

Wasatch Open Lands Board Meeting (WOLB)

September 8, 2025; 6:30 pm MT

Held Online and in Wasatch County Building, downstairs Conference Room, 25 N Main, Heber City, UT.

Attendees: Tracy Taylor, Justin Keys, Dr. Steve Stevens, Erik Rowland, Karl McMillan, Dallin K excused.

Wendy Fisher, Cheryl Fox.

Heidi Franco joined online at 6:45 pm.

Karl McMillan, chaired meeting.

Heidi Franco, excused and joined at 6:45 pm online.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1- Approval of August 11, 2025, Draft Minutes.

Motion: Erik Rowland

2nd: Dr. Steve Stevens

Vote in favor: Tracy Taylor, Dr. Steve Stevens, Erik Rowland, Karl McMillan. Justin Keys abstained.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: NONE

AGENDA ITEMS:

1- NOI – Notice of Interest Applications: Board discussion, updates, & action.

Utah Open Lands, Wendy Fisher: Midway Pear Tree Llams Farm NOI update. Working on trail.

A Giles NOI closing is after NRCS distributes money.

Lundin Farm NOI, settlement agreement update, plus come back to County Council hopefully in October 15th, for final CE.

Dr. Steve Stevens, what's going on with Federal funding?

UOL will need to reapply for RCPP, still waiting on Mitchel/Kissell NOI.

Cheryl Fox with Summit Lands Conservancy: She just got back with National Land Trust Conference with NRCS; not consistency; some RCPP's got pulled back, some held (not cancelled); do have money in escrow; its different for every land trust across the country. OBBB did put more money into farm programs, yet no process for deciding on that. Wait until next year.

2- Updates/Reports from Wasatch County Council, Midway City, and Heber City on open space bond funding, and preservation efforts.

Updates discussed above.

3- Miscellaneous Items, call for next month's agenda items.

Discussion with SLC land trust on website updates, video usage.

-Cheryl Fox's footage: 1st video- "we will determine our legacy in this time of crisis". Land that feeds and shelters us, breathe deeply, hearts beat with joy. Let's be the people who stepped into this moment, our commitment to our kids is greater.

2nd video- came here from somewhere else, stayed for the air, mountains, the people, what kind of legacy will we leave for our kids, save what we love, the hydrological system. The water is owned by the farmers that feeds SLC, over 25,000 acres agreements, needs money. Be part of the solution, let's protect some of the places, for the watershed, for our kids, for the future.

Wendy, UOL Videos:

Kohler Dairy: great footage of the farm, the owners, and production.

Branding needed for both land trusts in these videos.

What is goal for videos? Messaging to the community, to landowners.

Justin: Get landowners talking about their homes, heritage, way of life, real purpose of bond was this; the open space, wildlife corridors, are secondary. Possible bond next year. Thinks that growth will drive more interest from the public for open space.

Tracy: with property tax values tripled since 2018, any new bond could be quite small.

Wendy: moving forward with NF projects, use rollback taxes for leveraging? Talk about leveraging to the community, invested wisely. Not many other communities that do this. Celebrate these things. Still more landowners want to know if they can protect their property. Public needs to see that land is disappearing.

Erik R: message of hope, discouragement that change is inevitable. Is there a way to convey the hope then show what we've managed to preserve. There is a path to bring hope and save what we love here. Erik needs to get roll back tax money and bring to WOLB, present it quarterly to us.

Justin: need local funds to 'prime the pump' and get federal, state moneys. Requirements for roll back funding is more limited and different from our county code. Can we spend roll back for what we've already approved. That can free up money from bond.

*Justin: bring us a summary of the two codes, roll back v county code. What could we use roll back for discussion next month. Need to spend that money or it goes back to the State.

Wendy think that if project is 'in process' then it might still qualify?

Where would the videos go? On County FB, social media, etc., too?

Heidi F: allow 'intro' videos from each certified land trust, per County Code about each organization, then also add in project videos on new website.

Tracy T: Videos can show the community general plan goals to preserve the general vistas of community separators, Kem Gardner's property, North/South Fields between Heber and Midway, east county, etc. Show the lands/projects in videos.

Justin: How many projects could be closed next summer?

Wendy: likes 'intro' video, highlight the Kohler Dairy Farm, actively get video footage for fall, could do that. NRCS funding is not consistent, yet hopes NRCS will 'roll' on, talk about things that are in progress. 'We will save open space because you as a taxpayer said yes, to the open space bond....'

Erik R: shoot what footage you can. Late spring/early summer next year we coordinate message to build for potential bond next year. Figure out narration/script.

Cheryl F: Has a video of farmers talking about what it was like to enjoy their land and preserve it. Get the right voices, property owners talking.

Dr. Steve Stevens: Sep 27th – Volksmarch in Midway, Midway Green, 10 am – 1 pm.

Motion to adjourn: Erik Rowland

2nd: Steve Stevens

Vote: unanimous.

Closed Session per U.C.A. 52-4-205 if needed.

2025 Meeting Schedule: 2nd Monday of the month at 6:30 pm.

October 6th, 2025 (Move from October 13th due to holiday)

November 10th, 2025

December 8th, 2025