



MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) BOARD MEETING HELD MONDAY, JANUARY 12, 2026, AT 3:30 P.M. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED BOTH IN-PERSON AND VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM. THE ANCHOR LOCATION WAS MILLCREEK CITY HALL, LOCATED AT 1330 EAST CHAMBERS AVENUE, MILLCREEK, UTAH.

Board Members: Mayor Erin Mendenhall, Chair
Mayor Roger Bourke
Christopher Robinson
Bill Ciraco
Emily Gray
Mayor Gay Lynn Bennion
Mayor Scotty John
Mayor Monica Zoltanski
Bev Uipi
Carlton Christensen, Ex-Officio
Annalee Munsey, Ex-Officio
Caroline Rodriguez, Ex-Officio

Special Advisors: Jack Stauss

Staff: Lindsey Nielsen, Executive Director
Sam Kilpack, Director of Operations
Will McKay, Communications Director
Shane Topham, CWC Legal Counsel

Other: Ellen Birrell
Dan Knopp
Maura Hahnenberger
Devin Weder
Jon Nepstad
Danny Richardson
John Adams
John Knoblock

1 **OPENING**

2
3 **1. Chair Erin Mendenhall will Call the Meeting to Order and Welcome CWC Board**
4 **Members and the Public.**
5

6 Chair Erin Mendenhall called the Central Wasatch Commission (“CWC”) Board Meeting to order
7 at 3:40 p.m. and welcomed those present. She reported that the CWC Board is now meeting on a
8 quarterly basis. Chair Mendenhall asked all of the meeting attendees to introduce themselves.
9

10 Special Advisor, Jack Stauss, reported that he is the Executive Director of Save Our Canyons. He
11 has been in this role for approximately six months. His favourite part of the Central Wasatch
12 Symposium was the keynote address. Ellen Birrell reported that she is on the City Council in
13 Cottonwood Heights. There were a number of insightful sessions during the symposium. Mayor
14 Gay Lynn Bennion is the Mayor of Cottonwood Heights. She was impressed with the dedication
15 shown at the symposium. Ex-Officio Member, Carlton Christensen, explained that he is with Utah
16 Transit Authority (“UTA”). One of the symposium highlights was the presentation on rock
17 glaciers.
18

19 Bev Uipi introduced herself and stated that she is on the Millcreek City Council. Other attendees
20 from Sandy City, Utah Department of Transportation (“UDOT”), and Fehr & Peers introduced
21 themselves to the CWC Board. Chair Mendenhall stated that she is the Chair of the CWC Board
22 and is also the Mayor of Salt Lake City. She learned a lot during the Central Wasatch Symposium.
23 Highlights included the presentation on rock glaciers and the history of the Mountain Accord.
24 Mayor Monica Zoltanski explained that she is the Mayor of Sandy City. One of the symposium
25 highlights was the keynote address from Darren Parry, which focused on his relationship with the
26 canyons.
27

28 Ex-Officio Member, Annalee Munsey, identified herself as the General Manager at the
29 Metropolitan Water District of Salt Lake and Sandy. Danny Richardson reported that he is retired,
30 but has been part of the ski industry. He serves on the Stakeholders Council and enjoyed the
31 Central Wasatch Symposium. Mayor Scotty John stated that he is the newly elected Mayor of
32 Brighton. He liked that it was possible to network at the symposium and meet a lot of the CWC
33 Board Members.
34

35 Dan Knopp reported that he is a departing member of the CWC Board. Maura Hahnenberger
36 serves as the Chair of the Stakeholders Council and is also a Professor of Atmospheric Sciences.
37 There were a lot of highlights from the Central Wasatch Symposium, including the history of the
38 Mountain Accord. CWC Legal Counsel, Shane Topham, introduced himself to those present.
39 Executive Director, Lindsey Nielsen, introduced herself and noted that Ms. Hahnenberger
40 volunteered on both days of the symposium. Director of Operations, Sam Kilpack, introduced
41 herself and stated that she loved the Mountains and Mental Health symposium breakout, which
42 discussed the role of awe.
43

44 Communications Director, Will McKay, introduced himself to those present and stated that he
45 enjoyed meeting CWC Board Members and Stakeholders Council members during the Central
46 Wasatch Symposium. Chair Mendenhall asked the online participants to introduce themselves.

1 Emily Gray explained that she is a City Council Member in the City of Holladay. She echoed the
2 comments about the symposium. She took time to highlight the efforts made by Ms. Nielsen
3 during the event.
4

5 Mayor Roger Bourke reported that he is the Mayor of Alta. He took a moment to express
6 appreciation for the keynote address. Ex-Officio Member, Caroline Rodriguez, explained that she
7 is representing High Valley Transit. Her favorite part of the Central Wasatch Symposium was the
8 enthusiasm expressed by participants. Bill Ciraco stated that he is on the Park City Council. He
9 stated that the Central Wasatch Symposium brings people together and creates new ideas. There
10 were meaningful conversations and work will be done to cooperate with the Town of Brighton on
11 additional solutions for Bonanza Flat. Chair Mendenhall thanked everyone who took the time to
12 introduce themselves.
13

14 **2. (Action) The Board will Consider Approving the Minutes of the CWC Board Meeting**
15 **on October 31, 2025.**
16

17 **MOTION:** Monica Zoltanski moved to APPROVE the Minutes of the CWC Board Meeting on
18 October 31, 2025. Ellen Birrell seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous
19 consent of the Board.
20

