MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION ("CWC") EXECUTIVE/ BUDGET/AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, MARCH 17, 2025, AT 3:30 PM. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED WITH A VIRTUAL OPTION AT THE CWC OFFICES LOCATED IN THE BRIGHTON BANK BUILDING, 311 SOUTH STATE STREET, SUITE 330, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.

Present: Mayor Jeff Silvestrini, Chair
Christopher Robinson
Tom Diegel
John Knoblock

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

Opening

1. Chair Jeff Silvestrini will Open the Public Meeting as Chair of the Executive/Budget/Audit Committee of the Central Wasatch Commission.

Chair Jeff Silvestrini called the Central Wasatch Commission ("CWC") Executive/Budget/Audit Committee Meeting to order at approximately 3:30 p.m. and welcomed those present.

2. Review and Approval of the Minutes of the February 14, 2025 Meeting.

MOTION: Jeff Silvestrini moved to APPROVE the February 14, 2025, Executive/Budget/Audit Committee Meeting Minutes. Christopher Robinson seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.

Tom Diegel noted that he will need to leave the Executive/Budget/Audit Committee Meeting early and asked to share Stakeholders Council updates with the Committee first. Chair Silvestrini allowed the Stakeholders Council Discussion item to be addressed ahead of the other agenda items.

Strategic Plan Follow-Up

1. The Committee will Revisit the Topics Discussed for Next Fiscal Year's Strategic Plan:

a. CWNCRA Timeline and Planning.

Executive Director, Lindsey Nielsen, reported that based on previous CWC Board discussions, there

is a desire to focus on the Central Wasatch National Conservation and Recreation Area Act ("CWNCRA"). Though there are other projects in the Mountain Accord, it was determined that the CWNCRA should be the focus this year. Ms. Nielsen has started to schedule meetings related to this. There will be a more robust update shared at the CWC Board Meeting on May 5, 2025.

b. Land Acquisition Program.

During a previous meeting, there was a suggestion made by Laura Briefer about a possible Land Acquisition Program. She suggested a program where the CWC solicited for-sale parcels of land in the Central Wasatch from willing sellers. Those parcels could then be placed into conservation easements. Mr. Knoblock has had discussions with Ms. Briefer about this possibility in the past. He noted that there are a lot of private parcels in the Central Wasatch. It would be wonderful if some of those parcels could be put into public hands. Ms. Nielsen offered to add this to the agenda for the Executive/Budget/Audit Committee Meeting in April so Ms. Briefer can share comments.

Ms. Nielsen reported that Salt Lake City looks at for-sale land in the Cottonwood Canyons and Millcreek that have watershed impacts and benefits. The last time there was a conversation about this, she recalled that there was a desire for Salt Lake City to retain the latitude to make those decisions themselves. That being said, if that view has changed, there can be another discussion.

c. Environmental Monitoring and Restoration Program.

Ms. Nielsen explained that there was another addition to the Strategic Plan suggested by Ms. Briefer. It relates to the Environmental Monitoring and Restoration Program that was tied to the Environmental Dashboard in the Mountain Accord. The way she interpreted the language in the Mountain Accord is that the Environmental Dashboard was originally intended to be a report card of the functioning health of different elements specific to the Central Wasatch. Since that time, the Environmental Dashboard has changed. The Environmental Dashboard provides raw data, but not much commentary on what the data indicates in terms of functioning health. As a result, an Environmental Monitoring and Restoration Program would be somewhat difficult. If there is a desire to pursue that, the first step would be to reopen a discussion about the inclusion of a threshold or limits. It is possible to provide more commentary in the Environmental Dashboard.

d. Millcreek Canyon Shuttle.

Chair Silvestrini reported that there have been discussions with CWC Staff about whether to include an update to the Fehr & Peers study in the next fiscal year budget. He has not been supportive of that update in the past but has since been convinced that the timing might work.

