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3 **MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) STAKEHOLDERS**
4 **COUNCIL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD FRIDAY,**
5 **OCTOBER 11, 2024, AT 3:00 P.M. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED BOTH IN-**
6 **PERSON AND VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM. THE ANCHOR LOCATION WAS AT THE**
7 **CWC OFFICES LOCATED AT 311 SOUTH STATE STREET, SUITE 330, SALT LAKE**
8 **CITY, UTAH.**

9
10 **Present:** Danny Richardson, Chair
11 Kurt Hegmann
12 Mark Baer
13 Linda Johnson
14 John Knoblock
15 Mike Marker
16 Roger Borgenicht
17

18 **Staff:** Lindsey Nielsen, Executive Director
19 Samantha Kilpack, Director of Operations
20

21 **OPENING**

22
23 **1. Chair Danny Richardson will Open the Public Meeting as Chair of the**
24 **Transportation Systems Committee of the Central Wasatch Commission**
25 **Stakeholders Council.**

26
27 Chair Danny Richardson called the Central Wasatch Commission (“CWC”) Stakeholders Council
28 Transportation Systems Committee Meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. and welcomed those present.
29

30 **2. Review and Approval of the Minutes from the September 9, 2024, Meeting.**

31
32 Chair Richardson reviewed information from the last Transportation Systems Committee Meeting.
33 At the last meeting, there was a discussion about the Utah Department of Transportation
34 (“UDOT”) Big Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Study Stakeholder Working Group. It was
35 also mentioned that the Utah Transit Authority (“UTA”) is returning the 953 Route. Committee
36 Members discussed a potential partnership with the Millcreek Canyon Committee and with the
37 Wasatch Front Regional Council (“WFRC”), as there might be some common interests to consider.
38 The Transportation Systems Committee also discussed the Visitor Use Study at length.
39

40 Mike Marker asked whether the Transportation Systems Committee feels there should be a
41 capacity study. This is a question he feels the Committee still needs to answer. It was recognized

1 at the last meeting that the Visitor Use Study missed out on some of the data that was desired.
2 Chair Richardson noted that several Committee Members felt there should be more to the Visitor
3 Use Study. Mr. Marker felt the numbers were off in the Visitor Use Study. The numbers presented
4 in the study are 30% under the numbers presented 10 years prior, despite the visitation levels
5 increasing significantly in that time. That raises questions about the validity of the study numbers.
6

7 Linda Johnson noted that the Meeting Minutes clearly reflect what was discussed during the last
8 Transportation Systems Committee Meeting. The issue raised by Mr. Marker should likely be a
9 new agenda item and a discussion separate from the vote. It was determined that a vote would be
10 taken on the Meeting Minutes and the question raised by Mr. Marker would be further discussed.
11

12 **MOTION:** Linda Johnson moved to APPROVE the Transportation Systems Committee Meeting
13 Minutes from September 9, 2024. Kurt Hegmann seconded the motion. The motion passed with
14 the unanimous consent of the Committee.
15

TRACTION LAW DISCUSSION

1. **The Committee will Discuss Possible Ways to Facilitate Traction Law Compliance.**
2. **The Committee will Determine Action Items and Next Steps.**

21 Chair Richardson reported that at the CWC Board Meeting on October 7, 2024, there was a
22 representative from UDOT present. Roadway Operations Supervisor for UDOT Cottonwoods
23 Maintenance Shed 233, Jake Brown shared information about traction law compliance. He
24 explained that the sticker program is working well, but it does not cover everyone. On days when
25 there is no one checking for stickers, unchecked vehicles are able to drive up the canyon. There
26 are challenges with enforcement because there is inadequate staff available. UDOT is trying to
27 see whether the Sheriff's Department will assist. Some of the rental car companies are pre-
28 approving vehicles and participating in the sticker program. In 2024/2025, Cottonwood Heights,
29 Sandy City, and the Sheriff's Department are looking to do more to assist with enforcement.
30