21 **CHANGES TO BOARD MEMBERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP**
22

23 **1. (Action) The Board will Consider Resolution 2026-01 – Approving New Member**
24 **Commissioners Representing Brighton, Cottonwood Heights, and Millcreek.**
25

26 Chair Mendenhall reported that there are three Resolutions related to membership. Resolution
27 2026-01 relates to new members representing Brighton, Cottonwood Heights, and Millcreek.
28

29 **MOTION:** Monica Zoltanski moved to APPROVE Resolution 2026-01 – Approving New
30 Member Commissioners Representing Brighton, Cottonwood Heights, and Millcreek. Dan Knopp
31 seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.
32

33 **2. (Action) The Board will Consider Resolution 2026-02 – Thanking Dan Knopp for His**
34 **Service on the Central Wasatch Commission.**
35

36 Chair Mendenhall reported that Resolution 2026-02 thanks Dan Knopp for his service on the
37 CWC. She noted that he always had a passionate and informed perspective. This has improved
38 the outcomes of the decisions the CWC had made. He has been a wonderful representative on the
39 CWC Board. Ms. Nielsen stated that there is a framed photograph of Mr. Knopp to commemorate
40 his service.
41

42 Mr. Knopp reported that he will continue to focus on what can be done in the Central Wasatch.
43 Mayor John read Resolution 2026-02 aloud, which highlighted the contributions made to the
44 organization. Gratitude and appreciation were expressed to Mr. Knopp for his diligent work,
45 vision, and leadership as a member of the CWC. CWC Board Members reiterated their
46 appreciation for his efforts.

1
2 **MOTION:** Scotty John moved to APPROVE Resolution 2026-02 – Thanking Dan Knopp for His
3 Service on the Central Wasatch Commission. Bill Ciraco seconded the motion. The motion passed
4 with the unanimous consent of the Board.
5

6 **3. (Action) The Board will Consider Resolution 2026-03 – Thanking Ellen Birrell for**
7 **Her Service on the Central Wasatch Commission.**
8

9 Chair Mendenhall reported that Resolution 2026-03 thanks Ellen Birrell for her service on the
10 CWC. Mayor Bennion read Resolution 2026-03, which highlighted the contributions made to the
11 organization. Ms. Birrell was praised for her active participation on the CWC during her tenure.
12 She gave generously of her time, energy, experience, and talents to further the purpose of the
13 organization.
14

15 **MOTION:** Gay Lynn Bennion moved to APPROVE Resolution 2026-03 – Thanking Ellen Birrell
16 for Her Service on the Central Wasatch Commission. Monica Zoltanski seconded the motion. The
17 motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.
18

19 Chair Mendenhall asked the Board Members present to take a photo with Mr. Knopp and Ms.
20 Birrell.
21

22 Ms. Birrell shared some parting comments with the CWC Board. She will continue to support the
23 organization in spirit, because she cares deeply about the mountains. She will do what she can to
24 support the CWC and other efforts that make life better and safer for all members of the
25 community.
26

27 **PUBLIC COMMENT**
28

29 There were no public comments.
30

31 **BOARD BUSINESS**
32

33 **1. (Action) The Board will Consider Resolution 2026-04 – Again Naming Kirk**
34 **Cullimore a “Champion of the Wasatch.”**
35

36 Chair Mendenhall reported that Resolution 2026-04 will name Kirk Cullimore a “Champion of the
37 Wasatch.” Mayor Zoltanski felt it was a fitting recognition, as he has promoted funding for the
38 CWC and traffic enforcement for the Cottonwood Canyons. He has supported the canyon
39 communities.
40

41 **MOTION:** Monica Zoltanski moved to APPROVE Resolution 2026-04 – Again Naming Kirk
42 Cullimore a “Champion of the Wasatch.” Gay Lynn Bennion seconded the motion. The motion
43 passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.
44

1 **2. (Action) The Board will Consider Resolution 2026-05 – Amending the CWC Bylaws**
2 **Concerning Public Comment by the EBAC on Behalf of the Board.**

3
4 Chair Mendenhall reported that Resolution 2026-05 will amend the CWC bylaws. This has to do
5 with public comment by the Executive/Budget/Audit Committee on behalf of the CWC Board.
6 Ms. Nielsen explained that the meeting schedule for 2026 has shifted. There will be quarterly
7 meetings for the CWC Board. If a public comment period arises when the CWC Board will not
8 meet, she wants to make sure the Executive/Budget/Audit Committee has the ability to review and
9 approve a comment. The CWC Board is welcome to attend Executive/Budget/Audit Committee
10 Meetings.

11
12 Mayor Zoltanski asked if this has to do with public comments on work that is done by other
13 organizations and agencies. This was confirmed. Ms. Nielsen explained that if the CWC wants
14 to submit a public comment to another public entity, but there is not a CWC Board Meeting
15 scheduled in time, this amendment to the bylaws will allow the Executive/Budget/Audit
16 Committee to do so.

17
18 **MOTION:** Scotty John moved to APPROVE Resolution 2026-05 – Amending the CWC Bylaws
19 Concerning Public Comment by the EBAC on Behalf of the Board. Gay Lynn Bennion seconded
20 the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.

