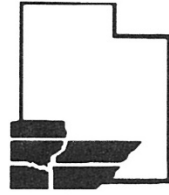


[DRAFT MINUTES]

Five County Association of Governments

1070 West 1600 South, Building B
St. George, Utah 84770

Fax (435) 673-3540



SOUTHWEST UTAH

Post Office Box 1550
St. George, Utah 84771

Office (435) 673-3548

MINUTES

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

**WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 21, 2024, AT 12:30 P.M.
MEETING HELD AT FESTIVAL HALL; COMBINED ROOMS 5 & 6;
96 NORTH MAIN ST., CEDAR CITY, UTAH**

MEETING WAS ALSO AVAILABLE TO BOARD MEMBERS VIA A ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Commissioner Gil Almquist, Chair
Commissioner Paul Cozzens, Vice-Chair
Commissioner Wade Hollinghead
Commissioner Jerry Taylor
Hurricane City Mayor Nannette Billings
Orderville Town Mayor Lyle Goulding
Ms. Stephanie Hill
Mr. Tyler Fails
Mr. Terry Hutchinson

REPRESENTING

Washington County Commission
Iron County Commission
Beaver County Commission
Garfield County Commission (via Telephone)
Washington County Mayors (via ZOOM)
Kane County Mayors
Iron County School Board
Beaver County School Board (via ZOOM)
Washington County School Board (via ZOOM)

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr. Bryan Thiriot
Mr. Gary Zabriskie
Mr. Myron Lee
Mr. Cody Christensen
Mr. Gary Webster
Mr. Kyle Wilson (via ZOOM)
Ms. Cindy Bulloch (via ZOOM)
Mr. Brad Last

REPRESENTING

Five County AOG Executive Director
Five County AOG Deputy Director/CED Director
Five County AOG Staff/Dixie MPO Director
Five County AOG CED Associate Planner
Senator Mike Lee
Senator Mitt Romney
Congresswoman Celeste Maloy
Representing Dixie Tech University

MEETING MINUTES:

1. Welcome by the Chair – Introductions of all participating.

Commissioner Gil Almquist, Steering Committee Chair, after confirming with Association staff that nine voting members were in-person, online on ZOOM, or on the telephone, thus exceeding the minimum quorum of eight voting members needed to conduct the meeting, welcomed all to the Five County Association of Governments Steering Committee meeting, and called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. All in attendance introduced themselves.

2. Pledge of Allegiance.

By invitation of the Chair, Mr. Myron Lee, Dixie MPO Director, led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Review and Approve Draft Minutes from June 12, 2024 Steering Committee meeting.

The Chair said this agenda item was to review and approve the draft minutes from the June 12, 2024 Steering Committee meeting. He said that this required a motion and a vote. He asked if there was any discussion on, or changes needed to, the draft minutes? After not seeing any, he asked for a motion.

Commissioner Gil Almquist made the motion to approve the minutes from the June 12, 2024 Steering Committee meeting as presented. That motion was seconded by Commissioner Jerry Taylor.

The Chair called for a vote. The voting was unanimous in favor of the motion and the minutes were approved.

4. Presentation and Discussion on, and Approval of CDBG Policies and Procedures and Rating and Ranking Criteria for the FY2025 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.

Mr. Cody Christensen, Associate Planner in the Community and Economic Development Division at the Association, led a discussion with the Steering Committee on the Policies and Procedures and Rating and Ranking criteria for the fiscal year 2025 Community Development Block Grant program. He explained that this approval is done every year. He said that as the Steering Committee, in our region, the members also serve as the Rating and Ranking Committee and set regional policies and procedures as part of the approval. Mr. Christensen said that last year staff brought the discussion to the Board about the dollar cap on projects. He said that he would like to bring that up again about removing the cap, especially with the issues with the CIB funding. He said he thinks another reason to maybe look at removing the cap so that this could be a way to maybe use in partnering with CIB, so it is a match to give it a little more strength as we go on with our CIB projects. He said that he would like to propose that. He referred the Board to line five of the policies. He said that he proposed that the Board just remove, as part of the policies and

