

Jordan River Commission Event Advisory Committee

April 11, 2024 | 10:00 AM

Meeting Location

This is a virtual meeting conducted via Zoom, with an anchor location at the Jordan River Commission office.

Meeting Participants

Event Advisory Committee Members

Tori Bird, Vice Chair, Utah's Hogle Zoo
Ali Avery, North Salt Lake City
Marissa Beckstrom, Tracy Aviary
Councilmember Tish Buroker, Riverton City
Kyle Fuchshuber, Salt Lake City Sustainability
Angelo Calacino, Salt Lake County

Commission Staff

Soren Simonsen, Executive Director
Rachel Turk, Communications & Outreach Manager
Julie Williams, Event & Volunteer Manager

Visitors and Guests

None

Meeting Minutes

Tori Bird, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM.

1. Welcome & Introductions

Roll call of Committee members.

2. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

3. Committee Business

Adoption of Meeting Minutes for March 13, 2024

Ali Avery moved to adopt the meeting minutes for March 13, 2024. Marissa Beckstrom seconded the motion.

The motion was unanimously approved by the Committee members present.

Annual Open & Public Meetings Act Training: Attendees watched a brief training video, (see State Auditor Training Video at <https://youtu.be/QNVBuXB7vkM> and Utah Open & Public Meetings Act at <https://le.utah.gov/xcode/Title52/Chapter4/52-4.html>).

Commission Strategic Planning Update: Soren Simonsen shared that a strategic planning update is coming soon. The Governing Board of the Jordan River Commission adopted its last strategic plan in 2015. The Blueprint Jordan River update was completed in 2022. The Executive Committee has suggested that the leadership of the different boards and committees, and anyone else interested, should provide input for an updated strategic plan. They are hoping to put together a strategic planning committee of about 20 people. The Commission is hoping to have a strategic plan finished by August 2024.

Event Web Site Updates: Rachel Turk reported that she has primarily been working on the RTP grant for a new mobile app, but is resuming work on the existing website. The Golden Spoke website has a new domain name (goldenspoke.net) and all previous sites redirect to this new one, which is housed in the Jordan River Commission website. She is now focusing on updating the existing Jordan River Commission website to be easily navigable for different users.

Soren noted that the RTP grant, if awarded, will be to transition the mobile website to a mobile app. He reported that the current site already incorporates the Seven Creek Corridors watersheds that are part of the work of the Seven Canyons Trust, and they are looking to expand that to include the southwest part of Salt Lake County, the five tributaries that include Butterfield and Rose Creek and Midas Creek and Bingham Creek and Barney's Wash and some of those areas from the Ochre Mountains. He added that, eventually, they hope to add in some of the smaller southeastern tributaries as well like Corner Canyon and Willow Creek.

4. Commission Events

City Nature Challenge – Friday, April 26 - Monday, April 29, 2024

a) BioBlitz Events Discussion & Planning: Rachel Turk stated that their goal is to have some BioBlitz-type activities along the river, focusing on all the community areas and representing all of the river. She noted that the Commission needs some partnership or some support for some of those activities.

She explained that the City Nature Challenge is an international event that was started by a couple of universities in California using the iNaturalist app. The app uses crowdsourcing, and makes the event into a competition. She noted that they are part of the Wasatch Front group, and any observations that are made on iNaturalist during those four days will be counted towards the competition.

Marissa Beckstrom mentioned that some staff and partnering organizations will be performing a BioBlitz the night before on Friday evening.

b) 2025 Budget Discussion: Soren Simonsen reported that for the first time, the Jordan River Commission is requesting funding in the Commission's budget for the City Nature Challenge. He mentioned that they adopted this event six or seven years ago as one of their signature events,

along with the Get to the River Festival and the Golden Spoke. However, the global COVID-19 pandemic was disruptive to gatherings, so people were encouraged to go out and do things on their own.

Soren asked Marissa how the Tracy Aviary budgets for this event and what they do to develop their event around the City Nature Challenge. Marissa replied that they have several meetings with the Natural History Museum and Hogle Zoo to pool resources together. She reported that the Nature Center provides space and staffing, and then the Zoo and the Natural History Museum provide resources, animals, and staff knowledge. She does not have an exact budget amount available currently but is happy to share that later on.

Soren asked Tori Bird how the Hogle Zoo budgeted for this event. Tori replied that their budget essentially covers their time for planning and executing the festival.

Soren added that the new staff member, Julie, could connect with Tracy Aviary and Hogle Zoo to assist.

Golden Spoke – Saturday, May 11, 2024

a) Event Planning Updates: Soren reported that this event has an incredible range of partners this year. One partner is the Department of Transportation and its Move Utah program. He reported that they are contributing about \$5,000 towards promotional activities. Other partners include Wasatch Front Regional Council and the Mountain Lions Association of Government, which he reported both have great active transportation coordinators.

