



9
10 **MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) STAKEHOLDERS**
11 **COUNCIL MILLCREEK CANYON COMMITTEE MEETING ON TUESDAY,**
12 **JANUARY 16, 2024, AT 1:30 P.M. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED BOTH IN-**
13 **PERSON AND VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM. THE ANCHOR LOCATION WAS THE CWC**
14 **OFFICES LOCATED AT GATEWAY AT 41 NORTH RIO GRANDE STREET, SUITE**
15 **102, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.**
16

17 **Present:** Tom Diegel, Chair
18 Del Draper
19 Ed Marshall
20 John Knoblock
21 Maura Hahnenberger
22

23 **Staff:** Lindsey Nielsen, Executive Director
24 Samantha Kilpack, Director of Operations
25

26 **Other:** Dan Zalles, SHC Environment Systems Committee Co-Chair
27 Rusty Vetter
28 David Parker
29

30 **Opening**
31

32 **1. Chair Tom Diegel will Open the Public Meeting as Chair of the Millcreek Committee**
33 **of the Central Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council.**
34

35 Chair Tom Diegel called the Central Wasatch Commission (“CWC”) Stakeholders Council
36 Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting to order at approximately 1:30 p.m. and welcomed those
37 present. He asked non-committee Members to introduce themselves. David Parker stated that he
38 is a cabin owner in Millcreek Canyon. Dan Zalles lives near Millcreek Canyon and visits there
39 often. He also serves as Co-Chair of the Environment Systems Committee. He was interested in
40 the work the Millcreek Canyon is doing, especially as it relates to private lands.
41

42 Chair Diegel reported that recently, the Millcreek Canyon Committee lost a member since Mike
43 Christensen left the Stakeholders Council. Any Stakeholders Council Members interested in
44 joining the Committee could do so. Committee Members will be discussed at the Stakeholders
45 Council Meeting scheduled for January 17, 2024. Recommendations could also be shared. Chair
46 Diegel thought Dennis Goreham from the Wasatch Mountain Club would be a good addition.

1
2 **2. Review and Approval of the Minutes from the November 20, 2023 Meeting.**
3

4 **MOTION:** Ed Marshall moved to APPROVE the November 20, 2023, Meeting Minutes. Del
5 Draper seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.
6

7 **FLAP Grant Update and Discussion**
8

9 **3. Committee Members will Hear an Update on the Millcreek Canyon FLAP Grant and**
10 **Discuss.**
11

12 Chair Diegel shared information about the Federal Land Access Program (“FLAP”) grant. He had
13 been in touch with the Deputy Mayor of Regional Operations in Salt Lake County, Catherine
14 Kanter. There was a desire to speak to the County Council about the FLAP grant. Deputy Mayor
15 Kanter originally wanted it on the County Council meeting agenda on January 16, 2024. He
16 reached out to her again at the beginning of the year, but the agenda item had been postponed until
17 the February 27, 2024, County Council Meeting. He hoped there would be a comprehensive
18 discussion.
19

20 John Knoblock asked if Helen Peters was still involved. Chair Diegel believed she was because
21 Ms. Peters had been included in an email he had seen. Before the County Council Meeting, he
22 thought it was a good idea for the public comments from the FLAP grant comment period last June
23 to be reviewed. It had been illuminating to sift through some of those. It made it possible to better
24 understand what people want to see and compare it to the vision of the consultants. He offered to
25 reach out to Deputy Mayor Kanter to see if she felt a comment review would be appropriate, as it
26 would provide the County Council with baseline information.
27

28 Mr. Knoblock reminded the Committee Members that it was possible for anyone to share
29 comments during the public comment period at a County Council Meeting. Chair Diegel explained
30 that he did that in the past. After he shared comments previously, there had been a fair amount of
31 discussion about the FLAP grant. That led to Deputy Mayor Kanter asking for it to be a formal
32 agenda item in the future. Mr. Knoblock believed FLAP grant construction was planned to take
33 place in the summer of 2025 and 2026. This was confirmed. Chair Diegel noted that there would
34 be another Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting before the County Council discussion on the
35 matter. It would be possible for the Committee to strategize before the February 27, 2024, meeting.
36

