

SALT LAKE COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Approved by the Board on March 23, 2026

February 23, 2026 – South Jordan Branch

Board Attendees:	Board Attendees:	Virtual Board Attendees:
Anastasia Morgan, Chair	Steven Sokol, Vice Chair	Spencer Romney (left at 1:25 pm)
Ann Engar	William (Bill) Scarber	Excused Board Members:
Jessica Strong	Kaati Tarr	Councilmember Natalie Pinkney
Lindsay Vargo		

Other Attendees:		
Joey McNamee	Anneliese Booher	Amy Watson
Brad Kendrick	Carrie Hackworth	Christa Warren
Christina Walsh	David Bird	Erin Rigby
Jené Mortensen	Lenora Monge	Luke Rasmussen
Matt McLain	Melissa Haslam	Pamela Park
Sara Neal	Shaun Dimick	Steve Van Maren

Other Virtual Attendees:		
Brent Roberts (Help Desk)	Robin Chalhoub	Isaac Higham
Alexis Alires	Bonnie Bradford	Emily Bullough
Josh Walters	Kalena Dean	Kathy Christiansen
Larry Carter	Lee Whiting	Maggie Mills
Melodie Ashley	Steph Tilt	

Anastasia Morgan, Board Chair, called the board meeting to order at 12:31 PM.

WELCOME – Joey McNamee, Library Director

The director opened the meeting by noting that a quorum was present and welcomed those in attendance, both in person and online. The key topics were briefly outlined—long-range planning, construction project updates, the upcoming council budget meeting, and proposed changes to the board bylaws—framing them as informational updates for the board. The director also expressed appreciation to the Human Resources team for organizing and running the meeting and taking minutes as well as the IT staff for their support.

APPROVE MINUTES: January 26, 2026 – Anastasia Morgan, Board Chair

Bill Scarber made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 26, 2025 Library Board Meeting. Ann Engar seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Board Member:	Vote:
Councilmember, Natalie Pinkney	N/A
Anastasia Morgan	Aye
Ann Engar	Aye
Bill Scarber	Aye
Jessica Strong	Aye
Kaati Tarr	Aye
Lindsay Vargo	Aye
Spencer Romney	Aye
Steve Sokol	Aye

PUBLIC COMMENTS – Anastasia Morgan

No public comments.

CORRESPONDENCE – Joey McNamee

Board members may occasionally receive emails generated from the library’s online contact form, such as recent messages about New York Times access and a recital at the Whitmore branch. These emails are routed to board members’ addresses, but individual contact information remains private. Library staff ensure all inquiries receive a response and are generally best positioned to provide accurate, detailed information. Board members may provide input, but as a standard practice, staff draft and send responses. When a patron specifically requests to hear from a particular board member, staff coordinate with that member so the reply accurately reflects the board’s perspective while still drawing on staff expertise.

One board contact requested access to the New York Times newspaper. Staff confirmed that the County Library provides access and noted additional access through a reciprocal lending agreement with the Salt Lake City Library. Questions about collection development and resource requests are routed to the Collection Resource Services (CRS) team, which reviews suggestions based on system-wide priorities, usage data, and available budget. Patron requests inform future collection decisions, but not all items can be added immediately or in every format, and these requests typically go directly to CRS rather than to the board.

Another board contact included concerns about a recital at the Whitmore that ran longer than expected into branch closing time; library administration is working with the branch manager and staff to address this and prevent similar issues.

Staff and board members may respond in their personal capacity to public comments, including on social media, but if a board member is identified or perceived as speaking in an official role, coordination with library administration is recommended to maintain consistent and accurate messaging. When the library’s name or logo is used, or when an event appears to be library-sponsored, organizers may be asked to clearly state when an event is not sponsored by the library to protect the library’s reputation and avoid misleading the public.

AGENDA ITEMS

INTRODUCTION TO THE SOUTH JORDAN BRANCH – Erin Rigby, Manager

The board were welcomed to the South Jordan branch. The last board meeting at this location included an announcement that the branch would be getting study pods, which they have now had for about a year. During that year, the branch has added approximately 1,700 instances of meeting space use that would not have been possible without the pods.

South Jordan is a beautiful branch, and staff take pride in how it looks and feels for patrons. Facilities contribute greatly to maintaining the building, and the branch RDP (roving, displays, and pickup) model helps keep the space welcoming and organized. Staff maintain displays, manage pickup items, and support the overall appearance of the branch, which has been very successful.

Programming at South Jordan is creative, active, and varied. In the children's area, the I Spy activity has become a staple. Every Wednesday, the branch offers a program for elementary-aged children, and on Fun Fridays they feature LEGO and board games. Staff also host Tween Tuesday and run a robust Volunteer Program, where teens help with programs under the direction of a staff member. Current offerings include chess club, math club, reading buddies, writing club, and a Teen Rainbow Alliance. For adults, the branch offers a senior book club and Thursday night activities. Families can participate in STEM and craft nights. In the past year, South Jordan has also added blood drives to its schedule.

