SEVEN COUNTY INFRASTRUCTURE COALITION
MEETING MINUTES
July 11 at 10:00 a.m.
Carbon County Commission Chambers (Anchor Location + Electronic)
751 East 100 North
Price, Utah 84501
(801) 712-7622

Board Members Present: Casey Hopes (Carbon County), Lynn Sitterud (Emery County), Greg Jensen (Sevier County), Brad Horrocks (Uintah County) virtual, Silvia Stubbs (San Juan County), Greg Miles (Duchesne County) virtual, and Jack Lytle (Daggett County) virtual.
Also in attendance: Keith Heaton, Brian Barton, Jon Stearmer, Stacey Herpel, Mike Hawley, Daniel Hawley, Melanie Sasser, Doug Rasmussen, Jay Johnson, Commissioner Tracy Killion (Duchesne County).
Attended telephonically: Kelly Carter, Stacey Herpel, Melissa Cano, Candace Powers, Will Lane, Mark Michel, Joel Brown, Amy Hadden Marsh, John Laursen, Chris Pieper.
Others Present: (Please notify staff at 385-337-0033 of any spelling corrections or if you were present and not listed.)

Public Meeting Participation Information:

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

https://jonesanddemille.zoom.us/j/86748043561

Or Join by Telephone:
1-253-215-8782 or
1-346-248-7799 or
1-669-900-6833
Webinar ID: 867 4804 3561

1. Welcome and Pledge of Allegiance (Casey Hopes)

Chairman Hopes welcomed everyone to the meeting at 10:00 AM. All board members were present with Commissioner Miles, Commissioner Lytle, and Commissioner Horrocks attending virtually. Chairman Hopes had everyone in attendance introduce themselves and then led the Pledge of Allegiance. He then moved to the second agenda item.

2. Public Comment (Casey Hopes)

Public comment was accepted verbally, during the meeting, telephonically by Zoom, and by electronic written submission at stacey@7county.utah.gov. Electronic written comments will be forwarded to the Board Members. All comments are summarized in the meeting minutes. A complete copy of any written comments submitted may be requested at the email address provided herein. Chairman Hopes then turned time over to Melissa Cano for those wishing to make public comments electronically.

There were no virtual comments at this time.

Chairman Hopes then asked if there were any comments in the Commission Room?

Seeing no comments online or in the Commission Room, Chairman Hopes moved to the next item on the agenda.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes for June 13, 2024 (Casey Hopes)

Chairman Hopes inquired about changes or updates to the minutes, there being none, requested a motion.

Motion to approve June 13, 2024 meeting minutes made by Commissioner Sitterud and seconded by Commissioner Jensen.

Chairman Hopes called for a vote to approve the minutes. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Chairman Hopes then moved to the next agenda item.

4. Greendale Recreation (Jack Lytle and Keith Heaton)

Chairman Hopes turned the time over to Commissioner Lytle and Director Heaton for updates on the Greendale Recreation Project.

Director Heaton stated that things have been a bit quiet on the Greendale Project as they are still currently working the environmental checklist with NEPA. There is a meeting July 12 where we should get that wrapped up and then have another meeting and have it all submitted before our next meeting where we will have more information.

Chairman Hopes asked if there were any additional comments, being none he moved on to the next agenda item.

6. Report on the San Rafael Research Center (Lynn Sitterud)

Chairman Hopes turned the time over to Commissioner Sitterud for the San Rafael Research Center report. Commissioner Sitterud stated that they finally got the footers poured for the combustion building. The foundations and the finishing compaction are being done today and tomorrow. The core part of the floor will be done next week and then they will be putting up the building and erecting steel. The state was not able to finish up all of the paperwork or the transfer, so they will come back down to sign the lease agreement with the state. 60 days have been planned to get everything in order and taken care of and then it is back in their hands to get all the paperwork done and the transfer complete.

Chairman Hopes thanked Commissioner Sitterud for the update and asked for any questions or further discussion, there being none moved on to the next agenda item.

8. Report on San Juan County Projects (Sylvia Stubbs)

Chairman Hopes then turned the time over to Director Heaton. Director Heaton stated that they have two active projects currently. The Navajo Mountain Road project reported last month that UDOT had requested that Jones and DeMille give them an updated cost estimate, then UDOT changed their minds and are going to have their in-house estimator do the estimate, but they are still moving forward.

Director Heaton stated that there has been continued progress on the San Juan Water Project. We are expecting the draft report from Jones and DeMille to be wrapped up in the next couple of months. Jones and DeMille is making good progress on the Halchita option that was discussed at last month's meeting and they are working with the Navajo Tribal Utility Company on that aspect of the project.