37 Some matters for the Committee to think about included the actual FLAP grant design and whether
38 the consultants were pursuing something appropriate as well as the canyon closures. Chair Diegel
39 wondered if the canyon closures were necessary. Two years of summer closures in the canyon
40 would be significant. The consultants need to think about cabin owners, recreationists, and
41 whether there would be bicycling access. Additional details about the closures were needed.
42 Additionally, it was necessary to determine whether there was an opportunity to run shuttles. He
43 did not want to see the canyon completely closed during construction and believed that was
44 important to discuss during the County Council Meeting.
45

1 Ed Marshall clarified that the canyon closures referred to were only for the upper portion of the
2 canyon, above the winter gate. Chair Diegel confirmed that this was his understanding as well.
3 However, it would be closed for two years, which was significant. There needs to be more clarity
4 about how that would be done and the impacts the closures would have. Del Draper was surprised
5 to hear that the construction work was expected to take two summers.

6
7 Mr. Zalles asked for additional details about the project work. Chair Diegel reported that there
8 were several components to the FLAP grant project, but there was essentially a desire to widen
9 and straighten the road. It is currently wider down at the gate but becomes gradually narrower.
10 The initial reason for the proposed widening was for safety reasons as a one-lane mountain road
11 is not as safe. Widening the road could also result in better access for emergency vehicles.
12 However, he noted that there were concerns related to the proposed widening. Chair Diegel
13 pointed out that emergency vehicles currently access the canyon without issue and there had not
14 been a formal request from emergency service providers to widen the road. In addition, making a
15 road wider and straighter to increase the sightlines actually led to increased speeds. That in turn
16 increased the likelihood of an accident occurring. Since the FLAP grant process began, a fair
17 amount of research has been reviewed about the narrowness of roads, lack of striping, relative
18 speeds, and relative safety. He wanted to make sure the consultants considered all of those factors.

19
20 Chair Diegel explained that the FLAP grant design work released previously had not reflected
21 some of the concerns expressed. The consultants discussed widening the road to 24 feet wide with
22 striping, with a bicycle lane that only went to Elbow Fork. Beyond Elbow Fork, there would be
23 no bicycle lane. As a cyclist, that was not something he supported. Mr. Knoblock shared
24 comments about the road width. He reported that the Mountain Accord referenced a trial shuttle
25 bus in Millcreek Canyon. When that was brought to the U.S. Forest Service, the Forest Service
26 stated that a shuttle would only be permitted if the road was brought to the minimum legal standard
27 width. He believed 20 feet was the minimum legal standard width.

28
29 Chair Diegel reported that the FLAP grant design work incorporated some shuttle bus
30 infrastructure, particularly at the winter gate and at the top of the canyon. That being said, the
31 Millcreek Canyon Committee and Forest Service never really confirmed what the vision was for
32 the shuttle vehicles themselves. There had been talk about a Zion Canyon type of shuttle, but more
33 recently, when CWC Staff had done their research over the summer, there was talk about vans or
34 oversized vans. He did not know whether there were standards associated with the shuttle size.

35
36 Having a discussion in front of the County Council would be worthwhile, especially considering
37 that the County has to provide a match for the FLAP grant funds. Chair Diegel explained that
38 when he shared comments with the County Council previously, some of the County Council
39 Members were surprised by the match amount. Rusty Vetter stated that a \$2 million match is
40 significant for the County. A freeze has been placed on hiring, so the budget is tight at the moment.
41 Chair Diegel expressed appreciation to Mr. Vetter for continuing to attend the meetings.