Chair Silvestrini wants to ensure that whatever updates are conducted will be recognized by the U.S. Forest Service. Ms. Nielsen reported that there will likely be a Categorical Exclusion ("CE"). She was told directly from Bekee Hotze that a CE is anticipated, which is much easier than an Environmental Assessment ("EA"). Chair Silvestrini noted that this will be a difficult budget season for the CWC, but he is supportive of the study update. John Knoblock hopes there can be coordination with the Forest Service so the Fehr & Peers study will satisfy their requirements.

Ms. Nielsen reported that there was a similar conversation during the recent Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting. There was some concern that the intention was to replicate the Feasibility Study

that was conducted in 2012. However, that is not the case and is not what has been suggested to Jon Nepstad at Fehr & Peers. She is not interested in spending CWC money on anything unnecessary. The study update would be related to items the Forest Service needs answers to.

Chair Silvestrini suggested checking in with CWC Legal Counsel to ensure that there is no issue returning to Fehr & Peers rather than going out to bid, given the time that has passed since the initial work. Director of Operations, Samantha Kilpack, explained that CWC Staff checked in with Shane Topham a few months back. At that time, he stated that a sole source should be permissible, as Fehr & Peers conducted the original study, but CWC Staff can double check.

Mr. Knoblock asked if there is an update on the Federal Lands Access Program ("FLAP") grant timing. The last he heard, it sounded like the FLAP road construction might not actually start this year. Chair Silvestrini explained that the timeline is up in the air. However, due to the progress of the grant, there might be funds committed already, so it is likely to move forward as planned.

Ms. Nielsen reported that the budget that the Executive/Budget/Audit Committee reviewed in the Meeting Materials does not include $34,000 for the update to the Fehr & Peers study. That can be added to the fiscal year budget but would require a larger Fund Balance appropriation. When she requested a projected timeline from Fehr & Peers for the necessary update, she was told that it would take between four and six months. She believes that the work could start in July 2025 when the new fiscal year starts. Commissioner Christopher Robinson asked for additional information about the timeline. Ms. Nielsen explained that if the CWC wants to budget for the study update using the funds from the next fiscal year, then the work cannot start until July 2025. She added that the organization is using the unallocated funds in the budget for other items this year, so she does not want to propose that the CWC use the unallocated contingency funds for this work.

Chair Silvestrini asked CWC Staff to check in with Mr. Nepstad to find out what the scope of work would look like. There will also need to be communication with the Forest Service. He would like to have that information available ahead of the next CWC Board Meeting. There could be a budget amendment to use reserves for that purpose. It might be beneficial for the work to start sooner rather than later. Ms. Kilpack reported that there will be a smaller surplus than previously anticipated, but there is still a surplus that could be used. As a result, it might be possible to accommodate the study update without a budget amendment. Commissioner Robinson noted that there are still six weeks until the next CWC Board Meeting. It might be appropriate to seek out consent via email so the approval can be granted earlier, especially if the study update will not require a budget amendment. Chair Silvestrini asked CWC Staff to create a memo related to what has been discussed. He offered to review the memo before it is distributed to the CWC Board. The memo could include information about the reason there is a desire to move forward with the study now, including the change in attitude from the Forest Service on the Millcreek Canyon shuttle. It would also be possible to analyze winter and summer use if the study happens now.

Ms. Nielsen has spoken to Salt Lake County about the shuttle and there was interest expressed. If the study is updated and everyone is on board with moving to a National Environmental Policy Act ("NEPA") analysis, the County has indicated some level of interest in partnering. Chair Silvestrini does not believe it is likely the shuttle could start before the academic year at Skyline High School ends. He reiterated his support to proceed with a memo to the CWC Board.

Preliminary 2025-2026 Budget Discussion

1. Staff will Present a Preliminary Budget for the 2025-2026 Fiscal Year.

a. Member Contributions.
b. New Member Jurisdictions.

