



## USU Board of Trustees Retreat

Aug 24, 2023 at 11:00 AM MDT

University Inn, Sonne Board Room - Logan campus and

Zoom: <https://usu-edu.zoom.us/j/86014446252?pwd=RHpaQnNsMXZheUhzRndsUmc2emQ3Zz09>

### Attendance

#### Trustees present:

Jacey Skinner, Chair  
Gina Gagon, Vice Chair  
Kent K. Alder  
John Y. Ferry  
David H. Huntsman  
Kacie Malouf

Heather Mason  
Tessa White

#### Trustees absent:

Wayne Niederhauser  
David Petersen  
Abraham Rodriguez

#### Utah State University Representatives present:

Elizabeth Cantwell, President  
Tiffany Allison  
Janalyn Brown  
Alison Fabricious  
Nancy Hanks

Mica McKinney  
Robert Wagner  
Matt White  
Devin Wiser

#### 1. **Welcome and Introduction of New Board Member - Chair Jacey Skinner**

Chair Skinner welcomed all to the Board of Trustees 2023 retreat.

#### 2. **New Trustee Oath of Office for Heather Mason - Chair Jacey Skinner**

Chair Skinner welcomed the newest member of the Board of Trustees, Heather Mason. She was appointed as a member due to her position as USU Alumni President and will serve in both capacities for two years. Trustee Mason was sworn in by Notary Tiffany Allison.

#### 3. **Board Engagement/Committee Discussion Items - Chair Jacey Skinner and Vice President Matt White**

Chair Skinner and Vice President Matt White shared ideas about board engagement and structure and how to be more effective and functional. Chair Skinner suggested and shared several sections of the book "Principles of Trusteeship" which has been put together by the Association of Governing Boards (AGB). Engaged, high-functioning boards embrace the full scope of their responsibilities. They lead by example as trustees have roles as ambassadors of the university. They think strategically, both short and long term.

Vice President Matt White shared four principles from the book: advancing the institutions focus and alignment, the difference between the board's role and the

administration's role, what it means to be an ambassador for the university, and how to think strategically.

Chair Skinner asked the board what would make them feel more engaged. Trustee Malouf would like to know the mission and vision of the board so she can tie committee work and all she does back to this. Trustee Alder would appreciate adding clarity to the board's role with USU administration as well as the Utah Board of Higher Education. Trustee Huntsman would like to remember the students in all board work because that is why they are all here. Trustee White suggested learning more about the risks so each meeting does not become just a rubber stamp. Trustee Ferry fears the board needs to be cautious, so they do not get too far "in the weeds." Trustee Alder mentioned the work the board does is for the students as well as for research.

President Cantwell asked what is the 21st century land-grant mission for the state of Utah? She believes it includes research and is derived from being a service institution. The President also mentioned the operating financial model of higher education is the most complex. It is not "us" but it is higher education in general. She is asking her team to create a one-page, boxes and lines showing dollars coming in, what are the revenue streams, where do they go, why, etc. which she hopes to bring to the board.

**4. Conflict of Interest and Explanation of Online GRAMA and Open Public Meeting Trainings - Vice President Mica McKinney**

Vice President McKinney shared a PowerPoint and explained the conflict of interest forms each trustee received in their folder. She explained the open public meeting act and that there will be online training for each trustee to complete.

**5. Lunch and Trustee Headshots**

**6. Title IX Mandatory Training - Emmalee Fishburn**

Emmalee Fishburn, Senior Prevention Specialist in the Office of Equity presented the Title IX training (see attached slide show). Training was completed by all trustees in attendance

**7. Board Engagement/Committee Discussion Items (continued) - Chair Jacey Skinner and Vice President Matt White**

Chair Skinner has discussed with the board the current trustee committees and the possibility of adding a few more. The board may need to be flexible as everything becomes aligned. The current committees are: 1. Executive 2. Audit 3. Student, health safety and well-being 4. Recruitment, retention and completion 5. Research and academic approval (with rotation of board members so all gain insight on what occurs in this committee), and 6. Honorary degree committees. New committees suggested: statewide campus oversight and external partnership. President Canwell would like to focus on student mental health within one of the committees. Charters are needed for each committee, both new and existing. Vice President White stated alignment of all

boards, including Alumni Board, Foundation Board, etc., is critical so that all are moving to build the institution and its success.

Chair Skinner mentioned four principles she wanted the group to focus on:

- governance (recognizing there is a fiduciary responsibility)
- respecting differences between board and administrative roles (but operating together)
- ambassadorship for both Utah State University and higher education (noting challenges in higher education, promoting goals of higher education, represent the institution-be a bridge, engage and support)
- the 21st land-grant mission (what makes USU viable for the next 10, 20 and 30 years-look to the future, and define goals.)

The board broke into groups for discussion and reported their findings and shared their suggestions for: key things the board could enhance, helpful resources, how to support the institutional president, ambassadorship, and long-term sustainability of the "land-grant." Chair Skinner encouraged the group to spend some time with the book and reach out with thoughts.

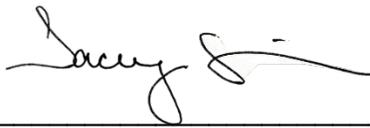
## **8. Strategic Plan and Update on Progress of Implementation- President Elizabeth Cantwell**

President Cantwell shared her thought process and perspective on vision and how she is thinking about the organizational structure of the institution. The President shared her vision and thoughts of what a modern 21st century land-grant institution should be. She defined this as a modern public service university, which provides public impact research, provide leadership in learning, teaching and outcomes, and stewardship and community engagement for all of Utah.

President Cantwell shared the following thoughts of what a modern land-grant institution in Utah should represent:

- a spirit of resolution
- innovation and entrepreneurship
- embrace the pioneer spirit
- encourage creative problem solving
- promote technological advancements
- community engagement and collaboration
- aim to address true societal challenges
- facilitate economic development
- stewardship and sustainability
- excellence in education and workforce development
- prioritize accessibility
- high-quality education

- collaborate with industry
- ethical leadership
- social responsibility



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Jacey Skinner, Chair



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Janalyn Brown, Secretary  
(minutes taken by Janalyn Brown)

November 10, 2023

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Date Approved