Director Heaton turned the time over to Dan Hawley to update more on the water project. Mr. Hawley stated that Halchita does not have a water source right now and that they are trucking water in, so we have been running some models and scenarios to interconnect them; what effects that would be for the Mexican Hat system and what would happen to their treatment plan to be able to share that water down to the South. We are in the middle of those models and will have a draft report that actually is going to be done by the end of this week. We have been working closely with the Navajo Nation sharing some data. We are still gathering more information from them regarding their usage throughout Halchita that will help us understand the sighting of any additional housing or tanks that would be needed for both systems.

Chairman Hopes thanked Director Heaton and Mr. Hawley for the San Juan County project updates and asked if there were any more questions. Chairman Hopes then moved to the next agenda item.

Report on Uinta Basin Railway Project (Brad Horrocks)

Chairman Hopes turned the time over to Commissioner Horrocks for updates on the Uinta Basin Railway. Commissioner Horrocks stated that he has nothing to share at this time but will have more updates in closed session. Commissioner Horrocks stated that he cannot reiterate enough about how much energy means to our country and transportation. This project we need to continue to work for energy dominance from the United States standpoint and so he appreciates the efforts of the team who have continually worked hard.

Chairman Hopes asked for any questions or further discussion, there being none moved on to the next agenda item.

9. Legal Update (Jay Johnson)

Commissioner Hopes turned the time over to Jay Johnson to give the legal update on the Uinta Basin Railway Project. Mr. Johnson thanked the coalition and stated that for this public session he would like to inform the Commission that on June 24th the Supreme Court of the United States granted our petition for reviewing the DC Circuit decision that sent the Uinta Basin Railway Project back to the Surface Transportation Board. Under the Supreme Court’s rules, we have to file written briefs to explain our positions in more detail. We expect the United States of America, Eagle County, and the Center for Biological Diversity Group that opposes the project to file their own written briefs. There will be an oral argument before the entire Supreme Court sometime later this year and the court will make a decision in our case by the end of June 2025. That is where things stand and we will talk more about legal strategy in closed session.

Commissioner Hopes thanked Mr. Johnson for his briefing and asked if there were any questions. Seeing none at this time, Commissioner Hopes moved to the next agenda item.

10. Executive Director Report (Keith Heaton)

Chairman Hopes turned time over to Executive Director Heaton for the director’s report. Director Heaton stated that he appreciates the opportunity to address the board and the public. Things have been progressing well. This past Tuesday, myself, John Stearmer, Brian Barton, and Commissioner Miles had the opportunity to spend the day meeting in the offices of Drexel Hamilton Infrastructure Partners with Mark Michel and Will Lane. This was an exceptional meeting and we talked about moving our joint efforts forward. We found out a lot more about Drexel Hamilton and the other projects that they are working on, how their operations function, financing, and funding. They seem to be doing very well, which is pleasing and they are excellent partners to have in this project. We have had many ups and downs through the years and they continue to represent the project well and be great partners. Director Heaton stated that he can assure each of the commissioners that they are legitimate; from time to time we get questions from people who do not know as well as we do, but rest assured that they are excellent partners and they are fully committed to the railway project and to the work that we are trying to do in the Seven County area. Director Heaton stated that it was nice to meet with them and see how things operate. Also, Mr. Michel introduced us to a similar entity called Valor Infrastructure Partners, that also operates in the energy sector, but in the renewable energy area like windmills and solar panels.They are interested in expanding to Utah. Director Heaton stated that they have accepted an invitation to attend our next board meeting in August, so we look forward to having a presentation from them at that time. They do want to set up a large operation, most likely solar in Eastern Utah. They have a couple of areas that they are looking at and they think that the help we can provide through permits and leasing of federal lands would be a perfect match.

Director Heaton stated that we talk to a lot of people about many potential projects. The project that they offer has more potential than many. Director Heaton stated that he is looking forward to meeting with Valor Infrastructure Partners and learning more about their intentions. Director Heaton stated that we continue to work closely with a couple of private sector entities in the Uintah Basin on natural gas that has to do with the right of ways that we have, along with other economic opportunities. There are good things happening, they are moving slowly which is typical of these types of lines, but they are progressing. We have meetings set up again next week to hopefully continue those projects and keep moving forward.

Chairman Hopes then called for any additional questions for Director Heaton. Chairman Hopes thanked Director Heaton for both his report and all the work he is doing in support of the Seven County Coalition. Chairman Hopes then moved on to the next agenda item.

