



BOARD OF THE DIVISION OF STATE PARKS, DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Minutes Of The Meeting Held on August 10, 2023 at 9:30 a.m.

Hybrid Meeting via Google Meet

Anchored at the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge in Brigham City

Streamed Live on YouTube

ATTENDEES

Board Members Present:

Corey Cram (chair)
Leshia Coltharp
Brent Boswell
Natalie Randall
Falyn Owens
Joan Hammer
Jack Draxler
Russ Steadman

Host:

The Department of
Natural Resources

Guests

Claudia Jarrett

Department of Natural Resources:

Scott Strong
Devan Chavez
Melanie Shepherd
Laurie Backus
Shane Stroud
Susan Zarekarizi
Chris Haramoto
Wayne Monroe*
Megan Blackwelder*
Nathan Schwebach

** online participation*

Audio/video recording of this meeting is located at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Ry5KaB-jRI>

TIME AGENDA ITEM AND SUMMARY

0:12

1. WELCOME

1.1. Call to Order

Board Chair Corey Cram called the hybrid meeting to order and presided. Melanie Shepherd recorded the minutes. A quorum of Board members were present and the meeting proceeded with business.

1.2. Swear in New Board Members

Deputy Director Nathan Schwebach gave his appreciation to the Board for the service that they provide for the State Parks. He then proceeded to swear in new Board members Falyn Owens and Jack Draxler.

1.3. Attendance and Introductions

Chair Cram took attendance of the Board members present. He acknowledged the

members of the Division of State Parks present, and led introductions. Chair Cram gave a recap of yesterday's visits to Bear Lake State Park, Hyrum State Park, and Willard Bay State Park.

1.4. Approval of Agenda

Chair Cram reviewed the agenda, and asked that it be approved. The agenda stands approved as presented.

JOAN HAMMER MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS DISTRIBUTED. JACK DRAXLER SECONDED THE MOTION AND IT CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

1.5. Approval of February 16, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Chair Cram presented the minutes of the February 16, 2023 Board Meeting and asked that they be approved. The minutes stand as presented.

LESHA COLTHARP MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 16, 2023. BRENT BOSWELL SECONDED THE MOTION AND IT CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

13:05 2. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

Chair Cram opened the meeting for Board reports.

Chair Cram reported that he visited Camp Floyd where they talked about doing chair yoga with having such a tiny office. It is a neat little park with a lot of history. He spent time at Quail Creek State Park for an office party. The campground is coming along and almost finished and they have a floating waterpark. He commented on Sand Hollow State Park that they have been packed with reservations, they have two tiny homes, and was so sorry to hear about the recent fatality. He spent time at Snow Canyon State Park. He commented that Gunlock State Park is doing great things, including the new campground. He went through Old Irontown recently and looks forward to one day being able to take the Board to this historical site. He is looking forward to the tour in October to Kodachrome and Escalante.

Lesha Coltharp reported that she and Joan Hammer, after visiting Bryce Canyon, decided to visit some State Parks. They visited Kodachrome State Park, which was amazing, and commented on how cool the Adobe huts were. Then they went over to Escalante State Park, where there was water coming up in the parking lot. Their gift shop and offices are really nice there. Then they went down to Anasazi State Park and visited with the ladies there. On Lesha's way back she stopped at Otter Creek State Park and Huntington State Park. It was a good tour. Lesha also visited Steinaker State Park, where they held the Paddle Fest this year, which was wonderful. Red Fleet State Park is closed for construction

Brent Boswell reported that the State Parks Board EDS Conference was amazing. He stayed up at East Canyon State Park in a little cabin and had a great time. Yuba State Park is doing awesome. Otter Creek State Park is doing good, with the exception of the Harmful Algal Bloom and warned to tell people not to swim there. The State Parks staff have handled injuries well in the media. He went to Bryce Canyon National Park yesterday and commented that our State Parks are more interactive than the National Parks.

Russ Steadman reported that he went to Gunlock State Park in March and that they are doing a great job. He did a ride at Gooseneck, but had no interaction with staff members.

Former Board Member, Claudia Jarrett reported that she serves on the planning and zoning committee and that Palisade State Park got their zoning approval for their campground. She visited Camp Floyd State Park, Old Iron Town, and Gunlock State Park. She commented that she enjoyed her time serving on the Utah State Parks Board and that she has visited all the Utah State Parks except six of them.