One of the features patrons especially enjoy a display in conjunction with [Explore.org](https://www.explore.org) streaming live nature and animal footage throughout the branch. Harold the Dinosaur, originally picked up when the Columbus branch closed, has become a beloved fixture; he has a name tag and is regularly dressed up for different occasions. The branch also maintains a Battle of the Books display during the school year, including current book lists, as an ongoing resource for students and families.

South Jordan's staff are dedicated, responsive, and care deeply about the people they serve.

SOUTH JORDAN CAPITAL MAINTENANCE – Jené Mortensen, Associate Director

The South Jordan HVAC system is nearing the end of its useful life and will be replaced before it becomes a problem. The branch is expected to remain open throughout the project, with only small areas closed at a time as work progresses. Much of the necessary material has already been ordered and shipped. The work is planned for this year, although a specific start date has not yet been confirmed.

BOARD BYLAWS – Anneliese Booher, District Attorney

The Utah State Library conducts an annual renewal for public libraries, and recent updates addressed the use of electronic meetings as part of that recertification. As staff and the board reviewed the governing documents, they identified a few minor changes that were needed.

The state's governance standards and certification requirements reference board bylaws and Utah code, and state that meetings are open to the public unless they are legally permitted to be closed. The current bylaws note that the board is in compliance with the code, but the language needs to be more specific. The primary revision is in Article 3, clarifying this

reference. Additional changes streamline the document by removing repeated statutory citations throughout; instead, the statute will be cited in the opening paragraph.

In that opening paragraph, the bylaws will clarify that the Library Board is established pursuant to, and governed by, Utah codes and the Open and Public Meetings Act.

In the January meeting, a comment was made about the budget as part of the bylaws. The board's fiduciary responsibility is established in county ordinance and reflected in the code, so it was not added as a new provision. This responsibility is already addressed in Article 4.

Anastasia Morgan made a motion to approve the Salt Lake County Library Board Bylaws with a small edit in the bylaw statement to say "and governed by Utah's Open and Public Meetings Act." Other changes include language in Article 3 regarding how we hold electronic meetings and are subject to Open and Public Meetings Act and other relevant statues and ordinances. Bill Scarber seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Board Member:	Vote:
Councilmember, Natalie Pinkney	N/A
Anastasia Morgan	Aye
Ann Engar	Aye
Bill Scarber	Aye
Jessica Strong	Aye
Kaati Tarr	Aye
Lindsay Vargo	Aye
Spencer Romney	Aye
Steve Sokol	Aye

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE – Joey McNamee

At the upcoming County Council meeting, the library will present budget requests for several major capital projects. The first is the Library Operations Center, a former warehouse purchased in March 2025 to house Community Engagement and Collection teams. To allow safe and effective occupancy, the building requires seismic retrofitting and other improvements to support long-term performance and operational efficiency. The current request includes adjustments to the original project scope; architects are prepared to proceed once the budget is approved.

The Sandy branch will also be receiving a new roof and an HVAC remodel. This is a significant project that will include an architectural study to identify sources of leaks and to reconfigure workflows and lighting in order to brighten and improve the space.

In addition, the long-range plan includes the Operations Center remodel and a rebuild of the West Valley branch. These larger projects are being grouped into a single, larger bond rather than several smaller ones, as it is more cost-effective to issue one bond than to process multiple smaller bonds. The projects under consideration for bonding are listed on the County Council's [Public Notice Upcoming Items](#) portion of the website as part of the public record. If the West Valley project is approved, work is anticipated to begin on a multi-year timeline, including a construction period of roughly three years.

The library has also acquired property in Midvale. The board voted unanimously to begin planning a new library on this site, and that project will be part of the broader budget discussion. The combined proposal is substantial, and tomorrow's council budget presentation at 3:30 pm will provide additional detail on how the library arrived at this point and how these projects fit into the long-range plan. West Valley City representatives are expected to participate in the discussion as well.

These initiatives have been in development for some time. The financial figures are significant, but the library operates from a dedicated fund that is separate from the county's general fund. The current long-range plan traces back to work that began around the 2022 library tax increase. Tomorrow's meeting is an opportunity to reaffirm that plan.

Board members' role at the budget meeting is primarily to be present and show visible support—especially managers from affected branches and community partners—demonstrating that there is strong engagement and commitment behind these projects. In 2024, the council adopted a resolution allowing the library to spend against a future bond, with the understanding that the bond itself would be approved later. Part of the current discussion involves reimbursing the library fund for expenditures already made, such as the Midvale land purchase, which was approved with the reasonable expectation that a library would be built there.

