**APPROVED**

**THE UTAH LAKE AUTHORITY REGULARLY HELD MEETING**

**September 20, 2023, at 9:00 AM–11:00 AM**

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**AGENDA**

**ATTENDEES:**

Julie Fullmer, Vineyard, Chair

Eric Ellis, Utah Lake Authority

Curtis Blair, Utah Valley Chamber

John Mackey, DWQ

Ben Stireman, FFSL

Kamron Dalton, GO UTAH

Hilary Hungerford, UVU

Mark Johnson, Lehi

Terry Peterson, Orem

Michelle Kaufusi, Provo

Chris Carn, Saratoga Springs

Tom Sakievich, Utah County

Mike McKell, Utah Senate

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Marty Larson, Genola

Carolyn Lundberg, Lindon

Brady Brammer, Utah House

**VISITORS:**

Isaac Paxman, Provo

Wade Tuft, ULWUA

Levi Smith

Gary Cannon, ULWUA

Rich Mickelsen, TSSD

Scott Daly, DWQ

Addy Valdez, ULA

Soren Simonsen, JRC

Jackie Larson, 7 Bard Farming

Dave Epstein, Jacobs

Richard Foggio

Renn Lambert

Sullivan Love

Teri Harman

Jodi Garberg, DWQ

Cindy Gabler

iPhone

FOX 13 News

Soren Simonsen

Keith Hambrecht

**Presiding Board Member:** Chair Julie Fullmer

**Vice Chair:** Michelle Kaufusi

**UTAH BOARD REGULAR SESSION**

1. **WELCOME & CALL TO ORDER/INSPIRATIONAL THOUGHT *– Chair Julie Fullmer***
   1. The meeting started at 9:00am

**2. CHAIR AND BOARD MEMBERS' REPORTS/DISCLOSURES/RECUSALS**

*(2- minutes each)*

**3. STAFF AND COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**3.1** Executive Director Eric Ellis – Project updates

Executive Director Eric Ellis began the meeting by expressing his gratitude to the attendees. He announced several important topics to discuss in preparation for the upcoming meeting. He shared that they had completed a 35 to 37-page calls and procedures manual, which had been updated in collaboration with the Utah Commission and reviewed by Paula, their attorney general. This document served as their current guidance and would be officially adopted at the next meeting, allowing attendees time to review it in advance.

He mentioned that the Comprehensive Management plan was now complete and in its final stages of review, with a 30-day public comment period set to occur before the next meeting. The plan would be ready for adoption at that time.

He outlined several topics, including the branding package, the Marina and Shoreline Enhancement Grant, legislative funding for algae treatments, and geotechnical matters. He introduced Jenna Ahern, who would discuss the branding package, highlighting the letterhead, business cards, and envelopes that had been designed to create a cohesive brand identity.

He provided an overview of the Marina and Shoreline Enhancement Grant, mentioning that last year's legislature had allocated $5 million for Utah Lake enhancements. Some of this funding would be used to acquire property, while the rest would be distributed as grants for shoreline projects. These grants aimed to support various master plan projects and leverage additional funding. He encouraged attendees to review the grant document and consider submitting proposals by the mid-October deadline.

A discussion ensued regarding the award process for a reimbursement-style grant.

Eric Ellis explained that the grant evaluation involved a four-person ranking committee. He elaborated on the ranking criteria, which were weighted, and how points were assigned and averaged to determine successful projects. They expected multiple awardees, with the possibility of granting portions of the requested funds to various projects that aligned with the group's interests.

Additionally, he noted that the Utah Lake Watershed Council had been formed, and a tour had taken place, starting with a visit to the north end of Utah Lake. Rich Mickelson chaired the group, and the tour covered various locations, including the Timpanogos Special Service District. Eric highlighted the studies being conducted by LINO grows on the north end of the lake. The group then proceeded south to Sandy Beach, where discussions about water quantity and quality issues took place among experts from different organizations.