21
22 **3. (Action) The Board will Consider Resolution 2026-06 – Amending the Stakeholders**
23 **Council Rules and Procedures.**

24
25 Chair Mendenhall reported that Resolution 2026-06 relates to amendments to the Stakeholders
26 Council Rules and Procedures. Ms. Kilpack explained that there are some administrative changes
27 proposed. These are proposed to better align with the Stakeholders Council operations. This
28 includes an alignment of the meeting schedule, as the Stakeholders Council also switched to a
29 quarterly meeting schedule for 2026. There are some changes for increased organizational
30 effectiveness, such as having Chair positions align with the broader CWC Board Chair
31 appointments and Stakeholders Council Committee appointments. This will ensure there is a
32 consistent schedule throughout.

33
34 **MOTION:** Bev Uipi moved to APPROVE Resolution 2026-06 – Amending the Stakeholders
35 Council Rules and Procedures. Monica Zoltanski seconded the motion. The motion passed with
36 the unanimous consent of the Board.

37
38 **4. (Action) The Board will Consider Resolution 2026-07 – Approving an Employment**
39 **Contract with Will McKay.**

40
41 Chair Mendenhall reported that Resolution 2026-07 is an Employment Contract with Mr. McKay.
42 Ms. Nielsen stated that he has hit the ground running since starting in the first week of December.
43 She has been impressed with his work ethic and the contributions made. CWC Staff is excited for
44 the Employment Contract to be approved. Mr. McKay introduced himself to the CWC Board. He
45 explained that he is originally from Iowa and shared information about his professional
46 background.

1
2 **MOTION:** Monica Zoltanski moved to APPROVE Resolution 2026-07 – Approving an
3 Employment Contract with Will McKay. Scotty John seconded the motion. The motion passed
4 with the unanimous consent of the Board.
5

6 **BIG COTTONWOOD CANYON ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT DISCUSSION**
7

- 8 1. **Devin Weder from the Utah Department of Transportation will Discuss the Big**
9 **Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Assessment.**
10
11 2. **(Action) The Board will Consider Resolution 2026-08 – Approving a Public Comment**
12 **on the Big Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Assessment.**
13
14 3. **UDOT’s Public Comment Deadline is January 19, 2026, at Midnight.**
15

16 Devin Weder explained that he is a Project Manager at UDOT and he is present to share
17 information about the Big Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Assessment (“EA”). The public
18 comment period is currently underway for the Big Cottonwood Canyon EA. Mr. Weder provided
19 details about the process timeline, which started in 2024. There were pre-scoping activities, which
20 were followed by the scoping. The current phase is the EA, where the second public comment
21 period has been opened.
22

23 The intention is to have a decision in spring 2026. Mr. Weder reported that two alternatives are
24 evaluated in detail within the Big Cottonwood Canyon EA, which includes a no-action alternative
25 and a proposed action. The no action alternative means planned projects would be built, current
26 service would continue, there would be no tolling or improvements, and a smaller mobility hub
27 and grade-separated interchange on Wasatch Boulevard would be constructed at the gravel pit site.
28 However, the smaller mobility hub would serve Little Cottonwood Canyon and not Big
29 Cottonwood Canyon.
30

31 The proposed action in the Big Cottonwood Canyon EA includes enhanced bus service, tolling, a
32 mobility hub, and resort bus stops. It also includes improvements to existing bus stops, a bus
33 priority lane around Brighton Loop Road, a grade-separated interchange on Wasatch Boulevard,
34 and a bus-only transitway at the base of Big Cottonwood Canyon. The purpose, need, and measure
35 information was shared. Mr. Weder reported that the no action alternative will result in an hour-
36 long travel time on average by 2050. With the proposed action, it is possible to keep the travel
37 times around 30 minutes. It is also possible to decrease bus travel time by five minutes, which
38 would be approximately 24 minutes. He shared information about the road capacity, which is
39 approximately 1,000 vehicles per hour. The goal is to keep the road working at that capacity.
40 With the proposed action, through tolling and increased bus service, it is possible to keep the road
41 working for all users.
42

43 Mr. Weder discussed increased transit service. If the roadway is full, the demand for transit will
44 increase. The following question was posed: “Does the alternative provide enhanced bus service
45 along with other elements, as specified in Senate Bill 2, to improve the rider experience and
46 encourage a mode shift?” The no action alternative does not, but the proposed action does. He

1 explained that it would provide enhanced winter bus service with buses leaving the mobility hub
2 every five to 10 minutes. Resort bus stops would have enclosed waiting areas, restrooms, and
3 lockers, and there would be a mobility hub with centralized parking to improve the overall rider
4 experience.

5
6 Mr. Weder next shared information about resource impacts. It is important to consider the impacts
7 both inside and outside the canyon. There will be land impacts at the gravel pit, which includes
8 28.96 acres outside of the canyon and 5.62 acres inside the canyon. This aligns with regional
9 goals, but it will require a change to the Forest Plan, because it will use approximately 2.3 acres
10 of National Forest land where development is currently restricted. There are no homes or
11 businesses that will be relocated. There will be minor impacts, but the intention is to stay as far
12 away from homes as possible.

13
14 Additional resource impacts were reviewed. Mr. Weder reported that there could be impacts to
15 the habitat for the Columbia spotted frog, and there could be a temporary impact to water quality
16 and habitat for the Bonneville cutthroat trout in Big Cottonwood Creek. The temporary impacts
17 during construction will be mitigated with appropriate construction mitigation methods.
18 Mr. Weder added that there is minor wildlife displacement expected throughout the construction
19 period. There will be approximately 18 acres of hard road surface added. There will be varied
20 visual impacts, but the intention is to make those minimal within the canyon. He shared
21 information about Solitude.

