

MT NEBO WATER AGENCY
BOARD MEETING
Salem City Offices, 30 West 100 South, Salem UT 84653
Monday, June 9, 2025

CONDUCTING

Richard Nielson, Chair

BOARD MEMBERS

Bart Leeftang, Central Utah Water Conservancy Dis.
Neil Brown, Genola City
Braden Sheppard, Goshen Valley Local District
ABSENT-Brett Christensen, Payson City
Paul Taylor, Salem City
ABSENT-Lynn Mecham, Santaquin City
Kevin Oyler, Spanish Fork City
Boyd Warren, Strawberry High Line Canal Co
Sterling Brown, Strawberry Water Users Assoc.
Richard Nielson, Utah County

ALTERNATE BOARD MEMBERS

Gerard Yates, Central Utah Water Conservancy Dis.
ABSENT-Curtis Thomas – Genola City
ABSENT-Paul Munns – Goshen Valley Local District
David Tuckett, Payson City (online, 7:42 a.m.)
Bradey Wilde, Salem City
Art Adcock - Santaquin City
Cory Pierce – Spanish Fork City
Marty Larson, Strawberry High Line Canal Co.
ABSENT-Lynn Swensen, Strawberry Water Users Assoc.
Glen Tanner, Utah County

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Roger Pearson, Central Utah Water Conservancy Dis. (online)
ABSENT-Chris Steele, Genola City
ABSENT-Melanie McVicker, Goshen Valley Local Dis.
Travis Jockumsen, Payson City
Bradey Wilde, Salem City
ABSENT-Norm Beagley, Santaquin City
Cory Pierce, Spanish Fork City
Marty Larson, Strawberry Highline Canal Co.
Sterling Brown, Strawberry Water Users Assoc.
Richard Nielson, Utah County

STAFF

Kim E. Holindrake, Payson City Recorder

OTHERS

Steve Clyde, Clyde Snow (online)
Jon Lundell, Santaquin City
Bruce Ward, Central Utah Water Conservancy Dis.
Brian Steed, Great Salt Lake Commission

1. Call to Order

Chair Richard Nielson called this meeting of the Mt Nebo Water Agency Board to order at 7:30 a.m. The meeting was properly noticed.

2. Public Comment Period

No public comments.

3. Approval of Minutes – May 12, 2025, Meeting

MOTION: Braden Sheppard– To approve the meeting minutes of May 12, 2025. Motion seconded by Paul Taylor. Those voting yes: Bart Leeftang, Neil Brown, Braden Sheppard, Paul Taylor, Art Adcock, Kevin Oyler, Boyd Warren, Sterling Brown, Richard Nielson. The motion carried.

4. Resolution – Review and Adoption of the Groundwater Database & Plan Management Program (Project #7) Additional Groundwater Modeling

Travis Jockumsen reported this is a continuation of the discussion from the last meeting. The purpose is to add additional information/data to the study and continue the groundwater study. The cost of \$40,500 was split equally except Genola is less. Most of the Technical Committee responded and didn't have any issues.

MOTION: Bart Leeftang – To approve the additional groundwater modeling for Project #7 with Hansen Allen & Luce. Motion seconded by Kevin Oyler. Those voting yes: Bart Leeftang, Neil Brown, Braden Sheppard, Paul Taylor, Art Adcock, Kevin Oyler, Boyd Warren, Sterling Brown, Richard Nielson. The motion carried.

5. Special Meeting July 1, 2025 at 12 p.m. with local, state, and federal elected/staff officials - South Utah County Water Demands and Infrastructure

Richard Nielson noted an email was sent to schedule a special meeting on July 1, which will be held in Spanish Fork. Sterling Brown has invited state, local, and federal officials.

MOTION: Paul Taylor – To approve holding a special meeting on July 1, 2025 at 12 p.m. to address south Utah County water demands and infrastructure. Motion seconded by Braden Sheppard. Those voting yes: Bart Leeftang, Neil Brown, Braden Sheppard, Paul Taylor, Art Adcock, Kevin Oyler, Boyd Warren, Sterling Brown, Richard Nielson. The motion carried.