He briefly mentioned the upcoming legislative session and the need for funding for projects related to marina upgrades, access enhancement, water quality, and Nature Center facilities. He encouraged support from legislators in securing funding for these projects.

Aqua Technics worked on algae mitigation at Utah Lake State Park and Lindon Marinas. Both marinas were reportedly below the recreational advisory threshold, indicating their safe use. Eric acknowledged that algae treatments were a temporary solution, and efforts were underway to find more long-term solutions to water quality and algae bloom issues.

Finally, he provided an update on the Walkara Way project, mentioning geotechnical surveys conducted to assess ground conditions for trailhead areas and segments, including a bridge location over the horn effluent. He concluded by opening the floor for any additional updates or questions.

A Board Member (Ben) stated that discussions had taken place with the Bureau of Reclamation to assess the progress of the land donation process to the Forestry Garden State Lands. He indicated that things were progressing well, but it was expected to take longer than initially anticipated, possibly extending to six months to a year, rather than concluding by the end of the current year. Additionally, meetings had been held with the family involved in the donation to address stipulations and ensure a smooth transition, with a focus on avoiding any potential litigation and ensuring everyone was aligned in their intentions.

Eric Ellis added that they were currently looking into initiating the Forum trailhead and a short trail segment leading to the river. He emphasized that this trail would be a valuable feature and a good starting point for the project, allowing them to move forward with the overall project once property-related matters were finalized.

**3.2** Addy Valdez – Conservation and Restoration Efforts

Addy Valdez provided an update on her recent activities and projects. She had been engaged in project work during late summer and early fall, gradually transitioning into her role and establishing partnerships. One of her key projects for the coming year was a significant re-vegetation effort focused on shoreline areas. She highlighted their collaboration with various agencies, including Utah Forestry, Fire & State Lands, and UVU. The project aimed to reintroduce native vegetation to the shoreline, starting on a small scale. They had ordered over 10,000 tree plugs and a substantial quantity of seeds for planting in the upcoming season. The plan included Earth Day and other related events to engage volunteers and promote educational opportunities. Keith Hambrecht would assist in using GIS data to identify suitable locations, primarily in the northern half of Utah Lake, including areas like Saratoga Springs and American Fork, which had shown successful treatments in recent years. She emphasized the role of UVU in collecting local seeds and mentioned ongoing seed collection efforts in locations such as Vineyard, Hobble Creek, and Powell Slough. UVU's greenhouse management field classes were instrumental in growing these seeds over the winter and early spring, intending to plant approximately 1,200 native plants next year.

She also reported being awarded 200 to 250 pollinator plants for the Utah Pollinator Habitat Program, which would be planted in the Delta project with the help of volunteers from UVU classes and other volunteers. Addy highlighted the importance of supporting pollinators and restoring wetlands.

She was involved in a grant for mission-related work with June suckers, where she assisted in tagging larva suckers to monitor their development. She noted that the DWR had successfully located them in Hobble Creek and explained the tagging process.

Addy concluded her update by mentioning that they were transitioning from fieldwork to report writing and expressed her enthusiasm for the exciting projects and ideas they had explored over the past few months. She welcomed any questions or discussions from the attendees.

**3.3** Jenna Ahern – Communications and Outreach

Jenna Ahern provided an update on the organization's social media efforts. She mentioned efforts to create more content and maintain a consistent posting schedule. Jenna highlighted a successful post in which she and Addy collaborated, featuring a video zooming in on Addy examining a substance in the water and a poll asking if it was algae. This post received substantial engagement, reaching over 7,000 accounts and over 2,000 nonfollowers. The survey within the post garnered 620 responses, 253 likes and 14 shares. She discussed the continuation of their "Ask Addy" segment, where they addressed questions related to the lake, plants, wildlife, and water quality, which had received positive feedback from their social media audience.

