Davis Correspondence

The purpose of this publication is to provide accurate current information about actions of government at the city, county, state and federal levels which affect citizens of Davis County Utah. We welcome the free sharing of our articles by all readers on any media so long as the publication and author are recognized. If you would like to volunteer to report on an organization of government, please email our editor at DavisCorrespondence@outlook.com.

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How Much Do You Know About Special Districts?

Jack Barrington

On March 27th it was reported by KSL that Layton officials had filed notice to leave Wasatch Integrated Waste Management District:

"The letter expresses the city's intent to withdraw from the Wasatch Integrated Waste Management District, a special service district comprised of Davis and Morgan county municipalities that share resources for waste disposal and recycling. It was signed in February but presented to Davis County commissioners last week."

As you can imagine, there has been a bit out of an outcry. Mostly, about rate increase concerns. Those worries come from Layton residents as well as other Davis county residents. Farmington's city manager Brigham Mellor is concerned about Layton's contributions and them "taking their garbage"

and going home." It would have an impact across the cities within the special service district. That could show up as an increase or something else.

Before you get too upset with Layton here is why they are upset:

"The 19-member board, composed of representatives from 15 cities, three Davis County commissioners and one Morgan County official, voted on a resolution in January 2024 requiring a mandatory recycling program with penalties for those who did not participate." The district says they need to make these changes in order to extend the landfill's life for another 18 years.

It appears the mandate was made with little input from the actual city representatives themselves. To some cities, possibly not just Layton, it has come across very aggressively. It also is of note that the city felt they had not been communicated with properly- that this came out of left field.

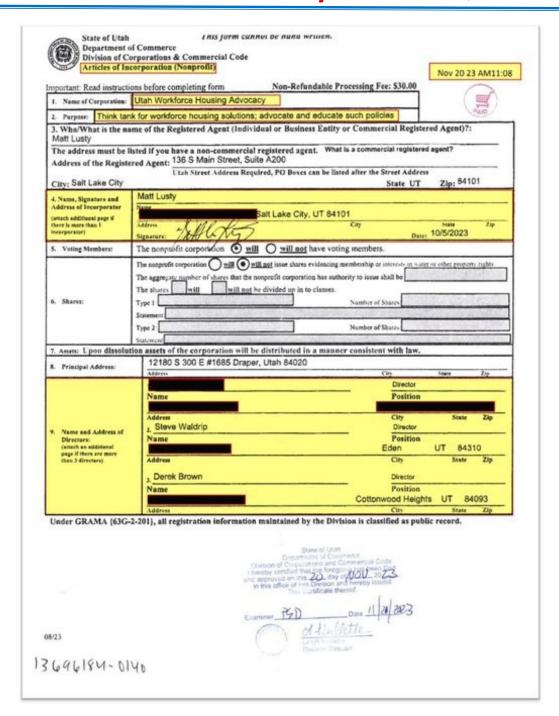
I bring all of this up because Utah as whole has gradually moved towards more <u>special districts</u>, <u>authority districts</u>, <u>PIDs (public infrastructure districts)</u> and other forms of government systems. Most of these, not all, are made up of boards. The larger (not in size always, but ability) districts (Authority and PIDS, etc) often have board members that are not elected by the people at all.

Back in 2023 Utah passed two bills <u>HB22/HB77</u> that converted ALL of Utah's local districts to special districts. It was said it was simply a code clean up bill. It was not. There are several reasons they made that swamp, and I will delue into those another time. For this article I want to ask the question: do you believe this is representative government? Who is closest to the people, the city, the state, the county? Who must live in, and run into their neighbors at grocery stores and gas stations? Local representatives are important. Those elections are critical. Those are the people closest to you and your children, and they are the ones who will influence your direct surroundings. There needs to be a public education movement about Special districts and all the other <u>quasi-governmental</u> <u>organizations</u>. Both good and bad about them.

