

Westside Coalition

Minutes of March 25, 2025 Westside Coalition Board of Directors Meeting

Minutes Taken By: Jake Erickson – Board Secretary

Location: NeighborWorks Community Mtg Room 622 W 500 N SLC **Online:** Zoom Meeting

Time: Started 5:40 pm Ended 7:30pm **Wi-Fi Password:** Nswfl\$1234

Board Members Present (#)	Jason Wessel, Bill Watts, Jake Erickson, C.J. Hellige, Chaise Warr, Dorothy Owen, Daniel Strong, Kevin Parke, Billy Palmer, Charlotte Fife-Jepperson, Chilton Hawk
Board Members Excused or Absent (#)	Daniel Tuutau, Turner Bitton, Dan Potts
Others Present:	Michelle Watts, Lizz Merrill, Maria Garciaz, Angela Romero, Dan Hegen, Nigel Swaby, Luz Escamilla, Sandra Hollins, Nick Meachem, Tess Alexander
Item 1	Lawmaker Presentation
Summary of the Legislative Session by Westside Representatives	<p>1. Presentation by Our Lawmakers on the Legislative Session</p> <p>a. Luz Escamilla</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Our districts have grown through redistricting, and the majority was very clear that they wanted another tax cut, so there was another. We now have a budget of \$30.8 billion dollars. The tax cuts translate to about \$40 for each average Utahn, but we're also cutting a lot of programs. For many individuals, property taxes are much higher.ii. We were able to add an extra year of childcare, which will now range from zero to four years old. There will be \$40 million more for voucher programs, but we asked them to delay that expense.iii. Salt lake City is under attack. A lot of the bills we saw related to transportation, public safety, and eminent domain conversations.iv. Dula bills have been a great asset, because they've helped Moms get healthier. <p>b. Sandra Hollins</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. I have been working with Utah Against Hunger to work on food insecurity with senior citizens. Some senior citizens only get \$27 per month.ii. I'm also in conversation with Common Spirit, where this past winter we had to take our daughter to the hospital, and it was a shame that we had to be out of

	<p>our community to get her care. We'd like to get a free standing emergency room here on the Westside. Now, I'm collecting data - and the last time we had a measure was in 2002, so I'm asking them now for an update to inform our work moving forward.</p> <p>iii. The session was pretty brutal. There were concerns about eminent domain and the shelter that's going in on the Westside. We voted against it from being built on 2200 North, 3200 West. Eminent domain ultimately allows for SLC to be a target.</p> <p>iv. Representative Clancy and I are going to have an informal work group to talk about the cutting of university classes that focus on diversity more. This is part of a national trend.</p>
Item 2 Querying Lawmakers About the Homeless Shelter	<p>Lawmaker Conversation Continued</p> <p>1. Lawmaker Conversation Continued: The Future Westside Homeless Shelter</p> <p>a. Daniel Strong</p> <p>i. How can we help when the session hits? Our strategy has been to engage on the bills that most directly impact the Westside where we have an ability to change things. However, 501C3's have to be careful.</p> <p>ii. Can you also elaborate on the homeless shelter?</p> <p>b. Angela Romero</p> <p>i. Hold our city officials' feet to the fire, and make sure they are supporting each other and supporting us. When they're negotiating where homeless shelters are going to go, it has to be the whole community who's held accountable. We need to have transparent conversations with entire neighborhoods.</p> <p>ii. The city council is going to decide on the budget for the city, so we need to show up and apply more pressure.</p> <p>e. Luz Escamilla</p> <p>i. This is a massive facility set to house thousands of people, and the city is on board, so you need to ask your council people. We opposed the bill. We want no more pressure on the Westside. We have had to welcome everything: the prison, the mosquito abatement, there are ecosystem impacts, halfway houses, the inland port. I said there are other places. There needs to be transparency for the community. I've been clear with both mayors and the councils in the two minutes we had with them on this issue.</p> <p>f. Jason Wessel</p>

i. You're creating a highway of encampments from through to the north of the neighboring cities. North Salt Lake, Bountiful, Ogden will all be impacted.

g. Chaise Warr

i. In addition to the cost, what about the resources to maintain? There's going to be a lot of police presence out there. What will the costs be? That's essentially a whole new city.

h. Luz Escamilla

i. The state will be in charge of this development through the homelessness office.

i. Bill Watts

i. One thing that we continuously see is crime. There's a 'they've gotta go somewhere mentality,' but it's going to take much more than the Westside coming together to make this conversation happen.