Additionally, she had been developing a social media policy to guide interactions with commenters and residents and ensure consistency in posting and content retention. She also mentioned the upcoming launch of the organization's brand, with final reviews completed, which would be integrated into the website and marketing materials. This brand identity would help establish a recognizable and consistent image for the Utah Lake Authority across all platforms.

Finally, she shared their collaboration with BYU interns from various disciplines

working on marketing plans for different events and general marketing initiatives. One intern specializing in geospatial engineering would create a story map for the site. Additionally, updates to the website's layout, design, and colors were in progress.

**3.4** Sam Braegger – Events and Engagement

Sam Braegger discussed several events and programs. He mentioned the upcoming Colleague Symposium, which was mandated by their management plan to promote collaboration with resource managers, policymakers, and scientists to enhance Utah Lake based on the latest research. The event was scheduled for October 17, with invitations sent out initially to a select group and later opened to the public.

He also mentioned the Life Jacket Owner Program, which involved building a new life jacket station at Access Point Mill Race, thanks to a grant from Utah County State Kids and the Utah Drowning Prevention Coalition. More stations were planned for the future, including one at Sandy Beach.

He introduced a new volunteer stationed at American Fork Harbor to help maintain and

monitor life jacket stations. He expressed the need for additional volunteers for this program.

Sam highlighted the upcoming fourth-grade fall field trips, which would host 700 fourth

graders from six elementary schools for educational presentations on water safety,

conservation, and more. He thanked the agencies involved for their support.

Lastly, He discussed the annual scavenger hunt, a digital event with over 150 missions

related to Utah Lake. Participants could win prizes, including inflatable paddle boards. The

event aimed to educate participants about the lake and its various aspects while having fun.

Registration was open, and the event would run for about nine to ten days. He emphasized

the positive feedback they received from participants in previous years.

The Board requested that he share the marketing materials related to an event.

Sam Braeger responded affirmatively, expressing a willingness to share the materials with partners and the city. He emphasized that the event was well-received, and no further questions or topics were discussed.

1. **CONSENT ITEMS**

**4.1** Approval of the July 19, 2023, ULA Board Meeting Minutes and August 14, 2023 Work Session Minutes

**4.2** Review and approve July-August Monthly ULA Budget Report

Motion to approve consent items 4.1 and 4.2.

Chris Carn motioned to approve the consent items. Seconded by Kamron Dalton. The motion was approved unanimously.

**5. PRESENTATIONS/RECOGNITIONS/AWARDS** *(5- minutes each)*

**5.1 Trail and Constructed Wetland – Timpanogos Special Service District**

Richard Mickelson, District Manager of the Special Service District, provided a presentation on their wastewater treatment plant expansion efforts. He mentioned that they face challenges in expanding treatment capacity due to the increasing demand in northern Utah County. Their expansion plans also involve mitigating wetlands and coordinating with various agencies, including the Division of Water Quality, Forest Service, State Lands, Army Corps of Engineers, County Commissioners, and member cities.

The presentation focused on the trail system they plan to build, which extends from Lindon Marina to American Fork Harbor. This trail will include sections for mitigating phragmites, using engineering solutions to control phragmites instead of pesticides. They also discussed plans for pump stations to accommodate the anticipated growth in the west side of their service area. Utah County is involved in the trail project and prefers an asphalt path, although they are open to donations for upgrades. They also plan to include boardwalks to mitigate wetland impacts and observatory towers for bird-watching.

The timeline for construction is expected to start next year, pending agreement approvals from relevant agencies. He expressed determination to move the project forward. There were no questions or further discussion at the end of the presentation.

**5.2 U LWQS Science Panel Update – John Mackey/Scott Daly DWQ**

Scott Daly, a water scientist from the Division of Water Quality, provided an update during the

meeting on the ongoing public water quality study concerning Utah Lake. The presentation

included information on the study's progress, nutrient criteria development, and implementation

planning.

