



SEVEN COUNTY INFRASTRUCTURE COALITION  
MEETING MINUTES

September 26, 2025 at 8:00 a.m.

Uintah Conference Center (Anchor Location + Electronic)  
313 East 200 South  
Vernal, Utah 84078  
(801) 712-7622

**Board Members Present:** Jared Haddock (Carbon County), Dennis Worwood (Emery County) excused, Greg Jensen (Sevier County) virtual, Sonja Norton (Uintah County), Silvia Stubbs (San Juan County) virtual, Greg Miles (Duchesne County), and Jack Lytle (Daggett County).

**Also in attendance:** Keith Heaton, Brian Barton, Michael Hawley, Jon Stearmer, Melanie Sasser, Joel Brown, Erin Waite, Kyla Allred, Tonya Murray, and Tiffany Carter.

**Attended telephonically:** Kelly Carter, Stacey Herpel, Doug Rasmussen, Melissa Cano, Deborah Herron, Lori Haslem, Jay Johnson, Dan Hawley, and Connor Haus.

**Others Present:** (Please notify staff at 435-817-0025 of any spelling corrections or if you were present and not listed.)

**Public Meeting Participation Information:**

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://jonesanddemille.zoom.us/j/81812623532>

Or Join by Telephone:

1-253-215-8782 or

1-346-248-7799 or

1-669-900-6833

Webinar ID: 818 1262 3532

**1. Welcome (Jack Lytle)**

Chairman Lytle welcomed everyone to the meeting at 8:15 AM. Chairman Lytle had everyone introduce themselves.

**2. Public Comment (Jack Lytle)**

Public comment was accepted verbally, during the meeting, telephonically by Zoom, and by electronic written submission at [stacey@7county.utah.gov](mailto:stacey@7county.utah.gov). Electronic written comments will be forwarded to the Board Members. All comments are summarized in the meeting minutes. A complete copy of any written comments submitted may be requested at the email address provided herein. Chairman Lytle then turned time over to Melissa Cano for those wishing to make public comments electronically.

There were no public comments online or in the room at this time.

Chairman Lytle thanked Ms. Cano, then moved to the next item on the agenda.

**3. Approval of Meeting Minutes for August 14, 2025 (Jack Lytle)**

Chairman Lytle inquired about changes or updates to the minutes, Commissioner Norton stated there were some grammatical corrections, and Commissioner Miles stated another correction. Ms. Herpel stated that those corrections are noted and will be done prior to posting approved meeting minutes. Chairman Lytle requested a motion to approve the minutes with corrections.

**Motion to approve, August 14, 2025 meeting minutes as written, by Commissioner Norton and seconded by Commissioner Haddock.**

Chairman Lytle called for a vote to approve the minutes with corrections. **The motion passed unanimously.**

**4. Uintah Basin Technical College Presentation (UBT Staff)**

Chairman Lytle introduced staff from the Uintah Basin Technical College for their presentation. Tonya Murray thanked the chairman and the board for allowing them to come and present today. Ms. Murray stated that here are some fun facts about UBTech. Uintah Basin Technical College is the oldest technical college in the State of Utah. It was founded in 1968 and had started as the Vocational Center, then moved to the Technology Center and in 2017 the name changed to the Uintah Basin Technical College. UBTech is part of the whole state education system. We align our programs so that they can be transferred across the state to another technical college or a higher degree granting institution. Our mission of Uintah Basin Technical College is to provide technical education and training for secondary and adult students, to fulfill labor market needs,

and promote economic development in the Uinta Basin. Ms. Murray stated that she will hand the time over to Stephanie Carter.

Ms. Carter stated that there are two ways we create programs at UBTech. The first way is that it starts with industry needs. We have to make sure that there are local jobs, then it follows along the process there. Once we identify that there is a local need, then we have to figure out is there space at one of our buildings? What does the funding look like? Figure out how we are going to pay for this new program and FTW for our employees. Is a faculty member available to teach that program? Do we have the equipment for that program? Once we get all those things aligned, now we have a new program.

Ms. Carter stated that the second way we create a program is short-term training. That is usually when an employer who already has employees that need additional training in one specific area or something specialized for their work. That is going to go through our custom fit opportunity and that is where they can create that short-term training, then there is some funding that is tied to that as well as those taxpayer dollars coming back. But those funds run out faster. With the first option, that is not the case. This opportunity is one where employers pay 60% of that training and we pay the 40%. We are an economic development partner in the Uinta Basin. We are the workforce arm of higher education. I will turn the time over to Kyla Allred.

