1. MINUTES of the public meeting of the **USSD1 BOARD MEETING February 12th 2025** in the conference room of the Uintah Recreation Center located at 610 South Vernal Ave. Vernal Utah. The Meeting commenced at 6:30 pm.

PARTICIPANTS/STAFF:
Jamey Smuin (Chairman), Joe McKea, Wayne Simper, Shaun Murray (Ballard), Uintah County Commissioner Sonja Norton, Jo Gardner, Robin O'Driscoll, Ross Morton, Joel Brown, Mike Harrington (Legal Counsel)
Executive Director Cheryl Meier, HR/CFO Shawna Weaver, Amanda Wilson, Dustin Hinkle, Rafe Johnston.

ABSENT/EXCUSED

ATTENDANCE:
Uintah County Commissioner Willis LeFevre, Bruce McKee, Bart Jensen (Jones and DeMille Engineering), Corey Foley (Vernal City Council), Carl Dieckmann (Dinaland Sports), Brandon Wilkins (BHI), Adam Brown (BHI), Mike Janowicz, Aubrey Janowicz, Brandon Roper (BHI) Sonya Ray, Melvin Ray, Tara Alsip (USSD1), Amber Hadlock (USSD1), Gabby Blackburn (Sunrise Engineering), Spencer Caldwell, Kevin Jardine (Jardine Builders), Nate Jardine(Jardine Builders) Gill Oosteveen, Brenda Stevens

Minutes recorded and written by Board Clerk Amanda Wilson

2. PRAYER Joel Brown, **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** Joe McKea

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES Joe McKea made a motion to approve the **Dec 11th, 2024 USSD1 Regular Board Meeting Minutes**. Joel Brown seconded the motion. *The motion passed unanimously.*

4. BOARD INPUT, FOLLOW UP ON MINUTES, COMMITTEE REPORTS
Executive Director Cheryl Meier introduced Rafe Johnston to the Board as the new superintendent at Dinaland Golf Course.

5. PUBLIC INPUT

Spencer Caldwell addressed the Board regarding the fee increase, following up on the January Board meeting and the meeting with the Patron Relations Committee. He requested that the Board vote to decrease the extra child fee to the $40-$45 per year range.

Aubrey Janowicz addressed the Board regarding the fee increase, following up on her patron relations meeting. She suggested that the Board consider expanding the definition of a family membership from 4 to 6 members. Aubrey also inquired about the allocation of the mineral lease funds and questioned the fee increase, expressing concern that the gap between user fees and the mineral lease funds would be too large to bridge effectively.

Commissioner Willis LeFevre said he commended the Board for considering adjusting the price increase after recognizing the mistake. He also praised Cheryl Meier for her hard work and dedication as an employee.

Brenda Stevens addressed the Board and questioned why the community couldn’t maintain the current, smaller scale and keep things as they are. Brenda stated that she would prefer to keep the facility's status quo and avoid making significant changes.

6. Public Hearing

Executive Director Cheryl Meier introduced to the Board the Public Hearing.

> *Notice is hereby given that the Uintah Special Service District 1 (USSD1) will hold a public hearing to discuss submitting an application to the Permanent Community Impact Board (CIB) for funding of the proposed addition to the Uintah Community Center for an expanded Athletic Facility. This project would consist of a new building to offer more areas of recreation to the community including basketball, volleyball, racketball, turf fields and more space for recreation opportunities. The CIB funding application will be in the amount of $20,000,000. USSD1 will solicit comments concerning the size, scope, and nature of the funding request for the above project. All interested persons shall be given an opportunity to be heard.*

Gill Oosteveen addressed the Board in support of the new building expansion. As a yoga instructor for USSD1, she expressed enthusiasm for the project, noting that the current space she teaches in is multifunctional and does not provide an ideal environment for yoga. She mentioned that her classes are often full and she has been asked to hold additional sessions. Gill Oosteveen emphasized her desire to provide a complete yoga experience, focusing on mind, body, and spirit, which are key benefits of the practice. In addition to her role as a yoga instructor, Gill Oosteveen is the mother of four children who play competitive soccer. She highlighted the challenges her children face, as they currently compete against teams with access to year-round practice facilities. She pointed out that securing practice time in the Uintah School District's shared facilities is difficult for the general public, and more frequent practice would help the community remain competitive with teams closer to the city. Gill Oosteveen further emphasized the need for additional facilities to accommodate various groups, including the addition of new courts for activities such as racquetball and pickleball.

