

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

TO THE RESIDENTS OF UINTAH COUNTY: Notice is hereby given that the Vernal City Council and the Uintah County Commission will hold a Special Joint Meeting on *Thursday, May 2 , 2024 at 4:00 p.m. in the Uintah County Commission Large Conference Room, 2nd Floor - 152 East 100 North, Vernal, Utah.* Naples and Ballard residents and officials are invited to attend; however, the meeting has not been noticed as an official city meeting for Naples and Ballard.

A G E N D A

4:00 P.M.

STANDING BUSINESS

1. ACKNOWLEDGMENT & APPROVAL OF SPECIAL MEETING
2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF MARCH 13, 2024 JOINT CITY / COUNTY MEETING

PUBLIC BUSINESS

3. UPDATE ON VERNAL BESS PROJECT (TENTATIVE)
4. DISCUSSION ON PROPOSED CEMETERY BUILDING
5. DISCUSSION ON JAKE BRAKE REGULATION AND PROCESS – QUINN BENNION
6. DISCUSSION ON WATER AND DEVELOPMENT / ANNEXATION AND WATER AVAILABILITY – QUINN BENNION

ADJOURN

NOTE: In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, individuals needing special accommodations during this meeting should notify Quinn Bennion, 374 East Main, Vernal, Utah 84078 or phone (435)789-2255 at least three days before the meeting.

1 **M**INUTES OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL AND UINTAH COUNTY
2 COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING HELD, MARCH 13, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. in
3 the Uintah County Conference room, 147 East Main, Vernal, Utah 84078.
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5 **PRESENT:**

6 **VERNAL CITY:** Ed Long, Randel Mills, Robin O’Driscoll, Corey Foley and Mayor Doug
7 Hammond.
8

9 **UINTAH COUNTY:** Commissioners Brad Horrocks, John Laursen and Sonja Norton.
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11 **STAFF:** Quinn Bennion, Roxanne Behunin, Lesha Coltharp, Ray Richards, Gabby
12 Blackburn, Carl Morton, Mike Cook and Mike Wilkins.
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14 **GUESTS:** Mike Davis, Joel Brown and Willis LeFevre.
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16 **WELCOME:** Commissioner John Laursen welcomed everyone to the meeting.
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18 **ACKNOWLEDGMENT & APPROVAL OF SPECIAL MEETING:** *Councilmember Corey*
19 *Foley moved to acknowledge and approve this special meeting. Commissioner Brad Horrocks*
20 *seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.*
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22 **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 20, 2023:** *Councilmember Corey Foley*
23 *moved to approve the minutes of December 20, 2023 as written. Commissioner Brad Horrocks*
24 *seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.*
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26 **UPDATE ON PLAY LIKE A LOCAL CAMPAIGN – LESHA COLTHARP:** Lesha Coltharp
27 presented the “Play like a local” campaign that was launched on social media last Wednesday. The
28 purpose of the campaign is to bring visitors to tour the sites and see what residents like to do here.
29 The plan was to use eight different demographics including a high school student, college grad,
30 mom, retired etc. Quinn Bennion reported there were a total of 32 video shoots which is a huge
31 undertaking. The final videos were displayed. The elected officials thanked Lesha for the
32 update.
33

34 **UPDATE ON DINO TRAIL - MIKE COOK:** Mike Cook, the trails coordinator for Uintah
35 County, provided an update on the Dino Trail project. He highlighted the efforts to develop trails
36 for both locals and tourists, including motorized and non-motorized options. The project aims to
37 address the need for trailheads, organize trail systems, and accommodate activities like rock
38 crawling. Notable developments include the leasing of property for an ATV park and plans by
39 SITLA for further organization. The project anticipates significant revenue generation through
40 events and grants have been applied for to improve trail infrastructure. Several major events are
41 being planned with over 700 visitors and 400 ATV machines expected to attend bringing in
42 \$750,000 of revenue to Uintah County. There are also several private events scheduled. Several
43 grants have been applied for to purchase equipment to keep the trails in good shape and install a

**MINUTES OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL and UINTAH COUNTY COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING HELD MARCH 13, 2024**

44 bathroom at Moonshine Arch. Mike Cook suggested everyone visit the trail website
45 Dinolandtrails.com.

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47 **REPORT ON JUSTICE COURT FINANCIALS:**

48 Quinn Bennion shared updates on the combined financial operations of the justice courts. The
49 consolidation of courts from Naples, Vernal and Uintah County into a unified justice court system
50 has been ongoing, aiming for better financial management and efficiency. Quinn reported with
51 the combined revenue and the arrangement between Uintah County and Naples City, Uintah
52 County covers the cost for Naples. There was more discussion on the revenue distribution,
53 expenses, staffing changes, and operational challenges. Judge Ray Richards reported that another
54 area of the State has combined their courts and it is working well. Access to the court is good and
55 they handled 6000 cases through the system. Quinn Bennion noted that each entity is responsible
56 for their own prosecution and indigent defense. Mike Wilkins indicated that the State wants to
57 take over the courts and the County is absorbing the operation expenses for the building so that
58 cost needs to be added into the court expense. There was some discussion regarding the cost for
59 other items being taken care of by the City. Judge Richards stated that by statute there has to be
60 a court. There is a pilot program for a divisional court. He noted that in the long-run combining
61 the courts has been a good thing. Quinn Bennion suggested the Interlocal Agreement be revisited
62 to cover all the expenses.

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64 **UPDATE ON CENTRAL UTAH PROJECT INITIATIVE TO ENCOURAGE
65 CONVERSION OF LAWNS TO ZERO SCAPE:**

66 Gabby Blackburn reported on the water wise incentives being offered by Central Water Conservancy District and displayed the website
67 for more information. Commissioner Sonja Norton asked if it is only for specific counties.
68 Gabby Blackburn stated it could be for areas outside the Wasatch Front although the incentives
69 are not as high. Quinn Bennion indicated that the agricultural use of water in Uintah County is
70 around 95% so the benefit of household conservation is not as high. Gabby Blackburn stated that
71 USU also has an extension office here for waterwise landscaping and interns available to help you
72 plan. Councilmember Robin O'Driscoll stated this would be good info for a new builder.

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74 It was noted that Vernal City would be going into a closed session as a separate item.

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76 **ADJOURN:** There being no further business; *Councilmember Corey Foley moved to adjourn.*
77 *Councilmember Randel Mills seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote*
78 *and the meeting was declared adjourned.*

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