SEVEN COUNTY INFRASTRUCTURE COALITION
MEETING MINUTES
August 8 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) virtual, Brad Horrocks (Uintah County) excused, Silvia Stubbs (San Juan County), Greg Miles (Duchesne County), and Jack Lytle (Daggett County) virtual.
Also in attendance: Keith Heaton, Brian Barton, Jon Stearmer, Stacey Herpel, Mike Hawley, Daniel Hawley, Melanie Sasser, Commissioner Sonja Norton (Uintah County), Commissioner Tracy Killion (Duchesne County), Joel Brown, Deb Herron, Aaqib Syed, and Thomas Mickel.
Attended telephonically: Kelly Carter, Melissa Cano, Jay Johnson, Will Lane, Mark Michel, Lori Haslem, Cameron Olson, Paul Clement, Stan Holmes, Commissioner Irene Hansen, Commissioner John Laursen, and Commissioner Irene Hansen.
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 (Greg Miles)

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

2. Public Comment (Greg Miles)

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.

Stan Holmes requested that we have the Seven County Infrastructure Coalition Website updated with the meeting schedule and agenda for any upcoming meetings.

Melissa Cano stated that they were aware of some issues with the website on the back end in the past week and we are working to get these corrected

Chairman Miles thanked Mr. Holmes and Ms. Cano for their comments and asked if there were any comments in the Commission Room?

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

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes for July 11, 2024 (Greg Miles)

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

Chairman Miles did request corrections in the meeting minutes to be made in several paragraphs.

Motion to approve July 11, 2024 meeting minutes with stated corrections made by Commissioner Sitterud and seconded by Commissioner Hopes.

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

Chairman Miles then moved to the next agenda item.

4. Valor Infrastructure (Aaqib Syed and Thomas Mickel)

Chairman Miles turned the time over to Aaqib Syed and Thomas Mickel from Valor Infrastructure for their presentation on their companies plans on venturing into Utah and what their company has to offer for energy options.

Mr.Syed thanked the coalition for allowing them to come and present today. Mr. Syed introduced himself and gave a brief overview of his background and his primary role at Valor, which is project manager out of the western part of Texas.

Mr. Thomas introduced himself and gave a brief overview of his background and his primary role in Valor as the Director of Land Services, which is to oversee lease acquisition and any real estate purchases to develop renewable energy projects across the county.

Mr. Syed proceeded to present to the Coalition about who Valor Infrastructure is, what they do, and why they are interested in Utah, more specifically how they could help development in Utah. Mr. Syed stated that Valor Infrastructure Headquarters is based out of Palm Beach Gardens, Florida and they are a 12 person team total. The team came to Valor because they wanted to develop more efficiently.

Mr. Syed explained that there are all kinds of developers in the renewable energy industry. What makes Valor Infrastructure different is that we are a utility scale developer. We develop large scale wind, solar, and battery farms across the county. We start from the beginning in terms of finding a viable large region to develop and deliver projects. Valor's portfolio currently consists of 13 energy and battery energy storage system projects across the United States and in four ISO Markets.

Mr. Syed stated that their main values are vision, integrity, purpose, and execution. Valor Infrastructure are independent thinkers and value entrepreneurship among our team. One of the team's strengths is that we prioritize process orientation and a disciplined approach to development. Valor Infrastructure is known primarily for our ability to do wind, mainly because all of our people were prior wind developers. Valor saw a large demand for wind in the industry by large companies that did not know how to do wind. 11.3 gigawatts developed to COD throughout North America. 40+ greenfield operating wind projects, which is the development from scratch where you go all the way through construction beginning to end. 20+ repowered wind projects, is an existing project that you are negotiating a power purchase agreement with and upsizing technology. 2 gigawatts wind PPA's and hedges negotiated and executed. 77 years of collective wind experience.

Mr. Syed stated the approach to project development. Valor Infrastructure sets successful conditions for project execution by considering technical design constraints and project economics throughout the development process. The development process starts with the process. The process is land and transmission, commercial diligence, and political and regulatory. The second part is opportunity, which consist of land exclusivity, site due diligence, financial analysis, and resilience scoring. The third phase is the project itself. The project is about onboarding, interconnection queue prep, and COD.

Mr. Syed then presented to the commissioners why Valor wants to focus on developing in Utah. One of the reasons is that Utah is underdeveloped, if you look at a map of projects in Utah, they are sparse. The reason for that is because there is a lot of federal and state land in Utah and people are afraid to develop on federal land. Mr. Syed stated that he believes people are afraid to develop on federal land because they lack the knowledge of how to develop that land. The process can be long, arduous, and bureaucratic since it is a federal level. In terms of availability, Utah has a lot of new transmission capacity and low growth. Utah is one of the fastest growing states in the country, so Utah has a lot of economic development due to growth. Utah is open to project development and new business development. Another reason is that Utah has excellent wind and solar resources, there are pockets of wind resources and full irradiance in Utah, which is the best in the country, so there is potential for these technologies to be utilized.

