

**MINUTES** of the public meeting of the Uintah County Commission held **April 9, 2024** in the Commission Chambers of the Uintah County Building at 147 East Main, Vernal, Utah. Meeting commenced at 3:00 p.m.

**PARTICIPANTS:** Commissioners John Laursen and Sonja Norton. Brad Horrocks, absent.

**ATTENDANCE:** Mike Wilkins, Bill Lewis, Clayton Rimer, Willis LeFevre, Crystal Clark, Ryan Mattson, Deanna Nyberg, Wendi Long, Matt Cazier, Zeke Atwood, Heidi Lundberg, Travis Campbell, Carson Young, Barbara Simper, Mechelle Miller, Sydney Millett, Lance Dean, Becky Richards, Jess Hermann, and Jon Stearmer.

Minutes recorded by Tai Duncan.

**WELCOME:** Commissioner Laursen welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**PRAYER** offered by Deanna Nyberg.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** led by Barbara Simper.

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES** of the March 25, 2024 work session and March 26, 2024 meeting

*Commissioner Norton moved to approve the minutes for March 25, 2024 work session and March 26, 2024 meeting. Commissioner Laursen seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

**2. REPORT OF WARRANTS** – Mike Wilkins, Clerk-Auditor, presented warrants dated March 28, 2024 in the amount of \$338,795.57. This included the annual payment to Northeastern Counseling in the amount of \$184,549.68. Warrants dated April 3, 2024 in the amount of \$296,173.93. This included the annual payment of \$39,583.17 to Bamboo for Human Resources.

**3. REVIEW and COUNTER SIGNATURE of CERTIFIED LIST of CLAIMS** – None.

**4. TAX MATTERS**

Mike presented a state appeal on greenbelt rollback on serial number 17:052:0002 for tax years 2022 and 2023. The applicant went through the formal appeal process and won. As per State Appeal #22-1724, the refund for 2022 is \$3,672.90 and \$795.37 for 2023, totaling \$4,468.27.

*Commissioner Norton moved to approve the State Appeal refund as presented. Commissioner Laursen seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

Barbara Simper, Assessor, presented a business personal property tax abatement for 2024 on account #5257. This is for the eight motor graders the County leases, making them exempt. The abatement amount is \$13,751.08.

*Commissioner Norton moved to approve the tax abatement as presented. Commissioner Laursen seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

Barbara also presented escaped property taxes for approval. This would apply \$776.22 to the taxes owed for 2023 and \$112.46 for 2022 on serial number 06:028:0090. The property was purchased from SITLA but the County did not receive notification and the parcel was not moved to the correct tax district.

*Commissioner Norton moved to approve the escaped property tax as presented. Commissioner Laursen seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

**5. RECESS FOR MUNICIPAL BUILDING AUTHORITY**

*Commissioner Norton moved to recess into Municipal Building Authority. Commissioner Laursen seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

**6. PUBLIC HEARING** approving the adoption by the Municipal Building Authority of Uintah County, Utah of a parameters resolution authorizing the issuance and sale of not more than \$620,000 taxable lease revenue bonds, series 2024B for a compactor and related matters.

Commissioner Norton, as MBA Chair, opened this portion of the meeting for a public hearing. Mike briefly explained the matter. The County received up to \$620,000 with a 50/50 match to replace the existing compactor at the Landfill. This is a zero-interest loan for ten years. The Landfill will make the payment from their revenue. The current compactor is at least 20 years old.

There were no comments. Commissioner Norton closed the public hearing.

**7. RESOLUTION #04-09-2024 MBA1:** A Resolution approving the execution by said authority of an annually renewable lease agreement with Uintah County, Utah for a compactor; authorizing the issuance and sale by said authority of its taxable lease revenue bonds, series 2024B in the amount of \$517,000; authorizing the execution by the authority of a Master Resolution, and the security documents and other; and related matters.

*Commissioner Laursen moved to approve Resolution #04-09-2024 MBA1 as presented. Commissioner Norton seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

**8. ADJOURN MBA and RECONVENE COMMISSION MEETING**

*Commissioner Laursen moved to adjourn Municipal Building Authority and reconvene Commission meeting. Commissioner Norton seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

**9. RESOLUTION #04-09-2024 R1:** A Resolution of the Board of County Commissioners of Uintah County, Utah authorizing the Municipal Building Authority of Uintah County, Utah to issue and sell \$517,000 taxable lease revenue bonds, series 2024B for a compactor and authorizing an annually renewable lease and the execution of all related documents; and related matters.