31 In Little Cottonwood Canyon, UDOT has installed a remote avalanche control system. That will
32 hopefully make it easier to control the slides. During the CWC Board Meeting, there was an
33 interesting point made about the Legislature potentially requiring more snow equipment. The
34 parking lots for backcountry use are not being plowed, as there are not adequate plows to address
35 that need. It was also pointed out that the traction law needs to be in place both up and down the
36 canyons. While it might be a clear day in the morning, the snow might fall in the afternoon, which
37 can create issues leaving the canyon. During the meeting, it was also stated that there is new
38 signage. On October 17, 2024, UDOT is holding a press conference to talk about the stickers and
39 vehicle inspections. A lot is being done to further consider traction laws and canyon safety.
40

41 Chair Richardson reported that the "No Parking" signs will be removed on the road in certain
42 locations. This means that backcountry skiers can park on the road in certain spots. There are also
43 30 additional parking spaces available at Alta. The White Pine roadside parking is closed. He
44 reiterated that a lot is happening at the moment as it relates to canyon transportation.
45

1 Kurt Hegmann believes this is an important topic for the Transportation Systems Committee to
2 discuss because it only takes one vehicle to spin out for the canyon traffic to be impacted for
3 several hours. He asked about rental vehicles with snow tires. Chair Richardson explained that
4 UDOT stated there has been cooperation with various rental companies to participate in the sticker
5 program. That was a comment made during the CWC Board Meeting, but he has not verified the
6 accuracy of that statement. However, he offered to look into that further and report back.
7

8 John Knoblock understood that some of the rental cars would be pre-approved through the sticker
9 program. Someone could rent a vehicle that was able to be used to access the canyons. The
10 question is whether there will be some educational component so renters know this is needed.
11 Chair Richardson believed more education and collaboration would be beneficial. It was
12 suggested there be discussions with Mr. Brown and some of the rental car companies at the airport.
13

14 Ms. Johnson thinks there needs to be more publicity about this issue. The CWC could reach out
15 to television and radio stations in the valley. When the weather is shared, it could be mentioned
16 that the traction laws are in effect. Chair Richardson liked that suggestion. Mr. Knoblock thought
17 it was positive that something was happening as far as potential enforcement of the laws. There
18 is still an educational element that needs to happen so stickers will be obtained. He pointed out
19 that he has had a sticker every year since the program began, but no one has ever checked it. If
20 there is additional enforcement taking place, then the program may become more successful.
21

22 Chair Richardson mentioned the idea of an electronic system. There have been discussions about
23 a lane or gate at the mouth of Little Cottonwood Canyon and Big Cottonwood Canyon. Vehicles
24 with a sticker would be able to proceed through the electronic gate in that instance. That is a
25 possibility and many different options are being considered. Mr. Knoblock brought up the need
26 to change the law so traction control can be required when there is a predicted snowstorm as
27 opposed to only after the snow is on the ground. It might also be possible to check vehicles when
28 they are leaving the ski resort parking lots. On the way down, there are often issues that occur.
29

30 Ms. Johnson suggested that the Committee look into the possibility of a sign at the beginning of
31 each canyon that outlines the traction laws. For example, the sign could state the dates when snow
32 tires are required. Executive Director, Lindsey Nielsen, reported that two VMS signs were
33 installed recently. The plan is to include traction law information on those signs. Mr. Knoblock
34 asked whether there would be a bill this year that would require proper compliance. Ms. Nielsen
35 clarified that she does not know the details, but has heard there will be a traction compliance bill.
36

37 Chair Richardson shared a traction law document with the Committee. Director of Operations,
38 Samantha Kilpack, suggested that the document be reviewed ahead of the next Transportation
39 Systems Committee Meeting. Committee Members can choose the top three or four items that
40 would be most effective and bring those items forward. The Committee can determine whether
41 there is overlap on some of the priorities. From there, it will be possible to determine action items.
42

43 Chair Richardson reported that at the CWC Board Meeting, it was stated that UTA carried 500,000
44 passengers on the ski buses. Mr. Knoblock was curious about that number because, through the
45 UDOT Little Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Impact Statement ("EIS"), it was noted that only

1 1,500 people could be moved on the bus per day. Ms. Johnson pointed out that the number
2 included employees as well. There were also some surge buses added last year when possible.
3

4 **BIG COTTONWOOD CANYON PARKING DISCUSSION**
5

6 **1. The Committee will Discuss Possible Partnerships with Local Businesses to Increase**
7 **Parking Options for Big Cottonwood Canyon Visitors.**
8 **2. The Committee will Discuss Potential Action Items and Next Steps.**
9