procedures, the cap on projects that applicants can go to. He said that right now it is a \$500,000 cap for projects. He said that many of the other regions have removed their cap, while a few other regions do still have a cap. Commissioner Paul Cozzens said that the nice thing is, and one reason he supports this, is you can do a more worthwhile project. Mr. Christensen said that the way the Rating and Ranking works, the best project goes to the top and that is why we have this system and with the way the projects have been coming in the last couple years, there hasn't been a lot of applicants, and so, for some reason, one reason or another, the applicant either drops out, or they don't qualify, or something happens, he thinks this would be a good way for best projects to go to the top of the ranking for funding. Mr. Christensen said that this would be the only change, and the other policies and procedures would then remain in effect.

The chair said that approval of the CDBG Policies and Procedures and Rating and Ranking Criteria for the FY2025 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program will require a motion and a vote. He asked if there was any further discussion needed? Seeing none, he asked for a motion.

Commissioner Paul Cozzens made the motion to approve the CDBG Policies and Procedures and Rating and Ranking Criteria for the FY2025 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, with note of the elimination of the project dollar amount cap, as presented. That motion was seconded by Commissioner Wade Hollingshead.

The Chair called for a vote. The voting was unanimous in favor of the motion and the CDBG Policies and Procedures and Rating and Ranking Criteria for the FY2025 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program were approved.

5. Areawide Clearinghouse Review of three SITLA Range Improvement Projects in Beaver County.

Mr. Gary Zabriskie, Deputy Director at the Association presented three area-wide clearinghouse reviews of three similar range improvement projects in Beaver County. Mr. Zabriskie said that he gave a handout to each board member. He said that all three are similar projects in that they are all rangeland improvement projects. He said that he contacted the three county commissioners via email sending the project information and describing the proposed projects by SITLA. All three commissioners replied by email, each stating they were in support of the projects. Mr. Zabriskie said that based on the Beaver County commissioners' support of these projects, the staff of the Five County AOG recommends that the Steering Committee also voice its support for these projects in the form of a motion. He said that the Board could do one motion for all three projects, unless anyone wanted to divide them up separately. The Chair asked if Beaver County Commissioner Hollingshead wanted to say anything about these projects? Commissioner Hollingshead said that these types of projects are very much needed, and all three commissioners are very much in support of these. He said that these are great projects, so it is very helpful to also have the Association of Governments support this. Mr. Zabriskie said that the county also can submit their own comments directly to SITLA. He said the

same would apply if a county is opposed to a particular project, and this organization also feels that they don't want them doing something similar in their county as well, it could support them in opposing something that you don't like to see SITLA doing. Mr. Zabriskie said that you carry weight as an Association of Governments, because you represent all of the municipalities, and all the counties, and all the school districts, in this region. He said that these reviews are so very important. He said that after the Board makes its decision on support, he puts together a letter and sends it back to SITLA saying the Steering Committee is in support (or doesn't support). The Chair felt that the Steering Committee can address these as one motion but asked that the person making the motion state the three project numbers so they will be on the record. He said he was ready for a motion.

Commissioner Wade Hollinghead made the motion to support all three SITLA projects: the Crater Knoll pipeline extension RIP 960A, the Big Wash pipeline extension RIP 989A and the Mineral Range livestock pipeline RIP 1036 as presented. That motion was seconded by Commissioner Paul Cozzens.

The Chair called for a vote. The voting was unanimous approving the motion.

6. FY2025 Budget Adjustment Explanation.

Ms. Allison McCoy, FCAOG Chief Financial Officer, presented information to the Steering Committee on this agenda item. She explained that is a fiscal year 2025 budget adjustment explanation. She referred everyone to the second to the last page of their packets where the consolidated budget totals are shown. She said that when she was sending in the budget approved in June to the state auditor, she realized there were two programs that were in the budget as presented to you then, but we're not included in the total budget. She said that the only change is our new budget for FY 2025 is \$14,086,779 instead of the previously stated \$13,961,479. She said that she listed the two programs that were not included in the totals. She said that she is just bringing this as notice to you of interest that those totals in the consolidated budget were incorrect. The Chair thanked Ms. McCoy for catching that and for bringing this to the Board's attention. He asked if anyone had any questions on this item, a budget adjustment and clarification. As this was brought to the Board as an informational item only, it did not require a motion or a vote.

