



Utah County Tourism and Tax Advisory Board Meeting
Monday, April 10, 2023 @ 11:30am
Provo Marriott

Board Members Present:

John Garfield, Marriott
Kurt Christensen, Hyatt House PG/Provo
Chad Linebaugh, Sundance
Danny Wheeler, Utah Valley Convention Center
John Lenahan, Enterprise
Jared Kearns, UVU
Chad Santiago, Communal

County Representatives Present:

Laurel Price, Utah County Commission Liaison
Nicole Neer, Utah County Commission Office
Tom Sakievich, Utah County Commissioner
Lisa Shepherd, Utah County Commission Office
Adam Beck, Utah County Attorney
Alice Black, Utah County

Others Present:

Kathy Lewis, Orem City
Lee Adamson, Explore Utah Valley

Welcome and working lunch

11:32 a.m. Danny Wheeler welcomed everyone to the meeting.

11:32 a.m. Approval of Minutes

Danny entertained a motion to approve the minutes from the February 6, 2023 meeting and the electronic meeting on February 9, 2023. Kurt Christensen made a motion to approve both minutes. Chad Linebaugh seconded. The vote was unanimous. Yes votes: Linebaugh, Wheeler, Christensen, Kearns, Lenahan, Garfield. (Kevin Santiago arrived late to meeting and didn't vote on minutes)

11:35 a.m. Funding Review Update- Kurt Christensen

Kurt Christensen provided a funding update on TRCC and TRT funding. 2023 revenue for TRT is \$470,490. 2023 revenue for TRCC is \$1,166,457.

11:40 a.m. Harrington Center for the Arts

Project Funding Request: \$49,500

Project Reviewer: Kurt Christensen

Project Presenter: Summer Stevens, Spencer Stevens

Summer mentioned that Harrington has supported 2380 local artists with over 300 volunteers and nine programs that they offer. The three programs they are focusing on for funding are

ForkFest, Concerts in the Park and Chalk It Up. All three of these events are held in Utah County.

ForkFest is bringing 240 local bands to perform. The headline act is going to be Aces which began in Utah. Harrington is hoping to expand attendees for both Forkfest and Chalk Festival so they can support more artists. ChalkFest was held in SLC and they are moving it to Utah County for the first time. Attendance for this event is 69% from Utah county. 16% from SL County, 6% from out of state. Harrington wants to focus the marketing dollars on SL County to bring all the previous attendees to Utah County. They have corporate sponsors and a tourism grant to help with some funding. The desire is to use the funding from TRT to increase participation with marketing and billboards in SL County.

Concerts in the Park is held in American Fork. Four free concerts through the summer and a headliner that they charge for. The goal is to increase the attendees through marketing dollars.

Chad Linebaugh asked about Harrington's relationship with American Fork City. Spencer mentioned that Harrington is a 501c3. American Fork provides funding through their arts program. John Garfield asked what makes them different from a regular city celebration. Spencer mentioned that Harrington works hard to find the gaps in arts events and works to build events around that. The example is ForkFest to highlight all the Utah bands. Harrington is planning to bring all three of these events to Utah County for the first time.

John Garfield asked the total spend for all three events and what percentage is the TRT ask of that? Spencer mentioned the total cost for all three is about \$232,000 and looking to increase marketing efforts by \$20,000. Between corporate sponsors and one other arts grant funds these events.

Danny Wheeler asked whether Harrington plans to approach Lehi City about their arts grant. Harrington is working with Lehi City on these grants.

12:00 p.m. Utah County Fair

Project Funding Request: \$Up to \$250,000

Project Reviewer: Danny Wheeler

Project Presenter: Craig Conover

Craig Conover gave an update on plans for the 2023 fair. Last year's attendance was the highest ever. In 2022, they increased their kids corner and are planning to do that again this year. Trying to provide something for everyone. All of the activities are free at the fair except the Monster Truck and the Demolition Derby which sell out every year and help to offset the cost.

Craig reported that they are working hard to expand the open class for the fair this year. They have started advertising now to encourage residents to prepare now to submit their items in the open class.