*Commissioner Norton moved to approve Resolution #04-09-2024 R1 as presented. Commissioner Laursen seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

**10. RESOLUTION #04-09-2024 R2:** encouraging Uintah County residents to remove junk, debris, and solid waste from yards and establishing a Spring Clean Up Week for 2024: April 20 – 27<sup>th</sup>. Jon Stearmer, Deputy County Attorney, led the discussion. Greg Jensen was here at the last meeting to present the information. The County will waive most fees at the landfill April 20<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> for small pickup, trailer and dump trucks to incentivize clean up. Commercial loads will not be waived. Commissioner Norton added this will be advertised in the paper. There will still be a \$20 charge for items with freon as there is a cost for the landfill to deal with it. They are also only allowing four tires per load.

*Commissioner Norton moved to approve Resolution #04-09-2024 R2 as presented. Commissioner Laursen seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

**11. NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS WEEK PROCLAMATION: APRIL 14 – 20<sup>th</sup>.**

Commissioner Laursen led the discussion. When you dial 911, you speak with a telecommunicator. Our dispatch center handles three counties and the federal agencies after hours. They have 48 telephone lines and even more radio channels. They are busy and they work hard. He encouraged people to express their appreciation. Jon took a moment to read the proclamation:

WHEREAS emergencies that require law enforcement officers, fire or emergency medical services can occur at any time; and, WHEREAS when an emergency occurs the prompt response of law enforcement officers, firefighters and emergency medical personnel is critical to the protection of life and preservation of property; and, WHEREAS the safety of our law enforcement officers, firefighters, and emergency medical personnel, is dependent upon the quality and accuracy of information obtained from citizens who contact the Uintah Basin Consolidated Dispatch Center; and, WHEREAS Public Safety Telecommunicators are the first and most critical contact our citizens have with emergency services; and,

WHEREAS Public Safety Telecommunicators are the single vital link for law enforcement officers, firefighters and emergency medical personnel by monitoring their activities by radio, providing them information and ensuring their safety; and, WHEREAS Public Safety Telecommunications of the Uintah Basin Consolidated Dispatch Center have contributed substantially to the apprehension of criminals, suppression of fires, and treatment of patients; and, WHEREAS each dispatcher has exhibited compassion, understanding and professionalism during the performance of their job in the past year; THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Uintah County Commission declares the week of April 14<sup>th</sup> through the 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, to be National Public Safety Telecommunicators week in Uintah County in honor of the women and men whose diligence and professionalism keep our County and citizens safe.

*Commissioner Norton moved to proclaim the week of April 14 – 20, 2024 as National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week. Commissioner Laursen seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

**13. REQUESTING FEE WAIVER at CONFERENCE CENTER for Gun & Knife Show** – Bill Lewis, Friends of Buckskin Hills, took a moment to request a fee waiver. Their group raises funds for the local shooting range at Buckskin Hills. Their goal is to make it safer and more impressive. They ask for a waiver for the use of the Conference Center for the Gun and Knife Show next March because all the profits are donated to the shooting range. Commissioner Laursen asked how many people from outside our area utilize the range. Bill noted 60% of the vendors at the show are from out of our area. The Conference Center is between \$1300 and \$1850. Commissioner Norton asked if they have talked to Lesha Coltharp with Travel and Tourism regarding the event funding available. Bill responded he has not. Jon clarified this event is slightly different than the other events that apply for Travel and Tourism event funding. The other events are excellent events with fantastic causes but they are private; they are not raising money to apply to a County facility. Friends of Buckskin Hills are not asking for a cash sponsorship.

*Commissioner Norton moved to approve the fee waiver for the Gun & Knife show for 2025 as requested. Commissioner Laursen seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

**12. VERNAL'S DINOSAUR ROUNDUP RODEO request for Sponsorship** – Carson Young Carson is Vice President of the Rodeo Committee and came forward to request a sponsorship for this year's event. He expressed gratitude to the employees at the Western Park and Conference Center as well as the Law Enforcement that assist with the event. This year the dates will change from July to June 13-15. This is Father's Day weekend and will be the expected dates moving forward. There were 669 professional contestants in 2023 with spectators from 36 states. 500 seats were unsold on Thursday night but Friday and Saturday were sold out. This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> year in a row Friday night sold out and 4<sup>th</sup> time in five years Saturday night sold out. Western Park has a capacity of 4,750. They have chosen not to do standing room only to ensure the event is a better experience for spectators and law enforcement. The Rodeo Committee donates \$3600 to Search and Rescue, \$4500 to the Basin Jr Rodeo, and \$2500 to Holly Days. Their fiscal year ends September 30<sup>th</sup>. They had private donors help secure livestock panels and additional equipment to support the rodeo and these items will remain at the Western Park. 2024 entertainment will include John Harrison as barrelman, Dusty Tuckness and Nathan Harp as bullfighters and Charley Jenkins in concert Friday and Saturday nights. The Rodeo will be broadcasted on the Cowboy Channel and will be part of the PRCA Playoff Series. The date was changed to June so as not to overlap other competing rodeos. The minimum payout has to be \$200,000 and we are just over that. Other rodeos that are scheduled the same weekend in July include Calgary, Estes Park, Colorado Springs, and Sheridan, Wyoming. There is a shortage of rodeo athletes and they have to decide which to attend. We cannot compete with the larger rodeos, like Calgary and Colorado Springs, so it is in our best interest to pick another date. Father's Day weekend was selected and will be the plan moving forward. There are no other Playoff Series rodeos currently scheduled for that weekend.