6. Great Salt Lake Commissioner's Office Update

Commissioner Brian Steed reported that as of yesterday, the Great Salt Lake is standing at 4193.1 at the south arm and 4192.4 at the north arm. Since 1950, the state has considered the Great Salt Lake as two bodies of water i.e., the north arm, which is very biologically impaired because of salt, and the south arm. The south arm is generally up since 2022 to 4198 but remains in the adverse effects category, which impacts brine shrimp viability, recreation, and ecosystem health. Salinity has been

managed quite well in the south arm via a breach in the causeway. The Union Pacific causeway was created in 1950, which created the two separate bodies of water and was never intended to work as a dam. Fresh water flows into the south arm and spills over the causeway to the north arm. The concerns today include drying lakes and dust. Dust mitigation is estimated to be at a minimum of \$1.5 million in capital costs with ongoing annual maintenance of \$15 million. The Owens Lake in California, which was dried out in the early 1900s, is 1/15 the size of the Great Salt Lake. California is putting out \$100 million yearly on dust mitigation based on federal mandates. These are staggering numbers. There is a lot of lakebed that has not been exposed for years. There are concerns over the dust and additional monitoring is needed to determine what is in the dust.

Other concerns because of low water include potential ecologic problems and microbial mats. Potential endangered species include the Wilson's Phalarope and several other species. Another concern is possible litigation by the public trust, which is a very old part of the law. It's the state's obligation to manage for the public good. Water has not been considered part of the public trust in Utah, but the court has disagreed.

What is the state doing about it? The state is getting more water to the lake, better protecting important habitat areas, and collecting better science. Getting more water to the lake includes agricultural water optimization, municipal and industrial water savings, and removing non-native invasive species. There has been a lot of work on water law, and Utah is moving faster than other western states. Optimizing water has been determined; dedicating and delivering water comes next. Seasonal leasing programs (fallow programs) is an option. Water savings is needed in the municipal and industrial areas. Sixty percent of municipal water is outdoor landscaping. If lawns and gardens were watered with just what is needed, there would be a 30% reduction in water usage and equates to a savings of over 100,000 acre feet. Secondary water meters are now required. These savings need to be dedicated and delivered to the Great Salt Lake.

Discussion:

The north arm is managed as a requirement of the state. The north arm is less important ecologically except for Gunnison Island because of several bird species. Around the north arm are dust hotspot areas, which are less admissible because of the thick crust. The current state policy is to manage the Great Salt Lake as a whole.

The Wilson's Phalarope has a potential for listing on the endangered species list. Legal paperwork is filed to get a species on the list and then a scientific and political review. Mr. Steed doesn't believe Wilson's Phalarope will go on the list by Trump administration, but a court may require it. Currently, there are no birds on the endangered or threatened list for the Great Salt Lake.

Water legislation gets a lot of heat because it doesn't move fast enough. Water law is meticulous to ensure people aren't being unduly harmed. Over the past three or four years, there has been 64 changes to Utah water law. No other state in the history of the west has moved that fast. What is needed is time to see the impacts. The legislative framework is there for water leasing, but it will take time for people to get engaged. Some leases are ongoing and some are potential. There will be better information in a year. The state needs to figure out the tools that are currently available.

Dedicate and deliver water falls under conservation. There is really good data showing when secondary water meters are installed people become aware of the amount of water they are using.

When people become aware of the amount of water they are using, they use less water. Water then stays in the reservoirs, which creates stability and security. The second part is to dedicate and deliver the excess water to the Great Salt Lake. Agreements with cities would allow temporary leasing of some water. This year on the Utah Salt Lake Canal, shareholders were engaged to lease about 2,000 acre feet for the Great Salt Lake. Partners are needed to do this. If it isn't done voluntarily, then it becomes a federal solution; and Utah loses control over its own destinies.

Spanish Fork is studying groundwater and recharge and using LID's designed with stormwater to recharge groundwater. Should municipalities deliver water to Utah Lake rather than putting it in the groundwater? These are individual decisions for each entity. All these things need to be done. Groundwater helps efficiency and gets water to the Great Salt Lake.