The study began in 2015 and progressed through various phases, including data gathering and nutrient criteria development. A strategic research plan was developed to address the lake's water quality questions. Several research projects were commissioned to gather data, including historical conditions, nutrient limitation, phosphorus binding in the lake, sediment recycling, and water quality modeling. The study revealed significant changes in Utah Lake over time, including shifts in diatom communities, increased cyanobacteria, and the accumulation of nutrients. These changes were attributed to various factors, including the introduction of carp in the 1850s and population growth in the watershed. Criteria development involved multiple lines of evidence, including historical data, modeling, statistical analysis, and reviewing literature from other lakes. The goal was to establish water quality standards that would help guide management efforts for Utah Lake. When determining these standards, the steering committee overseeing this process considered factors such as effectiveness, practicality, cost-effectiveness, and adaptability. Implementation planning was critical, and the steering committee developed an implementation framework to guide their efforts. The framework included considerations for partnerships, watershed understanding, source identification, management strategies, permitting approaches, and resource allocation. Specific strategies were outlined for addressing nutrient sources and improving the lake's ecosystem.

Overall, the study aimed to provide insights into the water quality of Utah Lake, identify the sources of nutrient pollution, and propose practical strategies for its improvement. The steering committee was actively working on the implementation plan, and further progress was expected in

the coming months.

Chair Julie Fullmer welcomed questions from the attendees.

Board Members raised concerns about the water levels in Provo Bay, specifically regarding the potential harm associated with maintaining consistently high water levels versus allowing fluctuations. They inquired about the benefits of removing sediments to create a core dam system in the lake. They asked questions about the possibility of reestablishing vegetation and nutrients.

Scott Daly acknowledged the importance of evaluating these scenarios but couldn't provide a definitive answer without further assessment. He emphasized the need to consider factors like maintaining consistent water levels and the potential benefits of having more water instead of less. He explained that Provo Bay had relatively high sediment levels, making it a possible target for sediment removal. He also mentioned the need to assess the effectiveness and costs of various strategies, including sediment removal and the creation of artificial wetlands. Additionally, he explained that introducing macrophytes, a type of aquatic vegetation, could help in nutrient management. However, he pointed out that the success of this strategy depended on having sufficient macrophytes and managing turbidity levels in the water.

There were concerns about assessing the impact of multiple changes and variables simultaneously.

Eric Ellis highlighted that most proposed implementation tactics and strategies had already undergone testing and implementation elsewhere, reducing the likelihood of introducing entirely new and unpredictable factors.

Scott Daly emphasized the importance of using multiple lines of evidence to attribute changes to specific practices. He also acknowledged that some questions, such as the relationship between removing carp and planting more macrophytes, had been challenging to answer. He noted that cost and scale were significant, especially in large-scale projects like carp removal or sediment management. He stressed that evaluating the cost-effectiveness of various approaches was crucial.

1. **CLOSED SESSION**

There was not a closed session.

**7. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Chair Julie Fullmer opened the meeting for public comment.

Wade Tuft introduced himself as the Water Supply Manager for the Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District and also the President and Chairman of the Utah Lake Water Users Association. He expressed their willingness to collaborate with the group and extend support to initiatives to improve and enhance Utah Lake. The Utah Lake Water Users Association, representing the lake's northern end, emphasized their significant vested interest in the water of Utah Lake. He specifically mentioned their ownership of the pump station and control gates responsible for regulating water outflow from Utah Lake. These facilities primarily serve the irrigation needs of five major canal companies in Salt Lake County. Before 2011, their collective route was the Border Canals, consisting of the East Jordan, Jordan, Salt Lake Distributing Canal, Utah, Salt Lake, and the South Jordan Canal companies. Subsequently, additional entities such as the Metropolitan Water District of Salt Lake, Sandy Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District, and Salt Lake City Public Facilities became associated with the Utah Lake Water Users Association. He expressed their readiness to collaborate with the committee and provide support as needed.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn.

Michelle Kaufusi motioned to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Tom Sakievich. The meeting was adjourned.

1. The meeting was adjourned at 10:15am.