Natalie Randall reported that she visited Bryce Canyon National Park and Kodachrome State Park, biking through them. She helped with the hiring for the Dead Horse Point State Park Park Manager position. She attended the Soldier Hollow Governor's golf tournament and was happy they chose our State Park to hold the tournament. Gooseneck State Park is hosting the Solar Eclipse Ring of Fire event on October 14, 2023. They are building that event out in partnership with San Juan County, Economic Development, Visitor Services, local County, Visitors Bureau on BLM. Devan Chavez commented that you can see every park during the eclipse and where each park lies in the path, on the Dark Sky part of our website. Natalie commented that Scott Strong did a great job reporting to the Legislature during the Interim session. Natalie reported tourism numbers from the year 2022: overall visitor spending \$11.98 billion, 152,800 in jobs, and \$2.12 billion in state and local tax revenue. If you stay at a State Park vs a National Park you are contributing to both state and local transient, so it helps our local economy and communities.

Jack Draxler reported that he has visited 22 of the Utah State Parks. He commented that he had visited Bear Lake State Park a couple of times a month when he goes up to do appraisals.

Falyn Owens reported that she visited Goblin Valley State Park for the first time. She is excited to work with the Utah State Parks and that they are so good compared to the National Parks.

Joan Hammer reported that she traveled with Leshia on a tour of some Utah State Parks. She also has visited Territorial, Antelope Island, and the Great Salt Lake State Parks. Joan commented on the Board tour.

Chair Cram commented that he appreciates everyone's time and board reports. He reminded everyone to practice safety in your work and personal lives.

The deputy directors of the Division of State Parks gave a brief report regarding the Division's recent activities.

3.1. Business Report

Chair Cram invited Scott Strong to discuss recent business operations. Mr. Strong gave a thank you to Melanie and Joanie Hammer for organizing the Board meeting and activities. Mr. Strong also welcomed the two new Board members Falyn Owens and Jack Draxler. Mr. Strong expressed his appreciation to all of the board members for their dedication, insight, and collaboration that they bring. And a thank you to the region managers for being here at the meeting and all that they do for our State Parks.

Mr. Strong had a chance to take some of the governor's staff on a tour of some of our State Parks. The guests gave positive comments about their experience, the parks, and the staff at the parks.

Mr. Strong reported on moving forward with funding requests:

- Asphalt for the parks of \$2.5 million, we have an ongoing appropriation of \$1.25 million dollars but are asking for additional funding. Cost of asphalt has gone up and there are many roads that need to be resurfaced.
- \$5 million for a new campground at Wasatch Mountain State Park.
- \$700,000 current expense, which includes garbage removal, paper, cleaning supplies, etc.
- \$500,000 for lodging, which includes new cottages, seasonal housing, etc.
- \$850,000 for staff pay for the current fiscal year, a supplemental request. We need to be able to attract good staff. For FY2025 we are asking for \$1.5 million ongoing for full-time and seasonal staff.

Jack Draxler commented that letting the governor's office and the legislature know what the money was spent on from that last approved budget goes a long way. It is appreciated by the legislature. Mr. Strong commented that State Parks tries to also take and show them what the money has been or will be spent for.

Mr. Strong reported that yesterday in the Legislative Interim they talked about out-of-state fees. He commented that during their discussion, with comparisons of how other states do their out-of-state, that Utah State parks should use a multiplier of two for out-of-state visitors. Also, State Parks was asked to eliminate the annual pass for out-of-state visitors. He commented that there was a discussion about the annual pass being a calendar year pass versus a rolling 12 month pass. There is still a concern there that State Parks is hoping to address when a digital pass is available.

Chair Cram asked if there were any further questions and thanked Mr. Strong for his

report.

3.2. Operations Report and 3.3 Director's Report

Chair Cram invited Deputy Director Laurie Backus to report on the Division of State Parks operations.

Ms. Backus gave her appreciation to the Board for their service and for the time they spent yesterday visiting some of the State Parks. Ms. Backus reported that we had a cool start to the summer and that the Northern parks didn't really pick up until mid-June, causing a little slower visitation. Down South, Gunlock Falls were going for months and months. There were many rangers that were sent down to help at Gunlock State Park. We have full reservoirs, for the most part, with lots of good boating for the season. The Harmful Algal Blooms are starting to show up in some of our parks.

