

RICH COUNTY COMMISSION MINUTES DECEMBER 10, 2025

The Rich County Commission Meeting was held on December 10, 2025, at the County Courthouse in Randolph, Utah, beginning at 10:00 a.m. Chairman Simeon B. Weston, Commissioner William E. Cox, Commissioner Jonathan B. Lee, and Clerk Anneliesa Peart were present.

Commissioner Cox **moved to approve** the December 10, 2025, agenda as presented. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Rick Rosser presented a request for business license clarification for BG Media Group LLC, a weekly tabloid publication with local advertising. The publication is free and contains family-friendly content. The Commissioners determined they need to consult with legal counsel to determine if advertising businesses are exempt from business licensing requirements before making a decision. The item was tabled until the next commission meeting.

Darren Eastman presented a request for clarification of the business license for Bear Lake Media/bearlakeutah.com, a digital advertising and marketing business operating since 2012. He also inquired about billboard licensing requirements. The Commissioners determined that this matter requires legal counsel review of county ordinances regarding advertising and billboard businesses. The item was tabled for the same review process.

Randall Knight, Garden City Fire District Board Chairman, requested the appointment of Samantha Coontz to replace Jayne Davis on the Fire District Board. The board selected Ms. Coontz for her computer skills and community involvement. Commissioner Cox **moved to appoint** Samantha Coontz to the Garden City Fire District Board for a three-year term to fill Jayne Davis's unexpired term. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Cox **moved to reappoint** Randall Knight and Michael Lasswell to four-year terms on the Garden City Fire District Board, beginning January 1, 2026. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Mr. Knight reported on fire district activities, including coordination with UDOT regarding standing water issues on Sweetwater Parkway, the Tourism Tax Advisory Board approval for the replacement of a 1958 brush truck, and property preparation for the new fire station.

Wayne Miller (via telephone) requested primary residence exemption status for his property at 135 S Bear Lake Boulevard. Commissioner Cox **moved to grant** the primary residence exemption of this property for 2025. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Cox **moved to refund** the tax difference between primary and secondary residence status for 2025. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Lee **moved to approve** the November 5, 2025, Commission Meeting minutes. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Bryce Nielson was recognized for 24 years of service to Rich County, including four years as County Commissioner and 20 years as Emergency Manager. The Commissioners presented him with a plaque commemorating his dedication and service.

Commissioner Cox **moved to approve** the November 2025 expenditures. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

The meeting recessed at 11:30 a.m. for a public hearing.

PUBLIC HEARING - WATER USE AND PRESERVATION ELEMENT

Chairman Weston called for a motion to open a public hearing. Commissioner Cox **moved to open** the public hearing for the Water Use and Preservation Element of the Rich County Comprehensive Plan. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Mitch Poulsen, Planning Administrator, presented the Water Use and Preservation Element of the Comprehensive Plan. The element is required by state statute (Utah Code 17-27-804) and must be completed by December 31, 2025. The plan addresses water resources, agriculture, drinking water, and includes a water budget. Rich County currently uses an average of 274 gallons per capita per day, which is below the Utah 2030 goal of 305 gallons per capita per day. Water rights far outpace projected use through 2050. The plan proposes various conservation strategies but is advisory in nature and not mandatory for implementation. The Planning Commission held a public hearing with no attendees or comments.

This was the time set for a public hearing for the proposed element of the Comprehensive Plan. All interested parties were given the opportunity to be heard for or against the item. No public comments were made. Commissioner Cox **moved to close** the public hearing. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Cox **moved to approve** the Water Use and Preservation Element of the Rich County Comprehensive Plan. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Cox **moved to approve** the purchase of a used Caterpillar D6 for the sanitation department at a cost between \$225,000-\$228,000, to be funded with Tourism Tax funds allocated to sanitation. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Cox **moved to approve** the purchase of a Bobcat 576 skid steer with attachments from Valley Equipment for \$61,840 for the landfill. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

The meeting recessed for lunch and reconvened at 1:00 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING - 2026 BUDGET

Chairman Weston called for a motion to open a public hearing. Commissioner Cox **moved to open** the public hearing for the 2026 budget. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

The Commissioners discussed budget modifications from the Tourism Tax Advisory Board recommendations, including not funding Bear Lake State Park launch ramp replacement at this time, increasing funding for Randolph park improvements to \$100,000, providing additional funding to Meadowville, and allocating funds to sanitation for a new front-load garbage truck.

This was the time set for a public hearing for the proposed 2026 budget. All interested parties were given the opportunity to be heard for or against the item.

Dan Larson, Resident, attended and asked questions about the budget process, tax rates, and county services. The Commissioners explained property tax mechanisms, growth impacts, and department funding.

No other public comments were received. Commissioner Cox **moved to close** the public hearing. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Lee **moved to adopt** the following tax rates for 2025-2026: General Operations .000469, Multi-County Assessing and Collecting .000014, and Local Assessing and Collecting .000191. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Cox **moved to contract** with Intermountain Insurance Services for employee benefits, including SelectHealth for Medical, Delta Dental for dental and vision, and Hartford for life insurance. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Lee **moved to adopt** the 2026 General Fund Budget of \$13,059,455 for revenue and expenditures. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Cox **moved to adopt** the 2026 Sanitation Budget of \$1,350,000 for revenue and expenditures. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Lee **moved to adopt** the following increased wages for county employees for 2026: a cost-of-living wage increase of \$3 per hour for part-time and full-time employees, including elected officials, with the possibility of market adjustment based on salary surveys, and a minimum starting wage increased from \$21 to \$22.50 per hour. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Cox **moved** that Rich County pay 100% of the Utah Retirement rates for 2026. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Lee **moved** to have Rich County billed for county sanitation services. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Cox **moved to reauthorize** the quarter-cent county option sales tax for 2026. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Lee **moved to reauthorize** the fixed guideway sales tax for 2026. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Cox **moved to reauthorize** the quarter-cent transportation tax for 2026. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Lee **moved to authorize** the Clerk to make department line item adjustments for the 2025 budget. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Anneliesa Peart, Clerk/Auditor, presented the county business license renewal list for Commissioner review. Discussion included clarification on \$25 versus \$50 license fees based on county impact. The Commissioners directed the Clerk to bill licenses as currently listed and will follow up on potential fee structure changes in the future.

Kaia Bowden, Recorder, addressed concerns about the November commission meeting's communication procedures. The Commissioners acknowledged that better inclusion practices should be followed going forward.

Commissioner Cox **moved to go into executive session** at 2:19 p.m. with Sheriff Stacey to discuss personnel matters. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous as follows: Commissioner Cox: Yes; Commissioner Lee: Yes; and Chairman Weston: Yes.

The Commission returned from executive session. With no further business before the Commission, Commissioner Lee **moved to adjourn** the meeting. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Approved: Simeon B. Weston

Simeon B. Weston, Chairman

Attest: Anneliesa Peart

Anneliesa Peart, Clerk