Amber Hadlock addressed the Board as both an employee of USSD1 and a parent of five children. She shared her personal experience of moving to rural Utah from the Wasatch Front, explaining that when the original building was constructed, the facility and its programs were a saving grace for her family. At a time when she felt lost, she found comfort at the community center, utilizing the child care services to give herself time to focus on her own physical and mental well-being. She emphasized the essential role recreation plays in a healthy lifestyle, noting that it is often overlooked and should be viewed as a necessity, not a luxury, within the community.

Amber Hadlock also shared a message of support from a representative at Ashley Regional Medical Center, who could not attend the meeting. The representative highlighted the importance of the district's offerings in recruiting and retaining doctors. They noted that the rec center is one of the main features they showcase to potential recruits, contributing significantly to doctors' decisions to move to Vernal and bring their families.

As a long-time employee, Amber Hadlock has witnessed the growth of both the community and the district. She stated that the new building would address many challenges, particularly within the fitness department. She explained that the current facility has outgrown its capacity, and a larger space would better serve the community, benefiting a broad range of groups and activities. The weight room is overcrowded, and the district offers over 50 group fitness classes per week, with hundreds of patrons utilizing those classes, in addition to the track, swimming pool, gym, and other programs. Thanks to the growth of the fitness program, we are seeing high demand, and there are times when classes reach capacity and patrons are turned away. Amber Hadlock emphasized the importance of recreation as a necessity, not only for fitness but also as a safe and supportive environment for all members of the community. She pointed out that teenagers have a safe place to hang out, and the facility provides a secure space for families, especially for mothers who can use child care services while taking care of their own physical and mental health. The recreation center also offers a vital space for the elderly, with some of the largest fitness classes catering to seniors, providing them with opportunities to connect with others, especially those who live alone. She further explained that the current facilities are at capacity and are needing more room to grow. While the district partners with the school district to use their buildings for sports programs, the growing demand from the community and the school's need for space for their teams has made it difficult to meet the demand for recreational programs. Amber Hadlock highlighted that the gym is sometimes closed for programs, limiting public access to open courts. She stressed the need for more space to accommodate both the district’s programs and public open gym time, benefiting the entire community. Finally, Amber Hadlock noted that winters in Vernal can be long, and there are limited spaces for recreational activities. She expressed that the new building would help provide the necessary space to support the growing needs of the Basin.

Willis LeFevre, the newest Uintah County Commissioner and an avid user of the community center, expressed his support for the new building, provided it does not incur costs to Uintah County taxpayers. He voiced strong appreciation for the CIB program, noting that it allows Uintah County to benefit from more of the mineral lease dollars generated within the county. Commissioner LeFevre emphasized that CIB is an excellent resource for addressing the needs of oil and gas-producing communities. He also pointed out that Uintah County is seeing new leases open up on federal lands, which will provide long-term benefits for the community and state. While Commissioner LeFevre expressed his support for the project, he firmly stated his opposition to taxing the citizens for it. He mentioned that Uintah County has contributed substantial funds to the CIB board and hopes some of that funding could be used to support the new building.

