

INVOCATION

An invocation was offered by Paul Cozzens.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Those assembled were led in the pledge of allegiance by Kenneth Robinson.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Kenneth Robinson made a motion to approve the minutes of the Iron County Commission meeting held on January 13, 2025. Second by Michael Bleak. Voting: Michael Bleak, Aye; Paul Cozzens, Aye; Kenneth Robinson, Aye.

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT

Michael Bleak made a motion to approve Claims for Payment from January 13, 2025 to January 26, 2025. Second by Kenneth Robinson. Voting: Michael Bleak, Aye; Paul Cozzens, Aye; Kenneth Robinson, Aye.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Carri Jeffries, Iron County Recorder, reported that Total Documents recorded in 2024 was 14,111 which was up by 1,500 from 2023. The new mapping system had made that process easier and less than half the time to do. She noted that they had seven or eight Public Infrastructure Districts (PIDs). Carri reported that the total Revenue for 2024 was \$564,177 which was up approximately \$55K from 2023. She noted that all the revenue came from recordings, which were up. Iron County had 1,185 new accounts in 2024, and currently 55K property accounts. Carrie reported that the Records Office implemented the new Fraud Guard program which would help property owners from being a victim of property fraud. There were only 250 currently signed up for the program. This was a free service for property owners and they had been working on additional ways to get the information out. Another project that they worked on in 2024 was the Survey Finder located on the Records website. Carrie explained how the program worked and how it benefited Iron County citizens. There were 4,022 survey maps on the Survey Finder and they would begin to add all Official Recorded maps. Discussion continued regarding the Survey Finder. State statute required her to give the new information to the Assessor's Office as of January 1st, which she had already done for the 2025 year.

Nicole Rosenberg, Iron County Treasurer, reported on the 2024 year. Product sales collected were \$79,552,000, 2024 Funds Distribution to Iron County was \$15,999,470 collected. Collections from October to December was \$58M, and Pooled Cash funds were doing well at \$82M. Nicole reported that the Public Treasurers Investment Fund (PTIF) interest rate at her last report was 5.25 %, and was currently at 4.73%. Interest earned was \$2.495M with PTIF and \$979K with Moreton Asset Management She noted that Outstanding Property Taxes was at \$3,000,933 compared to \$9,000,654 in January 2024. Nicole reported that they were beginning to mail Property Tax notices for the May Tax sale. Currently, there were 109 properties. Out of those 109 properties, 11 were buildings (homes, mobile homes, etc.) and eight of those have land value over \$25K. There were two commercial properties and eight campsites. She expressed her appreciation to Nichole Bess for the effort she puts in to find the correct address if a notice was returned for any reason. Nicole reported that she, Carri Jeffries, Jon Whittaker, Carrie Christiansen, Luke Little and Sam Woodall had been meeting to put together a PID policy for Iron County. They would be meeting with Marcus Keller, Iron County Municipal Advisor, to discuss a sound policy for PID's. Nicole expressed her appreciation to her staff for all the work they do, always being mindful of tax payers' money, and being very frugal in what was spent.

Michael Bleak, Iron County Commissioner, reported that the legislature was in session and he was concerned about the restrictions being added HB 488 Transportation Funding Modifications which would be detrimental to smaller counties. Iron County used Transportation Funds to help build the new jail and there was talk about restricting the use of those funds. This was a case of local government versus the state on who managed the counties better. There were many sixth-class counties that had a few hundred people and would never use the funds to build

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a big jail facility, but the funds would allow them to bolster their Search and Rescue, or to use for equipment. He noted that Representative Rex Shipp was sponsoring HB 162 Transportation Funding Amendments, and there was further discussion regarding how the restrictions would affect Class 3-6 counties. Commissioner Bleak reported that Representative Celeste Maloy reached out to him to ask if he could assist with putting together a resolution with the National Association of Counties (NACo) and the Justice and Public Safety, for Wildland Firefighters getting hazard pay for working on prescribed burns that get out of control. He explained that the Federal Government does not recognize prescribed burns that get out of hand as an actual fire, therefore, they do not pay the firefighters hazard pay. This resolution would go through the legislature to change the law to allow hazard pay those firefighters. The firefighters work very hard and every year someone loses their life in wildland fires. Representative Malloy's Office was working on sponsoring a bill that would delete the restriction for hazard pay on prescribed burns. On Friday the 24th, Cindy Bulloch, representative for Celeste Maloy, introduced Jeff Raizer as Senator Curtis's new Southern Utah Director.

Kenneth Robinson, Iron County Commissioner, reported that he spent time in the Assessor's Office to have a better understanding on the work they provide and took a tour to look at greenbelt issues. Ken also met with the Weed board where they discussed hiring two seasonal workers, whose salary was paid through grants. He noted that Amber Hatch, Weed Supervisor, was planning on doing a media blitz to inform citizens on what resources were available to help with weeds. Ken reported that he had a phone conversation with Sheriff Carpenter regarding an incident they were involved in recently, and that their needs were being met for the situations they have to deal with on a daily basis. He attended the jail meeting to be updated on the progress of the Sheriff's Complex.

