Council of Governments Meeting Minutes

April 16, 2026
Council Chambers
5:00 PM
Zoom Link

1. Call to Order

   Scott Wardle called the meeting to order at 5:03 pm.

2. Roll Call

   Scott Wardle
   Jared Hamner
   Erik Stromberg
   Maresa Manzione
   Dave McCall
   Kathleen VonHatten
   Heidi Hammond
   John Olson
   Christopher Damour
   Sheldon Birch
   Brian Johnson — Online
   Brittany Lopez
   Andy Welch
   Chandler Beutler - Online
   Fred Philpot - Online

3. Public Comment

   No public comment at this time.

4. Recognitions, Presentations, & Informational Items

   A. Transportation Utility Fee Study, Fred Philpot - LRB Finance

   The purpose of the presentation was to provide an overview of the study, including its objectives, methodology, and data requirements, and to gather feedback from participating jurisdictions on potential involvement.

   Fred explained that a Transportation Utility Fee is a recurring monthly fee assessed to property owners or utility customers to fund transportation system operations, maintenance, and capital improvements. Unlike impact fees, which are one-time charges, the TUF provides an ongoing and dedicated revenue source. He noted that recent legislative updates have clarified requirements and established additional guardrails for implementation.

   The key objectives of a TUF include promoting equity by aligning costs with system usage, increasing transparency through a dedicated enterprise fund, and creating long-term

sustainability for transportation funding. The fee is intended to supplement—not replace—existing revenue sources by addressing funding gaps necessary to maintain desired service levels.

Fred outlined the methodology used in the study, which involves establishing a nexus between transportation demand and the fee assessed. Demand is estimated using trip generation data based on land use classifications, with at least three required categories: residential, commercial, and other. Fees are calculated proportionally based on estimated system use.

The presentation also highlighted statutory requirements, including annual reporting, allowable administrative cost inclusion, and a 10-year sunset provision requiring periodic reevaluation of the fee.

To complete the analysis, significant data collection is required from participating jurisdictions. This includes capital improvement plans, current and projected transportation budgets, existing funding sources, operational and maintenance costs, staffing needs, and parcel-level land use data. This information will be used to determine funding gaps and calculate a potential monthly fee.

Fred noted that similar studies and fee structures are being evaluated or implemented in other Utah communities, with monthly fees ranging from approximately $3 to $18.50. Some jurisdictions have completed studies but opted not to adopt the fee.

The Council discussed participation and next steps, including the need for municipalities to provide input and required data to be included in the study. It was noted that implementation is based on demonstrated need rather than population size, and there is currently no specific limitation on city size for adopting a TUF.

B. Nuclear Lifecycle Energy Campus, Emy Lesofski

The Council received a presentation from Emy Lesofski, Director of the Utah Office of Energy Development, regarding the proposed Nuclear Lifecycle Innovation Campus in Tooele County. She was joined by members of her team, including a deputy director and a contractor supporting community engagement efforts.

Ms. Lesofski expressed appreciation for the collaboration between state and local partners in preparing and submitting the response to the U.S. Department of Energy's Request for Information. She noted that the process was highly collaborative and transparent, with materials made publicly available to ensure broad access to information. The state anticipates feedback from the Department of Energy in the near future.

The presentation included an overview of the nuclear energy lifecycle, beginning with uranium mining and milling, followed by conversion, enrichment, fuel fabrication, and reactor use. She explained that after use, nuclear fuel is cooled, stored, and potentially recycled as part of emerging technologies. The intent of the proposed campus would be to co-locate as many stages of this lifecycle as feasible to improve efficiency, streamline regulatory processes, and create economies of scale.

Ms. Lesofski indicated that, ideally, most stages of the lifecycle beyond initial milling could take place within Tooele County, depending on federal direction and site-specific considerations. She emphasized that the final configuration and proximity of facilities will be determined in coordination with the Department of Energy.

The Council discussed potential economic impacts, including job creation. Ms. Lesofski noted that a fully developed campus could support a substantial number of jobs, potentially in the range of thousands over time. These positions would span a wide range of professions, including engineering, skilled trades, operations, and support services, with many offering competitive wages. She emphasized that development would occur over time and would require coordinated planning for infrastructure and community support.

Additional discussion included the potential for related development, such as data centers

and energy generation facilities, as well as the importance of infrastructure planning to support future growth. Ms. Lesofski highlighted that the project could serve as a catalyst for broader economic development in the region.

5. Minutes

John Olson motioned to approve the minutes from the March meeting, Dave McCall seconded the motion. All in favor.

6. New Business

A. Nomination for the UTA Transit Commission

Scott Wardle reported that, following prior discussion and coordination with the Wasatch Front Regional Council, the Council of Governments (COG) was required to submit a nomination to the Utah Transit Authority (UTA) Transit Commission, with the nomination due to the Governor's Office by May 1.

Jared Hamner nominated Jeff Acerson, who currently represents the area and has demonstrated strong service to Tooele County. The nomination was seconded by Eric Stromberg.

7. Old Business

8. 3rd Quarter Sales Tax

Scott Wardle referenced prior discussion of the 2026 application and scoring sheet and noted that feedback had been routed through the appropriate subcommittee. A motion was made by Maresa Manzione to approve the application and scoring sheet for 2026, seconded by Mayor Olson.

The motion passed unanimously.

9. COG Committee Reports/Updates

Erda:

First, he reported that the Utah Trails Network is recommending approval of a feasibility study for a proposed trail connection between Tooele City and Stansbury Park. Several members attended a recent presentation regarding the project. The feasibility study will evaluate potential routes and the overall viability of the trail. The recommendation will be forwarded to UDOT for consideration, with action anticipated in June. Affected municipalities, including Tooele City and Erda, are in the process of submitting letters of support.

Second, Sheldon provided an update from the Board of Health. He noted that measles is currently a concern at the local level, with reported cases and hospitalizations. While no deaths have been reported, the Health Department is encouraging vaccination, emphasizing that measles is a preventable disease and that the risks associated with vaccination are significantly lower than the risks of infection.

Vernon:

John reported that the Town was successful in securing a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) in the amount of approximately $700,000 for fiscal years 2027 and 2028. The funding will be used to support improvements to Vernon's Main Street.

Additionally, a request was made regarding materials from the recent Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) presentation. It was noted that the slides from the prior presentation had not yet been received, despite a previous request. John indicated that the materials are needed to prepare a presentation to the Vernon Town Council and requested that both the prior and current slides be shared. Executive Admin will have those sent.

Dugway:

Mr. Damour from Dugway Proving Ground reported that he will soon be concluding his service as Garrison Manager. He expressed appreciation to the Council, noting his respect for the professionalism, dedication, and commitment demonstrated by members in serving their communities. He thanked the Council for its collaboration and support during his tenure.

The Council was also informed that Dugway Proving Ground has been selected by the U.S. Army as one of two installations, along with Fort Bliss, to host a future data center under an Enhanced Use Lease (EUL) agreement. The selected private partner for the Dugway site is CyrusOne.

While details are still being finalized, preliminary timelines indicate that construction could begin as early as 2027, with initial operations anticipated by 2029. The project is expected to develop a hyperscale data center across approximately 1,200 acres and, when fully built out, could require up to one gigawatt of power.

It was noted that while data centers typically employ a limited number of personnel once operational, the construction phase and supporting industries are expected to generate significant economic opportunities for Tooele County. The project is anticipated to provide long-term benefits to the region's workforce, particularly in the trades, and contribute to economic stability.

10. Adjournment

Scott entertained a motion to adjourn. Jared Hamner motioned, and all were in favor.
Meeting adjourned at 6:11 PM