



**MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) BOARD MEETING
HELD MONDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2024, AT 3:30 P.M. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED
BOTH IN-PERSON AND VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM. THE ANCHOR LOCATION WAS
MILLCREEK CITY HALL LOCATED AT 1330 EAST CHAMBERS AVENUE,
MILLCREEK, UTAH.**

Board Members: Mayor Jeff Silvestrini, Chair
Christopher F. Robinson
Mayor Erin Mendenhall
Mayor Dan Knopp
Bill Ciraco
Mayor Mike Weichers
Mayor Roger Bourke
Carlton Christensen (Ex-Officio)
Spencer Shaver (Special Advisor)
Amber Broadaway (Special Advisor)

Stakeholders Council Members:
Tom Diegel
John Knoblock
Ian Reddell

Youth Council Members:
Brixen Baird
Alden Rhodes
Jillian Perry

Staff: Lindsey Nielsen, Executive Director
Samantha Kilpack, Director of Operations
Mia McNeil, Community Engagement Coordinator
Shane Topham, CWC Legal Counsel

Others: Tom Ward, Sandy City Public Utilities
Laura Briefer

OPENING

1. Chair Jeff Silvestrini will Call the Meeting to Order and Welcome Board Members and the Public.

Chair Jeff Silvestrini called the Central Wasatch Commission (“CWC”) Board Meeting to order at

1 approximately 3:33 p.m. and welcomed those present. There are in-person and online participants.
2 Chair Silvestrini welcomed a new member of the Stakeholders Council, Ian Reddell. It was noted
3 that the Stakeholders Council appointments will take place while there is still a quorum present.
4

5 **MOTION:** Dan Knopp moved to REORDER the agenda to address the Action Items first. Bill
6 Ciraco seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.
7

8 **2. (Action) The Board will Consider Approving the Minutes of the Board Meeting on**
9 **October 7, 2024.**

10
11 It was determined that both sets of Meeting Minutes will be voted on in one motion.
12

13 **3. (Action) The Board will Consider Approving the Minutes of the Board Retreat on**
14 **November 1, 2024.**

15
16 **MOTION:** Dan Knopp moved to APPROVE the Meeting Minutes from the October 7, 2024, CWC
17 Board Meeting, and the November 1, 2024, CWC Board Retreat. Christopher Robinson seconded
18 the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.
19

20 **a. Committee Membership.**

21
22 Executive Director, Lindsey Nielsen, explained that all Commissioners are asked to join at least one
23 subcommittee. She reminded those present that the existing CWC Board subcommittees include the
24 Legislative and Land Tenure Committee, Transportation Committee, Executive/Budget/Audit
25 Committee, and Short-Term Projects Committee. She asked Amber Broadway and Spencer Shaver
26 about the subcommittees each would like to serve on. Mr. Shaver expressed interest in the Legislative
27 and Land Tenure Committee and the Transportation Committee. Ms. Broadway asked to join the
28 Transportation Committee. Ms. Nielsen thanked the Special Advisors for their participation.
29

30 **BOARD RETREAT DISCUSSION**

31
32 **1. CWNCRA Action Items:**

33
34 **a. Meetings Between Ski Resorts, the Forest Service, Sandy City Public Utilities,**
35 **and Salt Lake City Public Utilities to Revisit the Legislation.**

36
37 **b. 2025 Timeline for CWNCRA Discussion.**
38

39 Chair Silvestrini discussed the CWC Board Retreat. He appreciated those who participated but noted
40 that it was difficult for him to participate fully as he attended the retreat virtually. Ms. Nielsen
41 reminded those present that the CWC Board convened on November 1, 2024, for the annual CWC
42 Board Retreat. The retreat was guided by facilitator, Karen Hevel-Mingo. There were small breakout
43 discussions about the Central Wasatch National Conservation and Recreation Area Act
44 (“CWNCRA”). Based on those discussions, it is clear the CWC Board is ready to revisit the different
45 parts of the legislation. Specifically, there is a desire to reengage in conversations with partner
46 organizations involved in the legislation, such as the U.S. Forest Service, Utah Department of
47 Transportation (“UDOT”), Save Our Canyons, Salt Lake City Public Utilities, Sandy City Public
48 Utilities, and the ski resorts. That was the main takeaway from the CWC Board Retreat.

Commissioner Bill Ciraco shared comments about the CWC Board Retreat. He appreciated hearing from Mayor Erin Mendenhall, who took the time to stress the importance of the CWNCRRA to Salt Lake City. That put a renewed focus on the legislation. Mayor Mendenhall thanked CWC Staff for organizing such a productive retreat. It was a worthwhile experience and a lot of progress was made.

Ms. Nielsen explained that there is no official action item at this time as far as scheduling meetings with the partner organizations involved in the legislation. If there is interest in scheduling meetings, she can start to do that in the first part of 2025. There was support for that approach in the new year.

