

**IRON COUNTY COMMISSION MEETING
MARCH 10, 2025**

Minutes of the Iron County Commission meeting convened at 9:00 a.m. March 10, 2025
in Commission Chambers at the Iron County Courthouse, Parowan, Utah.

Officers in attendance included:

Paul Cozzens	Commission Chair
Michael Bleak	Commissioner
Kenneth Robinson	Commissioner
Jonathan T. Whittaker	County Clerk
Sam Woodall	Deputy County Attorney

Also present:

Nicole Rosenberg	County Treasurer
Shalon Shaver	Corrections
George Colson	Emergency Management
Jennifer Bradbury	HR Director
Marcus Keller	Municipal Advisor
Reed Erickson	Planner
Maria Twitchell	Tourism/Parks & Rec

Also Present:

J. Royce Barton	Linda Hahna	Diane Howell
Bruce Washburn		

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INVOCATION

An invocation was offered by Sam Woodall.

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 February 24, 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 February 24, 2025 to March 9, 2025. Second by Kenneth Robinson. Voting: Michael Bleak, Aye; Paul Cozzens, Aye; Kenneth Robinson, Aye.

PREVIEW OF THE UTAH SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL (USF) FOR 2025

Michael Bahr, USF Executive Managing Director, reported that the USF had a successful 2024 season. He had met with the Cedar City Chamber, Cedar City Council, and now with the Iron County Commissioners. Michael expressed his appreciation for the relationship with Iron County. Mike turned the time over to John DiAntonio, USF Artistic Director. John reported that there were seven shows planned for the 2025 year. They were: Shakespeare Theater - As You Like It, Macbeth, and Anthony & Cleopatra; The Randall Theater – the musical The Gentleman’s Guide to Love & Murder, Steel Magnolias, and the Importance of Being Earnest. The seventh show recently announced in the Anes Theatre was Dear Jack, Dear Louise. He noted that the Green Shows were back with three versions. John encouraged the commissioners and their families and friends to attend the shows. Mr. Bahr explained the local ticket discounts. Iron County passes were 6 plays for \$200, the day of a play was \$12, and a Student Access Pass was \$40 for as many plays/as many times they want to come.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Maria Twitchell, Tourism, Parks, and Recreation Director, began with Parks & Recreation. During the High School Mountain Bike Championship Race, there were a few neighbors who were unhappy because the race start was blocking their driveways and some damage to property, along with a few noise issues. Maria was working with them to mitigate those issues. The race was far too important to lose. There was a possibility of the race returning this year. She noted that she wanted to create an environment with happy neighbors, but also facilitate the economic development of Three Peaks and the parks. Maria had been working with Bruce Anderson, Iron County Public Works Director, to pave the road further into the Three Peaks Park up to the disc golf course. This would solve the encroachment issue, allowing the race start to be within Three Peaks. Maria expressed her appreciation to Bruce Anderson for being so supportive and helpful trying to make the race better for everyone. She reported that there were over 13K people in attendance which brought in over \$888K in booked lodging. Maria reported that camping revenue at Three Peaks was up from \$12K in 2023 to \$15K in 2024. She attributed the increase to placing a QR Code for payments at the campground and Three Peaks to facilitate payments on site. She noted that the 5-Mile campground had been open for a couple of months and the Grand Opening Ceremony would be on May 1st and the park would remain open through October 31st. Maria invited the commissioners to the grand opening as well as anyone else that would like to attend. Maria expressed her appreciation to Bryce Williams and Peyton McCabe for doing a great job making 5-Mile incredible, and to Mike Worthen for securing grant money to help to put in the amenities, and to build an ATV trailhead at Three Peaks. Bryce and Peyton, along with the Work Crew, installed a fence and it looked very nice.

