

Cache County Form of Government Study Committee
Meeting Minutes – July 3, 2025

Time (Approximately): 7:00 PM – 8:03 PM (MDT)

Place: Cache County Council Chambers (199 N Main St., Logan, UT, 84321)

Present Committee Members:

- Jack Draxler (Chair)
- Jordan Mathis (Vice Chair)
- Bryan Cox
- Blake Wright
- Andrew Erickson, Committee Secretary, was also present.

Excused:

- Ed Buist

Others Present:

- Dr. Damon Cann (USU Political Science Professor)
 - David Zook, Cache County Executive
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Call to Order

- Chair Jack Draxler called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 PM (0:07). A quorum was established.

Approval of Minutes

- Minutes from June 25, 2025 Meeting Jordan Mathis made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 25, 2025 meeting (0:47). The motion was seconded (0:50) and passed unanimously.

Discussion on Ideal Committee Timeline and Progress

- Andrew Erickson provided an update on the committee's progress, noting they are approaching the border between initial information gathering and the foundation phase, moving towards in-depth study and initial outreach in subsequent meetings (1:13).
- Jordan Mathis inquired about obtaining actual cost-benefit analyses for legislative and executive costs in Cache County compared to similar-sized counties with different forms of government, focusing on salaries and benefits (2:15).
- Bryan Cox supported this, suggesting Transparent Utah as a resource and focusing on Class 2 or Class 3 counties (5:49).
- Jordan Mathis also suggested gathering information on board assignments for executive and legislative branches in Cache County and comparable counties to understand workload distribution and governance roles (6:25).
- Bryan Cox requested clarity on the defined roles and responsibilities of legislative and executive members in Cache County's current form and whether actual functioning aligns with these roles (7:51).
- Andrew Erickson noted these points would be incorporated into his information gathering (9:07).

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Update on Information Gathering Research

- Andrew Erickson reported that GRAMA requests had been submitted to other counties, but only Tooele County had responded so far, with a large volume of audio recordings being processed with assistance from the County Clerk's Office. He is exploring AI for transcription of these recordings (10:47).
- He also noted research on Utah County's defeated Council Executive form proposal, stating the ballot results were 61.41% No and 38.59% Yes (12:31, 13:36). He will continue to seek additional information on their study.
- Regarding outreach to Courtney Flint from the USU Wellbeing Study for public dissemination methods, Andrew Erickson confirmed he had emailed her and was awaiting a response (14:06). Jordan Mathis offered to follow up with Ms. Flint due to a pre-existing relationship (18:19). Damon Cann also confirmed he had reached out to Ms. Flint (18:30).
- Bryan Cox mentioned Cache County's participation in the USU Wellbeing Survey and offered to provide last year's data (14:40).
- Discussion emphasized learning from Ms. Flint's dissemination process for surveys, particularly for reaching unincorporated areas (16:53).
- Andrew Erickson acknowledged a delay in setting up a dedicated webpage for the committee but affirmed it is in progress (20:24).

Engaging County Employees and Officials

- Andrew Erickson presented a revised set of questions for engaging county employees and officials, aiming to avoid "stirring the pot" (21:51). Committee members were asked to review these questions (23:32).
- Andrew Erickson stated he is consulting with the County Attorney's office regarding the legality and methods for ensuring anonymity and privacy of employee responses to prevent retaliation (21:51).
- Discussion ensued on the best method for surveying employees: email survey vs. in-person interviews/focus groups. Concerns were raised about potential bias in focus groups (Open Meetings Act, self-selection of participants, influence of others in the room) (23:50).
- Damon Cann offered USU's Qualtrics subscription for anonymous surveys, noting the potential for motivated response bias but emphasizing its value as a data point (28:57).
- Jack Draxler suggested contacting Courtney Flint or Damon Cann for assistance with both public and employee outreach survey methodologies (30:16). Damon Cann confirmed his willingness to assist with employee outreach using the university system (30:36).
- Andrew Erickson suggested interviewing former county executives and council members for unique perspectives (31:19).
- Bryan Cox inquired if other committee members had received unsolicited input from the public (32:42); Jack Draxler confirmed he had (32:55). The importance of being circumspect and directing inquiries to the chair as the Public Information Officer was reiterated (33:26).

Review of Historical Documents and External Legal Counsel

- Andrew Erickson reported on his visit to USU Special Collections, where he found materials from the original Cache County Study Committee (1985) and plans to make digital copies for the committee (34:38).
- He also mentioned undergraduate textbooks on local government that might offer valuable excerpts for review, noting the County Council covers material expenses. The committee agreed that excerpts would be more beneficial than full textbooks (35:54).

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- Regarding external legal counsel, Andrew Erickson noted Gavin Anderson's recommendation for independent counsel to avoid conflicts of interest with the County Attorney (39:14).
- Discussion included the procurement process for legal services and the possibility of engaging a retired attorney like Roger Tew (formerly with the League of Cities and Towns) on a pro bono basis or for a reduced fee (43:57). Damon Cann offered to reach out to Roger Tew (44:35).

Public Outreach and Education

- The committee largely agreed to defer to Courtney Flint's expertise for public outreach strategies (46:18).
- Bryan Cox suggested utilizing city newsletters, city websites, and social media for dissemination, and engaging the Council of Mayors (through Lindsay Peterson) to encourage information sharing within municipalities (46:43).
- Jordan Mathis offered to research local companies for low-budget, professional video production for public education and to inquire with the Chair about budget feasibility for such media (48:27).
- The committee decided to delay broad public outreach (radio, newspaper) until after Item 5 (engaging county employees and officials) is completed, to ensure a more congealed message and avoid premature bombardment (49:47).

Consideration of Subsidiary Committees

- Andrew Erickson revisited the idea of subcommittees, noting Tooele County's use of them (52:56).
- The committee generally preferred to avoid formal subcommittees for now, opting for simplification and assigning specific tasks to individuals (53:39).
- It was suggested that if additional assistance is needed for Andrew Erickson, a request could be made to the County Council for support staff (56:14). Andrew Erickson confirmed he has received some help from the County Clerk's office (56:39).

Other Business

- Jordan Mathis inquired about the county's capabilities for virtual meeting engagement (e.g., Zoom), especially as he and Jack Draxler will be absent from the next meeting (58:29). Andrew Erickson acknowledged the current AV system's difficulty but would work with IT to simplify remote participation. Damon Cann suggested using a "Meeting Owl" device if available (59:53).
- Bryan Cox raised a point about a statement in the February 25, 2025 meeting minutes regarding a perceived lack of representation for unincorporated parts of the county in the Council of Governments (COG), clarifying that the Cache County Executive represents the county on the COG (1:01:15).

Adjournment

- A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting (1:03:08). The motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:03 PM (1:03:08).

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NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING SET FOR: Thursday, July 17, 2025, at 7:00 PM