22
23 Mr. Weder discussed enhanced bus service with the CWC Board. The goal is to provide a reliable,
24 frequent, and comfortable bus experience for Big Cottonwood Canyon. The bus frequency would
25 be every 10 to 15 minutes for initial operations. As for the service season and hours, it would
26 likely operate seven days a week during the winter season, which is late November through mid-
27 April. The buses would typically run from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. There is an estimated total bus
28 fleet of 25 to 30 buses needed by 2050. He noted that this would be a significant increase over the
29 current fleet.

30
31 The bus priority lane for Brighton Loop Road information was shared. Mr. Weder explained that
32 the image shown outlines the location of the bus priority lane. It would be from Camp Tuttle Road
33 to the southern end of Brighton Loop Road. The reason it does not go all the way around the loop
34 is that it is narrower on the other side of the loop. Chair Mendenhall asked if it would become bi-
35 directional depending on the time of day. Mr. Weder confirmed that it can be conceptual, but it is
36 hard to do that without physical separation. While it is possible, there is no confirmation that this
37 will be pursued.

38
39 The mid-canyon bus stop details were reviewed. Mr. Weder explained that while these are
40 somewhat basic, it is an improvement over the current conditions. The intention is to have concrete
41 pads that are ADA-compliant. The mid-canyon bus stops include: Spruces Campground, Cardiff
42 Fork, Silver Fork, and Silver Lake. These are all locations where there are currently signs for bus
43 service.

44
45 Mr. Weder discussed the mobility hub parking structure. It would have 1,750 public parking
46 spaces with four levels of parking. The structure would be approximately 70 feet tall and would

1 be approximately 4.5 acres in size. The mobility hub could accommodate 23 buses per hour,
2 which would be split between 13 buses per hour for Little Cottonwood Canyon and 10 buses per
3 hour for Big Cottonwood Canyon by 2042. There would be 14 bus bays, including two extra bays
4 for varied arrival and departure times. Additionally, there would be space allocated for overnight
5 bus parking, which would eliminate the need for buses to travel from a remote facility to start the
6 canyon routes. There are dedicated areas for bus driver facilities and areas to perform inspections
7 and maintenance.
8

9 The initial concepts for the resort bus stops were shared. Mr. Weder reported that there will be
10 some Forest Service visual requirements that need to be met. The resort stops will need to be
11 tailored to each resort. He explained that the resort bus stops will be designed through the Forest
12 Service process. The intention is to have the capacity to accommodate 200 to 300 people. If the
13 bus service was slowed down due to canyon traffic, there would still be areas to wait and restrooms
14 that could be used. Some conceptual renderings were shared with the CWC Board, including one
15 for Solitude Mountain Resort. This shows a pedestrian bridge over the creek. There have been
16 comments about the existing bridge. However, the existing bridge is not a UDOT structure and
17 will likely need to be replaced by the Forest Service at some point. The conceptual rendering for
18 Brighton Resort was shared.
19

20 Mr. Weder discussed tolling in Big Cottonwood Canyon. This would be applied to the upper
21 canyon, starting just below Solitude Entry 1, with costs varying dynamically to achieve the vehicle
22 reduction goals. The intention is to incentivize visitors to use transit and reduce the number of
23 personal vehicles on the road. There would be an electronic pass used, so it would be different
24 from what is in place in Millcreek Canyon. There will most likely be exemptions, which could
25 include Big Cottonwood Canyon residents in the toll area and resort employees. Other exemptions
26 would likely include those who need access, such as police and fire. It is important to keep the
27 exceptions limited for the toll to be meaningful. Cost estimate information was next shared with
28 the CWC Board. The total proposed action has a cost of \$144.4 million. There is \$114 million
29 that is currently programmed for certain pieces in the UDOT Little Cottonwood Canyon
30 Environmental Impact Statement ("EIS").
31

32 The public comment period is currently underway. It opened on December 3, 2025, and will close
33 on January 19, 2026. The U.S. Forest Service public comment period ended last week. Due to
34 the regulations, the Forest Service could only have a 30-day public comment period. UDOT is
35 slightly more flexible and was able to extend the public comment timeline slightly. Chair
36 Mendenhall thanked Mr. Weder for his presentation on the Big Cottonwood Canyon EA. She
37 noted that the Meeting Materials Packet includes the public comment letter. The letter is dated
38 January 12, 2026.
39

40 Mayor Bennion asked if there would be improvements made to the buses. Mr. Weder explained
41 that with shorter wait times between buses, someone might be more inclined to wait an additional
42 10 minutes for a bus rather than stand on an overcrowded bus. Mayor Bennion wanted to know if
43 there would be more safety measures inside the buses for gear. Mr. Weder reported that since this
44 is a ski-specific service, thought would be given to the hardware. All of the options will be
45 explored.
46

1 Mayor Zoltanski liked being able to see the conceptual information and hear about the amenities
2 that are planned. She noted that the goal is to reduce personal vehicle traffic and incentivize people
3 to use the bus or carpool. She wondered whether there would be an incentive provided for people
4 carpooling through the toll. Mr. Weder explained that it is difficult to have high occupancy vehicle
5 (“HOV”), because there are enforcement challenges. In a situation like this, where the incentive
6 to cheat would be high, there is a hesitancy to pursue HOV, especially knowing about the
7 enforcement issues.
8