Brandon Wilkins addressed the Board as both a patron and a general contractor who submitted a bid for the project. He informed the Board that he was notified the previous evening that his company, BHI, was not selected. After reviewing the criteria and the five items the committee was asked to grade the proposals on, Brandon Wilkins raised concerns regarding the selection process. He questioned how a local contractor, who is more than qualified, was not selected for the project, especially given their recent completion of a $35 million recreation center in Ogden. The proposal followed a design-build approach, and BHI partnered with VCBO Architecture, one of the largest architectural firms in the state specializing in recreation. Brandon Wilkins argued that, due to this collaboration, his proposal was particularly strong. While Brandon Wilkins was unaware of which contractor was selected, he emphasized that BHI is a local company employing many county residents who pay taxes. He expressed confidence in the strength of their proposal and asked the Board to review how the proposals were scored.

Corey Foley addressed the Board as both a resident and a Vernal City council member. He inquired about how the building would be funded through the CIB, specifically asking whether the $20 million request would be a grant, a loan, or a combination of both. Executive Director Cheryl Meier responded to the questions by referring to the funding matrix, explaining that the funding will likely be a combination of a grant and loan. She noted that once the proposal is presented to CIB, securing funding for recreation projects can be a more challenging process. The proposal would involve taking out a loan and using the capital project fund to cover any portion of the funding that is not provided as a grant. The plan is to avoid draining the entire capital projects fund by spreading the financial burden over a 15-year period.
Corey Foley emphasized that he does not want debt to be a burden to the tax payers.

Carl Dieckmann addressed the Board in support of the Athletic Facility Expansion project. As the owner of Dinaland Sports, which has taken over the adult softball program, he shared that 800 adults participate in the program, but they have had to cut back due to space limitations. He explained that he holds the lease on the fields from May 1 to the end of November, using them four nights a week from 6 to 11 pm. Along with Dinaland Sports, Vernal Youth Baseball and Vernal Girls Softball also operate their programs through leases. Carl Dieckmann highlighted that these leases limit the ability of youth and other teams to access the fields for practice, hindering their development and the positive benefits sports provide. He noted that the lack of available time and space is a significant issue, as he witnesses overcrowded facilities throughout the basin. With Vernal continuing to grow, he emphasized the increasing demand for athletic space. Carl Dieckmann stressed that in a time when outdoor activities, athleticism, and disconnecting from technology are more important than ever, expanding the facilities is crucial to fostering community engagement and encouraging healthy, active lifestyles.

Bruce McKee addressed the Board, stating that while his project would be a great benefit to the community, it is important to also consider the ongoing associated costs, including employee expenses and utilities.

Jamey Smuin closed the public hearing.

7. Recommendation for the Athletic Facility Expansion Project

Robin O'Driscoll presented to the Board an overview of the process for the Athletic Facility Expansion Project. The committee, consisting of Robin, Shaun, and Joel, carefully reviewed all submitted proposals through a structured evaluation process. They discussed each proposal in detail and conducted a scoring process to narrow it down to the top three firms for interviews. The committee then held three separate interviews, asking follow-up questions to each firm. After the interviews, they reviewed the scoring once more and reached a unanimous decision that aligned with the project's best needs and goals.

> *Robin O'Drisoll made a motion to recommend Jardine Builders, MB Design Group, Sunrise Engineering, BHB Structural, and Royal Engineering for the Athletic Facility Expansion Project.*
> *Shaun Murray seconded the motion.*
> *Murray Aye, Norton Aye, Morton Aye, O'Driscoll Aye, McKea Aye, Brown Aye, Smuin Aye.*

8. Discussion on Work Session Information

> -Fee Increase
> *Shaun Murray made a motion to decrease the additional child fee to the community center from $185 to $45 annually. After the 4th family member on membership.*
> *Joel Brown seconded the motion.*
> *Murray Aye, Norton Aye, Morton Aye, O'Driscoll Aye, McKea Aye, Brown Aye, Smuin Aye.*
>
> -Elected Officials Stipend
> During the discussion at the January Board Meeting, the topic of elected officials not receiving a board stipend was brought up by Robin O'Driscoll and Shaun Murray. No motion was made, and it was decided to maintain the current practice of paying all board members a stipend.

9. FINANCIALS

Emailed by Shawna Weaver. Reviewed spreadsheet.

Ross Morton made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Meeting adjourned 7:49 pm