Ms. Allred stated that there is more than just the Basin that is being represented. Many of you may have technical colleges in your area, or if you need one that has already been established, these are some of what we already have, and we accept students from all over as well as other counties. We know what is coming down the line soon, but here is what we have available that is already established. Health Professions, Medical and Nursing Assistants. Service Industry, Information Technology and Culinary. Energy Services, a CDL Program. Trade Industry, Automotive, Construction, and Welding.

Ms. Allred stated that we listen and custom fit what the needs are and then we partner with industry, they are welcome to come to UBTech and help build the curriculum so they know that those future employees are prepared for exactly what they need and want. We invite all of the employers and anybody to come and recruit at our college. We are listening and we are partnering with the local CDL Industry. We knew there was going to be a new law that required anyone wanting a CDL, they needed to go through a training institute. By partnering with employers in that industry we were able to obtain equipment and get the things needed for this program to remove the limitations and meet the needs. In two years we increased the number of CDL drivers by 100, which has been great for the economy.

Ms. Murray stated that where we are today is we have had conversations with industries where they have been requesting heavy equipment over the years. This is something that has been a need even before the railroad project. The requested need has been to have highly trained, highly skilled heavy equipment operators. We are working on a federally funded opportunity, where we

are hoping to be able to get some heavy equipment operator simulators at UBTech where we are able to teach very technical skills, all of the latest technology using GPS and even a more current development with tandem training. Being able to train crews how to work together to be able to use this heavy equipment in a proper way. That is something that we are currently in the middle of doing with that turnaround coming up quickly. That is something that we would like to be able to have the support and commitment of this group and to be able to help us get people in the program, recruitment of students, bringing in the industry to connect us with those individuals who would have an interest in this and also being able to help us know what else is coming down the tracks so that there is that proactive approach to what is going to be needed in the area as it grows.

Ms. Murray stated that is some of the support and the commitment from Seven County and knowing the industries that we serve and those that are yet to come is going to be something that we only have a glimpse into what the potential is. We have lots of scholarship opportunities through partnerships that we have in our local area. We appreciate this opportunity to share a little bit more about UBTech and are open to any questions.

Chairman Lytle thanked Uintah Basin Technical College Staff for their presentation and asked if there were any questions at this time. Seeing none he moved onto the next agenda item.

#### **5. Extension Contract w/ICF for STB 3rd Party Consulting (Jon Stearmer)**

Chairman Lytle turned the time over to Jon Stearmer for the extension contract for professional consulting services. Mr. Stearmer stated that the introduction to this is going to be older than most of the board. Mr. Stearmer stated that we have not had to work on this document in awhile. As the case went to the Court of Appeals, and then went to the Supreme Court, the case is now currently at the Court of Appeals and is waiting for them to return it back to the STB. Jay Johnson had explained it as you climb up the judicial ladder and you get to the Supreme Court, in order to get back down to the agencies that can then get the project moving again, you have to climb back down or descend down the same ladder.

Mr. Stearmer stated that all parties have asked that it be returned back. As soon as it gets back to the STB, there will need to be some work done from the STB. The firm ICF, that helped prepare all the EIS documents and will do the cleanup work under their current arrangement. They are contracted to do any of that supplemental work. Years have passed with the court proceedings, we need to extend the term of the contract and then also update their billing rates.

Mr. Stearmer stated that there are 3 amendments to that contract. Amendment #4 is billable hour rates. The work is not a clearly defined package. It is going to be a collaboration with STB and ICF and work on certain specific clarification needed items.

Mr. Stearmer stated that the original contract goes back to 2019 and this is an easy amendment to extend it to September of 2026. We are not anticipating that they will be working for that long. ICF is an independent 3rd party, but under STB rules and other agencies do the same thing, the proponent of the project has to pay for that service. Mr. Stearmer asked if there were any questions about the extension of this contract?

There was some discussion by the board regarding the hourly rates and the original contract. Chairman Lytle requested a motion to approve the extended contract with Director Heaton's signature.

**Motion to approve amendment #4 with ICF and SCIC extended contract with Director Heaton's signature by Commissioner Miles and seconded by Commissioner Haddock.**

Chairman Lytle called for a vote to approve amendment #4 with ICF and SCIC extended contract with Director Heaton's signature. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Chairman Lytle thanked Mr. Stearmer and moved onto the next agenda item.

## **6. County Project Updates (Board Members)**

Chairman Lytle stated that he will turn the time over to the board members for any project updates at this time.