j. Michelle Watts

i. Thank you so much for coming to our last few Fairpark Community Council meetings. I see a lot of them skirting issues, can I hold them accountable? Can I push them on this issue? I want to put some pressure on them.

k. Nick Meachem

i. The city's known the entire time. We need to confront Petro and Puy. The city knew, so you should totally confront them. It's coming, and there's not much we'll be able to do about it. The church sold their land to the state or voluntarily gave it up. They are sick of nimby folks. But we have to fight and create a stink about this, or go to the courts.

l. Daniel Strong

i. I have little interest in fighting a homeless shelter. But if someone else does this, then go for it. We can be more accepting than other organizations and individuals. We'll have to have votes on all of this. We begrudgingly accept this while fighting for what we can get.

m. Jason Wessel

i. We need to brainstorm now on our list of demands. We want safety and security first? Transportation? Is there infrastructure? Roads? Water? This is another non taxable entity going in on the westside.

n. Bill Watts

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. It would be a good idea to do a poll on what our neighborhoods need since they'll be directly impacted. There's a bridge going into north park. Right across that bridge is an encampment. o. Billy Palmer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. I agree with Jason, but as far as strategy goes, you don't wait until buzz arrives. We need to start with the questions we want to ask so that we can look at strategy. What do they know, and when did they know it? Let's focus on what to do now. Yesterday we had that town hall with UDOT and the city on freeway expansion, and they're going up to sixth north.
Item 3	Homeless Campus Conversation and TIFF Projects
Discussion on the Funding Mechanisms Surrounding TIFF Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Special Tax Increment Financing Projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Charlotte Fife-Jepperson <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. All taxing entities within project areas take property taxes and invest it, and that's supposed to grow income for these taxing entities. A lot of these projects don't end for another 50 years. Some of this money may be going to Wards' public schools, and we haven't seen that in many years. SLC hasn't gotten that tax money because it's going to all of these different TIFF projects, which is great to get nice amenities for our community, but it's a double edged sword because it defers tax dollars for our public schools, which is terrible. b. Daniel Strong <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. They're supposed to be entering into agreements with other schools, and we don't get a proportionate amount of seats/votes. The RDA, which is now the CRA, are now at odds because of this funding mechanism. These TIFF projects are getting longer and longer. Districts that already exist need to push funding to those districts. c. Jason Wessel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. This is the new shiny thing that the legislature likes to use, and the only downside is that they get to hurt Salt Lake City. The Utah League of Cities is starting to get very vocal about it because of the new inland port model d. Charlotte Fife-Jepperson <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. There's another organization standing up for this called the Utah school board association. It includes all of the school districts, superintendents, rural, urban, small large school districts. They are all unified in protecting public education even if they are republican or conservative. The joint legislative council of superintendents is working to lobby proactively and educate them about these

	<p>consequences to push our pause on education related bills. There were 80 education related bills introduced during the legislative session. $\frac{1}{3}$ of all bills passed were passed on the last day of the session.</p> <p>e. Jason Wessel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. We need to assign people to this Homeless Shelter Issue. ii. Dorothy Owen, Daniel Strong, and Nick Meachem will continue to keep tabs on the subject.
Item 4	Annual Meeting Fundraising Summary
Covering Annual Meeting Fundraising Totals	<p>1. Discussion on the Annual Meeting</p> <p>a. Izumi Okamura</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Our Community Celebration Annual Meeting is on April 22nd. Sponsors gave us \$2000. \$13-14k in total was raised for this event.
Item 5	Approving the March 25th Minutes
Approval of the March 25th, 2025 WSC Monthly Meeting Minutes	<p>1. Approving the February Meeting Minutes</p> <p>a. Daniel Strong</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Now that our lawmakers have left, we should get to passing our minutes before more board members depart. <p>b. Charlotte Fife-Jepperson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Charlotte motions to approve the February 25th WSC Minutes. ii. Daniel Strong seconds the motion. iii. The motion passes 9-0.
Item 6	Adjourning the March 25th Meeting Minutes
Meeting Adjourned	<p>1. Meeting Closure</p> <p>a. Daniel Strong</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Daniel motions to conclude the March 25th WSC Meeting. ii. Billy Palmer seconds the motion.

	iii. The motion passes 9-0.
	Next Meeting: May 27th, 2025 5:30pm – 7:30pm