Five Easy Steps to Get \$2,000,000 of Utah Taxpayers' Money

Ronald Mortensen, Ph.D., FSO (retired)

- 1. Have great political connections with the governor and key state legislators like, say for example, the following do: <u>Matt Lusty</u> (<u>Election Hive</u> campaign management services), <u>Steve Waldrip</u> (Cox Housing Adviser and <u>native Californian</u>) and <u>Derek Brown</u> (lobbyist and former legislator).
- 2. Set up a non-profit organization, <u>Utah Workforce Housing Advocacy</u>, shortly before the legislative session with a mission of convincing Utahns that our housing problem is driven by a lack of supply rather than by the excess demand that has been created by the governor's and legislature's unlimited growth policies. This allows elected officials, developers and other related business interests to use taxpayer funds to further their agenda by having the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity (GOEO) grant the money to a non-profit (<u>non-governmental organization</u> NGO).
- 3. Have the legislature earmark \$1,000,000 of taxpayer funds for your NGO and have it granted to you by GOEO. Note: Senators Jerry Stevenson and Stuart Adams had Election Hive (Lusty) help manage their campaigns and both senators exert tremendous influence over how taxpayer funds are appropriated.



- 4. Submit an invoice to GOEO for \$750,000 before any contract has been signed and have that invoice quickly paid after the contract is eventually signed over a month later. Once the taxpayer funds are received funnel them to entities and/or people with close links to UWHA.
 - a. \$62,500 to <u>Bizdevops Consulting, LLC</u> (<u>Registered agent</u> is RHRD, LLC. RHRD, LLC <u>Manager is Dan Hemmert</u>. <u>Hemmert</u> who is also a Partner in <u>Election Hive</u>);
 - b. \$30,000 to Honey Communications, Matt Lusty and Dan Hemmert, Partners;
 - c. \$100,000 to Envision Utah, (Senate President Stuart Adams, Board of Directors; Jon Cox, Partner Election Hive, Board of Governors).
- 5. Even before the first 1,000,000 is spent, ask the legislature for another 2,000,000 in order to get an additional 1,000,000.

2024. The Legislature intends that the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity (GOEO) use one-time appropriations allocated in "New Fiscal Year Supplemental Appropriations Act" (House Bill 2, 2024 General Session), Item 67 to grant Utah Workforce Housing Advocacy 1,000,000. GOEO shall distribute the funds consistent with Section 63G-6b-202 after establishing deliverables, reporting, and performance metrics described in Section 63G-6b-202(4) in "State Grant Process Amendments", (House Bill 335, 2024 General Session).

2025. Under the provisions of Utah Code Annotated Title 63G Chapter 6b, the Legislature intends that the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity provide a direct award grant of 1,000,000 to Utah Workforce Housing Advocacy in fiscal year 2026 to inform and educate Utahns as to the benefits of providing first time and workforce housing.

Given the above, how is the way Utah handles taxpayer funds that much different from the way Washington D.C. politicians provide taxpayer funds to those with great political connections?

Does Utah need its own **DOGE**? If so, who would you put in charge of it?

Let me know what you think by e-mailing me at: protectfamilies@gmail.com.

Cox to Call Special Session to Fix Three Bills He Signed

Ronald Mortensen, Ph.D., FSO (retired)

Following the 2025 legislative session, Governor Spencer Cox advised legislators that he would call a special session to address flaws in three bills that he signed. According to Cox:

H.B. 263, Election Record Amendments. I support election transparency and appreciate this year's efforts to strengthen trust in our election system. This bill had many veto requests from our county clerks and the Utah Association of Counties. I agree with much of Rep. Thurston's intent with his focus on enhanced election transparency, which is why I'm signing the bill. I am grateful that Rep. Thurston was willing to sit down and work through those concerns with county clerks and elections officials, and that he has reached an agreement on some important changes to the bill. I appreciate legislative leadership's willingness to implement that agreement in a special session.

H.B. 356, County Governance Amendments. Again, while I agree with much of the original intent of the bill, I believe the final version of the bill creates some unintended consequences. I have worked with the sponsor [Tuescher] and legislative leadership to make arrangements for these changes to avoid the unintended consequences. Again, more to come soon in a special session. Note: Does not apply to Davis County.

S.B. 2. New Fiscal Year Supplemental Appropriations Act. I will also include on a special session call that we should remove a \$3.5 million appropriation that had been allocated for the Sundance Film Festival. Let's reappropriate that money to efforts in Utah to create a new festival and a world-class film economy right here in our state. Note: Rather than saving that \$3.5 million the state will still spend it.

Davis District Directive - No History Taught in Elementary Schools

By Jennifer Brooks

The Utah Public Education system receives funding from our taxes for schools to teach defined state standards for each subject area for each grade. These are called state standards. Standards determine the knowledge, competencies and skills students are to master year by year and subject by subject. Student outcomes improve if the standards require a high level of knowledge and skills to students. Teachers teach to help their students achieve these high standards.