Commissioner Miles stated that we had some really good presentations yesterday on the rail project, and he appreciates all the effort that went into it. Commissioner Miles recognized Director Heaton and stated that he is doing an excellent job, as well as Mark Michel and Jay Johnson. Commissioner Miles stated that he has had several people that took time to call him yesterday to thank him for Mr. Johnson being able to be here and give a presentation. A lot of the participants that came yesterday felt like it was good and he wanted to appreciate him for making the trip. There is a lot of interest still in the rail project and it was good to hear the full picture yesterday. Our private partners are working very diligently to get things finalized on the other end of the decision, which we are very hopeful that it comes soon and he wanted to express gratitude for all the support. This is a huge project for Utah and there is benefit for the three counties, but also Carbon County will see some benefit from the project.

Commissioner Haddock wanted to comment on what Commissioner Miles had stated. As you have seen in the news where we had the two truckers that collided in our area about 2:30 in the morning, it created a significant ball of fire and the fire continued for several hours. This took emergency hazard crews a long time to clean up and it got into the water. The trucks are more likely to have these types of accidents rather than the rail. This is all the more reason why he thinks that it is helpful that we are moving in this direction.

Chairman Lytle apologized for not being able to attend the Energy Summit, but he heard good things come from the meeting. He is grateful to be a part of the board and to chair alongside Commissioner Miles and thanked everyone for their efforts. Chairman Lytle asked Director Heaton to update the board on the Greenhill project in the Executive Directors Report.

Commissioner Jensen stated that the rail is also going to help Sevier County as well. We sit here and talk about people working and in need. There will be some people from Sevier County being out there working on the rail. When this project gets going, the economic benefit for the whole state through the funds that come through, even through CIB and different things, will help Sevier County. This is a project, even though it is based out there in the basin, will help the whole state and rural Utah, including San Juan, Sevier, and Emery Counties, even though it is not going to be touching those counties.

Chairman Lytle thanked the commissioners for their updates. Chairman Lytle asked if there were any other updates, seeing none he moved onto the next agenda item.

#### **7. Executive Director Report (Keith Heaton)**

Chairman Lytle turned time over to Executive Director Heaton for the director's report. Director Heaton thanked the chairman and the board. Director Heaton thanked everyone for being here today, he appreciates all the support both in person and those online.

Director Heaton stated that we have had multiple public hearings on the private activity bonding. The public hearing in Duchesne County went very well and we appreciate Commissioner Miles of Duchesne County for that. All positive comments from numerous circles. Thank you to your fellow commissioners. We know how extremely busy everyone is and for them to take the time and many hours of their staff's time to accommodate that was much appreciated.

Director Heaton stated that for those who were not at the kickoff of the Energy Summit yesterday morning, the day before, Congressman Kennedy actually started off the conference and he made multiple points addressing multiple projects. I think all but one was a seven county infrastructure project. This goes to show the impact that you are having and I want to dive deeper into that. Commissioner Haddock was in attendance at the Valor Atomics groundbreaking at the San Rafael Energy Center. Seven County was not mentioned in any of the comments, nor were the previous county commissioners. A number of state dignitaries were there, it was all in the press. This is a project that is going to have far-reaching and profound impacts, not only on the State of Utah, but on our country and world energy dynamics. It is because of this group and again, no one says that, but we know that if it were not for the Seven County Infrastructure Coalition, none of that would be happening. We are having impacts, even though people don't know.

Director Heaton continued with the conference yesterday. Our friends at the Utah Petroleum Association made the point to say that in the past three years, the production of waxy crude has doubled. Seven County Infrastructure Coalition is paid for and commissioned a report to explore the option of transporting waxy crude outside of the State of Utah. I am not aware of anyone in the local production arena that did further studies on that, but it was our work that led to that increase that has more than doubled what we historically shipped to the Salt Lake refineries. Without the work that we did, that would not be happening and the work that we are continuing to do will ensure that in the next five years, we double again the amount of production coming out of the basin. There will be an economic diversity impact that exceeds even that doubling of production. The few hours that you are spending a month in Seven County are having such a profound impact.

Director Heaton expressed his appreciation for everyone's efforts to be here. Everyone knows this has been a crazy month, nobody wants to have an early Friday meeting, but those sacrifices are paying dividends. Another example is this past Tuesday there was a tour of the Eastern Utah corridor proposed highway, another Seven County Infrastructure project where we said there is a need for this, no one else is doing it, we will do it. We are making a big impact. Thank you.