Chairman Miles thank Mr. Syed and Mr. Mickel for their time and presentation and asked the commission if there were any questions for Valor Infrastructure. Chairman Miles asked what type of incentives does Valor Infrastructure ask from local government agencies?

Mr. Mickel responded that they do not ask for much but would ask for tax abatement. Those abatements can be mutually beneficial and we are transparent with providing that with a third party to provide an analysis on that for the local government, although they are not guaranteed. That is the only thing that we would ask the local government.

Chairman Miles stated that Utah is a growing state and is in need of power. Chairman Miles stated that he did not hear Valor Infrastructure talk a lot about batteries and asked if they have been involved in battery storage projects, size, and type?

Mr. Syed responded that they have several battery storage projects. Currently there are three projects in Texas that are all 200 MW, 2 hour batteries. The batteries are large enough to provide power to about 30,000 homes.

Commissioner Hopes stated that one of the big concerns of the Utah State Legislature is green power and how it affects the grid. Green power is not clean energy on the market or on the transmission line. Commissioner Hopes asked what efforts has Valor Infrastructure taken to make sure that the power they are dumping onto the grid is clean? Do you use high grade transformers and components to make sure that you are not impacting the grid?

Mr. Mickel responded that they think it is important to state that we believe in all of the above energy approaches and we do not pick favorites when it comes to growing energy liabilities.

There are types of energy that we can deploy quicker and to meet demand, renewables play a role in that. There are ways that we can develop a project. We have to submit a plan to the local ISO for how that power is going to be integrated into their local grid system, and they approve a study that shows this is what can be injected and this is how it can be reliably transmitted among the set system. There is a long study process that goes into this, everything else is industry standard, so the components we use all come from the same places.

Chairman Miles thanked Valor Infrastructure for making the trip to present to the coalition today and this was great information. The coalition appreciates their time and recitation. With no additional comments moved on to the next agenda item.

5. Presentation of the 2023 Financial Audit (Cameron Olson)

Chairman Miles turned the time over to Cameron Olson for the presentation on the 2023 Financial Audit. Mr. Olson thanked the coalition for letting him join the meeting today.

Mr. Olson stated that looking over all the testing results, everything looked great, and all the files were in order. Mr. Olson stated that everything was done in a timely manner and was appreciated. Mr. Olson stated he wanted to go over a few financial bullet points on the statement of revenue and expenses for the year. Intergovernmental revenue for the year was $2,899,000 being the majority. Grant proceeds were $1,114,545 from CIB, and other revenues being $202,554, with a total revenue of $4,216,484 for the year. Mr. Olson then asked if there were any questions regarding these amounts? There being no questions Mr. Olson then moved onto the allocations of cash.

Mr. Olson stated that the allocations of cash for the coalition came to a total of $156,297. The majority of that at the end of the year was in the checking account $153,404 and Utah Public Treasurer Pool $2,893. Mr. Olson asked if there were any questions on these amounts? Seeing none Mr. Olson then moved on to capital assets.

Mr. Olson stated that he was not going to go into depth on capital assets, but wanted to point out the accumulated depreciation that took place during the last year of existing equipment which totaled $202,227.

Mr. Olson then moved to the letter of internal control. This is in compliance and that is one of the important parts to proper internal controls and the testing that we do, we usually test internal controls to make sure proper approvals are taking place in separation of duties and everything looks great. Mr. Olson stated that they found no deficiencies taking place. Mr. Olson stated that the second letter is the state compliance letter and they are required to test different avenues of state code and it is not the same every year. Some things that were tested this year were budgetary fund balance fraud, risk assessment, cash management, and correct public treasury bonds. Mr. Olson stated that he was happy to report no findings and everything was in compliance. Mr. Olson then asked if there were any questions about the audit?

Chairman Miles thanked Mr. Olson for his report on the 2023 Financial Audit and appreciated all his work that he does for the coalition.

Chairman Miles asked for a motion to accept the findings of the 2023 Financial Audit.

Motion to accept the 2023 Financial Audit was made by Commissioner Sitterud and seconded by Commissioner Stubbs.

Chairman Miles called for a vote to accept the 2023 Financial Audit. **The motion passed unanimously.**

6. Greendale Recreation (Jack Lytle & Keith Heaton)

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

Director Heaton thanked Commissioner Lytle and stated there is no new progress to report on at this time.

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

7. Uinta Basin Railway Update (Brad Horrocks & Greg Miles)

Chairman Miles stated that Commissioner Horrocks is excused from this meeting and turned the time over to Director Heaton for updates on the Uintah Basin Railway Project. Director Heaton thanked the commission and stated that they do not have much to add at this time other than we are preparing items in relation to the Supreme Court ventures.