Commissioner Laursen asked Carson to clarify a rumor he has heard regarding the announcer and stock contractor. Carson responded they are only rumors. Both the announcer, Roger Mooney, and stock contractor, Powder River, are under contract for two more years. They do not intend to make a change. The stock contractor does have a concern with the date change as they have an invitational in Nevada to provide stock for. They will work with them to have subcontractors. Unfortunately, they did lose the

sound director and had to hire a new one. They also have a separate sound contractor to provide speakers and back-up power. They feel they have everything they need to address the sound. Commissioner Norton also noted the Western Park has undergone improvements with the sound system as well so that should also help. Carson requested the Commission approve the sponsorship in the amount of \$25,000.

*Commissioner Norton moved to approve the sponsorship request of \$25,000 for the Dinosaur Roundup Rodeo. Commissioner Laursen seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

**14. 2024 RISE & THRIVE BUSINESS SPEED PITCH COMPETITION Report** – Travis Campbell, Economic Development, presented on the 4<sup>th</sup> annual event. This provides prizes and support for new business concepts as well as those that have been open for a year or less. This funding can be a great benefit and they need all the tools they can to be a success. Small business is crucial for the economy. This is funded through the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity Rural County Grant. They applied for eight different programs as suggested by the Community Advisory Board. Those that attend the competition get to vote on the People's Choice. This prize is sponsored by the Chamber. This year's winner is Squeaky Soap operated by Ambryn and Brytin Jackson. These girls may be minors but they have major plans. They have focused their soap market on kids.

3<sup>rd</sup> place goes to Amanda Jenkins for her business, Vernal Vineyard. She sells organic grape juice; 300 bottles last year. With her prize of \$4,000 she plans to increase her product output by purchasing more equipment and supplies as well as plants. 2<sup>nd</sup> place goes to Nelly Gomez for her business, DinoClean. She provides laundry service to commercial businesses, such as restaurants, as well as some industrial businesses. She will pick-up and deliver. She is new to the County and will use her prize of \$7,000 to purchase equipment. 1<sup>st</sup> place goes to Shay and Taylor Densley for their business Hopes Haven. They are offering equine assisted therapy. They have experience working with and training horses. Shay has worked with other similar facilities in the state. They will use the prize funding of \$12,000 to further their certification in therapeutic riding and improve the facility to offer the best services possible. Each business will have access to tools and assistance and they will stay in touch to make sure they can continue their plans. Each also receives advertising credits from Evans Media and STRATA. UBTech offers a full ride scholarship to the three winners. STRATA provides a year's worth of internet services.

**15. 2024 HMEP GRANT AWARD ACCEPTANCE** – Heidi Lundberg, Emergency Management This Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness Grant is through the Utah State Fire Marshall Office. The grant is for \$3200 with an \$800 match which has already been accounted for in Heidi's budget. Commissioner Norton asked what the grant is used for. Heidi noted Uintah County is the second highest in the state for tier 2 submissions. These are those entities with hazardous materials on site. The funding will go toward software that will compile the data so that it can be used for preparedness and planning for an emergency.

*Commissioner Norton moved to accept the HMEP grant as presented. Commissioner Laursen seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

**16. RFP AWARD: Crack Seal and Seal Coat Parking Lots** – Zeke Atwood, Purchasing & Grants The County sent out an RFP, request for proposal, for six different County parking lots to have a crack seal and seal coat; the County building, Library, Public Safety Complex, TriCounty Health, Conference Center, and Children's Justice Center. Two responses were received. The evaluation committee reviewed both responses and awarded points according to the RFP. Bonneville Asphalt and Repair received the most technical points at 466.67 and Asphalt Preservation received 433.33 technical points. Bonneville submitted a cost of \$139,098.43 and Asphalt Preservation submitted a cost of \$123,402.41. When the points from the technical and cost categories are added together, Bonneville has a score of 656.77 and Asphalt Preservation scores 647.62. Therefore, the evaluation committee recommends awarding the bid to Bonneville Asphalt and Repair.

