MINUTES OF COMBINED COMMISSION WORKING & REGULAR SESSION MEETING HELD MONDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2024, BEGINNING AT 9:00 A.M. IN DUCHESNE, UTAH

Present –

Commissioner Irene Hansen, Commissioner Greg Miles, Commissioner Tracy Killian, Deputy Attorney Tyler Allred, Public Works Deputy Director Clint Curtis, Public Works Director Mike Casper, Deputy Clerk-Auditor Janet Jenkins, Human Resource Director Judy Stevenson, Human Resource Payroll & Benefits Administrator Jamie Park, Sheriff Travis Tucker, Treasurer Stephen Potter, Emergency Management Director Mike Lefler, Clerk-Auditor Chelise Jessen, Assessor Traci Herrera, Surveyor Jerry Allred, Community Development Assistant Director Mike Gottfredson, Deputy Treasurer Connie Sweat, Chris Ivester and Noah Ivester with Ivester Trees, LLC, Duchesne High School Drill Team and Coaches, Duchesne County Residents Tracy Ross and Bryan Winterton, and Commission Executive Assistant Melissa Hughes is taking the meeting minutes.

Opening Comments

(9:00 a.m.)

Chairperson Hansen welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Pledge of Allegiance

(9:01 a.m.)

Recognition for the Duchesne High School Drill Team State Championship

(9:02 a.m.)

Commissioner Hansen briefly described the Centennial History Book and her experience meeting an elderly lady whose story was in the book. She explained how the Drill Team is making history with their achievement. Each Commissioner congratulated them on the award. Coach Kelly Grant appreciated the team's hard work and coachability. Kylie Grant, a senior, spoke about how she loves being a part of the team. Oaklee Larsen, another senior, said how much it means to have everyone from the community supporting them.

Open & Award the 2024 Wildland Fire Vegetation Reduction / Mitigation Bids

(9:13 a.m.)

Commissioner Hansen opened the one bid received from Ivester Trees, LLC. Emergency Management Director Mike Lefler described the project and the history of the large wildland fire. The main focus this year will be ingress and egress routes for the safety of the residents and firefighters. Commissioner Hansen read the price schedule on page three. Full Scope of Work 70% reduction $8,750.00 per acre, Chipper with a three-person crew $250.00 per hour, and Mulcher with an operator $250.00 per hour. The parties discussed the project and last year's project that Ivester Trees, LLC completed. *Commissioner Miles made a motion to approve the contract and award the bid to Ivester Trees, LLC. Commissioner Killian seconded the motion. Commissioner Miles voted aye, Commissioner Killian voted aye, and Commissioner Hansen voted aye. The motion passed.*

Public Works Update

(9:22 a.m.)

Public Works Director Mike Casper gave an update on existing projects and upcoming work. Some complaints have been received about muddy roads. They are hauling material from CKC Operations. There is a conference starting Tuesday, and some department members will attend. Some employees will attend an equipment inspection training hosted by Wheeler Machinery at no cost. The employees now can enter their dailys on their phones. This will streamline the process. The departments inventory has been completed.

NACo Legislative Conference Update

(9:29 a.m.)

Commissioner Hansen recognized and thanked Commissioner Miles for attending the conference.

Commissioner Miles said there were a lot of good meetings and information at the conference.

He is a member of the Public Lands Steering Committee for Utah and a member of the Western Interstate Region Board. The Western Interstate Region is the 15 western states with primarily the line share of public lands and public land issues. Representatives from the BLM and the Forest Service were at the meeting. They spoke on the Taylor Grazing Act and the cost of an allotment per year.