1 **Millcreek Shuttle Update**

2
3 **4. Committee Members will Hear an Update on Potential Parking for a Millcreek**
4 **Shuttle and NEPA Initiation and Discuss.**
5

6 Chair Diegel shared information about a potential Millcreek Canyon shuttle. In the summer, a
7 Feasibility Proposal was submitted to the U.S. Forest Service, but without a parking plan or finance
8 plan, there was no support to move forward with the process. Mr. Draper and Mr. Knoblock had
9 since identified some potential parking locations and received clearance from Millcreek City,
10 Skyline High School, and the Utah Department of Transportation (“UDOT”). Parking in the
11 proposed locations would be viable for a Millcreek Canyon shuttle. He wondered whether parking
12 had now been sufficiently addressed, so the only outstanding issue related to financing a shuttle.
13

14 CWC Executive Director, Lindsey Nielsen, reported that the main obstacle was funding. It was
15 not a small obstacle but it was better that there was only one main obstacle remaining. She thanked
16 the Millcreek Canyon Committee for their work and the parking locations that had been identified.
17 Ms. Nielsen emailed Bekee Hotze from the Forest Service last week but had not heard back. She
18 believed the best course of action now was for the Stakeholders to work with CWC Staff and build
19 on the research proposal. The Stakeholders Council could share input before the matter was
20 discussed by the CWC Board. She explained that a funding request could be made to the CWC
21 Board for the shuttle work, similar to what the Visitor Use Study Committee had done in the past.
22

23 The CWC Board met for the second half of the annual CWC Board Retreat last week. While the
24 Millcreek Canyon shuttle was mentioned, the Board Members had not spoken about prioritizing
25 that work at the CWC Board level. The Millcreek Canyon shuttle was one of the major action
26 items outlined in the Mountain Accord. It was something Ms. Nielsen believed was achievable.
27 If the Stakeholders, in consultation with CWC Staff, continued to work together, she felt it would
28 be possible to forward a proposal and funding request to the CWC Board. She explained that the
29 next step was to procure the funding for the National Environmental Policy Act (“NEPA”) process.
30

31 Chair Diegel pointed out that the Committee did not know what a shuttle would entail at the NEPA
32 level. For instance, there could be a full Environmental Impact Statement ("EIS"), an
33 Environmental Assessment (“EA”), or there could be a Categorical Exclusion. If it was the latter,
34 the costs would be significantly less. If an EIS was needed, it would cost a lot more money and
35 would also take a lot of time. Ms. Nielsen did not think a full EIS would be needed and thought it
36 was likely that there would be an EA. However, that information was not known at the current
37 time. Chair Diegel thought it was possible the shuttle could be classified as a Categorical
38 Exclusion since the shuttle would use the existing road. Ms. Nielsen noted that it was possible.
39

40 Mr. Draper did not believe the results of the meeting with UDOT or Millcreek City had been
41 documented. He wondered if that was something that needed to be done. For instance, there could
42 be a letter from UDOT and Millcreek City to state that the two parking locations had been
43 examined, and based on the current information, those were viable locations for shuttle parking.
44 Ms. Nielsen confirmed that it would be best to have that confirmed in writing. Mr. Draper noted
45 that he had drafted a version of a letter earlier on, which outlined all of the reasons those parking
46 locations were ideal. After the Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting, he offered to speak to Chair

1 Diegel about reaching back out to UDOT and Millcreek City. There could be a formal letter to
2 state that the parking locations had been examined and there were no anticipated issues.

3
4 Chair Diegel noted that the CWC Board was largely focused on Big Cottonwood Canyon and
5 Little Cottonwood Canyon. It was important to consistently remind them that Millcreek Canyon
6 was also important. The shuttle was critical for the canyon. He felt that a letter signed by UDOT
7 and Millcreek City would be a wonderful reminder to the CWC Board that there was support.

8 9 **Land Parcel Update**

10 11 **5. Committee Members will Hear an Update on the Potential for Water Access and** 12 **Development of a Parcel of Land Near the Mouth of Millcreek Canyon.**

13
14 Mr. Knoblock shared information about the parcel near the mouth of Millcreek Canyon. He had
15 spoken to some people at Salt Lake County Open Space, and apparently, the County Council had
16 put \$5 million into the Open Space Fund during the budget cycle. Millcreek was putting together
17 some sort of document with their expert opinion on the buildability of that land with respect to
18 FCOZ, slope compliance, water availability, and utilities. From there, the County would have an
19 appraisal done and approach the land owner about potentially purchasing the land to put it into
20 open space. That process was continuing to move forward. Chair Diegel clarified that the
21 discussion related to the 18-acre parcel that was currently for sale above the mouth of the canyon.