9 **MOTION:** Roger Bourke moved to APPROVE Resolution 2026-08 – Approving a Public
10 Comment on the Big Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Assessment. Gay Lynn Bennion
11 seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.
12

13 **MILLCREEK CANYON SHUTTLE FEASIBILITY STUDY DISCUSSION**

14

- 15 **1. Jon Nepstad of Fehr and Peers will Present the Final Millcreek Canyon Shuttle**
16 **Feasibility Study.**
17
- 18 **2. Staff will Present the Results of the Public Comment Period for the Millcreek Canyon**
19 **Shuttle Feasibility Study Draft Update.**
20

21 Jon Nepstad reported that he is with Fehr & Peers, who was hired to conduct the Millcreek Canyon
22 Shuttle Feasibility Study. The study assesses the feasibility of a shuttle program and includes
23 existing conditions, parking demand and locations, three toll revenue impact scenarios, and a
24 shuttle service plan. Previous plans identified a Millcreek Canyon shuttle as an option for the
25 reduction of canyon traffic congestion, which was primarily related to parking issues and user
26 conflicts within the canyon.
27

28 Something that was heard throughout this process was the need to keep the canyon revenue whole.
29 Mr. Nepstad reported that the money that is coming in from the toll booth is split between the
30 Forest Service and the County. Some of the feedback received had to do with convenience and
31 safety. In Millcreek Canyon, the peak times are Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from May to
32 October. The technical issue was holding revenue constant in terms of the toll booth revenue
33 currently collected.
34

35 The fee station revenue was reviewed. Mr. Nepstad reported that the current daily fee is \$5 or \$3
36 for seniors, and a season pass is \$50 or \$30 for seniors. He shared information about some of the
37 work that the collected fees are used to address. The different parking areas that were explored
38 include: Virginia Way, Millcreek Park, Maintenance Yard, Olympus Shopping Center, and a
39 previously empty lot. Given the parking capacity, the width of the right-of-way, and availability,
40 Virginia Way is the most feasible location for shuttle parking and staging. The right-of-way is
41 wide enough for a 25-passenger bus to turn around, and there are 135 parking stalls available.
42 Service plan assumptions were shared:
43

- 44 • Revenue of \$1.73 per visitor;
- 45 • Weekend service during peak months (May to October);
- 46 • 15 minute frequency;

- 10 hours of service per day;
- 25 passenger buses;
- No roadway improvements below the canyon gate.

As for the proposed route and stops, the trail use data and Federal Lands Access Program (“FLAP”) construction were both considered. The following stops were included in the analysis:

- Rattlesnake Gulch;
- Church Fork;
- Porter Fork;
- Winter Gate/Maple Grove;
- Elbow Fork;
- Alexander Basin;
- Big Water.

The stakeholder concerns were mentioned, which include the fee revenue. There are concerns that a shuttle could lead to decreased revenue for Millcreek Canyon. Mr. Nepstad reported that there were some scenarios created with different fees. He explained that the higher the fare, the lower the ridership tends to be. Model 3A was referenced and the assumptions for that model were highlighted.

Mr. Nepstad reported that when the original study was done in 2012, it was less common to hear about a dog on a bus or shuttle. However, it has become something that needs to be considered. More resort buses and shuttles are allowing dogs on them. Sometimes, there are certain requirements, such as reservations, proof of vaccination, muzzles, and so on. In the case of a Millcreek Canyon shuttle, there would be dogs allowed on the shuttle. Mr. Nepstad read the shuttle study conclusions. A shuttle is feasible in Millcreek Canyon. Due to lower visitor volumes on weekdays and in winter months, it is most feasible for a shuttle to provide service during the warm weather months, which are May through October. For a pilot program shuttle with 30-minute frequency, there would be a high-end estimate of \$300,000 per season. A shuttle with 15-minute frequency would have a high-end estimate of \$725,000 per season. If recreation fees are not increased, outside funding sources will need to be explored to fund operations without negatively impacting recreation fee revenue.

Mr. Nepstad stated that a three-year pilot program would be preferable. Something that was one year or less would not make as much sense because there would be a lot of investment for something that was short-term. He would recommend a three-year pilot program for the shuttle. It can be refined and marketed throughout that time. Mr. Nepstad shared information about the FLAP construction.

Ms. Nielsen reported that there is a memo in the Meeting Materials Packet with an overview of the study update process and the stakeholders involved. There is also an overview of the public comments received. Ms. Nielsen explained that there were hundreds of public comments submitted. There is a lot of support for a Millcreek Canyon shuttle. At the CWC Board Meeting in April, there will be a more specific public comment summary provided. Chair Mendenhall asked about the potential next steps. Ms. Nielsen stated that the immediate next step is to undertake

1 a National Environmental Policy Act (“NEPA”) analysis to understand the environmental impacts
2 to public lands. She has submitted an appropriations request, sponsored by Senator Cullimore, to
3 cover the cost of the operations. If the State funds the appropriations request, there will be money
4 available for the pilot.

5
6 Mayor Zoltanski asked if it would be possible for this to be a no-cost or low-cost shuttle.
7 Ms. Nielsen explained that the complicating factor with the cost of a Millcreek Canyon shuttle is
8 that every vehicle that enters Millcreek Canyon pays a toll. That revenue is important for the
9 maintenance of the facilities in the canyon. There is no desire to negatively impact the toll revenue
10 that the Forest Service and County receive, because it is used for road maintenance and facilities
11 maintenance. As a result, she is not sure a free shuttle would be feasible, because that could create
12 a negative impact.