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

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

Chairman Miles turned the time over to Commissioner Sitterud for the San Rafael Research Center report. Commissioner Sitterud stated that the project was handed over to the state in July. The windows are being installed this coming weekend and the building will be completed by the 1st of September. Currently we are not aware of who will be managing the facility. The Office of Energy has taken over paying the bills and payroll and stated that they would like the County to stay involved to complete the warm hand off and then our work is complete.

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

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

Chairman Miles then turned the time over to Commissioner Stubbs for an update on the multiple projects in San Juan County. Commissioner Stubbs stated that they have the water project that she will leave that update to the engineers. The second project is the Navajo Mountain Road Project which is one that is very needed and wanted. The engineers are currently working on this project and navigating a path through the mountain. One of the issues is how the road will be managed, so we have had several positive meetings with the tribe to discuss the managing roles. Part of managing the road is being able to allow medical and fire to travel the road without future incidents. Commissioner Stubbs stated that everyone has been working very hard to make the mountain road possible, now we are just figuring out who will maintain it after the work is completed.

Chairman Miles thanked Commissioner Stubbs for the San Juan County project updates and asked if there were any more comments or questions. Chairman Miles then moved to the next agenda item.

10. Executive Director Report (Keith Heaton)

Chairman Miles turned time over to Executive Director Heaton for the director's report. Director Heaton stated that he wanted to address what Mr. Holmes commented on earlier in the meeting and appreciated him for bringing that to our attention. Director Heaton stated that it was his responsibility and the issue has been addressed and should not be a problem moving forward. Director Heaton stated that we are in compliance with the Open and Public Meetings Act through the state website and the Seven County Coalition Website is there for a convenience factor, but it is important to the coalition and it will be posted monthly moving forward.

Director Heaton stated that we have stalled out on our right of way easements with the natural gas pipeline and we are working with private entities on this, it is just a little stalled out, we remain optimistic that they will move forward in time.

Director Heaton stated that the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity Executive Director Ryan Starks and his leadership team came out to Daggett County and discussed the Greendale Resort Project. We appreciate the governor's office for their support and their interest in the project. We have substantially completed the application for the Forest Service, we are putting together some maps and finishing some issues with the water, which is always an issue with any project, and some wildlife issues and the migration corridor that needs to be addressed, but nothing that would hold up the project. Director Heaton stated that the most important part is that our private partners come through with some funding so that we can move forward with the environmental impact statement in the next few weeks.

Director Heaton appreciated Jones and DeMille for the work they are doing on the water study and taking the lead on that project and completing the draft. We have a meeting scheduled tomorrow and in the next couple of months we will reach project conclusion. We expect good things to come from that study that will result in people getting access to water, which is a large issue in this region.

Chairman Miles then called for any additional questions for Director Heaton. Chairman Miles thanked Director Heaton and moved on to the next agenda item.

11. Strategic Communication Report (Melissa Cano)

Chairman Miles turned the time over to Melissa Cano for the strategic communications report. Ms. Cano presented to the coalition the newly established and accepted media page on Facebook that is now live. One of the posts created goes into Seven Counties and the makeup of the coalition. The second pending post is about Chairman Miles with an interview. Ms. Cano reminded the remainder of the commissioners to schedule time to complete their interviews and bios. Ms. Cano stated that we will begin highlighting each of the members before focusing on the project component. Ms. Cano stated that we are going to do a soft introduction for the first few months, but wanted to update the coalition on the media pages progress.

Chairman Miles 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 Miles turned the time over to Brian Barton with Jones & DeMille for the Engineers Report. Mr. Barton stated that there are alot of moving pieces they are involved in, in support of those efforts discussed by Director Heaton. Mr. Barton turned the time over to Dan Hawley to give the coalition updates on the Navajo Water Project and then will discuss the Uinta Basin Railway budget to do the six month update for budget line item recommendations.

Mr. Hawley stated that he wanted to add one thing from Director Heaton's update on the San Juan Water study and when we will be able to meet with them. It will probably be in the next few weeks around August 22 to go over the draft report. Mr. Hawley then turned the time back to Mr. Barton to talk about the Uinta Basin Railway budget six month update.

Mr. Barton stated that after all the adjustments that have been made with legal assistance and other items that were discussed over the past month there is still over a half million dollars contingency. There are still a few line item adjustments that still need to be updated. Under legal services we have added in the estimated fees for the Supreme Court. We have made a few adjustments to some of the line items to zero them out. Others, such as insurance, leave a little in there for the anticipated budget needs for the next six months and through the end of the year or beyond. Mr. Barton stated that they had some remaining budget for private equity bonds and then just the ongoing work with the coalition. As they are right now with the adjustments there would be a remaining balance for that time period of $703,000. The other budget we looked at is under strategic communication. Under strategic communication we have budgeted $400,000 to cover the next several months and a $50,000 budget for any outreach, if needed. Mr. Barton stated that with those budgets being what they are, everything else is zeroed out, which leaves $562,000 left in contingency, aside from those that are intended to be utilized in the next six months.