Maria Twitchell reported on Tourism. The budget was on track at 10% spent. Transient Room Tax (TRT) collections ended 2024 at 11% above 2023, Restaurant collections were slightly up from 2023. Occupancy was up 3% from 2023 and the Average Daily Rate was up 3% over 2023. She noted that she was concerned with occupancy because of the lack of snow this winter. Occupancy numbers were adequate because other events were held in Cedar City for the Utah Summer Games. Maria reported that Brian Head was celebrating their 50th Anniversary this week. They had many activities planned in celebration of this milestone. The Tourism Advisory Board accepted proposals for funding through their Contributing Partner and Special Events line items of the budget. The Contributing Partner proposals were from Cedar City Events, Utah Shakespeare Festival, SUMA, Utah Summer Games, Cedar City Airport, Frontier Homestead, and Parowan. Special Event requests were from the Lions Club, Livestock Festival, Cairn Conference, Homebuilders, Orchestra of Southern Utah, Brian Head Ice (4th of July Art Fest, Rockoberfest, Jingle Jangle Jubilee, and Spring Fling Ski Swap), Iron County Fair and Fairgrounds, Yin on Fire Festival, Red Rock Film, Big Mt Enduro, Youth Enduro, WeRock, and Hwy 143. The Restaurant Tax Board accepted applications for 2025 projects and the following allocations had been recommended, but note that the Board opted to pay off their obligation to Cedar City for the Cross Hollows Expansion a year early; Crosshollows, Cedar City Leisure Services, BLM, Utah Summer Games, Forest Service/Zion Forever, Cedar City Airport, Brian Head, Parowan, and the Utah Shakespeare Festival were the recommended allocations. Maria reported that Iron County Tourism was partnering with the Utah Office of Tourism to host a Destination Development Workshop in Cedar City on August 11th and 12, with emphasis on agri-tourism, dark sky, and indigenous destination product development. There would be a Dinner/Activity for the participants on the night of the 11th. She explained a tax bill that she was tracking at the Legislature regarding the TRT.

Shalon Shaver, Iron County Jail Commander, noted that the budget was on track at 11.63% spent. Shalon explained that there would be an unexpected expense to the budget regarding the Jail Standards Guidelines. The Sheriff's Association paid for the guidelines in the past and would no longer support the payment of \$2,700, as they were considering creating their guidelines. There were 608 standards to follow and this program helped to prove that the policy was being followed and helpful to new staff. Shalon noted that she asked Sheriff Carpenter if she could continue receiving the guidelines. She reported that the culinary cost per meal was slightly up because food was purchased in bulk at the first of the year. There were 461 bookings during the 1st Quarter, 25 female and 139 male inmates. Shalon reported that the jail had increased the number of Federal inmates to help create a healthy relationship with the state, which would fill beds in the new Sheriff Complex. The work crew had 1,023 man-hours working around Iron County. She noted that there were 2 deputy terminations which left 5 vacancies. There were 2 deputies and one nurse hired, 3 promotions, and 4 long-term leaves (1 extended military and 4 FMLA). Shalon reported on corrections planned projects and expenditures. The new Sheriff Complex continued to move forward, a virtual welder had been delivered for future classes. BZI donated a portion and opioid funds covered the remainder cost of the welder. She noted that the work crew was pleased with the safety and efficiency of the new Skid Steer, and the new body scanner arrived and was in use which was funded from Chris Stewart grant money. Other activities: There was a Graduation Ceremony for six inmates who obtained their GED; two "Inside-Out Dad" Graduation Ceremonies in the 1st quarter of 2025 with a total of 37 graduates; nine inmates had completed the Hustle-Life Skill program, and 8-12 inmates completed the Financial Literacy class sponsored by State Bank of Southern Utah. Shalon reported the total Jail Revenue for 2024 was \$2,065,844.19.

Kenneth Robinson, Iron County Commissioner, reported that last week he went out to the Modena Canyon Road, where the proposed mine would be located to familiarize himself with the area. He attended the Iron County Council of Governments (ICCOG) last week and was able to hear updates given by the Mayors throughout Iron County. Ken noted that as previously mentioned, Brian Head was celebrating their 50th Anniversary and hoped everyone would attend the activities planned. Parowan City was having a new bridge placed on the North end of Main

Street, and he attended the Iron County Planning Commission meeting on March 6th. Commissioner Cozzens asked how the vote went on the mine. Ken replied that it passed.

