

**Cache County Form of Government Study**  
**Committee Meeting Minutes - August 7, 2025**

**Date:** August 7, 2025

**Time:** (Approximately): 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM (MDT)

**Place:** Cache County Courthouse Council Chambers, 199 N Main St, Logan, UT

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**Present Committee Members:**

- Ed Buist
- Jordan Mathis (Vice Chair)
- Blake Wright
- Jack Draxler (Chair)

**Others also present:**

- Dr. Damon Cann, Committee Consultant
  - Andrew Erickson, Committee Secretary
  - Corbin Allen, Herald Journal
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**Call to Order**

Jack Draxler called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 PM (0:00). Note that all committee members were present except Mayor Brian Cox, who was excused due to travel and a family activity.

**Approval of Minutes**

Jack Draxler initiated a review of the minutes from July 17, 2025 (0:51). Blake Wright noted a minor correction: he was listed as present by teleconference but was physically present, while Jordan Mathis was on the line (1:21). Ed Buist made a motion to approve the minutes with the correction (1:47). The motion was seconded (1:52) and carried unanimously.

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**House Bill 356 Discussion**

Jack Draxler distributed information regarding House Bill 356, as requested by Mayor Cox (1:52). He encouraged committee members to review the bill on [le.utah.gov](http://le.utah.gov) and listen to the committee hearings and floor debates to understand its progression and amendments. He highlighted that the bill states a recommendation for change only goes to the voters if the committee recommends a change to the council (4:12).

**Review of Committee Timeline Framework & Progress**

Andrew Erickson provided an update, stating the committee is transitioning from Phase 1 (information gathering) to Phase 2 (in-depth study and investigation) (5:23). He felt the committee was in a good position despite not being exactly on the original timeline.

Ed Buist (6:19) and Jordan Mathis (8:02) expressed concerns about feeling rushed, emphasizing the need for thoroughness given the significance of a potential change in government form. Jack Draxler agreed that rushing should be avoided and emphasized the importance of remaining neutral, even-handed, comprehensive, and transparent in their information gathering (9:43). Andrew Erickson confirmed the flexibility to extend the timeline, noting that any recommendation for change would include a transition plan (11:59).

**Memo and Recommendation from Committee Secretary**

Andrew Erickson presented his memo regarding the potential official recognition of Dr. Damon Cann as an advisor (13:18). He noted that state code allows the committee to receive assistance from staff members, advisors, and professional consultants, under which Dr. Cann would qualify due to his subject matter expertise (14:00).

Ed Buist moved to appoint Dr. Damon Cann as an **official advisor and professional consultant** to the committee for the form of government study (14:40). Jack Draxler seconded the motion (15:00). Jordan Mathis clarified if compensation would be involved, to which Dr. Cann stated he would not accept financial compensation, viewing it as a service to the county (15:11). The motion passed unanimously (15:46).

**Public Outreach and Communications Plan**

Andrew Erickson reported that the press release was issued on July 31 (16:27), announcing the committee's formation and study. The release included an email for public input, which Andrew

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is currently monitoring (16:59). Ed Buist suggested Corbin Allen also monitor the email (17:14), which Corbin agreed to do.

Corbin Allen confirmed he has been covering the topic since February and wrote a story related to the committee's formation (18:12). Andrew Erickson noted that the press release had not yet been sent to local radio stations (19:28). Jordan Mathis volunteered to provide a list of media contacts for dissemination (19:41), and Jack Draxler offered to speak with media if requested (20:24).

Corbin Allen emphasized that the public would be interested in learning more about the potential changes, particularly regarding financial implications like council member salaries versus full-time commissioners (21:26). He suggested that any method to get information out to the public would be beneficial.

Jordan Mathis mentioned contact with Brian Champagne about potentially assisting with video production (23:10). Andrew Erickson shared a UAC-produced informational video about county government structures (25:08), which the committee found informative and suitable for future use on a website or app (29:48).