As for a 2025 timeline for the CWNCRRA work, the intention is to schedule meetings in the first part of the year. From there, the goal is to have a new draft of the CWNCRRA ready by the summer. That draft can be shared for public review and comment. Once there is an updated draft, it will be possible to work with the Federal Delegation to solicit sponsorship. By the later part of 2025 or the early part of 2026, the CWNCRRA could potentially be ready to seek reintroduction. Ms. Nielsen reminded those present that there was a discussion about the timeline at the CWC Board Retreat.

Mayor Dan Knopp explained that he is unable to support the CWNCRRA in its current form because of the way it intrudes into Brighton. He feels the boundaries need to be reexamined during this process and changes need to be made. Commissioner Christopher Robinson reported that the current version of the CWNCRRA has some rollback of small areas of wilderness to allow a wider transportation corridor. There is also the National Conservation Recreation Area designation. Mayor Knopp pointed out that he made comments about the boundary and the map in the past, but nothing has changed. Commissioner Robinson agreed that the area should be looked at further so there is comfort from all CWC Board Members. If the intention is to have a draft that is sponsorable by mid-year, there will need to be a lot of work done in the first six months of 2025 to relationship build and make necessary refinements. CWC Board Members should participate in the scheduled meetings.

Mayor Mendenhall appreciates the aspirational timeline that has been shared with the CWC Board. That being said, there is a shift about to happen in the Federal landscape as well as changes to the Utah Delegation. She suggested the focus be on next steps that the CWC Board can control. That might include an adjustment of boundaries so there is support from all CWC Board Members.

Ms. Nielsen reported that the immediate next steps involve scheduling the coordination meetings. It sounds like there should be a meeting scheduled with the Town of Brighton as well to better understand their concerns. Laura Briefer shared comments about previous meetings between the ski resorts, Forest Service, and Public Utilities, which focused on a certain aspect of the legislation. She wondered whether there should be a separate meeting with the Town of Brighton to work through the map boundaries and some of the language in the CWNCRRA. It might be best to have separate meetings first and then come back together once there is resolution. Ms. Nielsen agreed with that approach. The CWC can coordinate the meetings with the different partner organizations.

2. Discussion about the Different Iterations of the Legislation.

a. Staff will Briefly Discuss Each Iteration of the Legislation.

1 **b. Podcast Episode Available.**
2

3 Ms. Nielsen reported that the In The Wasatch podcast had an episode about the CWNCR. That
4 podcast went through the different iterations of the CWNCR. She offered to briefly review that
5 information during the CWC Board Meeting in order to provide additional context to Board Members.
6

7 H.R. 5718 was the original CWNCR introduced to the 114th Congress by Congressman Jason
8 Chaffetz in 2016. The main difference between that bill to the 2020 iteration of the CWNCR is the
9 removal of the land exchange section. The original H.R. 5718 had specific acreages included in the
10 National Conservation Recreation Area designation. Ms. Nielsen reported that there have been seven
11 different drafts of the CWNCR. The acreages have changed due to the removal of the ski area
12 permit boundaries and the removal of the Town of Alta jurisdictional boundary. The original 79,000
13 acres have since changed. In a 2025 draft, those acreages will need to be reworked in some way.
14

15 There were some technical difficulties and online participants were briefly unable to hear the meeting
16 discussions. While the issue was addressed, Mayor Roger Bourke reported that he listened to the In
17 The Wasatch podcast episode. The history of the CWNCR is complex, so he suggested a graphic
18 be created to outline the different changes from iteration to iteration of the document. John Knoblock
19 agreed that a graphic would be useful as there was a lot of history shared during the podcast episode.
20

21 Once the technical issues were addressed, additional information about the CWNCR was shared.
22 Ms. Nielsen reiterated that detailed information about the CWNCR can be heard on the In The
23 Wasatch podcast episode. The 10/26/2018 iteration of the CWNCR is the third iteration of the
24 legislation and the first instance where Alta Ski Lifts asked to have changes made to the land exchange
25 between Alta Ski Lifts and the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest. There was another redraft done
26 on 08/19/2019 and that iteration largely included administrative changes. That iteration of the bill
27 also included area fees for the first time, which is an authorization for the Forest Service to apply area
28 fees to wilderness areas in the National Conservation Recreation Area boundary and the White Pine
29 Watershed Management Area, one of the many designations the CWNCR proposes to create.
30

31 In the 08/19/2019 iteration of the legislation, the name of the White Pine designation was changed.
32 It was originally called the White Pine Special Management Area, but in the 2019 iteration, it was
33 changed to the White Pine Watershed Management Area. Ms. Nielsen shared information about the
34 2020 version, which is the latest iteration of the CWNCR. The major change from the beginning
35 to the end has to do with proposed land exchanges between the Cottonwood Canyon ski resorts and
36 the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest. Those were fully removed in the 2020 version. In 2018,
37 Alta Ski Lifts requested to be removed, but the other three ski resorts remained from 2018 to 2020.
38 It is in the 2020 iteration of the bill that all four ski resort land exchanges were removed.
39

