

UTAH SYMPHONY | UTAH OPERA
BOARD MEETING
AUGUST 12, 2025
MINUTES

Elected, Ex-officio, and Lifetime Board members who attended in person: Larry Brownstein, Paul Burdiss, John D’Arcy, David Dee, Jason Englund, Dennis Hranitzky, Stephen Tanner Irish, Tom Jacobson, Annette Jarvis, Dinesh Patel, Gary Porter, Pat Richards, Joanne Shiebler, Stan Sorensen, Shane Stowell, Jim Tozer, David Utrilla, and Henry Wurts.

Elected, Ex-officio, and Lifetime Board members who attended via videoconference: Steven Brosvik, Luz Escamilla, Brian Greeff, Tom Love, Abbie Lowder, Judy Moreton, Travis Peterson (musician), Shar Quinney, Sharlene Wells, Don Willie, and Kim Wilson.

Elected and Lifetime Board members not available to participate: Stewart Barlow, George Cardon-Bystry, Gary Crocker, Barry Eden, Jonathan Freedman, Brandon Fugal, Kem Gardner, Julie Aiken Hansen, Dan Hemmert, Jon Huntsman Jr., Frank Joklik, David Mortensen, Christina Myers (Onstage Ogden), Scott Parker, Dave Petersen, Frank Pignanelli, Miguel Rovira, Barbara Scowcroft (musician), Harris Simmons, Clint Stone, Tom Thatcher, and Thomas Wright.

Staff and guests present in person or via videoconference: David Green, David Hodges, Steve Hogan, Ben Kipp, Meredith Kimball Laing, Christopher McBeth, Julie McBeth, Garrett Murphy, Leslie Peterson, Michelle Peterson, Kerry Smith, Katie Swainston, Natty Taylor, and Gregory Walz.

I. Welcome and Consent Agenda: Board of Trustees Chair Brian Greeff welcomed the meeting participants and noted that he had asked Chair Elect Annette Jarvis to conduct the meeting since he was joining remotely from New York. Ms. Jarvis expressed appreciation to Mr. Greeff for his leadership and his mentorship. She asked if there were any questions, comments, or recommended edits to items in the Consent Agenda. Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Consent Agenda, which consisted of draft minutes from the May 19, 2025 Board Meeting as well as update reports from Development, Finance, and Marketing, Communications, & Patron Services, was adopted by majority vote.

I. Nominating Committee recommendations: Nominating Committee member Tom Love shared that committee chair Thomas Wright was unable to attend the meeting and gave the report. He expressed gratitude for Mr. Wright’s leadership and for the work of the Nominating Committee members. He shared election recommendations noted in the report found on pages 7-9 of the meeting materials. Upon motions duly made and seconded, the following resolutions were adopted by majority vote.

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees elects or re-elects the following individuals to serve three-year terms on the USUO Board of Trustees beginning September 2025:
David Dee, Brandon Fugal, Marie Gardner, Annette Jarvis, Derek Miller, Frank Pignanelli, Jennifer Price-Wallin, Aaron Starks, W. James Tozer, Jr., and Kim Wilson.

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees elects Brian Greeff to the Lifetime Board.

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees elects Julie Aiken Hansen to the Trustees Emeriti Board.

II. 2025/26 Board: Ms. Jarvis noted the proposed list of Board Officers and Committee Chairs for FY26 included on page 10 of the meeting materials. Upon motions duly made and seconded, the following resolutions were adopted by majority vote.

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees elects Judy Moreton, Joanne Shiebler, and Thomas Wright as Vice Chairs of the Board and Jason Englund as Secretary of the Board.

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees elects the following Committee Chairs for FY26: Audit-John D'Arcy; Finance-Barry Eden; Governance-Jason Englund; Government Relations-Frank Pignanelli; Investment-Henry Wurts; Nominating-Thomas Wright; Strategic Planning-Brian Greeff; and Venues-Stephen Tanner Irish.

Ms. Jarvis noted the proposed schedule of full board and regularly scheduled committee meetings included on page 11 of the meeting materials. Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the following resolution was adopted by majority vote.

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees adopts the proposed list of FY26 meeting dates.

III. League of American Orchestras feedback: Lifetime Board member Pat Richards shared highlights from the June 2025 League of American Orchestras Conference held in Salt Lake City for the first time in the 80 years it had been convened. She noted several examples of exceptionally positive feedback about the location, hotel, sessions, the energy and excellence of the orchestra, and the friendliness of our community. She added that it was the highest-rated conference in many years, with 84% of participants giving an overall rating of excellent. She thanked USUO board, staff, musicians, and volunteers who had helped to make it a success.

IV. Education and Community Engagement report: VP of Education and Community Engagement Ben Kipp provided an overview of education activities and shared a few specific stories of meaningful engagement from the 2024-25 season. He noted that USUO was able to secure close to \$6 million in fundraising and government support for our education initiatives, speaking to the values of our organization and how they align with those of the state of Utah.

V. Board discussion: balancing artistic excellence and financial resources: President & CEO Steve Brosvik reminded board members that the primary focus of USUO's Strategic Plan was audience development and noted successes with strong increases in households buying tickets, revenue from ticket sales, and contributions. He added that (even with all of that success) it had not been enough to keep up with inflation, resulting in the need to use board reserves as discussed in previous meetings. He invited conversation about when to consider serious operational changes to reduce need for board reserves use, as well as the short- and long-term effects those changes might cause.

Concepts in the discussion that followed included the belief that significant cuts would not serve the long-term health of the organization, particularly considering the artistic trajectory the company had been achieving; the need for shared responsibility of the board, staff, and musicians to reduce the structural deficit; the importance of 100% participation by the board in fundraising campaigns; and the need to keep an awareness of timing to determine when any specific changes could be most effective. They noted factors out of the organization's control that had caused campaign prospect hesitancy (hall renovation uncertainty related to SECC district) and delayed programming to the detriment of summer 2025 ticket sales (festival venue at Deer Valley). And they suggested strategies which included striving to gain an understanding of the giving potential from prospects throughout the state, and forming a committee to make recommendations to the board.

VP of Development Leslie Peterson reminded board members of the qualities that together make a good prospective donor: 1) a capacity to give; 2) a philanthropic nature; and 3) a meaningful connection to the work of USUO, whether that's because they believe that the symphony and opera is vital to this community, or because they love attending performances, or because they value our education programs.

Ms. Jarvis thanked the board members for the frank discussion and Mr. Brosvik for encouraging the conversation at the board level while there was still enough time to carefully consider various solutions. She added that she would like board members to continue to think about the issue to prepare for deeper discussion at the November 3 Board Retreat.

VI. Other Business / Executive Session: There being no additional business to discuss in open or executive session, the meeting was adjourned at 5:23pm.

Minutes Recorded By:

Julie McBeth

Minutes Approved By:

Board vote at November 3, 2025 meeting