Craig said they currently have \$26,500 in sponsors so far this year. They are hoping to hit \$50,000. Chad Linebaugh asked how this request compares to years past? Craig said this funding request is the same as last year. It would be nice to make the fair revenue neutral, that would be the goal but there are expenses required to make the fair successful. Craig said they should bring in about \$250,000 with sponsorships, monster trucks and derby. Monster Truck brought in \$70,000 in ticket sales last year.

Craig stated that last year they passed the fees along to the consumer with the ticket sales which seemed to be fine because they still sold out both shows.

12:10 p.m. **Spanish Fork City/Utah County**
Project Funding Request: \$500,000
Project Reviewer: Danny Wheeler
Project Presenter: Richard Nielsen, Nick Hanks, Bronco Hunter

Richard Nielsen started off by stating that the county and Spanish Fork City entered into an agreement many years ago for joint operations of the fairgrounds.

A few years ago there was a request to purchase some property adjacent to the fairgrounds for \$2.2 million which was split between the county and the city. The county had some reservations about the environmental cleanup on that land since it was an old wrecking yard and asked Spanish Fork to buy that piece outright. SF City refunded the county \$1.1 million in TRCC funds. There is another piece adjacent to the fairgrounds to be purchased for \$1.6 million. The county is asking for the remaining \$500,000 from the TRCC to fund this purchase. Acquiring this final piece will give the fairgrounds the ability to function well into the future with the space they need for parking and future growth.

Nick Hanks stated that there are over 1000 events a year at the fairgrounds which has a large economic impact for SF City and Utah County. They would like to build another arena, overflow parking and RV rental space for equestrian events hosted at the fairgrounds. Nick explained the importance of the buffer zone that this piece of land could provide for the fairgrounds.

12:20 p.m. **Discussion and first set of motions**

Danny Wheeler began the discussion of the first three projects on the agenda for today. Chad Linebaugh stated that he was supportive of their request. John Garfield mentioned that he was worried about duplication of events in cities. Is this money well spent if it's only in American Fork and not more county wide.

Danny Wheeler stated that ForkFest and Chalk events are specifically designed to bring people into the county for the events. Kurt Christensen was supportive of the request because he thinks the organization is well run and will do a good job bringing visitors to Utah County with these well established events.

There was continued discussion on the impact of the events and cost benefit to the county. Chad Linebaugh stated that maybe the board just supports the ForkFest since it is the best project of the three. Danny Wheeler mentioned that in the contract, it could stipulate that the marketing dollars have to be spent outside of Utah County to draw people to the event.

Utah County Fair- John Garfield made a motion to approve the request for up to \$250,000 with some potential to expand to other parts of the county. Kevin Santiago seconded. The vote was unanimous. Yes Votes: Garfield, Santiago, Wheeler, Christensen, Linebaugh, Lenahan, Kearns.

John Garfield made a motion to approve the Spanish Fork/Utah County request of \$500,000. Kurt Christensen commented that he had concerns about investing more money at the Spanish Fork Fairgrounds if the hope is that the county fair can perhaps take in a larger part of the

county at some point. Danny Wheeler stated that land real estate is a safe investment and investing this makes sense even if the county fair moves to other parts of the county.

There was a discussion about events across the county and how to engage residents to attend events in both the south and the north part of the county and how the TTAB Board should strategically handle these situations.

Spanish Fork City/Utah County- The board came back to John Garfield's motion to approve the request of \$500,000. Kurt Christensen seconded. The vote was unanimous. Yes Votes: Wheeler, Christensen, Linebaugh, Kearns, Lenahan, Santiago, Garfield.

Danny Wheeler stated that we will come back to the Harrington Center for the Arts Vote after the next presentation.

12:40 p.m. **Provo City Parks and Recreation**
Project Funding Request: \$5,000,000
Project Reviewer: Danny Wheeler
Project Presenter: Scott Henderson, Doug Roberts

This regional sports park is 100 acres in Provo. There was discussion about the economic impact this sports park will have for the county. The plan is to add a substantial pickle ball court system to the park in addition to the other courts. Pickleball is the fastest growing sport in the country and large tournaments are held all over the country.