Michael Bleak, Iron County Commissioner, reported that he attended the National Association of Counties (NACo) in Washington, D.C. Mike noted that he was able to meet with Southern Utah University (SUU) Aviation two days before the conference began regarding funding for programming. Mike reported that SUU Aviation provided 10% of all rotor pilots in the nation. The work they provide translated to approximately \$80M a year injected into our local economy. SUU Aviation was looking into some national legislation that would allow them to become part of the helicopter pilot training process for the US Army. The Army approached them to see if they could help with some of their training needs, but it would take federal legislative approval to work with the US Army. Mike reported that he spent two days visiting several representatives and senators. Commissioner Bleak reported that he sat on the Justice and Public Safety Committee for NACo and some of the issues they discussed were Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) disaster recovery issues. Commissioner Robinson asked if the SUU Aviation program was at its max for student enrollment. Mike replied that the program was close to the maximum number of students. SUU Aviation wanted to build a new training facility but had funding issues for the building. They were investigating at a 16-acre parcel adjacent to the Cedar City Airport and funding. Mike explained that the new facility could double maintenance on the helicopters. Currently, most of the maintenance training was done outside, under a tent. SUU Aviation had a 100% placement in job-maintenance graduate students. Many of them were snatched up by airlines before they graduated with six-figure jobs. Mike reported that there was a great partnership between SUU Aviation and Iron County and they were always willing to help anytime they were asked.

Paul Cozzens, Iron County Commissioner, reported that he too attended the NACo convention in Washington D.C. Paul noted that he was able to have dinner with his Sister and husband. His sister was the Vice-Presidents' Executive Assistant and her husband worked on I.T. issues with several senators. His son-in-law took them to the Senate Chamber where they observed those actions. Paul noted that Senator Mike Lee visited with him, Commissioner Tammy Pearson (Beaver County), and Commissioner Taylor (Garfield County) regarding Utah's public lands and the reduction of the Grand Staircase and Bears Ears Monuments. He noted that he spent some time at the jail site on Saturday. Construction continued with over-excavation for pads, pouring cells and coating them with epoxy, and water lines placed down roads. Paul met with Layton Construction and Jonathan Stathis regarding the water meter sizes and confirmed that a 3" meter would be used from the old jail. He reported that he attended health meetings in Human Services for Five-County.

PUBLIC HEARING, DISCUSSION, AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF A PROPOSED ZONE CHANGE FROM RESIDENTIAL ONE-HALF ACRE (R½) TO COMMERCIAL (C) FOR APPROXIMATELY 5.28 ACRES WITHIN THE NW¼ NW¼ OF SECTION 36, T34S, T10W, SLB&M, IRON COUNTY, UT LOCATED NEAR 257 N CENTER STREET, SUMMIT, UT (APN: D-94-7) Applicant: Edward Kelly Blackburn

Reed Erickson, Iron County Planner, explained that the proposed zone change to Commercial was for a commercial Plant Nursery and Resort Lodge with a reception area and small cabin rentals. Mr. Blackburn had an operational Christmas Tree Farm there for many years, but it could not be a true tree farm without the correct zoning, thus the zone change request. Reed reported that the 5.28 acres were adjacent to Commercial (C) and R½ on the Southeast side of I-15 and West of Center Street in Summit and within Tier III, Summit outside of the water company service area. Services Available were: Water - Private non-public water system, Sewer-Septic (Southwest Utah Public Health SWUPH), and other utility services in the area (Gas, Power, Communications, etc.).

Paul Cozzens, Iron County Commission Chair, declared a Public Hearing open regarding the proposed Zone Change regarding APN: D-94-7.

No Public Comments were offered.

Paul Cozzens, Iron County Commission Chair, declared the Public Hearing closed.

Reed Erickson, Iron County Planner, reported that after review, and findings, the ICPC confirmed that the applicant was compliant with the Iron County Policy – Evaluation Consideration for Re-Zone and recommended approval.

Kenneth Robinson made a motion to approve the proposed Zone change from R ½ to C as presented by Reed Erickson. Second by Michael Bleak. Voting: Michael Bleak, Aye; Paul Cozzens, Aye; Kenneth Robinson, Aye.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No Public Comments were offered.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF A PROPOSED ANNEXATION INTO CEDAR CITY CREATING AN ISLAND OR PENINSULA OF UNINCORPORATED PROPERTY, APPROXIMATELY 19.18 ACRES LOCATED NEAR 400 W & 3000 N, CEDAR CITY, UT., WITHIN THE NE¼ OF SECTION 27 AND THE NW¼ OF SECTION 26, T35S, R11W, SLB&M, IRON COUNTY, UTAH (APNS: D-699 & D-731)

Applicants: Ryan Brindley/Cedar City/Iron County

Reed Erickson, Iron County Planner, explained that this annexation would create an island of unincorporated area that does not currently exist. Reed reported that the property was between Enoch City and Cedar City on 3000 N. The recommendation from the Iron County Planning Commission (ICPC) was to consent to the annexation. He noted that this item does not require a public hearing and was presented to the commission for evaluation and consent for the annexation. He explained the percentage of an annexation considered as an island/peninsula. Two-thirds of the top portion of the property, was within the Instrument Approach zone and approximately a third was in the Approach zone of the Airport Overlay. Between the Approach zone and the Instrument Approach zone, this property had some limitations in terms of residential. They intended to annex it and develop it as Industrial & Mixed Use -1 (I&M-1) for storage units.