Ms. Backus reported on the staffing for the State Parks since our last Board meeting in February.

- We had Aaron Farmer, from Dead Horse Point, retire.
- We have had eight people resign, terminate, or transfer.
- We have had 22 promotions or vacancies filled.
- We have two people in POST right now, Chad Tarr is going to Sand Hollow State Park and Hollie Suissie is going to Echo State Park.
- We have five vacancies at the moment: Sand Hollow State Park has a Park Manager I position, Palisade State Park has an Assistant Park Manager position, Willard Bay State Park has a Park Manager position, Escalante State Park has a Building & Grounds Supervisor position, and Rockport State Park has a Park Ranger position.
- Park Manager positions that were filled were: Brad Walker for Huntington/Millsite/Scofield, James Wells moved from Goblin Valley State Park to Dead Horse Point State Park, Drew Sprafke for Goblin Valley State Park, and Charity Owens was promoted to the Park Manager at Rockport State Park.

Ms. Backus reported that we have had a lot of events, including ribbon cuttings for Sand Hollow State Park campground, Red Fleet State Park campground groundbreaking, Echo State Park campground, Deer Creek State Park campground, Rockport State Park day-use area, Fremont Indian State Park Museum trails and facilities, Antelope Island State Park archery range, Utah Lake State Park dip tank. Military Appreciation Day is coming up on Saturday, August 12. 50th Anniversary Celebration at Frontier Homestead State Park. Several scorpion programs. Spiderfest at Antelope Island State Park. IronMan at Sand Hollow State Park. Utah Lake festival. Anasazi State Park has farmer's markets all through the summer. Astrofest at Dead Horse Point State Park. Steinaker State Park had Paddlefest. Upcoming events: Annual Solar Eclipse for the parks within the path. Antelope Island State Park has the Bison Roundup coming at the end of October and start of November.

Update on our Division of Outdoor Recreation agreement. We successfully completed our agreement from last year of doing OHV contacts and vessel inspections and

surpassed those numbers. For boating we had a target of 5,300 and we did 5,800 vessel inspections. For OHV the goal was 53,000 contacts and we did 71,000 contacts. For outreach events, which could be safety fares, checkpoints, we had a target 126 events and we did 187. The agreement for FY2024 has been signed and we will be reimbursed in 2024 for actual expenses rather than a blanket amount and we have some flexibility with those goals to account for vacancies, injuries, and other things like that.

We have been working on our Park Plans. We will let you know when public meetings are scheduled.

Employee van tours were started a couple of years ago. We will be doing one this year on November 7 and 8 in the South Central area including: Fremont Indian State Park, Piute State Park, Otter Creek State Park, Kodachrome State Park, Escalante State Park, and Anasazi State Park. If any Board members would like to go, please let us know.

Law Enforcement rifles have been purchased for all the rangers and new handguns. We are now getting optics for those guns which they will be trained on this Fall, which is supposed to increase accuracy by quite a bit.

Ms. Backus reported on Director Rasmussen's report. We have a groundbreaking next month for Utahraptor State Park. We have upcoming ribbon cuttings at Quail Creek State Park and Escalante State Park for their campgrounds. At Utahraptor State Park and Lost Creek State Park the developments have been delayed a bit because of well drilling. Antelope Island State Park there is a museum expansion and theater project that is set to start this Spring and being completed in early 2025.

We have completed several projects since the last time we met including: Sand Hollow State Park campground, the day-use area at Rockport State Park, the main entrance at Echo State Park, and the Deer Creek State Park campground.

Things still on the horizon: the Bear Lake State Park marina, North Eden and Rainbow Cove, Lost Creek State Park, Utahraptor State Park, Soldier Hollow State Park, and we will be finalizing Quail Creek State Park campground.

The state has moved to a pay for performance plan for employees. This requires quarterly evaluations for employees.

Chair Cram expressed his appreciation to Mr. Strong and Ms. Backus for their reports.

1:24:10 4. RULES TO APPROVE

Attorney General Shane Stroud presented 32 rules to be repealed that will be moving to the Division of Outdoor Recreation, four rules that are being repealed because the rule is already covered in statute, and two rules to be amended.