Mr. Barton stated that even though we do have just over half a million dollars on assigned contingencies, that they started with budgeting this in 2018 and to be in 2024 and still are able to move ahead without relying on others at this point has been incredible, but they are at a point to start thinking about what is next. Jones and DeMille understand that it will be a process to get through the STB process, to get the Forest Service permits reinstated, so the next steps need to be anticipated. They have done a lot of leg work as far as fundraising and working funding opportunities with CIB and the Legislature, but we are at a point where we need to start having those conversations and putting a finger on what is next.

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

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

Chairman Miles turned the time over to Melanie Sasser for the presentation, approval and adoption of monthly expenses. Ms. Sasser presented the financial information and requested payment approval today. She went on to request payment approval amounting to $140,669.75. If there is any discussion or review of any items included in the payment request today, she is happy to entertain or discuss those individual line items

SEVEN COUNTY INFRASTRUCTURE COALITION PAYMENT APPROVAL
August 8, 2024 at 10:00 am
751 East 100 North
Price, Utah 84501

Expenses Previously Approved by Board :

Vendor	Check #	Invoice #	Amount	Description	Grant

Checks Currently Being Approved:

Vendor		Invoice #	Amount	Description	Funding Source
Smuin, Rich & Marsing	2467	49478	3,133.45	Consulting Per Contract	General Grant
Keith Heaton	2468	27	1,029.73	Director's Travel and Admin Expenses	General Grant
Stacey Herpel	2469	0724	832.00	Contract Labor	General Grant
Public Employees Health Program	2470	370252	1,668.74	Insurance Premiums - August	General Grant
Utah Office of Energy Development	2471	OED2501	10,000.00	Western States & Tribal Nations Mbmshp.	General Grant
Jones & DeMille	2472	0134876	3,421.25	Program Management and Engineering	General Grant
Jonathan A Stearmer	2473	7/31/2024	3,026.69	General - Legal Services	General Grant
Jonathan A Stearmer	2474	7/31/2024	8,797.64	Uinta Rail Line - Legal Service	Uinta Basin Railway Project Grant -STB Regulatory and Other Legal Services - Phase 2
Venable LLP (1/2 Invoice)	2475	2719839	29,166.50	Uinta Rail Line - Litigation Challenges to STB Decision	Uinta Basin Railway Project Grant -STB Regulatory and Other Legal Services - Phase 2
ETJ Law	2476	2887	262.50	Uinta Rail Line - Litigation Challenges to STB Decision - June	Uinta Basin Railway Project Grant -STB Regulatory and Other Legal Services - Phase 2
Jones & DeMille	2477	0134878	17,000.00	Uinta Rail Line - Engineering	Uinta Basin Railway Project Grant - Program Management Services - Phase 2
Jones & DeMille	2477	0134878	17,500.00	Uinta Rail Line - Engineering	Uinta Basin Railway Project Grant - Strategic Communications - Phase 2
ETJ Law	2478	2888	11,331.25	Molten Salt/Reasearch Center Facility - Legal Services - June	Energy Research Center
Jones & DeMille	2479	0134877	33,500.00	Navajo Water Settlement - Engineering	Division of Drinking Water
Total Payment Approval			**$ 140,669.75**		

Motion to approve expenses for July in the amount of $140,669.75 was made by Commissioner Hopes seconded by Commissioner Stubbs. Chairman Miles called for the vote. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Ms. Sasser then reviewed the balance sheet which was completed by July 31, 2024. It shows the total assets and liabilities of the Coalition with the second page showing profit and loss statements for January through June. 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 July by project as well. She then asked if there were any questions regarding the financial information.

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

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

Chairman Miles 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). (Greg Miles)

Chairman Miles then requested a motion for a closed session.

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

Chairman Miles called for a roll call vote to move into closed session. Motion passed; closed session began at 11:00 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 ___	No _X__(Excused)

Chairman Miles 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 Hopes with a second by Commissioner Lytle.

Chairman Miles called for a roll call vote with motion passing at 12:05 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 ___ No _X__(Excused)

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 (Greg Miles)

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Hopes at 12:30 PM.

A motion to approve the August 8, 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 ___

Seven County Infrastructure Coalition

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 ___

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Co-Chair: Greg Miles

____

Co-Chair: Casey Hopes

(COALITION SEAL)

ATTEST:

____

Stacey Herpel