Ms. Nielsen reported that the Meeting Materials Packet includes information about the Preliminary Budget for the 2025-2026 Fiscal Year. $100,000 was received out of the $185,000 that was requested this year from the State Legislature. The CWC will soon be budgeting for a third full-time employee who also will have benefits. Those are the two main reasons the CWC budget this year will require either more income or a Fund Balance appropriation that is larger than what has been needed in the past. Chair Silvestrini mentioned possible additional contributions. He pointed out that the Bus Bypass Program has been successful and is something that Sandy appreciates. Ms. Kilpack clarified that the budget does not include potential income from new member jurisdictions. It assumes the minimum contribution at each tier level from the current members.

Chair Silvestrini noted that he has spoken to CWC Staff about potentially approaching Wasatch County and Draper about their interest in joining the CWC. He has spoken to the Mayor of Draper, Troy Walker, about the organization. Mayor Walker expressed support but noted that his Council would need to agree as well and there has been some hesitancy expressed in the past. It might be worthwhile to present to the Draper City Council and highlight the benefits of the CWC. Commissioner Robinson asked what tier Draper would be in. Chair Silvestrini stated that their population is in excess of 50,000. As a result, Draper would be lower than Millcreek, but higher than Cottonwood Heights. The suggested amount would be between $50,000 and $75,000. Chair Silvestrini noted that there was a discussion with CWC Staff about a lower contribution to start. The idea is the member jurisdiction would see the value in the organization and increase the contribution over time, but he does not want to negatively impact the tiered system that is in place.

Mr. Knoblock asked whether Mayor Rob Dahle from Holladay had been approached. The 6200 South Park and Ride is part of Holladay. Chair Silvestrini stated that he could speak to him about the possibility, but noted that Mayor Dahle will not be running again. As a result, he may or may not be engaged in this matter. He offered to reach out to other members of the City Council.

Ms. Nielsen reported that she has reached out to Draper and will let the Executive/Budget/Audit Committee know whether she hears back from them. She also followed up on a conversation that she and Catherine Kanter had about Salt Lake County returning to the CWC as either a full voting member or as an ex-officio member. The bylaws, as written, limit CWC Board Membership to 10 voting members and four Ex-Officio Members. The bylaws also state that the member jurisdictions can only be from Summit County and Salt Lake County. If there were outreach to Wasatch County, which she supports, that would require a change to the bylaw language.

Commissioner Robinson asked if the CWC lost the Forest Service as an ex-officio member. This was confirmed. Ms. Nielsen clarified that the CWC Board has Special Advisors as well. As for the current Ex-Officio Members, there is Carlton Christensen with the Utah Transit Authority ("UTA") and Annalee Munsey with the Metropolitan Water District of Salt Lake and Sandy. There are still two Ex-Officio Member positions available. Commissioner Robinson pointed out that Salt Lake County

could become an ex-Officio member without an amendment to the current language. Ms. Nielsen confirmed this. There are currently eight voting members of the CWC.

Ms. Nielsen has considered inviting a representative from High Valley Transit to join the CWC Board as an Ex-Officio Member because High Valley Transit provides the transit connection between the Wasatch Back and Salt Lake City. High Valley Transit was at the Central Wasatch Symposium and provided a strong voice on the Transportation and Transit Panel. She reiterated that there are two Ex-Officio Member seats available currently. In addition, there are two seats available for voting members. The Executive/Budget/Audit Committee is currently talking about Draper, Holladay, and Wasatch County. If all three were interested, an amendment would be needed. Chair Silvestrini believes if there is interest from all three of them, an amendment can be pursued. As for High Valley Transit, he suggested reaching out to UTA to make sure there are no concerns. Commissioner Robinson reported that High Valley Transit has a great rapport with UTA. He does not believe there will be a conflict. He suggested reaching out to Draper, Holladay, and Wasatch County to see what the reaction is before making a decision about an amendment.