7. Presentation and Discussion on, and Approval of a "Transition and Continuation of Business Operations Policy" for the office of Executive Director.

Mr. Bryan Thiriot, Executive Director of the Association, presented this item which was a short policy amendment to the Policies and Procedures of the Association. A healthy discussion took place. The need for such a policy was discussed. Of particular concern to several board members was that it put the Chair in the position of determining if the Executive Director was incapacitated and whether that incapacitation was temporary or permanent. It was felt that there might need to be a third party involved in this, like medical professionals, and then the issue of HIPA releases and legalities was discussed. It was felt that it would be best to take all of these issues back to the Association's insurer, the Utah Counties Indemnity Pool and get direction from Mr. Johnnie Miller. The Chair received consensus from the Steering Committee to table this item until it is ready to be brought back at a future Steering Committee meeting.

8. Utah Congressional Briefing Report.

Commissioner Jerry Taylor was unable to be at the meeting in-person, therefore the Chair, using his discretion to do so, as this was a presentation item only, tabled the item until a future meeting in which Commissioner Taylor could attend in-person and present on the Congressional Briefing.

9. “Did You Know?” - All About Transportation Related Programs at the FCAOG.

Mr. Myron Lee, Director of the Dixie Metropolitan Planning Organization, attended the Steering Committee meeting to provide another one of the “*Did You Know?*” presentations. Prior to Mr. Lee’s presentation, it was explained by Mr. Gary Zabriskie that this is a continuation of a series of presentations to the Steering Committee members on some of the various programs administered at the Five County Association of Governments meant to keep them informed on what the AOG staff does, especially things the governing board may not know that the AOG does to help the residents of this region.

Mr. Lee explained that in the year 2000, the results of the 2000 U.S. Census warranted the creation of the Dixie Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and from that warrant, the cities of St. George, Washington, Santa Clara and Ivins got together to form an MPO. He said that back in that day, with St. George being the largest city in Washington County, they wanted to kind of have a heavy hand in how transportation decisions were made. He said that Washington County also wanted a heavy hand in that decision making process. He said that the other cities wanted to be participants, but didn’t want anybody to dominate the decision-making process. He explained that collectively they devised a plan where the MPO would be housed at the Five County Association of Governments as an arms-length third party, and the Dixie MPO has been hosted at the Association of Governments ever since. Mr. Lee said that he started with the MPO in 2010. He explained that the Dixie MPO has its own executive board and advisory committee. He said that he and Five County AOG Executive Director Bryan Thiriot have a good working relationship. He explained that the Dixie MPO expanded in 2013 to include Hurricane City, LaVerkin City, Toquerville City and the town of Leeds, and was expanded again earlier in 2024 to include the town of Virgin.

Mr. Lee explained that the MPO is a planning organization, and it’s charge is to plan future roads, transit lines, airports, and bike/pedestrian trails to serve the transportation needs of the urbanized metropolitan areas of Washington County. He said that in addition to the MPO, the Five County AOG also hosts the Rural Planning Organization in Iron County, and that includes the cities of Cedar, Enoch, Parowan, and Brian Head Town, and the County.

Mr. Lee explained that another purpose of the MPO, and also the RPO, is to coordinate transportation facilities between cities and amongst the county, so that you don't have a narrow two-lane road tying into a five-lane highway and then back into a two-lane road. He said that the planning process goes on there, so that roads of regional significance

actually fill a regional role. He said that they have had successes as well as a few failures over the last several years, but what the MPO tries to do is to provide policymakers with good data-based-information so that they can fully understand the consequences of action or inaction on a particular road facility, or a transit line.