Commissioner Michael P. Bleak reported that he was involved in the investigation of the recent homicide that happened last week that Commissioner Robinson referred to. He worked closely with detectives, responding Patrol Deputies, the Sheriff, and the Iron County Crime Scene Investigators (CSI) and they were all heroes working that case. This was a tragedy that did not have to happen. Mike went on to report on the homicide. With help of the DPS Helicopter and a reported lead, 4 suspects were currently in custody. He expressed his appreciation to Mickelle Croft, CSI Lead Investigator, her assistant Lindsay Kim and the entire Investigation Division for doing a fantastic job. George Colson, Iron County Emergency Manager, brought lights and the Command Center. It was a collaborative effort between all the departments, which needed to be highly praised.

Paul Cozzens, Iron County Commissioner, expressed his condolences to the families of this terrible tragedy. Paul noted that he also called Sheriff Carpenter to check in on him. He could not imagine having to witness the aftermath of the homicide, and it had to be tough on officers mentally. We deeply appreciate all of our first responders. Paul reported that work on the new Sheriff's Complex continued to move forward. Cornerstone Construction, subcontractors, had completed pouring three cells, which was 3% complete. He noted that work was progressing with Union Pacific regarding facilitating a utility railroad crossing easement for sewer regarding the new jail. The bid package came in way over budget and they continued to work with Value Engineering and getting the price down. Bids were coming in high as construction was being impacted with inflation. Paul reported that storm drains on 800 South, in front of the Rocky Mountain Substation, had been completed, which would alleviate a lot of the flooding issues in that area. Commissioner Cozzens reported that on a personal note, his sister had worked in Washington D.C for about 20 years as a scheduler for various senators. About a month ago, Vice-President J.D. Vance called and visited with her for about 15 minutes and hired her to be his Executive Assistant. Her office was located around the corner from the Oval Office.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Carol Barker, a citizen of Iron County, expressed her concerns about H.B. 488 having no guidelines as how money was to be spent, the legislature tying the hands of the commissioners, accountability and transparency of how much money was collected and where it was being spent. Commissioner Bleak suggested that she make an appointment with Luke Little, Iron County Auditor, for clarification on any money issues she had. Mike Bleak explained the restrictions being added to H.B 488 and how that would affect the third class counties versus a sixth class county. Funds from H.B 488 should allow smaller counties an opportunity to have funds to augment their existing budget for Search and Rescue. Discussion continued regarding transportation funds. Jon Whittaker reported that in regards to Carol's comment about accountability, Iron County had always been accountable for every penny spent. Carol replied that she agreed that Iron County was well-run. A conversation continued regarding accountability and transparency with the Iron County Commissioners and Elected Officials. Carol reported that she came to the commission meetings because it was important to know what was happening in Iron County. The commissioners expressed their appreciation for Carol attending the meetings and to please continue coming.

PRESENTATION OF THE ANNUAL BEE INSPECTOR REPORT

Blaine Nay, Iron County Bee Inspector, explained that this report was in accordance of Title 4, Chapter 11 of the Utah State Code, Utah Bee Inspector Act. Under the Utah Bee Inspector Act, each county was required to have an inspector and required all beekeepers to be registered. The beekeepers inspection process was to help beekeepers know how to recognize and diagnose pest and disease problems in their hives. The disease was a spore-forming disease and spores were viable for up to 80 years. Blaine reported that he inspected 25 bee-yard apiaries, with 73 different colonies in those 25 bee-yards. If upon inspection, any diseased, and or, parasitized in colonies were found, he would help the owner of the bees with treatment or have them destroy the colony. He noted that while he was inspecting the hives he was looking for parasitic mites and the count had to be less than 6 mites, which was a 2% infestation. Blaine reported that the mite problem could become a problem and the beekeepers need to be aware of how to count the mites (which he trained them to do) and to keep on top of it. He explained a case of the American Foul Bird in St. George, the process of destroying hives, and what happened when hive collapsed. There were good products used to put in hives to keep the mites out, which was very effective.

REORGANIZATION OF COMMISSION ASSIGNMENT AND REVIEW OF IRON COUNTY BOARDS

The commissioners reviewed the Iron County Commission Assignments and Boards for 2025. The assignments that the previous Commissioner, Marilyn Wood, had were reassigned to Commissioner Robinson. No other assignments were made. Review of the Iron County Boards would be continued after the commissioners were able to confirm members of the boards

PERSONNEL

Jennifer Bradbury, Iron County Human Resource (HR) Director, presented the promotion of Gavin Black from a Road Maintenance Worker 1 to Road Maintenance Worker 2 in the Road Department, effective February 2nd; the promotions of Robert Stammet from a Corporal to a Sergeant, and Zakkary Coons from a Deputy 3 to a Corporal in Sheriff – Corrections, effective January 19th; the new hire of Jennifer Barnett as a Full-Time Corrections Nurse in the Sheriff - Corrections, effective January 21st. This was a backfill of a vacant position; the promotions of Shawn Peterson from a Sergeant to a Lieutenant, effective January 19th, Brandon Kennedy from a Corporal to a Sergeant, effective February 2nd, Tyrell Crofts from a Deputy 2 to a Deputy 3, effective, January 19th, and Cree Carter from a Deputy 2 to a Deputy 3, effective February 16th.

Kenneth Robinson made a motion to approve the personnel changes as presented by Jennifer Bradbury. Second by. Voting: Michael Bleak, Aye; Paul Cozzens, Aye; Kenneth Robinson, Aye.

NON-DELEGATED ITEMS

No Non-Delegated items presented.

ADJOURNMENT

Paul Cozzens, Iron County Commission Chair, declared adjournment.



Signed: Paul Cozzens, Chair



Attest: Jonathan T. Whittaker, County Clerk