The Good Neighbor Authority House Resolution 1450 allows states, counties, and tribal governments to enter into a management agreement with the U.S. Forest Service to improve landscape health. Utah has not been a part of the Good Neighbor Authority funding because they have had success with shared stewardship.
Affordable and Workforce housing development in Public Lands counties was discussed. A bill was drafted to allow the BLM to dispose of properties either in municipality boundaries or adjacent to help with affordable housing issues.
The Federal Wildland Fire Commission is made up of 50 members. Bill Cox represents us at the federal level by making recommendations to Congress.
The National Endangered Species Act has not been re-authorized since 1992; there is some work to do there.
BLM Solar caused some heated discussion. Several committee members from Wyoming and Nevada were frustrated with the BLM about their solar plan. It will impact grazing. Greg Chilcott from Montana said that all of these projects before the federal agency has to conduct a complete study on how it changes the view shed, except for BLM Solar. Solar doesn't look pretty, and it ruins the view shed.
A children's book written by AI was handed out. It is about Counties, and it rhymes. Commissioner Miles thinks it would be good for us to put something together for our County. It is important to educate children on what local government does.
He visited with the Census Bureau, BLM, Forest Service, Housing and Community Development, Veterans Affairs, and others at a luncheon.
The National Center for Public Lands Counties was brought about by the Western Interstate Board two years ago. We received local assistance and tribal consistency funds, which were a part of the American Rescue Plan Act. The idea was to set up a National Center for Public Lands funded by 1% of that money from each revenue-sharing county. If everyone would have opted in, it would have been about 15 million dollars. Not everyone would commit, but all counties in Utah have committed and raised about 5.4 million. This is a great thing that will educate members of Congress, Senators, and new commissioners on the importance of public lands in their county. Utah hopes to have the office in Salt Lake City.
The SRS (Secure Rural Schools) needs to be re-authorized. SRS is the forest payment that was started when the Spotted Owl caused significant issues with the logging industry in the North West. The payments come from timber receipts, and a portion of the money is paid to counties and school districts through the SRS. They are threatening not to re-authorize SRS, which will affect the rural school districts.
An interim resolution was put forward on the public lands to encourage Congress to prioritize funding for required infrastructure and maintenance. Commissioner Miles offered feedback. We have a minor contract with the Forest Service for one LEO to cover the entire Ashley National Forest. Our contract is only $5,000, which is very low and hardly makes an impact. He was able to get them to change the resolution to include prioritizing law enforcement on Federal Lands.
He thanked the other Commissioners for covering, allowing him to attend, and letting our County's voice be heard.

Utah Legislative Update
(9:45 a.m.)

Commissioner Hansen gave a brief description of the Utah Legislative Sessions. They are wrapping up. The Commission attended the UAC meetings. The new baseball field dominated the conversation on Friday to entice a Major League Baseball Team. They will increase the TRT (Transient Room Tax) to fund the project.
Commissioner Miles expressed his appreciation for our local legislatures. Utah State Representative Christine Watkins, Senator Ronald Winterton, and Utah State Representative Scott Chew. Senator Winterton has been a true champion of our County and his district, and we appreciate him for his hard work. Representative Christine Watkins put in the appropriations for the Duchesne and Myton City funding. The Commissioners appreciate their support.
The County supports the Rural Caucus breakfast. This is where residents go for information and where critical conversations take place.
S.B. 91 was recommended because of a situation in Northern Utah where an executive was given a hefty raise without public engagement. The bill would require counties to go through a public hearing to raise salaries. Transparency is a good thing, but this could cause issues in the hiring process.
H.B. 36 would prevent elected officials from having administrative conversations outside official meetings.

Auditors Office - Surplus
(9:56 a.m.)

Clerk-Auditor Chelise Jessen presented a list of items from the Attorney's Office to be listed on the Surplus website. The parties review the items. *Commissioner Killian made a motion to authorize the surplus items for the Attorney's Office as presented. Commissioner Miles seconded the motion. Commissioner Killian voted aye, Commissioner Miles voted aye, and Commissioner Hansen voted aye. The motion passed.*

Auditors Office – Vouchers
(9:58 a.m.)

Deputy Clerk-Auditor Janet Jenkins presented the February 26, 2024, vouchers, check numbers 164218 through 164322 for $286,380.05. The parties reviewed the vouchers submitted. *Commissioner Killian made a motion to approve the February 26, 2024, vouchers, as presented. Commissioner Miles seconded the motion. Commissioner Killian voted aye, Commissioner Miles voted aye, and Commissioner Hansen voted aye. The motion passed.*

Auditors Office – Tax Adjustment
(10:06 a.m.)

