case, noting the unfairness of non-contributing counties obtaining special legislative funding. Legal Defenders face mounting financial pressure in professional and technical expenses due to complex DNA evidence re-evaluations, where the lowest negotiated expert rate is $300 per hour. Furthermore, investigator pay rates lag $15 per hour below market rates, with Lead Investigator Hurst receiving no rate increase in six years.

Director Utzinger requested renaming line item "sanity hearings" to "civil commitments", along with a $17,000 budget increase to align with actual expenditures. He announced that the IDC awarded three scholarships to Davis County Legal Defenders attorneys to attend the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers mental health convention. Expressing concern over utilizing temporary opioid settlement funds for ongoing general fund operational expenses, Director Utzinger reported collaborating with Davis Behavioral Health and the Sheriff's Office to transition a planned $112,000 re-entry position to Davis Behavioral Health, eliminating POST certification requirements and saving costs. Discussions were also held regarding law enforcement drop-off procedures at the Davis Behavioral Health Receiving Center in Layton, addressing low utilization by outlying County police departments due to travel distance from the County jail. Controller Parke confirmed that Legal Defender contracts include a 4% baseline increase plus COLA (with a 2% placeholder) through their expiration at the end of 2027, with Director Utzinger affirming that Davis County maintains the lowest per-capita indigent defense spending along the Wasatch Front. Following the presentations, the Commission recessed the meeting at approximately 10:35 AM.

5. **Sheriff's Office - 11:00 AM** - *recommended by Kelly Sparks, Davis County Sheriff*

Committee Members Present	Commissioner Bob Stevenson, Commissioner Lorene Kamalu, Commissioner John Crofts, Controller Scott Parke
Committee Members Not Present	Excused: ; Absent:

Other Staff Present	Juli Beesley Controller's Office, Chief Deputy Controller Andrew Driggs, Brad Barlow Search & Rescue, Annie Cook Sheriff's Office, Chief Deputy Sheriff Arnold Butcher, County Sheriff Kelly Sparks, Erin Griffeth Sheriff's Office, Nathalia Cornell HR, Human Resources Director Shawn Choate, Marina Brito HR, Information Systems Director Jeff Hassett, Correction's Chief Deputy Taylor, Facilities Manager Brandon Ottley
Public Attendance	Jon Atkin (Online), Bret Millburn, Kendalyn Harris, Susan Lee

The Sheriff's Budget Committee Meeting commenced at 10:50 AM with roll call conducted to record official attendance.

Sheriff Sparks opened the budget presentation by addressing organizational culture and service standards across Davis County government, emphasizing that line-level employees directly deliver County services to the public. Sheriff Sparks stressed that service quality is directly tied to workforce investment, noting that decisions regarding benefits, retirement contributions, 401(k) matches, and merit increases significantly impact employee morale, recruitment, and retention. Sheriff Sparks prioritized personnel as the primary focus of the Sheriff's Office and urged the Commission and the budget committee to avoid balancing the budget at the expense of County personnel.

Addressing personnel priorities, Sheriff Sparks detailed the historical impact of position relinquishments since 2023, when over twenty positions were relinquished—including a Captain position—which left the jail severely understaffed and eliminated the civil process unit. To address operational shortfalls, dangerous overtime demands, and statutory mandates, Sheriff Sparks requested the reclamation of seven Corrections Deputy positions, two Law Enforcement Deputy positions for civil process, one Captain position, and the reclassification of a Sergeant position back to Lieutenant.

Chief West presented the Corrections Bureau operating adjustments outlining $203,000 in fee revenue growth, $588,000 in operating inflation and trend adjustments, $430,000 in mandated inmate healthcare cost increases reflecting a 5% increase on the $4.7 million medical contract, and a $490,000 overtime shift alignment. Chief West noted a $136,000 revenue reduction in SCRAM electronic alcohol monitoring fees as surrounding counties establish independent programs, alongside a $25,000 request for investigative DNA testing. Chief West detailed a major capital request of $570,000 for a specialized, multi-year radio system upgrade to resolve critical communication dead zones caused by thick steel and concrete barriers within the jail, compounded by state radio encryption updates.

Chief West noted that jail capacity currently sits at approximately 685 inmates out of a maximum capacity of 800, and discussed the operational benefits of pre-trial release, electronic monitoring, and re-entry programs coordinated through the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council. In response to recruitment and capacity challenges, Controller Parke proposed pre-advancing up to five unfunded sworn positions financed through turnover savings, while Sheriff Sparks reiterated that permanent funded positions remain necessary to restore baseline operational security. Chief West, Sheriff Sparks, and Chief Butcher outlined the extensive training requirements for new recruits, noting that the County pays recruit wages of approximately $19,000 during the three-month Peace Officer Standards and Training academy, followed by ten to sixteen weeks of field training.