Mr. Lee reiterated that they are trying to help policymakers understand the consequences of building, or not building, with the future in mind. He said that this is a worthy goal that all of us can adhere to and appreciate. He showed a visual projected on the screen of a heat map of the transportation facilities in Washington County, and the heat map is households per acre in 2000, and then a slide showing as it was in 2010, and again in 2020, He then flipped screens to what is expected for 2030 and 2040 and said that those are a visual depiction of the growth that is anticipated. He said that it is quite daunting when you think about it, but it is all based on population growth. As a comparison, he said that back in 1923 there were only 381 motor vehicles registered in Washington County. He asked meeting attendees for guesses on the numbers from more recent times. After many guesses were offered out loud, Mr. Lee explained that in 2002, when the MPO was formed, there were 73,000 registered motor vehicles in Washington County. He said that in 2010, when he started working at the AOG, there were 129,000 vehicles registered in Washington County. He said that this year there are 206,389 vehicles registered in the county. He said that his point was that there is now over 206,000 more registered vehicles in the county than there were in 1923. He said that there is, essentially, over one per man, woman, and child, as the population of Washington County, as of March 2024, is estimated to be 202,452 persons.

Mr. Lee said that to calculate future needs for transportation, they go in and estimate population growth, job growth, future land use, and attempt to project what it is going to look like in the future, and how people are going to get home from work at night. He said that they do all those data searches and put everything into a computer, and the MPO contracts with some really smart people to try and figure out how to make those forecasts, so that the MPO can come up with a long-range plan that's divided into Phase 1, Phase 2, and Phase 3 needs. He said that they then try to constrain that plan according to what funding the MPO expects would reasonably come to build those projects, and anything that doesn't fit on that Phase 1, Phase 2, or Phase 3 list becomes an unfunded need. He showed what the long-range plan map looks like on paper, but they have computerized it. He then demonstrated it as a live map-based plan projected on the screen for all to see using ArcGIS Web AppBuilder.

Ms. Stephanie Hill, representing the Iron County School Board on the Steering Committee, asked a question of Mr. Lee. She explained that she is on the Cedar City Disabilities Action Committee, and one of the major issues that they are having in Cedar City is transportation for the disabled. She said that the underlying issue is that no one knows anything about transportation for the disabled in Cedar City, much less how to help the affected population. She asked if that is something she could maybe speak with him about later?

Continuing to show the online mapping of the long-range plan on computer projected up on the screen, he said that the MPO has the data in a GIS mapping database, wherein the MPO staff and engineering consultants can go in and click on an individual project and see

the different characteristics of what that project is. He said that the roads are color-coordinated, so the red projects are Phase 1, blue are Phase 2, and a purple color for Phase 3. He explained that in addition to the road and highway projects, they also have other transportation projects they have mapped out and explained in that same fashion. He said that together they have a project list and an interactive map that you can go in and look at, so those tools are out there for the policymakers and the public. He said that when you dive deeply into the transportation demand model, it will tell you how badly those roads are needed by forecasting how many vehicles per day are expected on those roads.

He continued into another part of his presentation by explaining that one of the things that they have been able to do in the last year, is they have been able to use a million dollars in a federal grant to create a "*Safe Routes, Safe Streets*" as well as a "*Roads for All*" program. He said that they have done a safety plan wherein they have gone out and looked at the historical depiction of fatal and serious injury accidents throughout this region, and mapped those out, and also mapped out the high injury network of roads that are susceptible to high injuries and then developed several countermeasures to address those needs to try and help get to a place where there could be zero fatalities. He said that there are things that can be done now and that there are also things that are going to require legislative changes, and some enforcement changes. He said that other areas of the country have found great success with cameras that will send a speeding ticket or a red-light-running ticket to violators just by taking their picture and sending out the ticket. He said that idea is not very popular in Utah, but there are areas where it would be warranted because of the heavy injury accidents and fatalities that have occurred in those road networks. He said that there are other things that are just driver behavior that require a great deal of public education and adherence. He said that this safety plan that they put together gives the MPO the tools that are needed to go forward to do that.

Mr. Lee mentioned that, as part of their transportation program, the one piece that reaches through all five counties in the AOG, is the Mobility Management program. He said that Mr. Scott Buys, on the AOG staff, runs the Mobility Management program, and his charge is to improve access and mobility throughout the five-county region, in all five counties, to identify needs of target populations like what Ms. Hill was just asking about. Mr. Lee said that Mr. Buy's program will go out and determine what those needs are and then try to coordinate plans to meet those needs. Mr. Lee said that after the meeting he would give Ms. Hill the contact information for Mr. Buys so she could connect with him. Mr. Lee said that he thought that Ms. Hill would be pleased to learn of some of the work that Mr. Buys has been doing and he can assist them.