40 Ms. Nielsen shared additional information about the latest version of the CWNCR. She explained
41 that the most recent version includes the creation of the National Conservation Recreation Area
42 designation, the White Pine Watershed Management Area, the Grandeur Peak - Mount Aire
43 Wilderness Area, and an addition of acreages to the Lone Peak Wilderness Area. The most recent
44 iteration also includes a realignment of existing wilderness areas to allow for the multi-use of the
45 Bonneville Shoreline Trail. It also includes the limitation of existing ski area boundaries and direction
46 to the Forest Service to create a Management Plan for the study area within three years of adoption.
47

Commissioner Robinson asked about the Bonneville Shoreline Trail bill, as it might have made some of the language in the CWNCRRA unnecessary. Ms. Nielsen reported that in 2020, a bill called the Bonneville Shoreline Trail Advancement Act was introduced. It is unclear whether the Bonneville Shoreline Trail Advancement Act took care of everything the CWNCRRA proposes there, but in discussions with the Forest Service and others, it will be possible to investigate that further and determine which parcels of wilderness were removed by the Bonneville Shoreline Trail Advancement Act. This will determine whether there is a need for realignment and offsets in the next version of the CWNCRRA. Discussions were had about the Bonneville Shoreline Train Advancement Act.

Ms. Briefer appreciates the summary of the different iterations of the CWNCRRA. She noted that the legislation was a significant part of the Mountain Accord negotiations. Some of the economic benefits and recreation benefits that were agreed to in the Mountain Accord were agreed to on the basis of the legislation moving forward. It is important to keep that context in mind during the discussions.

3. Individual and Collective Jurisdictional Roles Discussion.

Ms. Nielsen believes the CWC should focus on the immediate next step, which is to bring some of the major players, such as the Town of Brighton, ski resorts, Public Utilities, and others back to discuss the CWNCRRA. There can be periodic updates in 2025 during CWC Board Meetings and other subcommittee meetings. There was support to start the process with those discussions.

4. 2025 Legislative and Land Tenure Committee Meeting.

a. 2025 Draft of the CWNCRRA.

Ms. Nielsen noted that there is a need to schedule a Legislative and Land Tenure Committee Meeting in 2025. There can be a meeting in early spring, depending on the outcome of coordination meetings.

Tom Diegel reported that a few weeks prior to the CWC Board Retreat, the Stakeholders Council had a meeting where there were a lot of similar discussions about the CWNCRRA. As discussions about the CWNCRRA move forward, he asked that the Council be considered and included. Chair Silvestrini stressed the importance of including the Stakeholders Council in this process. He referenced some of the public comments received the last time the legislation was discussed. There were a lot of uninformed opinions, so it is important for the CWC to focus on education throughout this process. Additionally, it is important to involve the Stakeholders Council in the CWNCRRA discussions.

Ms. Nielsen explained that one of the reasons the In The Wasatch podcast was created was to focus on education. The podcast has started a CWNCRRA series where the legislation has been read and the changes made to each version have been reviewed. One of the next series episodes will look at what each section of the legislation means in simple terms. In addition, the Central Wasatch Symposium scheduled for January 9 and 10, 2025, will include some information about the CWNCRRA.

Mr. Knoblock does not believe there is a member on the Stakeholders Council opposed to the CWNCRRA, but if it is not likely to move forward, Council Members want to see the implementation of certain elements occur. He reiterated that there is general support for the CWNCRRA.

1 **EXECUTIVE/BUDGET/AUDIT COMMITTEE UPDATES**

2
3 **1. Central Wasatch Symposium:**

4
5 **a. Program Run-Through.**

6
7 **b. Budget Update (memo attached).**

8
9 Chair Silvestrini reported that the organization is a little bit over budget for the Central Wasatch
10 Symposium. There is a Central Wasatch Symposium Budget Memo included in the Meeting
11 Materials Packet. The extra amount is largely because of the catering expenses. He does not want to
12 ask the caterers to reduce the price, as caterers often have thin margins. It is likely that the CWC has
13 funding available to cover the extra \$3,400. The overage amount is broken down in the memo. Ms.
14 Nielsen noted that \$60,000 was built into the current fiscal year budget to act as a contingency fund.

15
16 The program run-through was shared. Ms. Nielsen reported that the plan is to release the full program
17 schedule on December 11, 2024. There will be a press release announcing the program as well as a
18 newsletter, blog post, website update, social media post, and podcast episode. In addition, there will
19 be a video trailer for the Central Wasatch Symposium. The document currently before the CWC
20 Board is nearly finalized but will likely change a little bit before the details are released next week.