Chair Silvestrini further discussed the Preliminary Budget. There were a lot of cuts made by the Legislature this year. He hopes the funding amount will be restored in future years. Commissioner Robinson confirmed that this was a tight year. Chair Silvestrini does not want to lose the momentum that has been built with the programs that have already been funded. He hopes that the fact that the reserves will be used to maintain the work will put the organization in a better position next year as opposed to cutting programs or reducing the scope. In terms of the public benefit, it is also important to continue the programs. He is supportive of coming to the CWC Board with this budget, given the circumstances. Ms. Nielsen reported that the lobbying team informed her that there was nothing else that could have been done. She reiterated that a lot of cuts were made.

Commissioner Robinson noted that the Preliminary Budget has $130,000 more in it for salaries and benefits than the prior year. He asked about the new positions that have been discussed. It was reported that Community Engagement Coordinator, Mia McNeil, will be leaving the CWC at the end of May 2025. During the month of May, she will train the new employee who will start as the Communications Director in a full-time position. Ms. McNeil stated that it is a bittersweet decision to leave the CWC because it has been a wonderful experience, but she will be participating in a study abroad over the summer in Ireland. Chair Silvestrini noted that the budget difference relates to the full-time position as well as a cost of living adjustment ("COLA"). Ms. Kilpack explained that the benefits number might be lower, but during the budget process, she has accounted for the possibility that whoever is hired might be married or have children. Ms. Nielsen stated that the Communications Director position has been marketed as a range of $80,000 to $90,000 per year with full benefits. Additional discussions were had about the budget.

Chair Silvestrini believes there is comfort in recommending the Preliminary Budget to the CWC Board. Commissioner Robinson confirmed this but noted that it is a difficult budget this year. Ms. Nielsen pointed out that meetings with the member jurisdictions might change some of the numbers listed. When the Tentative Budget is voted on in May, this might look a bit different.

Surplus Policy Amendment

1. The Committee will Discuss a Draft Amendment of the CWC's Surplus Policy.

Chair Silvestrini expressed support for the surplus policy amendment. What is proposed reflects the discussion had with CWC Legal Counsel about raising the limit before needing approval.

Use of Travel and Professional Development Funds

1. The Committee will Discuss the Use of this Fiscal Year's Budgeted Travel and Professional Development Funds.

Ms. Nielsen reported that there are unused professional development and travel funds in the current fiscal year budget. Ms. Nielsen and Ms. Kilpack have some suggestions about how to use those funds. For example, traveling to a Conservation and Recreation Area that is out of State, such as the Lake Tahoe Commission. The Commission has a similar composition to the CWC and it might be possible to ask them questions and attend some of their meetings. Until now, the travel funding has primarily been used for visits to DC when the focus was more on the CWNCRA.

Chair Silvestrini wants to be conservative in the way the money is spent. That being said, it makes sense to visit with other Conservation and Recreation Areas. It could be useful, especially if CWC Staff was able to find out about any political issues that were navigated. A field trip like that could have value, but it might be beneficial to speak to more than one organization. He asked CWC Staff to create a plan and then share it with the CWC Board for consideration. Ms. Nielsen confirmed that she will create a memo about this matter and will share it with Board Members.

Stakeholders Council Discussion

1. The Chair and Co-Chair of the Stakeholders Council will Discuss with the Committee the Recent Activities of the Stakeholders Council.

Mr. Diegel shared Stakeholders Council updates with the Executive/Budget/Audit Committee. Most of the subcommittees have met in the last week or so, including the various System Committees and the Millcreek Canyon Committee. Each of the System Committees is focused on collecting baseline data. Stakeholders Council Members determined that there is a lot of existing information that can be collected. It is possible to put in the effort to obtain the existing data. In the future, it will be possible to undertake this effort again and see what some of the trends are. This effort could potentially assist with future funding requests and resource suggestions.