Mr. Lee reminded everyone that the Dixie MPO is focused on the urbanized area in Washington County and the Iron County RPO is focused on the urbanizing areas in Iron County. He said that they anticipate that the urbanizing area of Iron County will become a metropolitan area after the 2030 Census. He said the trigger point is when the contiguous urbanizing area exceeds a population of 50,000, and thus it is considered an urbanized metropolitan area, and thus a metropolitan planning organization would need to be formed for that new urbanized area. He said that is what happened in the St. George area back in 2000, and it is anticipated that may happen in the Cedar area after 2030, based on the decennial census.

Mr. Lee asked if anyone had any further questions. The Chair asked Mr. Lee to explain where the funding for the MPO comes from. Mr. Lee said 93% of its funding is from federal funds that come to the MPO as pass-through monies that come through UDOT. He said that 7% of the money comes from the local match from our partners. He said that there are eight or nine partner cities, and Washington County, and UDOT. He said that those local funds match the federal funds and funds the MPO and also a large part of the Mobility Management program. He said that UDOT funds the other portion of the Mobility Management program. He said that the Iron County RPO is fully funded through their Corridor Preservation Fund and their local matches. Mr. Lee explained that the MPO receives about three million dollars a year for road projects, and the MPO will program those monies out on the TIP and on the STIP programs through the state. He stressed that three million dollars a year is not a lot when you start putting pavement down on the ground, but it is enough to give seed money to some regional projects that are key. He said that the MPO has also partnered with Washington County, and all of the MPO cities and towns, in doing planning efforts throughout the region.

The Chair thanked Mr. Lee for his presentation.

10. Congressional Staff Updates.

Ms. Cindy Bulloch, with Congresswoman Celeste Maloy's office, who was on ZOOM video, said that she had a couple of things of interest to the group, and some of which they have previously talked about, and some things that are in the pipeline. She said that their search and rescue bill is getting some really good momentum and is one that they have mentioned before to the Steering Committee. She said that it is a bill that they started with Congressman Stewart in the 2nd Congressional District and, when you're looking at grants, gives a kind of extra credit of sorts, or a boost in ranking criteria. She said that it is often hard for those of entities with a small population to rank very high when competing against huge projects. She said that what this does is give kind of extra credit or leveling of the playing field in counties or areas where there is a large amount of public land and a small population. She said that when we have someone that gets hurt in one of the monuments or outside of Zion National Park or anywhere else, it is local entity resources that have to go help that person and they are glad to do it, but it does cost money, so this just helps level that playing field. She said that they are getting a lot of support on that, she said that she know that Commissioner Jerry Taylor was going to be reporting about the Five and Six County Congressional Tour, but that issue with search and rescue was one thing that was talked about on that tour. She put a plug in for the Congressional tours. She said that it is money well spent to have some of the, generally, Democratic staffers from the East Coast, who have no idea what Utahns face every day in the West learn about those issues. She explained that when they go up to an area and they look out and just about everything they can see is the big vistas is all public lands. Ms. Bulloch said they explain to the east coast staffers that we are responsible for this land for search and rescue, etc., but get no financial benefit from it, and are not able to tax that. She said that for them to just see it, it makes a big difference and she had heard feedback from probably three of those staffers at some point during that tour who said they have already called their bosses, or will be calling their boss and they are going to sign onto this bill. She said that she just can't believe how

impactful this was to actually see it. She said that this was her plug for the Five and Six County Congressional Tour. She said that it does make a difference when they are trying to do these kind of bills, and that they need people from both sides of the aisle to agree on, and it does help.

Ms. Bulloch finished by stating that if anyone is applying for other grants, like a UDOT grant, or a FEMA grants, etc., they are happy to look at the project and while she said they can't guarantee that they will sign letters of support for everything, but if it's good for the district, if it's good for the county, if it's good for the municipality, it's probably good and something that Congresswoman Malloy would likely offer her support, so they can write those letters. She said that this was just a reminder as entities are working on other types of grants, to reach out to them, as they would love to be able to be supportive on those.