21
22 On January 9, 2025, the doors to Millcreek City Hall will open at 9:15 a.m. Terry Tempest Williams
23 will deliver the keynote address at 10:00 a.m. From there is a discussion on the CWCNRA, which
24 will be led by Ralph Becker. Following the CWCNRA discussion, there will be a break. Community
25 Engagement Coordinator, Mia McNeil, and the CWC Youth Council will interview attendees during
26 the break for a future podcast episode. Breakout sessions will occur after that. Ms. Nielsen explained
27 that there will be a few breakout sessions during the Central Wasatch Symposium. Those sessions
28 will focus on the four main focus areas of the CWC: environment, economy, transportation, and
29 recreation in the Central Wasatch. There will also be discussions about policy and there will be
30 presentations from the land, water, and road managers during the Transportation Planning Panel.

31
32 The Central Wasatch Symposium will also include a Mayor and Council Member Panel with
33 participants from jurisdictions that have immediate boundaries in or touching the Central Wasatch
34 mountains. The ski resort General Managers will also be at the symposium to talk about the history
35 of skiing in the Cottonwood Canyons and what skiing in the area could potentially look like in the
36 future. There will be additional breakout sessions on the second day of the symposium. The Central
37 Wasatch Symposium will end with some unstructured and unscheduled time for attendees to mingle.

38
39 Commissioner Robinson asked about registration for the event so far. Director of Operations,
40 Samantha Kilpack, reported that there are 38 attendees registered at this time. There are regular
41 meetings with the hired event support team. The team has assured them that people tend to wait until
42 the last minute to purchase tickets. There are no concerns at this time about the attendance numbers.
43 She expects that after the December 11, 2024, release of the symposium information, there will be
44 additional ticket sales. So far, there is a good mixture of discounted and full-price tickets sold.

45
46 **2. Environmental Dashboard.**

47
48 **a. Use of State-Appropriated Funds to Further Build the Human Element.**

1
2 **b. Storyboarding Workshop for Stakeholders and the Public.**
3

4 Ms. Nielsen reported that during the last Legislative Session, the State Legislature appropriated some
5 funding for the CWC to expand the data reflected on the Human Element of the Environmental
6 Dashboard. There have been conversations with Phoebe McNeally and her team at the University of
7 Utah about building out the Human Element. There can be an action item ready for the next meeting.
8

9 The Stakeholders Council has been vocal about wanting a CWC-hosted Storyboarding Workshop for
10 Stakeholders as well as members of the general public. The workshop will provide feedback to CWC
11 Staff and the developers of the Environmental Dashboard. Comments can be shared to outline what
12 there is a desire to see reflected on the Environmental Dashboard and how the Environmental
13 Dashboard can be improved. There will be a Storyboarding Workshop planned and hosted in
14 February 2025. Plans for the workshop will begin after the Central Wasatch Symposium.
15

16 **3. Youth Council Travel Stipend Discussion (memo attached).**
17

18 Chair Silvestrini reported that during the Executive/Budget/Audit Committee Meeting, there was a
19 discussion about providing a minor stipend to members of the CWC Youth Council who travel to
20 meetings. Members could benefit from a bus pass in certain circumstances, so it was proposed that a
21 program be created for this purpose. There is a memo in the Meeting Materials Packet with the
22 details. He pointed out that it is a nominal expense, but can make a difference for those in need.
23

24 Ex Officio Member, Carlton Christensen, expressed support for the proposed stipend. He noted that
25 most students will have access to a bus pass. Chair Silvestrini reported that those in need can apply
26 for the stipend through CWC Staff. He believes this is worthwhile to offer the CWC Youth Council.
27

28 **TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE UPDATES**
29

30 **1. Transportation Committee Chair Dan Knopp will Discuss the Recent Activity of the**
31 **Transportation Committee.**
32

33 **a. Discussion About Updating the 2012 Fehr and Peers Millcreek Canyon Shuttle**
34 **Feasibility Study in January 2025 (memo attached).**
35

36 **b. Big Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Assessment Draft Scoping Letter Due**
37 **December 13.**
38

39 **c. Exploration of Transit and Transportation Mode Alternatives for the Central**
40 **Wasatch Region (memo attached).**
41

42 **d. Consideration of a Draft Letter Proposing an Environmental Collaboration and**
43 **Conflict Resolution Process Pertaining to the Little Cottonwood Canyon**
44 **Environmental Impact Statement.**
45

46 Mayor Knopp shared information about recent Transportation Committee discussions. He explained
47 that the Committee wants to release a statement in support of the Phase 1 Record of Decision (“ROD”)
48 of the UDOT Little Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Impact Statement (“EIS”). He explained

1 that Phase 1 includes expanded bus service to address traffic congestion in Little Cottonwood Canyon.
2 There is a desire to have a discussion with UDOT about collaborative conflict resolution.