Funding of this park to this point. Provo City was part of the land acquisition and has put out \$6 million in capital improvements. There has been arts/parks money from Provo City contributed. \$5 million in ARPA funding from the Federal Government. The state donated \$2 million in land and conservation funding. Utah County has committed \$2.5 million in TRCC funds as well.

Provo City's current request is \$5 million with \$2.5 million going to enhanced site design and \$2.5 million for the pickleball complex. The expected cost of the pickleball complex is \$10 million. Provo is also planning to have the local pickleball citizen fundraising of \$2 million. Provo City is fine with the requirement that the county not donate their \$2.5 million until after the pickleball orgs have raised their \$2 million.

John Garfield asked when the fields would be ready. The north fields, (15 fields), will be ready next year. Working from north to south on the project. The enhanced infrastructure for the park will be done once the pickleball complex decision is made and funding is secured.

Chad Linebaugh asked about the citizen fundraising portion. Provo City stated that the local pickleball orgs would be responsible for bringing \$2 million to the table so there is some "skin in the game" so to speak. Provo City is fine with the TRCC funding being contingent on these private dollars being raised first.

1:05 p.m. Writer's Cubed

Project Funding Request: \$22,701

Project Reviewer: Danny Wheeler

Project Presenter: Jennifer Jenkins

Jennifer Jenkins presented on what Writer's Cubed does. Jennifer is a nationally published author. Jennifer put this organization together because there was a gap and need for mentorship in literacy and authorship. Writer's Cubed through a group of authors provides a boot camp for youth to help fill in this gap.

Writer's Cubed has been self funded up to this point. Prior to the covid closure, the 501c3 lost deposits on the 2020 conference. In addition, the costs have increased in putting on this conference. They are looking for help with marketing efforts. 45% of the students that attend the conference come from SL County and 15% come from out of state. The conference is held at the Utah Valley Convention Center. The marketing dollars would be used for billboards, radio advertisements to get the word out on the event.

1:25 p.m. Springville City

Project Funding Request: \$300,000

Project Reviewer: John Garfield

Project Presenter: Mayor Matt Packard, Stacey Childs, Dave Ashton, Mike Snelson

John Garfield introduced Springville City. Mayor Matt Packard provided a short introduction of the Springville City team. Mayor Packard stated that the city is putting 90% of the funding of this project and are looking for \$300,000 in additional TRCC funding.

Stacey Childs gave a brief overview of the Cherry Ridge Bike Park. Stacey stated that this location is a straight shot from I-15 and also provides access to numerous trails in the canyon and provides excellent connectivity to trails including the Bonneville Shoreline trail. The bike park will have a section for younger riders and a more difficult area for older riders.

1:48 p.m. Discussion and second set of motions

Adam Beck stated that going forward one commissioner will attend the TTAB meetings going forward due to open meetings laws. The policy advisors of the other two commissioners will also attend. Commissioner Sakievich will be the representative this year. Alice Black will take over as the TTAB secretary. Clarification was made that the TTAB meetings must be public meetings because of the use of public dollars.

Harrington Center for the Arts- John Garfield made a motion to approve the full amount of \$49,500 of TRT reimbursed marketing dollars with an expectation of growth associated with the events and increased economic impact. John Lenahan seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. Yes Vote: Wheeler, Garfield, Lenahan, Santiago, Christensen, Kearns. (Linebaugh excused from this vote because he had to leave early)

Writer's Cubed- Kurt Christensen made a motion to approve the full amount of \$22,701 of TRT marketing dollars. John Garfield seconded. The vote was unanimous. Yes Votes: Garfield, Wheeler, Christensen, Santiago, Kearns, Lenahan. (Linebaugh had to leave early)

Springville City- There was a robust discussion about trail systems and funding this project as just a city project or as a county project due to access to the trail systems in the canyons like the Bonneville Trail system. There was also discussion that mountain bikers, high school teams etc. will use this facility and Explore Utah Valley can market this countywide.