13
14 Mayor Bourke mentioned the Bonanza Flat presentation during the Central Wasatch Symposium.
15 There turned out to be no cost to the rider, because it was paid for exclusively by the parking fees.
16 That is an interesting idea that could be considered in this case as well. Commissioner Gray noted
17 that there have been comments made about expanding access. This leads to a question that was
18 mentioned during the Central Wasatch Symposium and is something she believes the CWC Board
19 should spend some time on. The question is how to determine a maximum capacity for the
20 canyons. It is possible to add more buses and build more parking structures to bring more people
21 into the canyons, but it is important to look at the maximum transportation capacity and the
22 maximum environmental impact capacity. She suggested this be a future CWC Board discussion.
23 Chair Mendenhall confirmed that there will be work done with CWC Staff to add that to the next
24 agenda.

25
26 It was clarified that there is no action that needs to be taken on the Millcreek Canyon Shuttle
27 Feasibility Study by the CWC Board at this time. There can be an update shared about the
28 appropriations request in the future. Chair Mendenhall thanked Mr. Nepstad for the presentation.
29

30 **STAKEHOLDERS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

- 31
32 1. **The Stakeholders Council Chair and Co-Chair will Present the Recent Activities of**
33 **the Stakeholders Council and Engage with the Commission for Guidance and**
34 **Feedback.**
35
36 2. **(Action) Resolution 2026-09 – Releasing and Appointing Stakeholders Council**
37 **Members.**
38

39 Ms. Hahnenberger shared updates about the Stakeholders Council. At the last meeting, there was
40 time spent reviewing some of the key accomplishments over the last year. There was also a
41 discussion about how to be most effective. The Recreation System Committee created a Self-
42 Guided Historical and Urban Hikes Guide, which will be on the CWC website. It pulls together
43 different resources, so recreationists have options for easy and informative activities. The
44 Millcreek Canyon Committee has been focused on the Millcreek Canyon shuttle for many years.
45 The Transportation System Committee brought a letter forward to the CWC Board for the car
46 rental agencies. The letter encouraged traction law compliance and that visitors be informed about

1 the traction law. The Environment System Committee has worked on improvements to the Central
2 Wasatch Dashboard, formally known as the Environmental Dashboard. Many of those suggestions
3 have been implemented. The intention is to make adjustments so the Central Wasatch Dashboard
4 becomes a more user-friendly resource.

5
6 Multiple subcommittees worked together to draft a letter about the proposed parking structure
7 across from Solitude Mountain Resort. That letter was brought to the CWC Board. Ms.
8 Hahnenberger reported that there are several subcommittees working to collect data on visitor use
9 to create a baseline. In a few years, it will be possible to see the changes that have occurred over
10 time. The Economy System Committee is working to identify funding needs in the Central
11 Wasatch. There was a Cottonwoods Commons Trust brainstorm to potentially fund some of the
12 existing needs. Moving forward, the Stakeholders Council is focused on choosing projects where
13 it is possible to be proactive. There might be reactive situations the Stakeholders Council will be
14 involved in, but there is a desire to be proactive whenever possible. Something else the
15 Stakeholders Council wants to focus on is engaging with partners and working on relationship
16 building. Chair Mendenhall expressed appreciation for the work done by the Council and for the
17 efforts made at the symposium.

18
19 **MOTION:** Monica Zoltanski moved to APPROVE Resolution 2026-09 – Releasing and
20 Appointing Stakeholders Council Members. Christopher Robinson seconded the motion. The
21 motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.

22 23 **CANYONS TRUST CONCEPT DISCUSSION**

24 25 **1. Secretary/Treasurer Christopher Robinson will Introduce a Canyons Trust Idea** 26 **Brought to the EBAC by a Member of the Stakeholders Council.**

27
28 Commissioner Christopher Robinson shared information about the Canyons Trust concept that
29 was brought to the Executive/Budget/Audit Committee by a member of the Stakeholders Council.
30 In the Meeting Materials Packet, there is information about a Cottonwoods Commons Trust.
31 Ms. Nielsen reported that Stakeholders Council Member, John Adams, brought this suggestion
32 forward. This concept originated at the Economy System Committee level. This concept is
33 modeled after the Great Salt Lake Wetland Enhancement Trust, where tax revenue is diverted to
34 some degree from the General Fund into the trust fund to allow necessary maintenance of the Great
35 Salt Lake to occur.

36
37 Ms. Nielsen explained that a Cottonwoods Commons Trust could do something similar to the Great
38 Salt Lake Wetland Enhancement Trust and divert some of the tax revenue generated in the canyons
39 back to the canyons for necessary infrastructure and facilities maintenance. Mr. Adams shared
40 presentation slides titled “The Case for a Cottonwoods Commons Trust.” The natural environment
41 underpins the financial and overall well-being. The goal of a Canyons Trust is to reinvest some
42 of the revenue generated from this natural wealth to protect the environment that is relied on for
43 financial wealth and experiences that support overall health. A trust makes it possible to be
44 proactive rather than reactive. Mr. Adams believed the time was right to introduce something like
45 a trust in the area.

1 It was noted that the population will continue to grow. Mr. Adams added that there is a new
2 growth-dependent ski resort business model that has emerged since the Mountain Accord process
3 started. As stated during the keynote address at the Central Wasatch Symposium, the relationship
4 with the canyons needs to change, or the next generation will inherit the same relationship. A
5 Canyons Trust will increase visibility, make it possible to address challenges, and better inform
6 future decisions.