3
4 Ms. Nielsen reported that the Transportation Committee met on November 20, 2024. During the
5 meeting, it was determined that the Committee would ask the CWC Board to consider a public
6 statement in support of Phase 1 of the ROD. In addition, the Committee would ask the CWC Board
7 about revisiting the idea of a request for collaborative conflict resolution. She reminded those present
8 that last year, the CWC sent a letter to UDOT requesting that UDOT and others in dispute over the
9 ROD engage in an Environmental Conflict and Collaboration Resolution (“ECCR”). Last year,
10 UDOT declined that request. The Transportation Committee discussed the possibility of a revisited
11 request given the fact that conditions have changed over the last year. Mayor Bourke asked what
12 conditions have changed. Ms. Nielsen pointed out that there was not a lawsuit at this time last year.

13
14 Mayor Mendenhall explained that at best she could abstain from a vote on an ECCR, given the
15 litigation. Mayor Knopp asked if she thought it would be beneficial to sit down and have a discussion.
16 Mayor Mendenhall denied this unless it was the Salt Lake City attorneys sitting down to speak with
17 the UDOT attorneys. Chair Silvestrini asked if there have been attempts to resolve this matter
18 between counsels. Mayor Mendenhall stated that there have not been attempts between the legal
19 entities, but there might have been discussions within UDOT and within Salt Lake City Corporation.

20
21 Chair Silvestrini likes the idea of the ECCR, but if the parties are not interested in that approach, there
22 is not much the CWC can do. Mayor Mendenhall does not believe the ECCR is the appropriate
23 mechanism. If the CWC Board wants to move forward with a statement or a request for an ECCR,
24 then Salt Lake City will need to abstain. Chair Silvestrini pointed out that there needs to be a
25 willingness from all parties to come together. Commissioner Ciraco asked what would happen if Salt
26 Lake City did not prevail in the litigation. For example, what the potential next step might be. Mayor
27 Mendenhall explained that she is unable to discuss that during the CWC Board Meeting.

28
29 Mr. Knoblock noted that some people are not aware that the Salt Lake City litigation specifically calls
30 out enhanced buses as something disputed. He wondered if there was any education that could be
31 done in that position. Mayor Mendenhall does not believe the litigation specifically calls out
32 enhanced busing. Ms. Briefer clarified that the complaint has to do with process. There is an element
33 of Phase 1 where there was an assumption made that water would be available for some transit
34 buildings in Little Cottonwood. The National Environmental Policy Act (“NEPA”) process did not
35 evaluate that. It is not the busing itself that is mentioned in the complaint, but some of the processes
36 around that. Mayor Bourke agreed with the comments shared by Mayor Mendenhall and Ms. Briefer.

37
38 Ms. Broadway was confused about the proposal to draft a letter when not everyone was supportive
39 of that approach. She sees that the suggestion came out of the Transportation Committee discussions.
40 Mayor Knopp explained that the idea was to bring ideas forward to the CWC Board to see if there
41 was support for the suggestions. If there was consensus, then CWC Staff could be directed to draft a
42 letter that could be approved at a later meeting. Based on the discussion so far, there is no consensus.
43 Chair Silvestrini explained that while he would love to see a resolution that would allow some of the
44 funding for the enhanced bus service to be implemented, he is not sure that is possible at this time.

45
46 Mayor Bourke reported that many in Alta and Little Cottonwood Canyon would like to see Phase 1
47 move forward to see how it works. It is possible that the Phase 1 items could satisfy the existing
48 issues and there would not be a need to move ahead on the other phases. However, there seems to be

1 reluctance on the part of UDOT to attempt that. Mr. Knoblock thanked Ms. Briefer for the earlier
2 clarification about the Salt Lake City lawsuit. If the transit station buildings at Snowbird and Alta
3 were not part of the enhanced busing, it sounds like that approach might be amenable to all parties.
4 Mayor Mike Weichers explained that Cottonwood Heights meets with UDOT monthly. According
5 to UDOT, their attorneys have stated no phase will move forward while others are under litigation.

6
7 Tom Ward pointed out that in these discussions, the CWC Board has been using the term that UDOT
8 uses, which is enhanced busing. However, he noted that there are other entities with buses that are
9 not involved in lawsuits. It might be worth exploring different bus options in the meantime.

10
11 Mayor Knopp shared information about a potential Millcreek Canyon shuttle. He explained that
12 parking continues to be an issue. Chair Silvestrini reported that once the Skyline High School
13 construction project is completed in approximately one year, there will be parking available on the
14 frontage road that runs on the west side of I-215. Additionally, when school is not in session, there
15 could be parking available at Skyline High School. In order for the Forest Service to agree to a shuttle
16 program, the Federal Lands Access Program (“FLAP”) grant improvements to the road are needed.

17
18 Mayor Knopp reported that there were discussions at the Transportation Committee Meeting about
19 an update to the Feasibility Study. Chair Silvestrini is not sure whether the Feasibility Study is
20 appropriate to do before the FLAP grant improvements, because a study would need to assume those
21 improvements and some of them are more definite than others. The work in the upper canyon is
22 moving forward, but the lower canyon FLAP grant is not something that has been finalized at this
23 point. There will be a public engagement process before an application is submitted for that work.