### **Information Gathering & Research Updates**

Andrew Erickson reported receiving responses from all three counties requested via GRAMA (Government Records Access and Management Act) (31:23). He compiled a brief summary of their conclusions, available online, and offered to print them for committee members (31:46). These three counties (Utah, Grant, and Tooele) have all undergone or extensively discussed changes in their form of government (34:02).

Dr. Damon Cann presented an analysis of the costs (salary and benefits) associated with different forms of government, focusing on elected or appointed officials required by the specific government form (35:00). Key points from his presentation:

- **Commission Form:** Varies substantially in compensation; full-time officials (40:02).
- **Expanded Commission (Grant County):** Generally cheaper due to part-time status of commissioners, despite having more members (42:05).
- **Council Manager (Tooele, Wasatch, Summit Counties):** Highest average cost, particularly due to high salaries for professional managers (47:17) (especially in Summit and Wasatch due to cost of living). Dr. Cann noted that a manager's salary often exceeds an elected mayor's.

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- **Council Executive (Cache County - Status Quo):** Cache County council members are generally among the lowest paid in the state (52:17).

Dr. Cann concluded that while there are differences in cost, the implementation and preferences of elected officials and voters are likely more consequential to the overall cost of government and service delivery than the specific form of government (58:45).

**Further Information on House Bill 356**

Andrew Erickson stated that Corbin Allen offered to share articles he has written on HB 356 and its progression (1:04:28). Corbin provided an overview, noting the bill's initial aim to disallow Cache County's current form of government and force Summit County to elect its council manager by district (1:08:11). He recounted the Cache County Council's surprise and subsequent efforts to assert local control over the decision, leading to amendments. He encouraged committee members to review his articles for historical context.

Andrew Erickson suggested inviting current county council members for interviews to gain more context on why the committee was formed (1:17:58). The committee discussed interview methods, considering potential public meeting requirements if all committee members were present (1:18:58).

Jordan Mathis proposed a written survey for past and current council members and executives to avoid bias from interviews (1:20:04). The survey would include a question asking if respondents would be willing to speak further with the committee. Andrew Erickson suggested thinking about this further for potential improvements (1:23:43).

Dr. Damon Cann advised that employee surveys should be anonymous to encourage frank responses, with an option for employees to provide contact information if they are willing to be contacted for further discussion (1:45:13). He also noted that the public survey's need for Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval would depend on its ultimate use (internal vs. generalizable knowledge) (1:52:02).

**Committee Survey Discussion and Motion**

The committee discussed developing surveys for:

1. **Current and Past County Elected Leaders (Executive and Council):** To understand their perspectives and reasons for supporting or not supporting the current form of government (1:25:18).

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2. County Employees: To gauge their understanding of government structure, roles, and how effectively the current form supports their work and serves the public (1:28:02). It was agreed that this survey would be anonymous (1:51:09), with Amy (HR) to be consulted regarding policy for surveying personnel (1:48:32).
3. Municipal Leaders in Cache County: To understand how responsive the county government is to municipalities (1:36:15). It was decided that surveying leaders from other counties was less valuable due to potential bias (1:37:08).

Jack Draxler entertained a motion for Jordan Mathis, Dr. Damon Cann, and Andrew Erickson to formulate written surveys appropriate for these three groups (1:42:55). Jordan Mathis made the motion (1:42:50), and it was seconded (1:43:30).

Andrew Erickson suggested also including intergovernmental organizations in the survey (1:43:43), but Jack Draxler and Ed Buist felt the current three groups would adequately cover relevant leaders (1:44:20).

Dr. Damon Cann confirmed his ability to support the surveys via Qualtrics and emphasized the importance of ensuring the employee survey's anonymity due to potential GRAMA requests (1:45:13). Jordan Mathis stressed the employee survey should be 100% anonymous, while other surveys could offer an optional name field for follow-up (1:51:22). The motion carried unanimously (1:56:13).

### **Adjournment**

Jack Draxler entertained a motion to adjourn (1:56:34). Ed Buist moved to adjourn (1:56:38). The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned (1:56:40).