Treasurer Stephen Potter presented the tax adjustments for the Assessor's and Treasurer's office. The Assessor's office is for a Motor Vehicle. The State refunded the state portion. The County's portion needs to be refunded for a credit of $50.00. For the Treasurer's office, the 40% veterans exemption was misapplied for a credit of $242.15. The parties review the tax adjustments. *Commissioner Miles made a motion to approve the tax adjustments as presented. Commissioner Killian seconded the motion. Commissioner Miles voted aye, Commissioner Killian voted aye, and Commissioner Hansen voted aye. The motion passed.*

Treasurer's Office – Tax Deferral
(10:08 a.m.)

Treasurer Stephen Potter and Deputy Treasurer Connie Sweat described the resident's scenario. The home is listed as a secondary residence. The house was owned by the grandpa, who is now deceased. The ownership was transferred to his son. The granddaughter is now living in the home full-time. Taxes are owed, and a tax adjustment could be made for the primary residency. They are working with the residents on the documentation that is needed. The parties discussed the tax sale and the properties that may be listed.

Recess 10:33 a.m. to 10:42 a.m.

Commissioner Miles made a motion to recess. Commissioner Killian seconded the motion. Commissioner Miles voted aye, Commissioner Killian voted aye, and Commissioner Hansen voted aye. The motion passed.

HR Office – Payroll
(10:42 a.m.)

Human Resource Payroll & Benefits Administrator Jamie Park presented the payroll report ending February 17, 2024; 205 employees were paid. *Commissioner Miles made a motion to approve the February 17, 2024 payroll, as presented. Commissioner Killian seconded the motion. Commissioner Miles voted aye, Commissioner Killian voted aye, and Commissioner Hansen voted aye. The motion passed.*

Consideration of Minutes for Combined Commission Meeting held February 12, 2024
(10:45 a.m.)

Parties review the combined Commission meeting minutes held on February 12, 2024. *Commissioner Killian made a motion to approve the minutes for February 12, 2024, as presented. Commissioner Miles seconded the motion. Commissioner Killian voted aye, Commissioner Hansen voted aye, and Commissioner Miles abstained. The motion passed.*

Discussion of Possible Subjects for the Next Meeting
(10:53 a.m.)

Calendaring & Weekly Update on Events
(10:56 a.m.)

Closed Meeting – Strategy Session to Discuss: Pending or Reasonably Imminent Litigation;
(11:01 a.m.)

Commissioner Miles made a motion to go in and out of a closed meeting for a strategy session to discuss: Pending or Reasonably Imminent Litigation. Commissioner Killian

seconded the motion. Commissioner Miles voted aye, Commissioner Killian voted aye, and Commissioner Hansen voted aye. The motion passed.

Back in Session
(11:26 a.m.)

No action is to be taken.

Human Resource Update
(11:28 a.m.)

Human Resource Director Judy Stevenson gave an update for the Human Resource Department. The county has seven openings, and they are conducting interviews weekly. On March 13th, there is a blood-borne pathogen training. Employees will be able to attend virtually.

Closed Meeting – Strategy Session to Discuss: The Character, Professional Competence, or Physical or Mental Health of an Individual;
(11:30 a.m.)

Commissioner Killian made a motion to go in and out of a closed meeting for a strategy session to discuss: The Character, Professional Competence, or Physical or Mental Health of an Individual. Commissioner Miles seconded the motion. Commissioner Killian voted aye, Commissioner Miles voted aye, and Commissioner Hansen voted aye. The motion passed.

Back in Session
(12:44 p.m.)

No action is to be taken.

Adjournment
(12:45 p.m.)

Commissioner Miles made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:45 p.m. Commissioner Killian seconded the motion. Commissioner Miles voted aye, Commissioner Killian voted aye, and Commissioner Hansen voted aye. The forum adjourned.

Read and approved this on the 4th day of March 2024.

Irene Hansen
Commission Chair

Chelise Jessen
Clerk-Auditor

Minutes of the meeting prepared by Commission Executive Assistant Melissa Hughes