24
25 Mayor Mendenhall asked when the FLAP grant application will be submitted. Chair Silvestrini
26 reported that the first FLAP grant application, which is for the upper portion of the canyon, has already
27 been submitted and funded. It is continuing to move forward and the construction will start in the
28 spring. Chair Silvestrini clarified that the grant is for road improvements in upper Millcreek Canyon.

29
30 Mayor Mendenhall pointed out that the Feasibility Study from Fehr & Peers is almost fifteen years
31 old and needs an update. However, that feels like it is something to consider during the budget
32 process. She is interested in the study being updated but is not interested in allocating funds through
33 a budget amendment. Chair Silvestrini believes it makes sense to handle this during the normal
34 budget process.

35
36 Ms. Nielsen reported that the last part of the Transportation Committee discussion relates to a Scoping
37 Letter. The Big Cottonwood Canyon environmental study team invited the CWC to submit a
38 comment on the scoping phase of the environmental study. She shared a draft letter written by CWC
39 Staff. It broadly touches on the pillars that came out of the Mountain Transportation System (“MTS”)
40 project. The pillars are outlined in the draft version of the scoping letter and are as follows:

- 41
- 42 • A visitor-use capacity study that corresponds to transportation and transit study and decision-
 - 43 making is necessary;
 - 44 • Any transportation solution should minimize and mitigate negative environmental impacts,
 - 45 including irreversible damage to the watersheds that provide precious drinking water to more
 - 46 than 450,000 people in the Salt Lake Valley;
 - 47 • Traffic demand management strategies should address both traffic congestion on the roads
 - 48 accessing the Cottonwood Canyons, as well as S.R. 190 itself. Canyon traffic management

options should include variable tolling, limited access for single occupancy vehicles, carpool programs, or the reduction of on-road parking;

- Transportation solutions should have the capacity for integration into the broader regional transportation network. The CWC supports the exploration of transit micro-hubs in areas throughout the valley as gathering places for visitors and residents to board transit to Big Cottonwood Canyon;
- The CWC considers year-round transit service a priority, including dispersed recreational opportunities, and other dispersed recreational opportunities in the surrounding areas (such as areas along the foothills);
- Transportation improvements should be coupled with improved land and natural resource protection. Transportation solutions for Big and Little Cottonwood Canyon should be conditioned upon the passage of Federal legislation, the CWNCRA. This coupling of Federal legislation to transportation is necessary given the delicate balance that was foundational to the Mountain Accord agreement, based on four interdependent systems of the Central Wasatch: transportation, economy, recreation, and environment.

Ms. Nielsen explained that the letter also touches on the Big Cottonwood Canyon Mobility Action Plan (“BCC MAP”) released in 2023 and the recommendations made. If there is support from the CWC Board on the draft, she will add the signatures of the voting CWC Board Members and send this to UDOT. She reminded those present that the deadline for submission of the scoping letter to UDOT is December 13, 2024. Chair Silvestrini noted that some did not receive the letter ahead of the meeting. It might be possible to conditionally approve the letter. If there are objections, then those issues can be handled over email. Mayor Knopp thought that was a reasonable approach.

Ms. Nielsen shared a memo that summarizes the discussion that Mayor Knopp and Commissioner Ciraco had during the November 20, 2024, Transportation Committee Meeting. There was a discussion at that time about revisiting an exploration of other transportation and transit modes for the Cottonwood Canyons. Mayor Knopp explained that there is a desire to look at the Mountain Accord and some of the other opportunities there, such as connection from Park City to Brighton to Alta. In addition, some believe the train is a better solution than the proposed gondola. Commissioner Ciraco noted that the reason this discussion occurred is because of the shifts taking place in the State. With the future Olympic Games, it makes sense to think about all of the transportation issues and all of the possible transportation solutions. There can be an exploratory discussion.

Mayor Mendenhall reported that Salt Lake City will not take part in connecting the canyons. That is not something they have an interest in participating in. The reason she participates in the CWC meetings is to advance the CWNCRA. While transportation solutions are needed in the Cottonwood Canyons, she does not feel those need to be in place for the Olympic Games. The Mountain Accord process had a broad desire to explore transportation alternatives, but she is not interested in spending the CWC budget on various transportation alternatives that UDOT is uninterested in. Mayor Bourke believes there is a lot of agreement about what might move forward as long as it does not include a gondola. It might be valuable to see where there is consensus. Mr. Shaver reported that the concept of connecting the canyons has been met with broad opposition from the environmental community in the past. That connection would impact recreational users as well as the business community.