Bart consideration given to additional mechanical management of the lake such as pumps, and wetting areas by urban corridor.

There are no bad options for additional mechanical management of the Great Salt Lake such as pumps. The Executive Appropriations Committee is looking at engineering solutions. There are no bad options, but there are tradeoffs. The idea of rewetting Farmington Bay and Bear River Bay for dust management are good ideas, but the question is what does that do to lake levels and solidity levels. It's a balance of managing dust, solidity, and lake level. More technical solutions have been addressed instead of the backhoe, but it's very expensive.

Many people say the issue is just mother nature. Many up north near Bear River or south near Nephi question why they need to care about the Great Salt Lake. Everyone needs to be concerned because the Great Salt Lake is the primary water driver of water policy. The Great Salt Lake may be a huge drain economically overall. It's really important to understand and deal with the Great Salt Lake. Hydrology needs to change or the Great Salt Lake will be an issue for the rest of our lives.

7. Finance Report 8:06

Sterling Brown presented the finance report. Since the last meeting one invoice was paid to the State of Utah for the entity registration for \$25.00. Revenues included one interest payment of \$3.81. Account balances include the reserve account - \$5,000, administrative account - \$28,867.84, and Project #7 account - \$5,029.60 for a total of \$38,897.44.

8. Public Hearing/Resolution – Review and Adoption of the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Final Budget

Sterling Brown reviewed the proposed final budget for fiscal year 2025-2026.

MT. NEBO WATER AGENCY FISCAL YEAR 2026 FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET

Expenses

Clerk	\$700.00
Professional Services	\$1,000.00
Treasurer's Bond	\$100.00
Mailbox	\$360.00
Meals and Entertainment	\$200.00

Quick Books	\$300.00
Publication Expenses for Public Hearings	\$100.00
State Entity Registration	\$50.00
Total	\$2,810.00

Note: The Administrative Budget will be deducted from the fund balance. No member assessments will be levied.

**MT. NEBO WATER AGENCY
FISCAL YEAR 2026 FINAL PROJECTS BUDGET
PROJECT #7 - Groundwater Database and Plan Management Program**

Revenues:

Member Participant	\$40,500.00
Assessments	
Use of Fund Balance	<u>\$5,029.60</u>
Total Revenues	<u>\$45,529.60</u>

Expenses:

Professional Services - Hansen	<u>\$45,529.60</u>
Allen & Luce	
Total Expenses	<u>\$45,529.60</u>

Note: The current balance of Project #7 is \$5,029.60.

The budget comparison for the years 2024 (actual), 2025 (estimated), and 2026 (proposed) encompass many of the same numbers as summarized. There is no funding for the special meeting on July 1 for lunch or a room fee, but some board entities will cover lunch. He questioned if there is a value in a slush fund or special event fund this coming year.

Discussion to allow board entities to help out and keep expenses streamlined toward water issues. There is no room fee for the special meeting.

MOTION: Paul Taylor – To open the public hearing. Motion seconded by Sterling Brown. Those voting yes: Bart Leeftang, Neil Brown, Braden Sheppard, Dave Tuckett, Paul Taylor, Art Adcock, Kevin Oyler, Boyd Warren, Sterling Brown, Richard Nielson. The motion carried.

Public Comment:
No public comments.

MOTION: Neil Brown – To close the public hearing. Motion seconded by Bart Leeftang. Those voting yes: Bart Leeftang, Neil Brown, Braden Sheppard, Dave Tuckett, Paul Taylor, Art Adcock, Kevin Oyler, Boyd Warren, Sterling Brown, Richard Nielson. The motion carried.

MOTION: Sterling Brown – To adopt Resolution No. 06-09-2025-B, a resolution adopting the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Final Budget. Motion seconded by Neil Brown. Those voting yes: Bart Leeftang, Neil Brown, Braden Sheppard, Dave Tuckett, Paul Taylor, Art Adcock, Kevin Oyler, Boyd Warren, Sterling Brown, Richard Nielson. The motion carried.

9. Review of State Auditor's Fraud Questionnaire

Sterling Brown reviewed the State Auditor's Fraud Questionnaire, which is required annually and signed by the chair. It will then be submitted to the state. It ensures board members are adhering to conflict of interest obligations, procurement, ethical behavior, fraud, etc.