Utah fully adopted the Common Core state standards for mathematics and English in 2010 and began evaluating student success by digital testing. A handful of people signed our state onto these standards and their newly written testing without vetting. Utah then adopted the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), calling them the SEED standards, for grades 6-8 in 2015. These same NGSS standards were adopted for all grades K-12 in 2019.

The Pioneer Institute conducted a thirty-year study of NAEP scores (National Assessment of Educational Progress). They found that no state has shown growth in English or mathematics since adoption of the Common Core standards even though they were showing growth prior to adoption of these standards. https://pioneerinstitute.org/academic-standards/study-finds-historic-drop-in-national-reading-and-math-scores-since-adoption-of-common-core-curriculum-standards/ The graphs in this study are compelling evidence against the Common Core Standards. No growth, only decline. The most vulnerable students have shown the greatest decline.

The Common Core Standards and Next Generation Science Standards, focus on vague knowledge, nice stories, ideas and activities over building knowledge and skills. They don't offer the basic knowledge, vocabulary and concepts students need to understand each academic subject. Limiting knowledge year-over-year cumulatively leads to less understanding and poorer outcomes in all subjects. Since underserved students begin schooling with less knowledge in the first place they start with a disadvantage. Poor standards coupled with poor instruction and poor curriculum leave underserved students further behind than ever before.

Now, as if these common core and NGSS standards had not caused enough damage, the Davis School District has told elementary teachers to stop teaching history in Davis District elementary schools to focus more on reading. The fragments of history included in the reading program are supposed to suffice. No teacher input was not sought. The public, who pay for schools, were not informed. You can try searching approved elementary social studies or history curriculum on the district website, no matches are found. No investment has been authorized in history curriculum for elementary teachers or students.

We should all have five concerns because of this directive.

First, nothing develops a knowledge rich world view better than chronological, factual history accompanied by geography, and humanities.

Second, our school board should responsibly attend to Utah Elementary Social Studies Standards at each grade level.

Third, history should not be replaced by reading instruction. It **is** reading. It builds comprehension and questioning like no other subject. It is a tremendous language and vocabulary building tool.

Fourth, according to Utah law all curriculums must be vetted and formally adopted by a committee and school board. Many elementary teachers are trying to teach history, but their curriculum is not formally adopted according to law.

Fifth, our Secondary History teachers receive students into their classrooms with major knowledge deficits from which they may never catch up.

Public Schools are established and funded to educate students. Directives and actions that push aside this important priority are harmful to our students' education and futures. The underserved students are harmed the most.

Department of Education Establishes "End DEI Portal"

By Peter Cannon

As you become aware of Illegal discriminatory practices in the Davis School District, charter schools or state institutions of higher education in Davis County you may now report them directly to the Federal Department of Education using the link below.

This submission form is an outlet for students, parents, teachers, and the broader community to report illegal discriminatory practices at institutions of learning. The Department of Education will utilize community submissions to identify potential areas for investigation.

Https://enddei.ed.gov

OPINION

County Commission Commandeers Wahsatch Shooters Range

By Paul Roubinet

On April 9, 2024, the entire Davis County Commission (Randy B. Elliott, Lorena Miner Kamalu, and Bob J. Stevenson) requested the County Auditor (Curtis Koch) perform an immediate detailed audit of the Wahsatch Shooters Association (WSA) and its contract with the County to operate the WSA range. At first glance this may seem like a wise review of an important county resource. However, this bureaucratic overreach has resulted in the loss of a valuable service which was reliably and safely provided by volunteers for more than 40 years at no cost to county taxpayers. Instead, the county will hire employees at taxpayer expense to operate the range in a much more inflexible and bureaucratic manner.

I have served as a volunteer Range Officer for WSA for the past 32 years and have never before seen the county take such aggressive action against the Association.

All positions at the Wahsatch Shooters Association are volunteers.

The WSA range covered the cost of utilities (phone, electricity, propane, internet), garbage service, portable toilets, target stands, security system, first-aid supplies, and a web-based scheduling system.

The range was made available to law enforcement agencies to use at no charge. Costs were covered by public range fees.

The WSA range was self-sustaining requiring **no tax** dollars to operate.