The presentation is therefore largely for the public record and for transparency—summarizing what the council has already supported, the historical path to this point, and the next steps. Staff involved in the council process are confident the meeting will be productive and a positive opportunity to highlight the library's long-term vision.

LONG RANGE PLAN – Brad Kendrick, Associate Director

Brad Kendrick, Associate Director over finance, reviewed the library's financial long-range plan, which looks ahead twenty years. Tomorrow, the Library is asking the County Council to approve a number of projects. These projects include the Kearns branch loan repayment, the remodel of the Operations Center, a rebuild of the West Valley branch, the building of a new Midvale branch, and a partial remodel of the Sandy branch. The Whitmore branch rebuild was pushed further into the future to accommodate the completion of the Operations Center for affected staff in the current building. These projects can be found in the New Building and Major Remodels portion of the long-range plan.

An overview of library funding was given, starting with property tax as the primary revenue source, supplemented by several smaller revenue lines. He explained the downward bias of Utah property tax: as property values increase, the certified tax rate is adjusted downward. This ensures the taxing entity receives the same amount of funding it did the previous year, but does not capture any additional revenue from the increase in property values. This means that property tax revenue does not naturally keep pace with inflation. As a result, the library must periodically seek tax increases to maintain service levels rather than relying on automatic growth. The long-range plan contemplates a regular 3% property tax increase to keep the budget stable over time.

The library's smaller revenue sources include interest, printing and copying, late fees, sales, Viridian rentals, and restitution. Combined, these line items total just under \$600,000 annually, with overdue fines contributing about \$150,000—a very small percentage of the overall budget. Most of these revenue lines are projected as flat, since the library does not want to overestimate future growth.

Personnel costs account for roughly 60% of the budget and are projected to grow at about 3% per year. Operational expenses include equipment for branches, IT infrastructure, and other technology related costs. Capital projects, particularly facilities work, often span multiple years, so funding in a given year may be tied to projects initiated earlier.

Overhead costs are charged by county agencies such as the mayor's office, the county attorney, and IT. These costs are allocated using methods considered fairest for each service—for example, by full-time equivalents, usage, or hours billed.

Major construction projects are funded through a variety of means. For example, Kearns Library was funded through the New Market Tax Credit (NMTTC) program and has a balloon repayment of approximately \$9.3 million due later this year. A similar approach is anticipated for the Midvale project, which is expected to generate a net benefit in the range of \$3–5 million, though final figures are still being developed with partners. Under this model, the library will carry interest-only loans for the duration of the program, and then will pay off the remaining balance at the end of the term—either through a future bond or fund balance. West Valley and Midvale projects will also require additional FTEs and one-time costs, such as initial collections and equipment, which are accounted for and included in the plan.

Brad noted that staff run multiple financial scenarios based on different assumptions about tax increases and project timing. If the ongoing 3% tax increase is not approved, the library would likely need to fall back on less frequent, larger tax increases, with the next major increase estimated for 2029.

He emphasized that the long-range plan aims to avoid long gaps between tax adjustments—such as the ten-year period before the 2022 tax increase—by identifying operational needs, potential expansions of hours, staffing requirements, and capital investments over the coming decade. The County’s AAA bond rating allows the library to borrow at favorable rates, but the amounts involved are substantial, and staff are cautious and deliberate in their requests and planning. The fiscal team was recognized for their work in keeping the financial plan detailed, transparent, and aligned with the library’s long-term goals.

EXPRESSIVE ACTIVITIES – Joey McNamee

There has been a significant increase in expressive activities in and around the branches. As a library, the goal is to provide space that supports lawful political expression while maintaining open access for all patrons. The library itself may not use its resources for political activity, but members of the public may do so as long as they do not interfere with others’ use of the library. Recently, this has included petition signature gathering related to Proposition 4, including both repeal and removal efforts, with multiple groups present in branches and on library premises—at times in heated ways.

The [Expressive Activities Policy](#) provides clear guidance for staff and the public. Staff are not there to evaluate or restrict the content of anyone’s speech; their role is to ensure that public access to the branches remains protected. One person’s expression cannot be allowed to limit another person’s ability to enter, use, or leave the library. Staff have, for example, informed petition gatherers that they may not block book drops, follow patrons to their cars, or circulate through the library interrupting patrons to request signatures.

While there have been some tense moments, there has also been a high level of civic engagement. The library strongly values both access and free expression and recognizes the important role these activities play in a functioning democracy. Leadership expressed appreciation for staff who have maintained professionalism and calmly managed behavior within the policy. The library’s approach has helped inform broader county policy, as other county facilities have seen similar increases in expressive activity. Consistency with county partners is an important goal, and this has been a busy and instructive period for the library.