Chief Butcher outlined the budget for Administration and the Public Shooting Range, noting an organizational realignment that separated patrol, justice services, professional standards, and administration into distinct

organizational codes to improve fiscal accountability. Chief Butcher highlighted a $1.5 million reduction in revenue and expenditures resulting from the expiration of the federal COPS grant utilized for adverse terrain command post equipment, and reported the transfer of a $1,400 software license cost for ISPYFIRE following dispatch relocation. Chief Butcher reported that the Public Shooting Range generated $36,000 above projected revenue and proposed expanding the west parking lot to establish two additional competition shooting bays, with Controller Parke and Commission members noting potential use of Tourism Department funds. Sheriff Sparks recommended that public recreational management of the range be transferred to another County entity, such as the Community and Economic Development department, while preserving Sheriff's Office access for law enforcement training.

Chief Butcher presented Patrol Operations, detailing $191,000 in increased interlocal contract revenue from service cities and a $145,000 increase in fleet maintenance costs assessed by County fleet operations. New patrol requests totaled $83,000, which included $33,000 for canine replacements to retire nine-year-old K9 Ralph and rebuild the canine unit toward four total dogs, $30,000 to initiate a utility terrain vehicle lease rotation for canyon patrols, and $20,000 for canyon patrol vehicle communications equipped with Starlink satellite and Wi-Fi-enabled radios. Chief Butcher emphasized that enhanced canyon communications are vital for public safety during mountain emergencies and large events where cellular and traditional radio signals fail.

Chief Butcher and Chief West outlined Justice Services priorities, requesting $76,740 for a tactical drone platform featuring live-streaming capability for major incidents, search and rescue, and emergency operations. Chief Butcher requested $60,000 to acquire a specialized bomb squad equipment trailer to replace an aging 2001 command truck, explaining that the regional bomb squad responds to frequent hazardous calls, including eleven deployments in the past two weeks. Chief Butcher also requested $11,810 for mobile command post communication upgrades, including Starlink satellite integration and cradle point cellular routers.

Chief Butcher reviewed the Professional Standards Unit, presenting a $75,000 request for artificial intelligence software deployment, which Director Hassett noted could be reduced to approximately $15,000 by expanding existing County-wide software licenses. Chief Butcher noted that Emergency Services maintains $235,000 in federal BRIC grant funding for building codes and hazard mitigation planning.

Facilities Manager Ottley presented Buildings and Grounds West, reporting almost $200,000 in personnel savings from early retirements, offset by $130,000 in operational expansion for two additional facilities and $130,000 in capital maintenance savings. Capital upgrades for the West Campus totaled $260,000 for mechanical and security projects including chiller replacements, security cameras, parking lot lighting, and a sewer backup pump, $78,500 for Emergency Operations Center fire panel integration, carpet repairs, and dispatch office remodeling, $7,200 for uniform allowance alignment ($870 annual taxable allowance for civilian facility staff), and $39,000 for a specialized sewer lift station maintenance service contract.

Search and Rescue Representative Barlow presented the Search and Rescue budget, highlighting the contributions of 48 volunteer members who provided approximately 3,300 donated hours across 20 to 30 emergency callouts annually. Operational requests included $11,000 for high-angle rope gear, ongoing avalanche and technical rescue training through the Mountain Rescue Association, and a $12,000 allocation for side-by-side equipment. Representative Barlow noted that the unit maintains a highly cost-effective powersports equipment agreement with Young Powersports, requiring a net exchange cost of only $1,600 every two years to rotate eight new machines.

In concluding discussions, Facilities Manager Ottley, Chief Deputy Butcher, and Sheriff Sparks confirmed that the final facility feasibility study for the campus is expected in November following a preliminary review by the working committee. Controller Parke, Commissioner Stevenson, Commissioner Kamalu, and Commissioner Crofts discussed general fiscal parameters, noting the challenge of balancing department budget requests against available revenues without imposing property tax increases. The Commissioners commended Sheriff Sparks and the Sheriff's Office executive team for their fiscal responsibility, operational leadership, and dedication to public safety across Davis County. With no further business, the Sheriff Budget Committee Meeting was adjourned at 12:40 PM.

CLOSED SESSION

If needed, the meeting may be closed for reasons permitted under Utah Code Annotated §52-4-205.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:40.

Minutes Prepared by:
Juli Beesley
Controller's Office

Minutes Approved on:
PENDING