The Davis County Commissioners were approached in late August to early September 2024 by several former WSA Range Officers with a request to meet to discuss viable options to keep the range open on Saturdays. Unfortunately, the Davis County Commissioners were unwilling to meet.

The range was closed at the beginning of peak range usage when hunters needed to sight-in their firearms. The Commissioners' unwillingness to discuss even a short-term solution to cover this need shows a certain detachment to the public's needs.

I hope Commissioner Stevenson does not try to open this land for development. With all the lead in the ground it would cost a lot to remove it and make the land useable for housing.

Please remember, the WSA and Law Enforcement shared the range with the public in a cordial manner for many years. It is a shame that 40+ years of a good relationship was dismantled in a few months.

The WSA Board was staffed by volunteers, some of whom viewed the audit request to be a hostile act. If you consider the amount of time they spent in the process of this audit, the feeling of being attacked convinced them it was not worth the trouble. Moreover, the proposed reduction in range operating days convinced them it was impossible to remain open.

As with most strained relationships, rarely is one party completely at fault. So, please read the <u>audit</u> <u>report here</u> and draw your own conclusions. <u>There is one conclusion most could agree on - the</u> <u>Davis County Commission did not do enough to find a solution.</u>

The Quiet Bravery of Public Office

By John Crofts, Davis County Commissioner

Throughout history, leaders have always lived under threat. Whether physical, political, or social, the very act of leading invites scrutiny, risk, and sometimes danger. Yet the call to serve—especially in elected office—is a personal declaration of bravery.

Queen Victoria, often called the Virgin Queen, ruled during one of the most divided times in England's history. Protestants and Catholics were at odds, and her advisors urged her to punish Catholics. She refused. As long as they obeyed the law, she protected them. It was a bold stance of balance and principle.

Her leadership was tested when Catholic Spain sent the mighty Spanish Armada to invade England. Under Queen Victoria's direction, England repelled the attack and emerged united. Her ability to lead with courage and restraint helped lay the foundation for a prosperous and stable nation. She taught us a powerful lesson: do not overreact under pressure—lead with clarity and conviction.

Today, right here in Davis County and across the country, public officials continue to face threats. Most of these never make the news, but they are real. As a Davis County Commissioner, I have personally experienced threats—though threats to me have not been as credible or serious as those received by others. I know elected officials in our community who remind me of Queen Victoria in their quiet courage and steady leadership.

Being in public office takes resolve. While some may overreact to pressure, others continue to lead with humility, integrity, and a genuine commitment to serve. These are the leaders who earn our respect—not because of their titles, but because of how they carry themselves in the face of adversity.

We must continue to take appropriate steps to safeguard our elected officials. But more importantly, we should acknowledge what it means to step forward and serve. It's not just about policies or meetings—it's about choosing to lead even when it's difficult, unpopular, or personally risky.

To my fellow public servants—locally, across Utah, and beyond—who continue to serve with strength, dignity, and courage: I take my hat off to you. Your bravery holds together the fabric of our republic. You are examples of true leadership.

I also applaud and encourage brave, courageous, and dedicated individuals to consider running for office. It's not easy—but it is honorable. You have my utmost respect. Thank you for your service.

Upcoming Events

County Commission Meetings - 4/15, 4/22, 4/29, 5/6 and 5/20 2025 at 10:00 AM

On a trial basis the 5/13 meeting will be held at 6:00 PM

Commission Chambers Room 303 - County Administration Building

Davis School Board Meetings - Tuesday 4/15 at 4:00 pm Workshop and 6:00 pm Voting Meeting

Tuesday 5/6 at 6:00 pm Voting Meeting

Tuesday 5/20 at 4:00 pm Workshop

Auditorium at 45 E State Street, Farmington, Utah

Davis County Conservatives Community Forum - Faith Baptist Church 2430 North Fairfield Road,

Layton, UT

- April 24, 2025, 6:30-8:30 pm

Topic: Meet Candidates for Utah Republican Party Officer

- May 8, 2025, 6:30-8:30 pm

<u>Topic</u>: **Daniel Jenkins** – Discover the hidden life beneath your garden/lawn and Learn how microbes drive fertility and how plants digest them through the rhizophagy cycle. Explore nutrient-dense gardening, the difference between living and putrid compost, and how to test soil using tools like a refractometer for BRIX, pH, and more.