Soren added that the Utah Transit Authority is providing some financial support, as well as providing passes for those who will use public transit to get to the event start locations or return once they finish. He expressed appreciation for this partnership, which shows how connected the Jordan River Parkway is with the transit system. He mentioned that two cities are holding small cycling events. Everything will end at the Nature Center and there will be a big party from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM there to welcome riders as they arrive, as well as other activities and food trucks.

b) Quarterly Financial Report: Soren stated that quarterly reports are provided for informational purposes, but do not need to adopt them. He provided a summary of the Golden Spoke event and mentioned that they are considering paying for a radio advertisement. He also mentioned that for long-term planning, they are tentatively exploring doing a full 100-mile century ride next year. This year there are two 50-mile rides, although people can ride further if they want to, but next year they are tentatively planning to hold the end-of-ride event at the Provo River Delta, which will open to the public later this year.

Get to the River Festival – September 2024

a) Fundraising & Budget Updates: Soren reported that they have raised \$58,000 towards the event this year, with a goal of \$80,000. If the full \$80,000 is not met, they may need to consider making adjustments to the budget, which was built around that \$80,000 mark. The primary event focus is on fundraising right now. He mentioned that he is looking for ways for the Miller Foundation to become a more significant sponsor in the future as they participate in the Power District revitalization efforts near the Jordan River.

b) Event Planning Updates: Soren reported that the Planning Committee had their first meeting at the end of February and are solidifying their plans and dates for different festival events. They will start working on recruiting some seasonal employees early in the summer. Depending on

how fundraising finalizes, they will announce their seed funds and mini-grants at the June meeting. The August meeting will be the last meeting before the event to coordinate final details and finalize the kickoff media event. He also mentioned that they are exploring additional partnerships with the aquarium and Thanksgiving Point.

c) Quarterly Financial Report: Soren reported a balance of about \$40,200. He will transfer some funds both to pay for the contractor working on the website migration and to Mighty Penguin. On the expense and income summary side, he reported a total of \$36,000 in donations and commitments that have been invoiced and roughly \$15,130 in expenses so far had this year.

5. Other Events

Earth Day Events & Activities: Rachel Turk summarized a variety of Earth Day activities that different organizations are holding. These include trash cleanup, canoeing, biking, and celebratory events.

Roundtable Discussion: Kyle Fuchshuber asked how the Jordan River Commission typically does waste management for river cleanups, and whether they generally put things they collect in the trash. Rachel replied that they do typically throw things in the trash because the quality of the materials coming out of the river is generally past the point of being recyclable. She asked Kyle Fuchshuber if he could assist or provide guidance on this matter.

Kyle Fuchshuber replied that he could help with that initiative. He stated that he can be contacted directly for residential-size 95-gallon bins from Salt Lake City, which isn't necessarily always ideal for big cleanups like this. He mentioned that he could connect them to different haulers and different facilities throughout the city that could set up something a bit bigger or that's more viable.

Soren Simonsen noted that the logistics of something like that off can be challenging, and he appreciates the guidance and assistance that Kyle can provide. He asked if Kyle could perform some waste stream analysis and provide guidance on what is pulled out, and whether or not they can have facilities do the sorting and diverting. Kyle replied that he could assist with that.

6. Communications, Engagement & Outreach

Recent Media Coverage: Soren Simonsen reported that there is a lot of interest in the high water flows coming out of Utah Lake. He reported three or four media inquiries on the topic as well as interviews with TV and radio. There has been a fair amount of bank erosion and some sections of the Jordan River Trail, particularly down at the south part of the Salt Lake Valley, that are underwater.

Soren also reported that he has been fielding calls about the large homeless concentration around the State Fairpark. There have been impacts on businesses, homeowners, and Fairpark itself, as well as at least three or four major drug busts that have happened there. He stated that, unfortunately, some of the drug cartels have embedded themselves with the homeless population. He stated that there are a lot of vulnerable people who have addictions and mental health and other challenges, such as physical health challenges, that are being exposed to drug activity.

Soren noted that they have had great support from the Salt Lake City Police Department to make sure that cleanup volunteers were safe working around some of that population, especially with

some of the drug cartels operating in that area. He reported that they also cleaned up a lot of drug paraphernalia, tinfoil, and needles, which filled two large sharps containers.

Upcoming Media Opportunities: Soren reported that the Commission does not do many press releases, but that may be something they could include in strategic planning. He asked how they could make the public more aware of things that are going on around the Jordan River beyond events and activities. He mentioned that the Commission does not do much outreach and media engagement, but it's something they could do more of because. There are many communities doing beneficial projects, and it could be meaningful to highlight some of that effort so the public is more aware.

Other: Soren Simonsen reported that the Commission is looking forward to announcing the award received from the America the Beautiful Challenge grant.

7. Upcoming Committee Meeting

Tori Bird noted that the next meeting is on Thursday, June 13, 2024.

8. Adjourn

Kyle Fuchshuber moved to adjourn the meeting. Angelo Calacino seconded the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 AM.

A meeting recording, presentation and handout materials, and meeting minutes are available at <https://www.utah.gov/pmn/sitemap/notice/905809.html>.

Meeting minutes were prepared by Ren Griffeth, Jordan River Commission Administrative, Grant & Research Specialist, and Soren Simonsen, Commission Secretary.