Michael Bleak made a motion to consent to the proposed annexation into Cedar City regarding APNs: D-699 & D-731 as presented by Reed Erickson. Second by Kenneth Robinson. Voting: Michael Bleak, Aye; Paul Cozzens, Aye; Kenneth Robinson, Aye.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE RATIFICATION OF A CONTRACT WITH EMERGENCY SERVICES CONSULTING INTERNATIONAL (ESCI) TO PERFORM A FIRE DISTRICT FEASIBILITY STUDY IN IRON COUNTY

Jon Whittaker, Iron County Clerk, explained there had been discussions on having a feasibility study to create Fire Districts within Iron County. Jon reported that Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI) bid on the study. Commissioner Bleak, as the commission liaison, signed the contract to begin services with ESCI, which was the purpose of the ratification of the contract. At this point, information was being gathered for the firm and they would make recommendations based on many factors. Discussion and comments were shared on the geographical areas that were unique to Iron County.

Royce Barton, Paragonah Fire Chief, noted that he agreed that Iron County was a unique place as Jon mentioned. Chief Barton stated that he would like to be involved with this study and have his input considered. We need to have funding for the Paragonah area because there were three different districts, Paragonah, Parowan, and Brian Head and it was not fair to put the fire district in one place. He had been the Paragonah Fire Chief for 45 years and the area he covered was from Paragonah to mile-post 91, which was in Iron County but only seven miles out of Beaver County, and then over to U-20. He reported that there were some real challenges with running the volunteer fire department financially. Equipment and trucks were still needed. Jon Whittaker noted that a study was not the same as taking action. He reported that ESCI was a very reputable firm and they want to meet with the Fire Chiefs. Discussion continued regarding funding districts and the benefits.

Kenneth Robinson made a motion to the ratification of the contract with Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI) to perform a Fire District(s) Feasibility Study. Second by Michael Bleak. Voting: Michael Bleak, Aye; Paul Cozzens, Aye; Kenneth Bleak, Aye.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF A POLICY TO ESTABLISH APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS, REVIEW CRITERIA, AND AN APPROVAL PROCESS WHEN CREATING A PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE DISTRICT (PID)

Marcus Keller, Iron County Municipal Advisor, explained what a Public Infrastructure District (PID) was and how it worked. Marcus stated that this item was not to approve a PID. It was simply setting a policy so that when Iron County received an application that requested a PID, there would be a structure on what would be required to submit that application and what information the review committee required. There was also a fee associated with the PID so the county would be compensated for any time and effort they put in as far as manpower, time spent, etc. for this. He explained that a PID was a tool, a financing mechanism that allowed the creation of an entity. Anything in unincorporated Iron County, you were the creating entity that gave Iron County the power to create a local district called a PID. The PID could do one thing. It could bond and be used as a financing vehicle. Marcus explained the PID bonding process, taxing authority, and its benefits. Discussion, questions, and answers continued between the Iron County Commissioners and Marcus regarding the PID.

Michael Bleak made a motion to approve the Iron County Policy PID establishing an application requirement, review criteria, and approval process when creating a PID, with all suggested changes as presented by Marcus Keller. Second by Kenneth Robinson. Voting: Michael Bleak, Aye; Paul Cozzens, Aye; Kenneth Robinson, Aye.

PERSONNEL

Jennifer Bradbury, Iron County Human Resource (HR) Director, presented the new hire of Elizabeth Hinson as a Part-Time Legal Assistant for the Attorney's Office, effective March 17th. This was a newly approved position; the promotion of Emilee Campbell from Deputy 2 to Deputy 3 for the Sheriff's – Corrections Department, effective March 17th; and the new hire of Raul Rodriguez Pacheco as a Full-Time Road Maintenance Technician in the Road Department, effective February 18th. This was a backfill of a vacant position.

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

NON-DELEGATED ITEMS

No Non-Delegated were discussed.

ADJOURNMENT

Paul Cozzens, Iron County Commission Chair, declared adjournment.


Signed: Paul Cozzens, Chair


Attest: Jonathan T. Whittaker, County Clerk