10 Chair Richardson explained that the next item on the Transportation Systems Committee agenda
11 relates to parking options for Big Cottonwood Canyon visitors. He reported that there was some
12 restriping and 30 additional parking spaces were added. Mr. Knoblock stated that he spoke to
13 Cowboy Partners and they steered him toward Vibe Properties. They are amenable to allowing
14 parking in their parking lot. He spoke to Devin Weder about that, who offered to explore that
15 further. Currently, there is a sign that says, "No Ski Bus Parking," but at the bottom it says,
16 "Weekends Excluded. Park at Your Own Risk." It would be nice if there was more clarity.
17

18 UDOT is still looking at the gravel pit in the future. It could be a major ski bus transportation hub.
19 Mr. Knoblock noted that the Meeting Minutes from the CWC Board Meeting stated that this would
20 be the last year of gravel extraction from the gravel pit, but there would still be some asphalt
21 processing. Mr. Knoblock called the Community and Economic Development Director from
22 Cottonwood Heights, Michael Johnson, for an update on that. Walker Family Trust was supposed
23 to submit a development plan to Cottonwood Heights. Mr. Knoblock believed UDOT was in the
24 process of trying to work out a purchase agreement for a portion of the gravel pit for future use.
25

26 Mr. Knoblock noted that the Recreation Systems Committee spoke about the S-Curve and the
27 parking. There were several cases where vehicles and buses were unable to make it around the S-
28 Curve successfully without having to stop and adjust due to poorly parked vehicles in the winter.
29 There is a desire to speak to the Acting Salt Lake District Ranger, Adam Shaw, about that issue.
30 The Committee wants to know if there is a way to have the S-Curve parking lot plowed in the
31 winter and to place some "No Parking" signs around that area for additional safety. He is not sure
32 how the Transportation Systems Committee could participate in that work. Ms. Nielsen stated that
33 this topic can be considered at the next Recreation Systems Committee Meeting. Discussions were
34 had about snow plow access and the need for backcountry parking during the winter season. Ms.
35 Nielsen reported that Mr. Shaw can be invited to a subsequent meeting to discuss that need.
36

37 Mr. Knoblock stated that some of the parking areas are UDOT-owned, some are U.S. Forest
38 Service parcels, and so on. For example, Porter Fork in Millcreek Canyon is plowed by the Forest
39 Service, but the County handles the road. He wondered whether CWC Staff could further consider
40 coordination efforts there. Ms. Johnson reported that the ski areas have smaller plows that might
41 be suitable for backcountry lots. It might be possible for the ski areas, UDOT, and Forest Service
42 to collaborate. She noted that a few years ago, snow plow drivers attended a CWC meeting.
43

44 Discussions were had about roadside parking at the ski resorts. When those vehicles pull a U-turn
45 into traffic at the end of the day, it can create issues. Ms. Johnson does not see a real way to
46 address that problem, because there are so many vehicles moving in different directions. UDOT

1 had a plan a long time ago for bus transportation to the ski areas. They were going to put tunnels
2 under the road so people could cross the road without walking across traffic. Chair Richardson
3 stated that Solitude has discussed the possibility of a moving sidewalk to address some issues. Ms.
4 Johnson asked who receives the money from the paid parking at the resorts. Mr. Knoblock
5 believed the money goes back to UTA to provide additional shuttles for the ski resort employees.
6

7 Mr. Knoblock asked to further discuss the U-turn issue on the road when people park facing uphill
8 in the morning to ski, and at the end of the day, pull a U-turn into traffic to leave. That is something
9 that slows down traffic and can be problematic. He wondered whether anyone was working to
10 address that. Mr. Marker heard that the uphill side was prohibited for that reason. Mr. Knoblock
11 clarified that it was the downhill side that was closed off. As a result, all of the vehicles parked
12 on the road there are facing uphill. Ms. Nielsen is not certain who might be addressing the issue,
13 but CWC Staff can do some discovery and report back to the Committee.