Director Heaton stated that we changed some things with the website. There used to be a scrolling section with each of your counties. That information is still available. It is more of a collective thing. We have also made it much easier for the public to go onto the website and be able to get a hold of us. We appreciate those suggestions and comments and want to let you know that it has been changed.

Director Heaton stated that much like the railroad, the Greendale Resort project is slow going, but we are moving forward. We had a number of positive conversations over the past two days here at the Energy Summit about that project, about bringing financing and technical skills into that project. So, it is moving forward and we are seeing some positive progress. We are being able to understand our role and what we need to do to make this project happen and how we can bring together the appropriate parties. It is a bit complicated and it is time consuming, but it is moving forward. We do have funding, developers, and operators that are interested. If we can bring the right people together in the right way.

Director Heaton stated that there were a number of conversations about the Jensen Water project. It is important that we take the opportunity to access any water that we can. Commissioner Lytle knows that we've got a big reservoir full of water and if we don't use our share, it just goes downstream. So we want to make sure we are getting our share, because there is not enough, so that is a very critical thing, just like energy. So we need to do all that we can to increase that. That is all that I have at this time and I'm willing to take any questions.

Chairman Lytle thanked Director Heaton and appreciates all the work he has done. Chairman Lytle then called for any additional questions for Director Heaton. Chairman Lytle then moved on to the next agenda item.

**8. Engineers Report (Jones & DeMille)**

Chairman Lytle turned the time over to Brian Barton with Jones & DeMille for the Engineers Report. Mr. Barton stated that he wanted to state that he just pulled up some information regarding comments about the safety of rail versus the safety of trucks. The final EIS on rail operation, estimates that rail operations would result in a spill of crude oil approximately once every 13 to 36 years, which makes it a very safe option.

Mr. Barton stated that there was a lot of discussion in the Energy Summit about air quality as well. If you are doubling production and you are trying to truck all that in, that is an issue. It is a cleaner option, as far as emissions are concerned, to use rail. Rail's efficiency is enhanced by its ability to carry larger volumes. One train can replace hundreds of trucks and lower fuel consumption approximately 470 to 528 ton miles per gallon of fuel for rail versus only 134 to 145 for trucks. Rail is the king of freight for a reason. We are excited about this project continuing to move forward.

Mr. Barton stated that Director Heaton and the board have talked about all the dynamics of the project and we continue to be supportive of those efforts. We appreciate being plugged into all of the discussions and lending some of that institutional knowledge and information and with respect to the rail, we are happy to have ICF back on with the coalition.

Chairman Lytle thanked Jones & DeMille for their update and all the work they have been doing. Chairman Lytle asked if there were any more questions about the Engineering Report, seeing none, he then moved on to the next agenda item.

**9. Communications Report (Melissa Cano)**

Chairman Lytle turned the time over to Melissa Cano for the communications report. Ms. Cano thanked Chairman Lytle and stated that she will be brief.

Ms. Cano stated that other than monitoring the normal social activity and media outlines, we did not hold a stakeholder meeting this month, so everything has been quiet. We have a few hits on social media here and there, otherwise we suspect we will see more activity when the DC Circuit Court makes their decision, then there will be an uptick of items. Ms. Cano stated that she sent out a holding statement to prepare for that moment, from there we can decide which direction we want to go with either being proactive or reactive with that.

Chairman Lytle thanked Ms. Cano for her update and asked if there were any questions from the board? Seeing none, Chairman Lytle moved on to the next agenda item.



# **10. Presentation, Approval and Adoption of Monthly Expenses (Smuin, Rich & Marsing)**

Chairman Lytle turned the time over to Melanie Sasser for the presentation, approval and adoption of monthly expenses. Ms. Sasser presented the financial information and requested payment approval today. She went on to request payment approval amounting to \$84,326.83. If there is any discussion or review of any items included in the payment request today, she is happy to entertain or discuss those individual line items.

Ms. Sasser stated that there was a check that was needed to be sent out before the meeting that is included in these numbers and will be authorized with the rest of them today to Stacey Herpel.