Mr. Gary Webster, with Senator Lee's office thanked Mr. Bryan Thiriot for the hard work on the congressional briefing. He said that they invited many of the folks from the congressional offices in D.C. and said that those relationships are so very important. He said that in January, hopefully, Senator Lee will be the chair of Energy and Natural Resources, which will be significant for the state of Utah and for plans and public policy situations. He discussed that BLM has announced public input process for the Fervo Cape Geothermal Power Project in Beaver County, which the period for comments will run through September 20th. He said that it is 631 acres that will possibly have up to 20 power plants and will service a significant amount of electrical output. He said that it will require transmission lines and other things as well, and said he thinks that it is important that public input be made. He said that on the previous day the state of Utah filed a significant lawsuit that they hope will be brought up by the Supreme Court. He said that Senator Lee has stated that Utah belongs to Utah, and it was never intended for a federal agency to hold onto so much land. He discussed concerns the Senator has with the Federal Land Policy Management Act, or FLPMA. Mr. Webster recognized Commissioner Cozzens for his efforts with the veterans cemetery. Mr. Webster said the cemetery was officially named the Southern Utah National Cemetery, and it will open later in 2025. He said that a lot of effort has gone into this, and it is now a nationally recognized facility in Iron County.

Mr. Webster said that for the benefit of our Utah constituents, Utah will finally have a passport office, and that will be established in the Federal Building in Salt Lake. He said that the federal folks have not determined a space, or a floor, where that will be located. He said that now people will be able to get appointments downtown in Salt Lake City. Mr. Webster said that Senator Lee has been working feverishly regarding the SAVE Act, which prevents those that are not citizens of the United States from voting. He said that they are looking at continuing resolutions and attaching the SAVE Act to that. He noted that 198 Democrats voted against the SAVE Act on the House side, which means there are a significant amount of people that do not care whether or not you are a citizen voting in our elections. He said that the Senator's office will continue to serve its constituency, and if anyone has any friends, family, or otherwise that need to have some assistance with any federal agencies, please get in touch with the Senator's staff. He said that they are more than happy to help.

11. State Agency Updates.

There were no state agencies in attendance to present.

12. Universities and Technical Colleges Updates.

Mr. Brad Last, with Utah Tech University thanked the Chair, and the other Steering Committee members, for allowing the universities and the technical colleges to come to the Steering Committee. He said that he was acting that day on behalf of Henry Walton, who he understands is a regular participant at these meetings. He went over several major construction activities taking place now or planned in the near future. He said that the University recently completed a large student housing project, adding vitality to the campus with almost 1,500 students housed there. He said that a new classroom building, a four-story 120,000 square foot building for humanities programs, is set to open next year. He explained that there is a domino effect, in that the new building will trigger significant remodel projects and office relocations across campus. He mentioned that the Cox Performing Arts Center, the largest in Washington County, will be renamed due to a significant donation from America First Credit Union. He talked about the University's Innovation District which is a long-term project involving 30 acres of the University's 183-acre property, with no immediate developments. He also talked about the University's Strategic Plan. He said that they are now finishing the final year of the current strategic plan and are celebrating ten years of university status with a polytechnic academic model.

13. Local Affairs Discussions

Mr. Bryan Thiriot mentioned that the U.S. 89 Wildlife Safety Corridor Project received \$10 million in funding, with fencing east of Kanab starting in September. Mr. Gary Zabriskie gave a short Five County AOG office building remodeling update saying that the final inspection on grading was expected that Friday, and once that passes the \$25,000 retainage will be released to the contractor. He and Mr. Thiriot praised the contractor, Bud Mahas Construction, for their work.

The Chair expressed his appreciation for everyone's involvement at this meeting and said that future meeting dates will be sent out soon.

14. Adjourn.

Seeing that there was no further business, the Chair again thanked everyone for attending and called the meeting adjourned.

These minutes were transcribed, typed, and edited by Mr. Gary Zabriskie, Deputy Director at the Five County Association of Governments.

These minutes, in their draft form, will be presented for approval by the Steering Committee at their next meeting.