*Commissioner Norton moved to award the crack seal and seal coat parking lot bid to Bonneville Asphalt and Repair at a cost of \$139,098.43 as presented. Commissioner Laursen seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

**17. BACKHOE LOADER RENTAL AGREEMENT** with Wheeler

Scott Hardman, Road Department, was unable to attend but Commissioner Laursen explained this is a rental for a backhoe used at the Road Department. The fee is \$14,000 a year. The agreement has been in place for a few years. The Attorney's office has reviewed it and he has no concerns. Jon added the rental agreement is done annually. Mike agreed and noted it is not a lease purchase.

*Commissioner Norton moved to approve the backhoe loader rental agreement as presented. Commissioner Laursen seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

**18. STREET LIGHT AGREEMENT**, 3500 S Hwy 40 – Matt Cazier on behalf of the Road Department

Matt explained this is for the installation of a street light, not a traffic light, at 3500 South Highway 40, with Rocky Mountain Power. This has been in the works for a long time. Several years ago, when Bryan Meier was at the Road Department, it was approved. It got lost. Last year Scott and Commissioner Horrocks revived it. Rocky Mountain Power provided the agreement December 2023, Matt signed it and returned it. Rocky Mountain Power lost it. Now it is coming forward again. The cost is \$4,791, which is slightly less than when originally approved. The ongoing cost will be \$14.89 per month. Rocky Mountain Power will own the street light and maintain it. It will be added to the regular bill we receive for all the other street lights. Mike added this would be paid for from Municipal Services Funds, there is sufficient funding. Commissioner Norton noted this is an important place to have a street light, it has been needed for a long time. Matt stated the agreement needs to be approved as well as the funding and authorization of his signature. Jon noted it will fall under the general agreement, this simply adds one more light so Matt's signature is acceptable. If a new agreement was needed, the Commission Chair would need to sign.

*Commissioner Norton moved to approve the street light agreement at 3500 S Highway 40 in the amount of \$4,791 with ongoing costs of \$14.89 a month and authorize Matt's signature as presented. Commissioner Laursen seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

**19. PUBLIC DEFENDER CONTRACT for DISTRICT COURT** – Lance Dean, Public Defender

This was discussed in work session yesterday. Aaron Owens from Provo has accepted and signed the contract for District Court. It was backdated to April 1<sup>st</sup> and will run through December 31, 2024. It is part of the contract to have the option to extend for two additional one-year terms. The cost is \$9,166 per month. Signatures are needed.

*Commissioner Norton moved to approve the District Court contract as presented. Commissioner Laursen seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

**20. 2024 UEN Wi-Fi for LIBRARIES** project plan, budget application and MOU – Ryan Mattson, IT

UEN, Utah Education Network, has leftover ARPA Funds available for Libraries. 29 other Libraries applied as well. Our application was approved and we can receive a reimbursement of \$34,858.15; they wanted an exact figure. This was discussed in work session yesterday. Ryan needs approval of digital signatures. This will be a good improvement for the Library and should last around seven years.

*Commissioner Norton moved to approve the UEN WiFi for Libraries as presented. Commissioner Laursen seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

**21. AMENDMENT 1 to the COST-REIMBURSABLE SERVICES AGREEMENT** between USU and the Sheriff's Office for Mental Health Services. This is an agreement with USU to provide mental health services for law enforcement. The grant has been extended to March 31, 2025. Jon reviewed it and it looked fine; it extends the time period not the cost.

*Commissioner Norton moved to approve the amendment as presented and authorize the Sheriff's signature. Commissioner Laursen seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

**22. APPROVAL OF STATE AUDITOR RISK FRAUD ASSESSMENT** – Mike Wilkins, Clerk-Auditor

The State Auditor's office has an assessment for us to complete each year. Mike has completed it and we received a score of 355. This puts us at the very low risk level. The highest score possible is 395 and the higher the better. If the number is low, the entity is more at risk. This shows we have adequate internal controls.

*Commissioner Norton moved to approve the Risk Fraud Assessment as presented. Commissioner Laursen seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

**23. PUBLIC COMMENT** – None.

**ADJOURN:** The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:08 pm.



JOHN LAURSEN, CHAIR



MICHAEL W. WILKINS, CLERK – AUDITOR