Commissioner Ciraco clarified that the conversation had during the Transportation Committee Meeting was not related to ski area expansion, but was about realistically looking at the challenges in the canyons. The conversation started from an environment-first perspective. Park City owns 3,000

1 acres at the top of Guardsman Pass and the majority of those users are not from Park City. The traffic
2 on Guardsman Pass Road in the summer is dangerous due to the volume of visitors. The Committee
3 conversations came out of the fact that there are existing problems and there is a need to address them.
4 Commissioner Ciraco pointed out that the population will continue to grow and it is necessary to face
5 those challenges. He appreciates the concerns that have been expressed but reiterated that the
6 Transportation Committee did not contemplate ski area expansion. Possible options were discussed.

7
8 Chair Silvestrini believes that based on the CWC Board Meeting conversations, there are some
9 roadblocks. Some would like to see progress on the Phase 1 elements of the UDOT Little Cottonwood
10 Canyon EIS, but it is unrealistic to expect that there will be movement on that given the lawsuits.
11 Mayor Knopp stressed the importance of addressing the number of vehicles in the canyons. Mayor
12 Mendenhall agrees that transportation needs to improve as does the management of the transportation.

13 **2025 MEETING DATES**

14 **1. Adoption of a 2025 Meeting Schedule (memo attached).**

15 16 17 18 **a. Proposed Resolution 2024-34 – Adopting the Annual Meeting Schedule of the** 19 **CWC’s Public Bodies for 2025.**

20
21 Chair Silvestrini explained that the CWC needs to adopt the annual meeting schedule. It was noted
22 that the Resolution in the Meeting Materials Packet is titled, “A Resolution Establishing a Schedule
23 for Regular Meetings of the Public Bodies of the Central Wasatch Commission for 2025.”

24 **STAKEHOLDERS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

25 **1. Stakeholders Council Chair and Co-Chair John Knoblock and Tom Diegel will Discuss** 26 **with the Board the Recent Activities of the Stakeholders Council.**

27 28 29 30 **a. New Members Ian Reddell and Kim Doyle.**

31 32 **b. Proposed Resolution 2024-35 – Appointing and Releasing Members of the** 33 **Stakeholders Council.**

34
35 Ms. Nielsen reported that two Special Advisors were added to the CWC Board during the CWC Board
36 Retreat. Those Special Advisors represent the economy and environment systems of the Central
37 Wasatch and are represented by Ms. Broadway from Solitude Mountain Resort and Mr. Shaver from
38 Save Our Canyons. In this Resolution, Ms. Broadway is officially released from the Stakeholders
39 Council and Ian Reddell will take her place to represent Solitude Mountain Resort on the Council.

40 41 **c. Letter Concerning a “Baseline Conditions” Study for Board Consideration.**

42
43 Mr. Knoblock shared Stakeholders Council updates with the CWC Board. At the last meeting, the
44 focus was on transportation. There was a presentation on the Big Cottonwood Canyon environmental
45 study and there were breakout sessions. At the meeting before that, the Council talked about the
46 CWNCR. Mr. Knoblock shared the Baseline Conditions Study letter for CWC Board consideration.
47 He explained that a letter was drafted asking for a Baseline Conditions Study. Some Council
48 Members are interested in improving the Visitor Use Study because it did not meet what many

1 Council Members thought the need was. Council Members want to better understand how many
2 people are in the canyons and what the uses are. Instead, the Visitor Use Study followed the Forest
3 Service protocol. It did not try to identify all uses in the canyon and largely looked at trail use.

4
5 The proposal is to have a Baseline Conditions Study conducted to better understand how many users
6 there are in different user groups. For example, the number of hikers versus backcountry skiers, resort
7 skiers, rock climbers, trail runners, and so on. Having the user groups better defined would be
8 beneficial. Chair Silvestrini pointed out that a study like that would be expensive, especially if it is
9 as comprehensive as described. Mr. Knoblock explained that the Council is thinking about using the
10 best available data that exists now. It can be pulled together and used as a starting point. That work
11 could potentially be done by the individuals on the Stakeholders Council. The idea is to focus on
12 crowdsourcing data collection. Chair Silvestrini does not have a problem with that, but some
13 methodology would need to be presented before the CWC Board offers its support for the work.

14
15 Mr. Diegel reported that the Wasatch Backcountry Alliance has been utilizing trail counters at
16 approximately 20 different backcountry ski trailheads in the tri-canyon area over the last five years.
17 In the spring, those are taken down and loaned to the Forest Service to use at summertime trailheads.
18 There is an opportunity to do some data collection that doesn't necessarily involve an expensive study.

19
20 Mr. Knoblock believes there is some reasonably accurate data that can be pulled together at limited
21 or no expense. Chair Silvestrini agrees that it would be valuable to know the baseline of the use.
22 While baseline data would be worthwhile to have, the question is how to obtain the data in a way that
23 is both reliable and affordable. He asked CWC Staff to talk to the Environmental Dashboard team
24 about this. Ms. Nielsen stated that the Storyboarding Workshop would be an appropriate venue to
25 voice requests for the Human Element specifically as well as for the broader Environmental
26 Dashboard. Mr. Knoblock suggested that the Stakeholders Council work on the methodology and
27 write down what data is already available. This will make it possible to determine data gaps.

