



UTAH RECREATION & PARKS ASSOCIATION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING Thursday, April 30, 2026

Attendees

LeeAnn Powell	McKell Christensen	Megan Zollinger
Kevin Schmidt	Wendy Harris	Taylor Smith
Kaitlin Youd	Lydia Hebdon	Myrna Clark
Jamie Anderson	James Abbott	Kyle Clyde
Melissa Haynes	Scott McDonald	Janell Payne
Cheryl Meier	Austin Rothaug	Ashley Brown
Melisa Catten		

Call to Order

President Kevin Schmidt welcomed the group and reviewed the meeting objectives. The minutes from the March meeting were approved.

StrengthsFinder Discussion

LeeAnn introduced the assigned reading, *StrengthsFinder* by Tom Rath, and discussed how URPA utilizes the assessment to build dynamic and effective teams by identifying and leveraging individual strengths.

Trading Card Initiative

Kevin introduced the concept of trading cards, and the board engaged in a brainstorming session regarding potential themes and applications. Ideas discussed included:

- Providing opportunities for attendees to create personalized cards at the conference.
- Supplying laminate sleeves, printers, and volunteer assistance for card creation.
- Offering trading cards as speaker incentives.
- Developing cards for each conference track.

- Organizing cards in binders or deck boxes.
- Creating "rookie cards" for new professionals.
- Designing cards for individual parks and facilities that staff could distribute to children.
- Utilizing the cards as enhanced business cards.
- Standardizing card dimensions and including contact information.
- Creating a puzzle image on the reverse side so multiple cards combine to form a larger picture.

The board emphasized the importance of URPA representatives sharing information about the trading card initiative with recreation centers throughout the state.

Approval of Minutes

Taylor Smith motioned to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Wendy Jones and passed unanimously.

Association Business

India Nielsen-Barfuss is unable to fulfill her board position. Based on recommendations from the state organization, Ashley Brown was nominated to fill the vacancy. Kyle made a motion to approve the appointment, and James Abbott seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Assistant Executive Director Report

Toolkit Tuesday

McKell distributed the Toolkit Tuesday topic sign-up sheet via text message and encouraged board members to select presentation topics.

Calendar Updates

A comprehensive calendar featuring regional meetings and URPA training events will be added to the website. Board members were asked to submit event information to McKell for inclusion.

Executive Director Report

LeeAnn reviewed the materials provided in each board member's folder and encouraged all members to:

- Review their position descriptions and responsibilities.
- Read the URPA Constitution and governing documents.
- Note that the positions of Executive Secretary and Treasurer are now appointed three-year positions.

Conference planning efforts have begun:

- The Call for Presenters will open on June 1 and remain open through October 31.
- Board members were encouraged to recruit at least eight presenters within their respective tracks.
- A conference survey was included in the board materials for review.

Upcoming Events

Board members were reminded to stay informed about upcoming association activities and assist with promotion efforts, including:

- Lifeguard Games
- Drowning Prevention Coalition Golf Tournament
- Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI) Course

URPA hosts two CPSI trainings annually. Members should be familiar with the purpose of the certification and associated requirements. Any updates should be submitted to McKell.

Educational Programming

LeeAnn highlighted the Women in Leadership Conference planning packet as a resource and template for future educational event planning.

Group Reports

NURPA – Lydia

Reported on fundraising efforts and initiatives to improve communication.

CURPA – Austin

Shared conference survey results indicating that personal interaction was highly valued by attendees. CURPA plans to facilitate peer-group discussion sessions among professionals.

WARPA – Kaitlin

Expressed interest in offering Continuing Education Units (CEUs) and plans to invite presenters from the previous conference to participate.

President-Elect – Janell

Would like to explore opportunities to incorporate an arts component into URPA programming.

Active Aging – Jamie

Plans to begin quarterly meetings with Active Aging professionals.

State Representative – Ashley

Aims to connect Utah State University Outdoor Recreation faculty and students with recreation center directors to support internships and career development opportunities.

Past President – Megan

Would like to improve and streamline the awards process.

Aquatics – Wendy

Plans to contact agencies not currently participating in URPA and establish regular meetings with aquatics professionals.

Executive Track – Cheryl

Would like to strengthen communication among directors and create a statewide information-sharing and advocacy network.

Recreation – James

Will reach out to agencies not currently engaged with URPA to gather feedback on improving accessibility and participation in recreation programs.

Young Professionals – Kyle

Plans to survey participants following each session to enhance programming and increase engagement from organizations not currently involved in the Leadership Academy.

Adaptive Programs – Taylor

Is forming a statewide committee with representatives from each region to provide adaptive recreation resources, training, and support. Her goal is to develop a statewide advocacy network similar to the Utah County Coalition model.

Events – Myrna

Reported that the AceCo group has requested training related to county permitting processes and policies. She will coordinate outreach with county representatives.

Conference Chairs – Scott & Melissa

Continue developing the trading card concept with a focus on simplicity and accessibility. They are also identifying potential keynote speakers and exploring ways to share the history and origin story of URPA during the conference.

President – Kevin

Would like to expand micro-training opportunities and provide CEU options for specialized parks and recreation groups. He emphasized the importance of strengthening legislative advocacy efforts.

Adjournment

Megan Zollinger motioned to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by James Abbott and approved. The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.