14

COMMITTEE UPDATES

15

16

1. Central Wasatch Symposium Registration is Open.

17

18

19 Ms. Nielsen reported that the CWC will host the first Central Wasatch Symposium in January.
20 Terry Tempest Williams will provide the keynote address. There will be two days of breakout
21 sessions that include leaders from the four systems of the Central Wasatch: economy, recreation,
22 transportation, and environment. She hopes that all Committee Members will be able to attend.
23 The Central Wasatch Symposium will take place on January 9 and 10, 2024, at Millcreek City
24 Hall. She noted that Terry Tempest Williams will speak at 10:00 a.m. on January 9, 2024.

25

26 Mr. Knoblock wondered whether it was possible to create CWC t-shirts. Promotion and education
27 might help the organization in the long run. Ms. Nielsen explained that the CWC is a six-year-old
28 organization and is still relatively new. The Central Wasatch Symposium is one way to spread the
29 word. She pointed out that the event is not free and registration is \$50 with a sliding scale for
30 discounted entrance if that is requested. The \$50 price point is to offset the costs of the event. Ms.
31 Johnson noted that ski equipment companies would likely be interested in having a table there.

32

33 The CWC Board Retreat will take place on November 1, 2024. It is a public meeting, so anyone
34 interested in attending can do so. It will take place at the River Oaks Golf Course in Sandy City.
35 It is also possible to attend the retreat virtually. The retreat will be from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

36

2. The Committee will Share Any Other Transportation-Related Updates.

37

38

39 Mr. Knoblock asked whether UTA would reinstate the 953 Route. Ms. Nielsen reported that the
40 route will come back with a third-party contracted service. She shared information about the Ski
41 Bus Priority Access Program that the CWC runs. There is work being done with Cottonwood
42 Heights to involve them in this program on SR-210 closure days and SR-190 closure days.

1 **NEXT MEETING AGENDA**

2

3 **1. The Next Meeting will be on November 8, 2024, as November 11 is Veterans Day.**

4

5 Chair Richardson reported that the next Transportation Systems Committee Meeting will take

6 place on November 8, 2024, rather than November 11, 2024, due to Veterans Day.

7

8 **2. The Committee will Discuss Items for the Next Meeting Agenda.**

9

10 Mr. Marker believes the Committee needs to make a decision about a capacity study. The

11 Transportation Systems Committee started to have a conversation about that, but there needs to be

12 a clear decision made. He pointed out that it was a deliverable in the Mountain Accord. If there

13 is a desire to apply the systems approach, it is important to think about the ways capacity can

14 impact the different systems groups. Ms. Nielsen noted that this could be a discussion item at the

15 next meeting. Committee Members can come prepared to have a more robust conversation.

16

17 **OTHER ITEMS**

18

19 It was noted that Mr. Hegmann left a comment in the Zoom chat box. In his opinion, this was a

20 highly constructive solutions-oriented meeting. He felt it was the best Committee Meeting so far.

21

22 Mr. Marker stated that there are tasks for Committee Members to work on ahead of the next

23 Transportation Systems Committee Meeting. He asked Committee Members to start thinking

24 about a capacity study. Ms. Nielsen reported that there are action items for CWC Staff as well.

25 She explained that CWC Staff will look into a potential community partners committee specific to

26 Canyon parking lot plowing. Additionally, there will be some discovery around the canyon

27 parking U-turn issue that was mentioned earlier. That information will be provided at the next

28 meeting.

29

30 Mr. Hegmann shared comments about capacity. He pointed out that time of year and recreation

31 use types are important to consider. The prior study was limited in some areas. Mr. Marker asked

32 if the CWC contributed to the Visitor Use Study. Ms. Nielsen confirmed that it was a CWC study.

33

34 **CLOSING**

35

36 **1. Chair Richardson will Call for a Motion to Adjourn the Transportation Systems**

37 **Committee Meeting.**

38

39 **MOTION:** Kurt Hegmann moved to ADJOURN the Transportation Systems Committee

40 Meeting. John Knoblock seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent

41 of the Committee.

42

43 The Central Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council Transportation Systems Committee

44 Meeting adjourned at 3:58 p.m.

1 *I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Central
2 Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council Transportation Systems Committee Meeting held
3 Friday, October 11, 2024.*

4

5 Teri Forbes

6 Teri Forbes
7 T Forbes Group
8 Minutes Secretary

9
10 Minutes Approved: _____