The policy also outlines potential consequences when behavior crosses the line. On some occasions, individuals have been asked to leave. This is never the first option; staff want people to be able to use the library and to engage in lawful expression. However, when complaints arise about heated interactions and individuals do not modify their behavior after being warned, they will be asked to leave to ensure that patrons are not intimidated or prevented from using the library. The overall goal is always de-escalation and resolution while safeguarding both free expression and public access.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION – Matt McLain, Associate Director

The library is currently monitoring the following bills during the legislative session. The county is tracking additional legislation, which is not included here.

- [HB565](#) – **City Library Property Tax Amendments**
 - Applies specifically to Salt Lake City Public Library and lists its tax rate separately. Salt Lake County Library already operates under a separate tax rate, so this bill does not change current practice.
- [HB88](#) – **Public Assistance Amendments**
 - May affect the library’s ability to issue cards to non-resident aliens. The language includes some gray areas, and the impact on library services is not yet clear, but staff are monitoring it closely. The bill is currently in the House.

- [HB197](#) – **School Materials Amendments**
 - Began as a more far-reaching proposal but has since been narrowed. It reiterates existing book-ban provisions. It has passed the House and is moving to the Senate. The library is not in favor of this bill, and one concern is how databases are treated under its provisions; access through the Utah Education and Telehealth Network (UTN) may need adjustment in response.
- [HB517](#) – **Sensitive Materials**
 - A follow-up to a previous bill, addressing when materials may be removed and suggesting that books could be banned unless such action would conflict with the U.S. Constitution. The library would oppose that approach; however, the bill currently applies only to schools, not public libraries.
- [SB241](#) – **Early Literacy**
 - Focuses on funding for early learning initiatives and is on the second reading calendar. The governor has emphasized early literacy, including efforts to ensure third-grade students are reading on grade level.
- [SB253](#) – **Library Materials Amendments**
 - Supported by the Utah Library Association and considered a positive development. It requires libraries to have a collection development policy and outlines how materials are selected and how items may be removed from consideration.
 - Salt Lake County Library already has an approved collection development policy describing how items are added, evaluated, and withdrawn.
 - Many school libraries have not previously had such policies; SB253 would strengthen their ability to manage collections and respond to challenges.
 - The bill also clarifies the process for filing civil complaints and requires involvement from a certified language arts instructor to help ensure materials are educationally appropriate.
 - SB253 is on the second reading calendar and, if implemented in schools, may reduce the perceived need for some of the more restrictive measures in other bills.

The library will continue to monitor these and other bills and will adjust policies and practices as needed in response to final legislative outcomes.

STAFF REPORTS

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Joey McNamee

Due to time constraints, this report was skipped.

HUMAN RESOURCES – Pamela Park, Manager

The Summer Teen Internship is a legacy program that began under Robin Chalhoub, in partnership with refugee communities and Utah State University's extension program. The library has built on that foundation to create the current program, which now offers a variety of opportunities across the system. Most branches, as well as some departments, host at least one intern. Interns assist with programs and activities that align with teens' interests and skills.

Interns must be between 16 and 19 years old as of the start date. They may work up to 20 hours per week and are paid \$13.75 per hour. The program has been very successful; many former interns have later been hired as shelvers, and a few have gone on to library school or become writers.

Teens can apply using a QR code between March 22 and March 29. The shorter application window helps keep the number of applications manageable. The full application process is available under [careers](#) on the library website. Applicants do not need extensive prior experience; the program is designed to help teens learn job skills and support their community. There

are typically about 20 internships available—one for each branch, plus a few in other departments. Marketing creates flyers that are distributed in the branches, which generally provides enough outreach since it targets teens who are already using the library. Some locations, such as Kearns, also attend school job fairs and do additional active recruiting.

In response to questions about similar opportunities for college students in library programs, staff noted that there is an active practicum program. As part of the leadership succession plan, librarians must complete a practicum, and the library is continuing to develop and refine this option. College students may also apply for regular positions as merit employees or substitutes; those openings are posted on the library’s website along with other job opportunities.

WRAP UP AND TOUR – Anastasia Morgan

Bill Scarber made a motion to close the Salt Lake County Library Board Meeting. Lindsay Vargo seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Board Member:	Vote:
Councilmember, Natalie Pinkney	N/A
Anastasia Morgan	Aye
Ann Engar	Aye
Bill Scarber	Aye
Jessica Strong	Aye
Kaati Tarr	Aye
Lindsay Vargo	Aye
Spencer Romney (left meeting early)	N/A
Steve Sokol	Aye

The meeting ended at 1:53 PM. Erin Rigby, Shaun Dimick (Facilities Manager), and Luke Rasmussen (Construction Project Manager) took interested parties on tour of the South Jordan branch.