11. Strategic Communication Report (Melissa Cano)

Chairman Hopes turned the time over to Melissa Cano for the strategic communications report. Ms. Cano stated that she had two major updates. The first is that the Facebook page is up and live. A screenshot was emailed to all the commissioners feedback and a questionnaire to fill out so we can start our discussions. The first post will just be about the Coalition and what we do for the communities and an introduction of all the commissioners. Ms. Cano stated that she would like to set up a 30 minute meeting with each of the commissioners to go over introductions.

Ms. Cano stated that the second update is in light of the announcement that Mr. Johnson just shared and we have been talking about, regarding the railway project. We have had 67 media engagements across the board the past two weeks. We have a lot of positive news out there and we are just going to continue to share the message as we get ready for the end of the year.

Chairman Hopes asked if there were any questions or discussion from the board, seeing none he then moved on to the next agenda item.

12. Engineers Report (Jones & DeMille)

Chairman Hopes turned the time over to Brian Barton with Jones & DeMille for the Engineers Report. Mr. Barton stated that they are covering some great ground today, in a very quick manner. We have touched on several of the projects. Mr. Barton stated that Ms. Cano has done a great job of fielding a lot of the media inquiries and action that comes from the Supreme Court that Mr. Johnson discussed earlier, so we appreciate her efforts.

Mr. Barton stated that he is going to turn the time over to Dan Hawley. Mr. Hawley stated that we have been looking through several of the previous projects that have been proposed years ago and just updating the feasibility of that, the cost, and then the denominations that was expressed in our last meeting with them a couple of months ago to see if there is anything in the Navajo Mountain area that may have a need. We had a project a couple of years ago down there when we ran a well with the school. We are kind of resurrecting that. We are looking to understand how that existing water system looks to them based on some of the recent projects that have been done to see if there is a project there that comes to life and write up a draft report review with that.

Chairman Hopes thanked Jones & DeMille for their update and all the work they have been doing for the Coalition and San Juan County. Chairman Hopes asked if there were any more questions about the Engineering Report. There being no further discussion, Chairman Hopes moved on to the next agenda item.

13. Presentation, Approval and Adoption of Monthly Expenses. (Smuin, Rich & Marsing)

Chairman Hopes turned the time over to Doug Rasmussen for the presentation, approval and adoption of monthly expenses. Mr. Rasmussen presented the financial information and requested payment approval today. He went on to request payment approval amounting to $124,620.88. If there is any discussion or review of any items included in the payment request today, he is happy to entertain or discuss those individual line items

SEVEN COUNTY INFRASTRUCTURE COALITION PAYMENT APPROVAL
July 11, 2024 at 10:00 am
751 East 100 North
Price, Utah 84501

Expenses Previously Approved by Board :

Vendor	Check #	Invoice #	Amount	Description	Grant
Keith Heaton - Payroll	Direct Deposit	7/22/24-10/14/24	59,186.35	Payroll/Admin	General Grant

Checks Currently Being Approved:

Vendor		Invoice #	Amount	Description	Funding Source
VOID #2407, 2424, 2437, 2440					
Smuin, Rich & Marsing	2453	49376	3,086.75	Consulting Per Contract	General Grant
Keith Heaton	2454	26	257.10	Director's Travel and Admin Expenses	General Grant
Stacey Herpel	2455	0624	1,480.62	Contract Labor	General Grant
Public Employees Health Program	2456	352184	1,668.74	Insurance Premiums - July	General Grant
Health Equity	2457	humr89o	2.10	HSA Administration Fees - July	General Grant
Aycock, Miles & Associates	2458	43238	7,200.00	2023 Financial Audit	General Grant
Jones & DeMille	2459	0134643	4,154.09	Program Management and Engineering	General Grant
Jonathan A Stearmer	2460	06/01/2024-06/30/2024	3,276.69	General - Legal Services	General Grant
Jonathan A Stearmer	2461	06/01/2024-06/30/2024	1,675.00	Uinta Rail Line - Legal Service	Uinta Basin Railway Project Grant -STB Regulatory and Other Legal Services - Phase 2
Venable LLP (1/2 Invoice)	2462	2710831	12,594.79	Uinta Rail Line - Litigation Challenges to STB Decision	Uinta Basin Railway Project Grant -STB Regulatory and Other Legal Services - Phase 2
ETJ Law	2463	2846	2,187.50	Uinta Rail Line - Litigation Challenges to STB Decision - April	Uinta Basin Railway Project Grant -STB Regulatory and Other Legal Services - Phase 2
ETJ Law	2463	2864	525.00	Uinta Rail Line - Litigation Challenges to STB Decision - May	Uinta Basin Railway Project Grant -STB Regulatory and Other Legal Services - Phase 2
Jones & DeMille	2464	0134641	11,600.00	Uinta Rail Line - Engineering	Uinta Basin Railway Project Grant - Program Management Services - Phase 2
Jones & DeMille	2464	0134641	21,500.00	Uinta Rail Line - Engineering	Uinta Basin Railway Project Grant - Strategic Communications - Phase 2
ETJ Law	2465	2847	12,293.75	Molten Salt/Reasearch Center Facility - Legal Services - April	Energy Research Center
ETJ Law	2465	2865	12,118.75	Molten Salt/Reasearch Center Facility - Legal Services - January	Energy Research Center
Jones & DeMille	2466	0134644	29,000.00	Navajo Water Settlement - Engineering	Division of Drinking Water
Total Payment Approval			**$ 124,620.88**		