7
8 Chair Mendenhall stated that what has been described would be a State Legislative fiscal decision
9 to look at some percentage of revenue that is generated from the for-profit businesses in the
10 canyons at a certain scale. She asked if this would be managed by the CWC. Mr. Adams explained
11 that he wanted to introduce the concept to the CWC Board to determine whether it is viable. If
12 there is support, then experts can be brought to the table to start discussing some of the possible
13 next steps.

14
15 Ex-Officio Christensen asked how this differs from the transportation fund that exists. It was
16 explained that there are certain funds for the enforcement of the traction law. A significant portion
17 goes to the County, and it is split between Cottonwood Heights and Sandy for enforcement. Ex-
18 Officio Christensen reported that there is another fund as well. It was noted that it is tied to the
19 sales tax. Chair Mendenhall pointed out that it is a General Fund and not a fund that is specific to
20 canyon needs.

21
22 Mr. Adams clarified that the Canyons Trust is not envisioned to ensure there are funds to build
23 more transportation. There was an initial discussion about the unintended consequences of growth
24 that require there to be mitigation efforts made. The funds could be used to prevent issues and
25 move certain aspects of the Mountain Accord forward, which would look to protect the area. This
26 is something that needs to be looked at holistically. He mentioned the interdependence of the
27 systems.

28
29 Mayor Zoltanski stated that when she thinks about a land trust, she thinks about property
30 acquisition for preservation purposes. All avenues toward canyon protection should be explored
31 by the CWC. Commissioner Robinson mentioned the examples provided in the Meeting Materials
32 Packet. He doesn't believe this kind of trust would be supported by the Legislature at this time.
33 It makes sense to focus on solving the issues that exist in the Wasatch and working toward the
34 Federal Designation. There could be a trust created in the future, but unless this is funded by
35 private third parties, he does not believe it would move forward at this time. Chair Mendenhall
36 stated that it is a strong concept, but it might be premature in the order of operations that the
37 Legislature would want to see. If the CWC can help to create a transportation solution outcome,
38 that would show that the organization could be an appropriate steward of a future fund. Right
39 now, there is more work to be done.

40
41 Additional discussions were had about the proposed trust. Mayor Zoltanski thought that with the
42 resources the CWC has, it makes sense to focus on the primary function of the organization. That
43 being said, she likes the idea of a land trust. Mayor John expressed support for the idea, but noted
44 that focus is important. That is likely the reason CWC Board Members have mentioned tabling
45 this for the time being. It might be possible to start smaller programs for preservation and
46 restoration.

1
2 John Knoblock reported that a lot of the transient room tax and sales tax goes into the Tourism,
3 Recreation, Culture, and Convention (“TRCC”) fund, which is controlled by Salt Lake County.
4 There is a need to purchase lands that are available from willing sellers within the tri-canyon area.
5 The trust could be funded from the TRCC Board and then those monies would be available for
6 purchasing lands in order to protect and preserve them for environmental and recreational uses.
7 Chair Mendenhall noted that the Stakeholders Council could look into a possible meeting with the
8 TRCC.
9

10 **CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION FUNDING DISCUSSION**

- 11
- 12 **1. The Board will Discuss Funding Methods for the Central Wasatch Commission.**
- 13
- 14 **2. The Board will Create a Budget and Funding Committee, Separate from the EBAC.**
- 15

16 Ms. Nielsen reported that the CWC Board is being asked to consider the creation of a Budget and
17 Funding Committee, which would be separate from the Executive/Budget/Audit Committee. The
18 Budget and Funding Committee could have discussions about suggestions, such as a land trust.
19 There could also be discussions about round-up donations, CWC license plates, and member
20 contributions. Mayor Zoltanski stated that she would be willing to serve as the Chair of the
21 proposed Committee.
22

23 **STATE APPROPRIATIONS REQUEST DISCUSSION**

- 24
- 25 **1. The Board will Discuss the CWC’s 2026-2027 State Appropriations Request.**
- 26

27 Ms. Nielsen reported that the State appropriations request has been submitted. It is for \$2.5 million
28 this year, because of the inclusion of the Millcreek Canyon shuttle. Senator Cullimore has
29 consistently sponsored the appropriations requests for the CWC and agreed to do so this year as
30 well. This appropriations request will go through the Transportation Committee at the Legislature,
31 because the bulk of the request is for a three-year pilot program for a Millcreek Canyon shuttle.
32 Other components of the appropriations request include a potential NEPA analysis associated with
33 the shuttle program and the standard project work, such as the Ski Bus Priority Access Program,
34 graffiti abatement in partnership with Graffiti Busters, restroom maintenance, and the Short-Term
35 Projects Grant Program.
36

37 **CWNCRA DISCUSSION**

- 38
- 39 **1. Staff will Give an Update on the Recent CWNCRA Activities.**
- 40
- 41 **2. The Legislative and Land Tenure Committee can Convene as Needed.**
- 42

43 CWC Staff has been focused on the Central Wasatch National Conservation and Recreation Area
44 Act (“CWNCRA”). There was a meeting held in December with the Mayors of Brighton and Alta,
45 Salt Lake City Public Utilities, and the General Managers of the ski resorts to see if there was
46 interest in reengaging with the Legislation. There is interest, so there will be another meeting held

1 in February. It was also noted that the Legislative and Land Tenure Committee can convene as
2 needed.