Mr. Knoblock characterized this as an effort to supplement the Visitor Use Study that was conducted. Chair Silvestrini noted that traffic counters were placed in the canyon. The vehicle counts for Millcreek Canyon did not correspond with the visitor use data that Dr. Jordan Smith presented. While he understands the contract with Dr. Smith has ended, there should likely be some sort of conversation about the issues. Mr. Diegel explained that he looked at the Visitor Use Study closely when it was released and based on that review, he felt a lot of the information was incomplete. According to Dr. Smith, the Utah State University team was compelled to follow Forest Service guidelines. Dr. Smith recognized that there were certain limitations to that process, but in order for the Forest

Service to consider the Visitor Use Study, the guidelines needed to be considered. It appears that the guidelines limited the quality of the information received.

Mr. Diegel reported that there were recent discussions about a Millcreek Canyon shuttle. Last week, he had a meeting with the new District Ranger, Adam Shaw. During that meeting, he asked him how he felt about a Millcreek Canyon shuttle and Mr. Shaw expressed support. He committed to speaking to Dave Whittekiend about the shuttle and personally felt there has been a need for a shuttle in the canyon for some time. Mr. Shaw acknowledged the letter that was sent in the fall of 2023 from the Forest Service to the CWC. That letter talked about the need for funding and parking. Both of those issues have been looked into further, especially the parking needs. With the upper canyon being closed for the next two summers, this will increase the intensity of the use on the lower portion of the canyon. The plan is for there to be another road project in the lower portion of the canyon in the future. As a result, the need for a shuttle is intensified.

Mr. Diegel pointed out that the winter use in Millcreek Canyon is intense. It is not necessarily traffic that is the problem, but parking in the canyon is an issue. A Millcreek Canyon shuttle would address a lot of the existing parking issues. Mr. Diegel reiterated that Mr. Shaw is supportive of a Millcreek Canyon shuttle and also has the support of the regional office. Chair Silvestrini was encouraged by this update. He hoped to speak to Mr. Shaw about this matter in the future.

Staff Announcements

1. Youth Council Updates.

Ms. McNeil shared information about the CWC Youth Council. Next Tuesday will be the CWC Youth Council Meeting. Some of the subcommittees will meet this week as well.

2. Request for Appropriation.

The appropriation request was already discussed.

3. Hiring Committee.

Ms. Nielsen reported that the CWC is currently accepting applications for the Communications Director role and a Research Internship. The Hiring Committee will include Ms. Nielsen, Mses. Kilpack and McNeil. Chair Silvestrini and Commissioner Robinson are also welcome to participate in the Hiring Committee. The preference is to have in-person interviews when possible.

4. Short-Term Projects Grant Finalists Have Been Selected.

The Short-Term Projects Grant Program finalists have been selected. Ms. Nielsen clarified that this does not mean the grants have been awarded, as there are a few different phases. The call for ideas was opened and out of that initial pool, the proposals were graded based on set criteria. The finalists were asked to build out their project proposals with a timeline of work and a full budget.

5. The Next EBAC Meeting is Scheduled for Monday, April 21, 2025, at 3:30 PM.

The next Executive/Budget/Audit Committee Meeting will take place on April 21, 2025.

6. The Next CWC Board Meeting and Tentative Budget Hearing are on May 5, 2025.

The next CWC Board Meeting and Tentative Budget Hearing will take place on May 5, 2025. That meeting will be the last one that Ms. McNeil attends as a member of CWC Staff.

Other Business

There was no additional business.

Closing

1. Chair Silvestrini will Call for a Motion to Adjourn the Executive/Budget/Audit Committee Meeting.

MOTION: Jeff Silvestrini moved to ADJOURN the Executive/Budget/Audit Committee Meeting. Christopher Robinson seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.

The Central Wasatch Commission Executive/Budget/Audit Committee Meeting adjourned at approximately 4:34 p.m.

I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Central Wasatch Commission Executive/Budget/Audit Committee Meeting held on Monday, March 17, 2025.

Teri Forbes

Teri Forbes
T Forbes Group
Minutes Secretary

Minutes Approved: _____