Motion to approve expenses for June in the amount of $124,620.88 was made by Commissioner Jensen seconded by Commissioner Stubbs. Chairman Hopes called for the vote. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Mr. Rassmussen then reviewed the balance sheet which was completed by June 30, 2024. It shows the total assets and liabilities of the Coalition with the second page showing profit and loss statements for January through May. We also have included a profit/loss by class which shows the funding and expenditures by project. We have detailed information for activity that has happened through April by project as well. He then asked if there were any questions regarding the financial information.

Motion to approve the financial report for July was made by Commissioner Sitterud seconded by Commissioner Jensen. Chairman Hopes called for the vote. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Mr. Rassmussen, again for information purposes only, reviewed the project sheet. This does not require any approval from the Coalition. Mr. Rassmussen stated that this concluded the financial update to the Coalition.

Chairman Hopes thanked Smuin, Rich & Marsing for their work efforts and moved to the next item on the agenda to a closed session.

14. Motion for closed (executive) session pursuant to 52-4-205 (Litigation, personnel, real estate acquisition, &/or character/professional competency). (Casey Hopes)

Chairman Hopes then requested a motion for a closed session.

Motion to move into closed session for litigation was made by Commissioner Sitterud, seconded by Commissioner Jensen.

Chairman Hopes called for a roll call vote to move into closed session. Motion passed; closed session began at 10:33 AM.

SEVEN COUNTY INFRASTRUCTURE COALITION VOTING

Carbon Board Member	Yea _X_	No ___
Daggett Board Member	Yea _X_	No ___
Duchesne Board Member	Yea _X_	No ___
Emery Board Member	Yea _X_	No ___
San Juan Board Member	Yea _X_	No ___
Sevier Board Member	Yea _X_	No ___
Uintah Board Member	Yea _X_	No ___

Chairman Hopes requested a motion to move back into open session and exit the closed session.

Motion to move out of closed session was made by Commissioner Sitterud with a second by Commissioner Jensen.

Chairman Hopes called for a roll call vote with motion passing at 1:38 PM.

SEVEN COUNTY INFRASTRUCTURE COALITION VOTING:

Carbon Board Member	Yea _X_	No ___
Daggett Board Member	Yea _X_	No ___
Duchesne Board Member	Yea _X_	No ___
Emery Board Member	Yea _X_	No ___
San Juan Board Member	Yea _X_	No ___
Sevier Board Member	Yea _X_	No ___
Uintah Board Member	Yea _X_	No ___

Motion to authorize our staff to engage additional legal counsel for the railway litigation was made by Commissioner Miles seconded by Commissioner Lytle. Chairman Hopes called for the vote. **The motion passed unanimously.**

15. **Motion to Adjourn** (Casey Hopes)

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Jensen at 1:41 PM.

A motion to approve the July 11, 2024 meeting minutes was made by Commissioner

__________________________, seconded by Commissioner ____________________________.

SEVEN COUNTY INFRASTRUCTURE COALITION VOTING:

Carbon Board Member Yes ___ No ___

Daggett Board Member Yes ___ No ___

Duchesne Board Member Yes ___ No ___

Emery Board Member Yes ___ No ___

San Juan Board Member Yes ___ No ___

Sevier Board Member Yes ___ No ___

Uintah Board Member Yes ___ No ___

____

Co-Chair: Greg Miles

____

Co-Chair: Casey Hopes

(COALITION SEAL)

ATTEST:

____

Stacey Herpel