## **SEVEN COUNTY INFRASTRUCTURE COALITION PAYMENT APPROVAL**

**September 26, 2025 at 8:00 am**

**Uintah Conference Center**

**Split Mountain Room**

**313 East 200 South**

**Vernal, UT 84078**

Expenses Previously Approved by Board :

Vendor	Check #	Invoice #	Amount	Description	Funding Source

Checks Currently Being Approved:

Check Issued - To Be Ratified:

Vendor	Check #	Invoice #	Amount	Description	Funding Source
Stacey Herpel	Direct Deposit	0825	1,752.62	Contract Labor	General Grant

Vendor	Check #	Invoice #	Amount	Description	Funding Source
Smuin, Rich & Marsing	3244	53234	3,326.08	Consulting Per Contract	General Grant
Keith Heaton	3245	40	271.16	Director's Travel and Admin Expenses	General Grant
Public Employees Health Program	3246	608486	1,760.10	Insurance Premiums - August	General Grant
Health Equity	3247	6rqge0x	2.10	HSA Administration Fees - August	General Grant
Jones & DeMille	3248	0138755	8,253.25	Program Management and Engineering	General Grant
Jones & DeMille	3248	0138700	3,000.00	Program Management and Engineering - Jensen Unit Pump Station Planning	General Grant
Jones & DeMille	3248	0138776	900.00	Program Management and Engineering - Ashley Valley Railway	General Grant
Kunz PC	3249	317	3,808.20	General - Legal Service	General Grant
Kunz PC	3250	318	6,906.20	Uinta Rail Line - Legal Service	Uinta Basin Railway Project Grant - STB Regulatory and Other Legal Services - Phase 2
Venable LLP (1/2 Invoice)	3251	2849613	10,000.00	Uinta Rail Line - Litigation Challenges to STB Decision	Uinta Basin Railway Project Grant - STB Regulatory and Other Legal Services - Phase 2
Stratton Law Firm PLLC	3252	148	6,847.12	Uinta Rail Line - Legal Services - PAB	Uinta Basin Railway Project Grant - STB Regulatory and Other Legal Services - Phase 2
Jones & DeMille	3253	0138756	17,900.00	Uinta Rail Line - Engineering	Uinta Basin Railway Project Grant - Program Management Services - Phase 2
Jones & DeMille	3253	0138756	16,200.00	Uinta Rail Line - Engineering	Uinta Basin Railway Project Grant - Strategic Communications - Phase 2
Jones & DeMille	3253	0138756	450.00	Uinta Rail Line - Engineering	Uinta Basin Railway Project Grant - BIA Draft ROD Prep - Phase 2
Kunz PC	3254	319	450.00	Greendale Respritt Planning - Legal Services	Daggett County
Jones & DeMille	3255	0138699	2,500.00	Greendale Respritt Planning - Engineering	Daggett County
<b>Total Payment Approval</b>			<b>\$ 84,326.83</b>		

**Motion to approve expenses for August in the amount of \$84,326.83 was made by Commissioner Miles seconded by Commissioner Norton.**

Chairman Lytle called for the vote. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Ms. Sasser then reviewed the balance sheet which was completed by August 31, 2025. It shows the total assets and liabilities of the Coalition with the second page showing profit and loss statements for August. We also have included a profit/loss by class which shows the funding and expenditures by project. We have detailed information for activity that has happened through August by project as well. She then asked if there were any questions regarding the financial information.

**Motion to approve the financial report for July was made by Commissioner Miles seconded by Commissioner Norton.**

Chairman Lytle called for the vote. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Ms. Sasser stated for information purposes only, then reviewed the project sheet. This does not require any approval from the Coalition. She stated that this concluded the financial update to the Coalition.

Ms. Sasser stated that they were still having issues with the closed checking account and that checks were still trying to be cashed and there were a few small businesses that called to verify checks. They are explaining to those that call in to verify the checks what has happened and the businesses are turning those checks over to local law enforcement.

Chairman Lytle thanked Ms. Sasser and Smuin, Rich & Marsing for their work efforts and moved to the next item on the agenda.

**19. Motion to Adjourn (Jack Lytle)**

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Norton at 9:52 AM.

Seven County Infrastructure Coalition

A motion to approve the September 26, 2025 meeting minutes was made by Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_, seconded by Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_.

SEVEN COUNTY INFRASTRUCTURE COALITION VOTING:

Carbon Board Member	Yes ____	No ____
Daggett Board Member	Yes ____	No ____
Duchesne Board Member	Yes ____	No ____
Emery Board Member	Yes ____	No ____
San Juan Board Member	Yes ____	No ____
Sevier Board Member	Yes ____	No ____
Uintah Board Member	Yes ____	No ____

\_\_\_\_\_  
Co-Chair: Greg Miles

\_\_\_\_\_  
Co-Chair: Jack Lytle

**(COALITION SEAL)**

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Stacey Herpel