28
29 At the last Stakeholders Council Meeting, there was a presentation from the Cottonwood Canyons
30 Foundation on the monitoring of plants, specifically invasive species in the Central Wasatch.
31 Ms. Kilpack added that the program was funded by the CWC Short-Term Projects Grant Program.

32 **STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS**

33 **1. Youth Council Updates and Introductions.**

34
35
36
37 It was noted that several members of the CWC Youth Council were present at the CWC Board
38 Meeting. Ms. McNeil reported that the CWC Youth Council met last month. This month, the various
39 subcommittees will meet and there will be discussions about the Short-Term Projects Grant Program
40 applications. Each subcommittee will consider whether there is a desire to apply to the program.

41
42 Three members of the CWC Youth Council introduced themselves to the CWC Board. Brixen Baird
43 explained that he grew up in Cottonwood Heights and attended the University of Utah. He is currently
44 working at a small architecture firm where has an internship. Before that, he was working in the ski
45 rental industry. Mr. Baird joined the CWC Youth Council last month because he wants to better
46 understand what is happening with transportation and recreation. Alden Rhodes introduced himself
47 to the CWC Board and explained that he is a high school student. He is interested in the CWC Youth
48 Council because of his involvement in ski racing. He has been a ski racer for a long time and that

1 made him passionate about the accessibility of the Central Wasatch mountains for current and future
2 generations. Mr. Rhodes has an interest in the conservation of the Central Wasatch mountains. Jillian
3 Perry explained that she is a senior at the University of Utah and will receive her degree in
4 Environmental Studies with a minor in Spanish. She wanted to join the CWC Youth Council because
5 she has been learning about environmental conservation in her classes and thought the CWC Youth
6 Council would be a good way to apply what she is learning. Ms. Perry informed the CWC Board that
7 her favorite component of the Mountain Accord relates to conservation.

8
9 **2. Short-Term Projects Grant Call for Projects will be Open from January 7 to February 7.**

10
11 Ms. Nielsen reported that the Short-Term Projects Grant Program will accept applications from
12 January 7, 2025, to February 7, 2025. Those interested can submit an application.

13
14 **3. Registration is Open for the Central Wasatch Symposium Taking Place January 9-10.**

15
16 The Central Wasatch Symposium will take place on January 9 and 10, 2025.

17
18 **4. The Next Board Meeting will be on January 6, 2025.**

19
20 The next CWC Board Meeting is scheduled for January 6, 2025.

21
22 **5. In the Wasatch Podcast.**

23
24 Ms. Nielsen encouraged CWC Board Members to listen to the In The Wasatch podcast.

25
26 **6. Thank You to the City of Millcreek for Hosting Our Board and Stakeholders' Council**
27 **Meetings.**

28
29 Ms. Nielsen thanked the City of Millcreek for hosting the CWC Board Meeting.

30
31 **PUBLIC COMMENT**

32
33 There were no public comments.

34
35 **COMMISSIONER COMMENT**

36
37 There were no Commissioner comments.

38
39 **ACTION ITEMS**

40
41 **1. (Action) Consideration of Resolution 2024-34 – Adopting the Annual Meeting Schedule**
42 **of the CWC's Public Bodies for 2025.**

43
44 **MOTION:** Christopher Robinson moved to APPROVE Resolution 2024-34 – Adopting the Annual
45 Meeting Schedule of the CWC's Public Bodies for 2025. Bill Ciraco seconded the motion. The
46 motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.
47

1 **2. (Action) Consideration of Resolution 2024-45 – Appointing and Releasing Members of**
2 **the Stakeholders Council.**

3
4 **MOTION:** Dan Knopp moved to APPROVE Resolution 2024-35 –Appointing and Releasing
5 Members of the Stakeholders Council. Christopher Robinson seconded the motion. The motion
6 passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.

7
8 Mr. Reddell thanked the CWC Board for the appointment. He looks forward to being part of the
9 Stakeholders Council where he will represent Solitude Mountain Resort in the discussions.
10 Mr. Reddell has been with the resort for approximately 30 years and has a ski patrol and avalanche
11 background. His current position is as the Director of Planning and Projects.

12
13 **OTHER BUSINESS**

14
15 There were no additional discussions.

16
17 **CLOSING**

18
19 **1. Chair Silvestrini will Call for a Motion to Adjourn the Board Meeting.**

20
21 **MOTION:** Erin Mendenhall moved to ADJOURN the CWC Board Meeting. Dan Knopp seconded
22 the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.

23
24 The CWC Board Meeting adjourned at 5:29 p.m.

1 *I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Central*
2 *Wasatch Commission Board Meeting held on Monday, December 2, 2024.*
3

4 Teri Forbes

5 Teri Forbes
6 T Forbes Group
7 Minutes Secretary
8

9 Minutes Approved: _____