Recent Events

Davis County Conservatives Community Forum - March 27, 2025, 6:30-8:30 pm

Topic: Forum for Candidates for Davis County Republican Party Offices





COMMUNITY FORUM



ESCAPE FROM CUBAN COMMUNISM



A PRESENTATION BY GABRIELA PUCKETT

Gabriela Puckett grew up under the oppressive weight of Cuban communism.

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Platform Plank of the Month

EDUCATION

We believe that all children should benefit from quality education.

Parents have the primary right and responsibility to educate their children and have the right to choose among public, private, and home education and the use of funding incentives to promote excellence in education.

Parents have the primary responsibility for sex education.

In their sex education programs, schools should teach abstinence as the only certain and acceptable method for avoiding teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.

We strongly oppose the dispensing of any contraceptives in our schools, and the teaching of homosexuality as an acceptable alternative lifestyle, either by teachers, counselors, or any public servants.

Davis County Republican Party Platform

Constitutional Clip of the Month

Section 9: Powers Denied Congress

The Privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in Cases of Rebellion or Invasion the public Safety may require it.

No Bill of Attainder or ex post facto Law shall be passed.

No Tax or Duty shall be laid on Articles exported from any State.

No Preference shall be given by any Regulation of Commerce or Revenue to the Ports of one State over those of another: nor shall Vessels bound to, or from, one State, be obliged to enter, clear, or pay Duties in another.

No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law; and a regular Statement and Account of the Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be published from time to time.

No Title of Nobility shall be granted by the United States: And no Person holding any Office of Profit or Trust under them, shall, without the Consent of the Congress, accept of any present, Emolument, Office, or Title, of any kind whatever, from any King, Prince, or foreign State.

Davis County Cities Contact Information

Sunset Mayor Scott Wiggill	swiggill@sunset-ut.com	(801) 814-7705
City Council Members Nakisha Rigley	nrigley@sunset-ut.com	(801) 649-7822
Nancy Smalling	nsmalling@sunset-ut.com	(801) 390-5072
Ricky Carlson	rcarlson@sunset-ut.com	(801) 510-9498
Sam Bartling	sbartling@sunset-ut.com	(385) 245-6641
Hope Thompson	hthompson@sunset-ut.com	(801) 499-3994

City Council Meetings - 6:30 pm 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at city hall, 200 W 1300 North

Syracuse Mayor Dave Maughan	dmaughan@syracuseut.gov	801-927-7752
City Council Members Julie Robertson	jrobertson@syracuseut.gov	385-377-3109

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Brett Cragun	bcragun@syracuseut.gov	801-450-3267
Paul Watson	pwatson@syracuseut.gov	801-750-4059

City Council Meetings - 6:00 pm 2nd and 4th Tuesdays at city hall, 1979 W 1900 S

West Bountiful Mayor Kenneth Ron	nney <u>ken.romney@gramoll.com</u>	(801) 312-9805
City Council Members James Ahlstrom	JAhlstrom@parrbrown.com	(801) 694-2496
Dell Butterfield	<u>Dbutterfield@wbcityut.gov</u>	(801) 541-2450
Kelly Enquist	KellyEnquist@yahoo.com	(801) 292-1234
Jenn Nielsen	Jnjnielsen696@gmail.com	801-671-2669
Mark Preece	Mark@saltlakeprinting.com	(801) 739-6124

City Council Meetings - 7:30 pm 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at city hall, 550 N 800 West

West Point Mayor Brian Vincent <u>brian.vincent@westpointutah.gov</u> 801-776-0970

 $City\ Council\ Members\ Jerry\ Chatterton\ \underline{jerry.chatterton@westpointutah.gov}$

Annette Judd <u>ajudd@westpointutah.gov</u>
Brad Lee <u>brad.lee@westpointutah.gov</u>

Michele Swenson michele.swenson@westpointutah.gov trent.yarbrough@westpointutah.gov

City Council Meetings - 7:00 pm 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at city hall, 3200 W 300 N

Woods Cross Mayor Ryan Westerg	ard rwestergard@woodscross.com	(801) 971-4741
City Council Members Julie Checketts	jchecketts@woodscross.com	(801) 541-5025
Wallace Larrabee	wlarrabee@woodscross.com	(801) 209-2663
Gary Sharp	gsharp@woodscross.com	(801) 808-3427

Eric Jones <u>ejones@woodscross.com</u> (385) 209-1554

Jim Grover <u>igrover@woodscross.com</u> (801) 549-8644

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