Kevin Santiago made a motion to approve the full amount of \$300,000. John Garfield seconded. Vote was unanimous. Yes Votes: Garfield, Christensen, Wheeler, Lenahan, Santiago, Kearns. (Linebaugh had to leave early)

Provo City Parks and Recreation-

Danny Wheeler began the discussion for this. The pickleball complex will be \$10 million. Provo City is asking for \$2.5 million of TRCC dollars (25%) and \$2 million from private citizen fundraising. The total regional park complex is about a \$75 million project.

John Garfield stated that sports groups are great for hoteliers in the area. They do book a lot of hotel nights. Lee Adamson stated that Utah is one of the highest pickleball areas in the nation. The Provo pickleball complex would be the only large complex that is not in a hot and humid climate for the summer months. This would be a big plus for the Provo complex.

There was a question about lighting at the fields. Most fields don't include lights but the championship field does include lights. Lee Adamson stated that the sports park complexes were heavily used by groups from all over the country during COVID. The youth sports programs were heavily used even during COVID.

Danny Wheeler stated that he believes that the first set of fields on the north side of the complex is short of funding and the \$2.5 million of the \$5 million request would be to help with this completion.

Danny Wheeler stated the fact that there has been \$15 million in requests from Provo City recently. There was discussion about breaking this \$5 million dollar request into two parts and funding half of the request. Kurt Christensen asked if it would be appropriate to have them come back and discuss the need for the other \$2.5 million. John Garfield stated that there could be flexibility in the funding over the last few years. Kurt stated that maybe the \$2.5 million for the pickleball complex be set aside to see if the citizens' fundraising actually happens.

Danny Wheeler stated that he wonders if this request should have been a \$2.5 million ask. Kevin Santiago stated that perhaps we look at the long term for the remainder and still set the funds aside for that eventuality. Kurt Christensen that he's concerned about the scope creep and feels there needs to be accountability from Provo City on this given that all the original fields were included in the first \$2.5 million ask. There was a discussion on inflation and increase in building costs which is a real issue.

Danny Wheeler did ask about the recommendation that was made to provide a staff member at Explore Utah Valley to help sell the regional parks from a tourism perspective. Lee Adamson had not heard anything about that. There was a discussion about this making sense for the future with the regional parks in Provo and the Lakeside Park project in Orem.

John Garfield made a split motion to approve \$2.5 million to complete the current fields for reimbursement at the completion of the project. The second \$2.5 million funded approved contingent on the full funding of the \$2 million private citizen match and a 50% salary of an employee at Explore Utah Valley to help with the selling of the courts and the pickleball

courts at the regional park. Danny acknowledged the motion on the table. Kurt Christensen expressed that he will likely abstain because he wants to see more accountability.

John Garfield asked if he should separate the motion? There was discussion on what accountability there should be. How much are they over budget and how much is the TRCC asking to fund that overage. Is it the complete amount or a percentage of the over budget?

John Garfield motioned to split his original motion. The first motion is to approve \$2.5 million to be paid by reimbursement after the total project is complete.

The second motion is to approve \$2.5 million for the pickleball courts after the full funding of the \$2 million citizen match and to give the commission flexibility for the timing of the funding of the project.

Kurt Christensen moved to amend John's first motion to include an accountability from Provo City on why they need more funding. John Garfield rejected the counter.

Kevin Santiago seconded John's first motion to approve \$2.5 million to be paid by reimbursement after the total completion of the project. Danny stated a motion and a second was on the table. Danny Wheeler stated that he will join Kurt Christensen to vote no because there isn't enough information to make an educated vote. Yes votes: Santiago, Garfield, Kearns No Votes: Wheeler, Christensen, Lenahan A tie vote means the motion fails.

John Garfield repeated his second motion of approval of \$2.5 million reimbursable for Pickleball courts contingent on the citizen match of \$2 million, ½ sales position at Explore Utah Valley and flexibility for the commission to determine the funding amount distribution of the project. John Lenahan seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. Yes votes: Lenahan, Garfield, Wheeler, Christensen, Santiago, Kearns.

Danny Wheeler stated that he will go back to Provo City and ask them to present again with some specific information for the TTAB board. Danny asked the board to email him specific questions that they may have for Provo City before the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.