3 4 **BOARD COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP DISCUSSION**

5 6 **1. The Board will Appoint Members/Leaders to Each of its Committees.**

- 7
- 8 a. **Executive/Budget/Audit Committee.**
- 9 b. **Legislative and Land Tenure Committee.**
- 10 c. **Short-Term Projects Committee.**
- 11 d. **Transportation Committee.**
- 12 e. **Budget and Funding Committee.**
- 13

14 Ms. Nielsen reported that each year, there are new leaders appointed to the CWC Board
15 Committees. The members of the Executive/Budget/Audit Committee are the Chair, Co-Chair,
16 and Secretary, but all CWC Board Members are welcome to attend those meetings. The
17 Legislative and Land Tenure Committee is typically chaired by the CWC Board Chair. Ms.
18 Nielsen noted that the other committees that members and leaders are needed for include the Short-
19 Term Projects Committee, Transportation Committee, and Budget and Funding Committee. She
20 explained that the Short-Term Projects Committee meets once a year, and it reviews the funding
21 request for the Short-Term Projects Grant Program. It was noted that the majority of the
22 committees listed meet on an as-needed basis.

23
24 Ms. Nielsen asked if there are volunteers to join or co-chair the Legislative and Land Tenure
25 Committee. Ex-Officio Rodriguez asked whether Ex-Officio Members can request to join one of
26 the committees. Ms. Nielsen clarified that the bylaws state Ex-Officio Members and Special
27 Advisors are not technical members of the CWC Board Committees and would not count toward
28 the quorum. However, it is encouraged that those members attend and participate in meetings
29 when possible.

30
31 Mayor John would like to be on the Transportation Committee and the Budget and Funding
32 Committee. Commissioner Gray asked to be on the Transportation Committee. It was noted that
33 Commissioner Uipi previously mentioned she would like to be a member of the Short-Term
34 Projects Committee. Commissioner Ciraco would like to serve on the Transportation Committee
35 and the Legislative and Land Tenure Committee. Commissioner Robinson also offered to serve
36 on the Legislative and Land Tenure Committee. Ms. Nielsen noted that a Chair is still needed for
37 the Short-Term Projects Committee. Mayor Bennion expressed a desire to serve on that
38 Committee. She also spoke to Ms. Nielsen previously about serving on the Transportation
39 Committee. Ms. Nielsen stated that she will finalize the committee leadership and membership
40 after the CWC Board Meeting.

41 42 **YOUTH COUNCIL UPDATES**

43 44 **1. Staff will Discuss the Activities of the Youth Council.**

45

1 **2. Youth Council Chair, Dylanger McKissen, will Discuss the Idea of a Youth**
2 **Symposium.**

3
4 It was noted that the CWC Youth Council Chair, Dylanger McKissen, was going to present a
5 proposal, but was not present at the CWC Board Meeting. Other CWC Youth Council updates
6 were shared. Mr. McKay reported that there is currently a switch underway from committees to
7 officer roles.
8

9 **STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS**

10
11 **1. Preliminary Symposium Report.**

12
13 Ms. Nielsen reported that the Central Wasatch Symposium was a success. She thanked everyone
14 who attended and presented. Many members of the CWC Board presented during the symposium.
15 Ms. Kilpack stated that there were a little over 200 total attendees, and there were 158 tickets sold
16 for approximately \$3,800 of revenue. There were 10-year Mountain Accord anniversary shirts
17 and hats that were available for a donation. Some of them were sold for a total of \$330 of revenue
18 overall. Ms. Nielsen stated that there will be a more robust Central Wasatch Symposium report
19 provided in the future.
20

21 **2. Updates to the Central Wasatch Dashboard.**

22
23 Ms. Nielsen reported that this item will be tabled until the CWC Board Meeting in April.
24

25 **3. Budget Discussions will Start in February.**

26
27 Ms. Nielsen reported that the CWC budget discussions will start next month.
28

29 **4. The Call for Short-Term Projects will be Open from January 13 to February 10, 2026.**

30
31 **a. The Short-Term Projects Committee will Meet in April.**

32
33 The call for projects for the Short-Term Projects Grant Program will open on January 13, 2026,
34 and will be open until February 10, 2026. There will be a press release and e-kit sent to members.
35

36 **5. The Next EBAC Meeting will be on March 16, 2026.**

37
38 The next Executive/Budget/Audit Committee Meeting will take place on March 16, 2026.
39

40 **6. The Next CWC Board Meeting will be on April 13, 2026.**

41
42 The next CWC Board Meeting will take place on April 13, 2026.
43

44 **OTHER BUSINESS**

45
46 There was no other business.

1
2 **COMMISSIONER COMMENT**
3

4 Commissioner Robinson thanked everyone for their hard work on the Central Wasatch
5 Symposium.
6

7 **CLOSING**
8

9 **1. Chair Mendenhall will Call for a Motion to Adjourn the Board Meeting.**
10

11 **MOTION:** Monica Zoltanski moved to ADJOURN the CWC Board Meeting. Christopher
12 Robinson seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.
13

14 The CWC Board Meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

1 *I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Central*
2 *Wasatch Commission Board Meeting held Monday, January 12, 2026.*
3

4 Teri Forbes

5 Teri Forbes

6 T Forbes Group

7 Minutes Secretary

8

9 Minutes Approved: _____