JOAN HAMMER MOVED TO APPROVED THE AMENDMENT OF RULE R651-700 - ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES FOR REAL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT AND R651-633 - SPECIAL CLOSURES OR RESTRICTIONS. BRENT BOSWELL SECONDED THE MOTION AND IT CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

LESHA COLTHARP MOVED TO REPEAL RULES R651-103 - ELECTRONIC MEETINGS, R651-607 - DISORDERLY CONDUCT, R651-632 - ENFORCEMENT, AND R651-102 - GOVERNMENT RECORDS ACCESS MANAGEMENT ACT. RUSS STEADMAN SECONDED THE MOTION AND IT CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

NATALIE RANDALL MOVED TO REPEAL RULES R651-201 - DEFINITIONS, R651-202 - BOATING ADVISORY COUNCIL, R651-203 - WATERWAY MARKING SYSTEM, R651-204 - REGULATING WATERWAY MARKERS, R651-205 - ZONED WATERS, R651-206 - CARRYING PASSENGERS FOR HIRE, R651-207 - REGISTRATION FEE, R651-208 - BACKING PLATES, R651-209 - ANCHORED AND BEACHED VESSELS, R651-210 - CHANGE OF ADDRESS, R651-211 - ASSIGNED NUMBERS, R651-212 - DISPLAY OF YEARLY REGISTRATION DECALS AND MONTH OF EXPIRATION DECALS, R651-213 - DEALER NUMBERS AND REGISTRATIONS, R651-214 - TEMPORARY REGISTRATION, R651-215 - PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICES, R651-216 - NAVIGATION LIGHTS, R651-217 - FIRE EXTINGUISHERS, R651-218 - CARBURETOR BACKFIRE FLAME CONTROL, R651-219 - ADDITIONAL SAFETY EQUIPMENT, R651-220 - REGISTRATION AND NUMBERING EXEMPTIONS, R651-221 - BOAT LIVERIES - BOAT RENTAL COMPANIES, R651-222 - MUFFLING REQUIREMENTS, R651-223 - VESSEL ACCIDENT REPORTING, R651-224 - TOWED DEVICES, R651-226 - REGATTAS AND RACES, R651-227 - BOATING SAFETY COURSE FEES, R651-401 - OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE AND REGISTRATION STICKERS, R651-405 - OFF-HIGHWAY IMPLEMENT OF HUSBANDRY STICKER FEE, R651-406 - OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE REGISTRATION FEES, R651-409 - MINIMUM AMOUNTS OF LIABILITY INSURANCE FOR AN ORGANIZED PRACTICE OR SANCTIONED RACE, R651-410 - OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE SAFETY EQUIPMENT, AND R651-412 - CIRRICULUM STANDARDS FOR OHV EDUCATION PROGRAMS OFFERED BY NON-DIVISION ENTITIES. FALYN OWENS SECONDED THE MOTION AND IT CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

1:44:25 5. THANK YOU TO OUTGOING BOARD MEMBERS

Chair Cram invited Claudia Jarrett to come up in front of the Board to be recognized for her service on the Utah State Parks Board. Natalie Randall was invited up to be recognized for her service on the Utah State Parks Board.

1:57:45 6. OTHER BUSINESS/SET NEXT MEETING DATES/ADJOURNMENT

Chair Cram asked if there was any other business to discuss. After some discussion, it was confirmed that the next five meetings of the Board will be held:

- November 1 & 2 in the Southwest Region at Kodachrome and Escalante area.
- February 8 in Salt Lake City at the DNR building.
- May 8 & 9 in Washington County (hosted by Corey Cram and Wayne Monroe).
- August 14 & 15 in the Palisade/Huntington/Millsite/Scofield area (hosted by Falyn Owens, Melanie Shepherd, and Megan Blackwelder).
- November 13 & 14 in the San Juan County area (hosted by Elaine Gizler and Megan Blackwelder). Visit Utahraptor and Edge of Cedars.

The Board having no further business, Chair Cram sought a motion to adjourn.

NATALIE RANDALL MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN. JACK DRAXLER SECONDED THE MOTION. IT CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY AND THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED.

2:06:15 7. LUNCH BREAK