22
23 Chair Diegel questioned whether any offers had been made on the parcel. Mr. Knoblock reported
24 that there had been a few lowball offers, but the owner wanted to hold out for the full asking price.
25 He had informed the owner that there was a desire to see the land protected in perpetuity. The
26 County had spoken to the property owner as well so that connection had been made. Mr. Draper
27 was encouraged by what had been done so far and the progress that had been made. Mr. Knoblock
28 hoped the appraisal would come in at a value that the landowner would accept. He reported that
29 the County would pay for the cost of the appraisal. Chair Diegel appreciated the update shared.

30
31 Chair Diegel reported that at a previous Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting, there had been a
32 discussion about fire mitigation. At that time, Mr. Marshall had discussed bringing a proposal to
33 the Stakeholders Council for consideration. Mr. Marshall informed those present that he was
34 interested in seeing the debris cleaned up along Millcreek Road. He noted that the debris had been
35 neglected for decades. There had been discussions with Scott Frost at the Forest Service regarding
36 that issue. Mr. Frost wanted to make sure that if the Forest Service cleaned that area, the grass
37 would be cut and maintained by the County. As a result, there had been discussions with Scott
38 Baird at the Municipal Services District in November and December. Mr. Baird had committed
39 that the MSD would cut the area twice per summer to mitigate potential fire impacts.

40
41 Mr. Frost had been proceeding on the basis that the Forest Service would remove the debris, though
42 a firm commitment had not been made yet. Forest personnel had gone up the canyon to determine
43 how many days it would take to clear the debris. Mr. Frost believed it would be a one to two-day
44 job, which Mr. Marshall agreed with since only an eight-foot strip would be done. The issue for
45 Mr. Frost was that in some areas, a roadless area improperly came all the way down to the roadway.
46 That had been cleaned up in-house, but approval was needed from Washington, D.C. Mr. Marshall

1 had tried to talk him out of that and encouraged him to use the same justification that was used to
2 do the mitigation work in the upper canyon, but a commitment had not been received from Mr.
3 Frost on that. He believed now that Ms. Hotze had returned, the effort would either move forward
4 or backward. Given the work done in Lambs Canyon and Upper Millcreek Canyon, it was possible
5 that there would be support for the debris work because it was a fairly simple project.
6

7 Chair Diegel thanked Mr. Marshall for all of his efforts and hard work. Mr. Marshall added that
8 one area that had a fair amount of debris was the parcel that was for sale. There were areas that
9 had a lot of debris, while others had none at all. He was interested in reaching out to that property
10 owner about the issue, as there was a desire to see that portion cleaned up. That could either be
11 handled by the property owner or permission could be granted to the Forest Service to do that
12 work. Mr. Marshall reported that the Forest Service was only considering debris cleanup at the
13 winter gate. He believed that had to do with funding and staffing, but also had to do with the fact
14 that the FLAP grant work would be done in the upper portion of the canyon in the near future.
15

16 Chair Diegel noted that there had been previous discussions about the possibility of establishing
17 cell phone coverage in the canyon. He wondered whether there were any updates to share on that.
18 Mr. Draper stated that there were no additional updates. In the past, he had spoken to someone to
19 determine what had been done in the other canyons. He wanted to make sure that as the FLAP
20 grant work moved forward, there was a conduit in there to make communication possible.
21 Mr. Draper offered to carry on with that work and find out more information for the Committee.
22 Additional discussions were had about the installation of fiber and the different options available.
23

24 Mr. Marshall was curious whether people on the other Systems Committees had anything to report
25 about the activities of those groups and how those discussions might impact Millcreek Canyon.
26 He believed that should be an item on the Millcreek Canyon Meeting agendas moving forward so
27 there was continuity between the Millcreek Canyon Committee and the various Systems
28 Committees. Mr. Knoblock stated that there would be Committee Reports shared at the next
29 Stakeholders Council Meeting. Ms. Nielsen confirmed that a fair amount of time had been
30 allocated at the next Stakeholders Council Meeting so those kinds of discussions could take place.
31

