

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ADVISORY BOARD (EOAB)

Held at Grand County Commission Chambers

125 E. Center St. Moab, Utah 84532

June 25th, 2025

YouTube recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XK14YiM7HPY>

Call to Order: Chris Wilson called meeting to order at 3:03

Attendees:

- Chris Wilson (Chair, Voting, Private Sector Representative)
- Mark Tyner (Voting, Grand County Commission Administration Representative)
- Forrest Rodgers (Voting, Member of the public who lives in Grand County)
- Melodie McCandless (Non-voting, Grand County Commission Representative)
- Randy Martin (Voting, Member appointed by Moab Area Chamber of Commerce)
- Brittney Melton (Voting, Private Sector Representative)
- Melisa Jeffers (Vice Chair, Voting Member of public who lives in the County)
- Ashley Korenblat (Voting, Workforce development representative)
- Aaron Lindberg (Voting Member, Secretary)
- Cory Shurtleff (Non-Voting, Moab City Representative)
- Samantha Campbell (USU-Moab executive representative, non-voting)
- Todd Thompson (USU's Small Business Development director, non-voting)
- Debra McKee (non-voting, Utah Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity)

Introductions:

Samantha Campbell introduced herself as the new interim associate vice president of USU Moab. Todd Thompson explained his role as Moab's Small Business Development Director and offered his services as a resource for the Economic Development Advisory Board and the business community.

Ex-Parte Communications and Disclosures:

Brittney, Ashley, and Randy disclosed their affiliation with the Chamber of Commerce.

Citizens to be Heard:

None.

County Update:

Melodie reported on the Grand County Commission's decision regarding the Economic Development Advisory Board's recommendations for the Rural County Grant and Rural County Opportunity Grants. The Commission approved most recommendations but decreased the Moab Chamber of Commerce's funding by \$15,000 and allocated it to two childcare providers. Mark Tyner reported on the hiring process for a new staff position.

Approval of Minutes:

Ashley moved to approve the May 28th meeting minutes; seconded by Melisa and approved unanimously.

Letter of Support for Moab Community Childcare:

Chris and Melisa explained the reporting requirement and process for the Rural Economic Development Grant. Action Item: Randy Martin moved to approve the letter, seconded by Melisa, and it was passed unanimously.

Update on Rural Communities Opportunity Grant Application Process and Closeout of MACLT Grant:

Chris explained that to apply for the new RCOG grant, the county needs to close out the current MACLT's RCOG grant contract. Although the contract deadline is December 31st, the county needs to expedite certain permitting processes to allow the land trust to finalize their site and utility projects and finish their paperwork sooner. This is necessary to meet the new RCOG grant application deadline by October 31st.

Discussion and Possible Action to Document Feedback and Create a Guide for Future RCG and RCOG Grant Cycles:

The discussion focused on preserving institutional knowledge despite staffing issues and the revolving nature of the volunteer board. Key points included:

- Evaluating the grant selection process, including what went well and what didn't
- Balancing funding between private businesses and non-profits
- Assessing grant impact and prioritizing projects with the greatest multiplying effect
- Defining the county's goals and objectives for the grant program
- Considering separating the RCG and RCOG processes
- Formalizing the application process and criteria to streamline future cycles

- Potentially using resources like USU's Small Business Development center to support applicants
- Exploring opportunities to work with high schoolers and college students to support young entrepreneurs
- Documenting the process to build institutional knowledge and improve future grant cycles
- Allowing more time for advertising grants, with a suggestion of at least one additional month
- Reviewing other counties' handbooks and programs for best practices

The discussion emphasized the importance of formalizing the process, setting clear goals, and prioritizing projects that align with the county's objectives. Next steps may include proposing goals and objectives to the commission and developing a more structured approach to the grant program.

Meeting Adjourned at 4:43 pm