MOTION: Neil Brown – To approve the State Auditor's Fraud Questionnaire and allow the chair to sign. Motion seconded by Paul Taylor. Those voting yes: Bart Leeftang, Neil Brown, Braden Sheppard, Dave Tuckett, Paul Taylor, Art Adcock, Kevin Oyler, Boyd Warren, Sterling Brown, Richard Nielson. The motion carried.

10. Review of State Auditor's Self-Evaluation Form

Sterling Brown stated the self-evaluation form is also required by state law and comes from the Office of the State Auditor to ensure the board is improving or implementing good business practices, complying with policies, procedures, and laws, and limiting the potential use of resources. The board reviews this and gives the chair the authority to sign.

MOTION: Neil Brown – To authorize the chair to sign the self-evaluation form. Motion seconded by Braden Sheppard. Those voting yes: Bart Leeftang, Neil Brown, Braden Sheppard, Dave Tuckett, Paul Taylor, Art Adcock, Kevin Oyler, Boyd Warren, Sterling Brown, Richard Nielson. The motion carried.

11. Other Business (8:17 a.m.)

a. Information/Discussion Items for Future Meetings

Sterling Brown noted that in 2020 or 2021, the State Legislature established Local Watershed Councils and a state watershed council, which took a year or two to organize. There are 11 watershed councils throughout the state. Our area is under the Utah Lake Watershed Council that is chaired by Joe Crawford. Is there an interest to have a briefing on what the council is doing and the impact it may have on this board?

The consensus of the Board is yes.

Bart Leeftang noted the Central Utah Water has come a number of times to provide updates on the Nebo Regional Water Project. Multiple public scoping meetings related to the project will be held this week in Payson tomorrow and Juab County on Thursday. Is the Board interested in an update on this project?

The consensus of the Board is at the November meeting.

b. Other

Discussion that the special meeting on July 1 is considered a board meeting because a quorum will be present.

Clarification that the assessments for Project #7 will go out after July 1 so it's in the new budget.

Discussion on who can take over the administrative duties of the Agency prior to Kim Holindrake retiring. Salem was asked but will not be able to take on those responsibilities. There is \$700 available in the budget, but in Kim's case it has fallen under her city recorder duties. The preference is for a municipal entity to take over because municipalities are more educated on the administrative responsibilities that go on behind the scenes. Kevin Oyler can have that discussion with the Spanish Fork staff.

12. Election of Officers

a. Chair

Rihard Nielson explained that the bylaws allow the chair and vice chair to serve three consecutive one-year terms. He has served for three one-year terms and can no longer serve as chair.

Kim Holindrake noted that Kevin Oyler was appointed to fill the vacancy in the vice chair position so he can serve three full one-year terms.

Kevin Oyler nominated Paul Taylor as chair.

MOTION: Bart Leeftang – To appoint Paul Taylor as chair. Motion seconded by Braden Sheppard. Those voting yes: Bart Leeftang, Neil Brown, Braden Sheppard, Dave Tuckett, Paul Taylor, Art Adcock, Kevin Oyler, Boyd Warren, Sterling Brown, Richard Nielson. The motion carried.

b. Vice Chair

Paul Taylor nominated Kevin Oyler as vice chair.

MOTION: Richard Nielson – To appoint Kevin Oyler as vice chair. Motion seconded by Bart Leeftang. Those voting yes: Bart Leeftang, Neil Brown, Braden Sheppard, Dave Tuckett, Paul Taylor, Art Adcock, Kevin Oyler, Boyd Warren, Sterling Brown, Richard Nielson. The motion carried.

13. Next Meeting – August 11, 2025

14. Adjourn

MOTION: Neil Brown – To adjourn. Motion seconded by Braden Sheppard. Those voting yes: Bart Leeftang, Neil Brown, Braden Sheppard, Dave Tuckett, Paul Taylor, Art Adcock, Kevin Oyler, Boyd Warren, Sterling Brown, Richard Nielson. The motion carried.

This meeting adjourned at 8:30 a.m.