32 Chair Diegel reported that he was on the Recreation Systems Committee and also tried to sit in on
33 the Transportation Systems Committee Meetings. He pointed out that there was also the CWC
34 Transportation Committee, where Mayor Dan Knopp was the Chair. He asked if there would be
35 an overlap between the Transportation Committee and the Transportation Systems Committee
36 work. Ms. Nielsen explained that the Executive/Budget/Audit Committee would meet shortly. At
37 that time, the scope of work for the committees would be more concretely defined. She encouraged
38 interested Committee Members to listen in on that meeting. It had not been determined what the
39 Transportation Committee at the CWC Board level would be specifically focused on in 2024.
40

41 Based on the discussions and exercises that took place during the CWC Board Retreat, it seemed
42 that the CWC Board was focused on assisting the State and ensuring Phase I of the UDOT Little
43 Cottonwood Canyon EIS was a success. There was a desire to determine how the organization
44 could be of assistance to make sure Phase I was successful. As a result, she did not know that
45 there would be any considerable overlap between the Transportation Committee and the
46 Transportation Systems Committee work. At the Stakeholders Council level, she anticipated that

1 the Transportation Systems Committee would focus on other issues, such as the Millcreek Canyon
2 shuttle and research on a Special Transit District. Ms. Nielsen reminded those present that the role
3 of the Stakeholders Council was to conduct research and brainstorm ideas. Some of those ideas
4 could eventually move forward to the CWC Board for their consideration and potential action.
5

6 Mr. Zalles reported that the Environment Systems Committee had met last week. Something
7 discussed at that time was the potential assessment and purchase of available parcels. At that time,
8 it was noted that it might be possible for the Environment Systems Committee and Millcreek
9 Canyon Committee to work together in some way. He wondered whether the Committee believed
10 there was an opportunity to collaborate in some manner. Mr. Draper reported that the Millcreek
11 Canyon Committee had contacted the Boy Scouts to see if there was a desire for a conservation
12 easement on Camp Tracey. The Committee had contacted them annually for approximately three
13 years. Each time, the Committee had been informed that there was no desire for a conservation
14 easement there. He noted that there were a lot of different ways to structure a conservation
15 easement, but reiterated that the Boy Scouts were not interested in any of those options currently.
16

17 Ms. Nielsen stated that information had been added to the Zoom chat box. This included the
18 timeline for when the Stakeholders Council and CWC Board Meetings were scheduled. The
19 Committee could consider the next Stakeholders Council Meeting in March as the deadline to
20 build on the research proposal for the Millcreek Canyon shuttle. Ms. Nielsen also informed the
21 Committee that the Short-Term Projects Grant Program would open in March 2024. There was
22 \$100,000 available this year, which was more than the organization had ever had for short-term
23 projects. Those guidelines will be released shortly. Additionally, she asked those who had not
24 completed the form left in the Zoom chat box to do so later that day, as it was important to submit.
25

26 Chair Diegel thought it made sense to focus on shuttle work ahead of the future Stakeholders
27 Council Meeting. Mr. Knoblock suggested that when speaking to the County Council, the issue
28 of the fee booth be discussed. There had been talks about moving the fee booth at some point in
29 order to move it away from the private property parcel and to potentially automate the payment
30 system. Chair Diegel thanked him for the reminder and noted that it was an important subject.
31

32 **Closing**

34 **6. Chair Tom Diegel will Call for a Motion to Adjourn the Millcreek Committee** 35 **Meeting.**

37 **MOTION:** Del Draper moved to ADJOURN the Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting. Ed
38 Marshall seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.
39

40 The Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting adjourned at approximately 2:30 p.m.

1 *I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the*
2 *Stakeholders Council Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting held on Tuesday, January 16, 2024.*
3

4 Teri Forbes

5 Teri Forbes

6 T Forbes Group

7 Minutes Secretary

8

9 Minutes Approved: _____