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9 **MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) STAKEHOLDERS**
10 **COUNCIL ENVIRONMENT SYSTEM COMMITTEE MEETING HELD TUESDAY,**
11 **FEBRUARY 10, 2026, AT 3:30 P.M. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED BOTH IN-**
12 **PERSON AND VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM. THE ANCHOR LOCATION WAS THE CWC**
13 **OFFICES, LOCATED IN THE BRIGHTON BANK BUILDING, 311 SOUTH STATE**
14 **STREET, SUITE 330, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.**

15
16 **Committee Members:** Dan Zalles, Co-Chair
17 Meaghan McKasy
18 Brenden Catt
19 Maura Hahnenberger
20 Ella Abelli-Amen
21 Jonny Vasic
22 Olivia Juarez
23 Doug Tolman

24
25 **Staff:** Sam Kilpack, Director of Operations
26 Will McKay, Communications Director

27
28 **OPENING**

29
30 **1. Chair Kelly Boardman will Open the Public Meeting as Chair of the Environment**
31 **System Committee of the Central Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council.**

32
33 In the absence of Chair Kelly Boardman, Co-Chair Dan Zalles called the Central Wasatch
34 Commission (“CWC”) Stakeholders Council Environment System Committee Meeting to order at
35 approximately 3:35 p.m. and welcomed those present. It was noted that there is not a quorum.

36
37 **2. Review and Approval of the Minutes from the December 9, 2025, Meeting.**

38
39 Co-Chair Zalles explained that the Meeting Minutes from December 9, 2025, will be reviewed and
40 approved once there is a quorum of the Environment System Committee present. Once there was a
41 quorum of Committee Members present, a vote would be taken on the Meeting Minutes from
42 December.

43
44 **MOTION:** Jonny Vasic moved to APPROVE the December 9, 2025, Meeting Minutes. Doug
45 Tolman seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.

1 **VISITOR BEHAVIOR IN THE CENTRAL WASATCH**

2
3 1. **The Committee will Discuss Current Efforts to Understand and Modify Visitor**
4 **Behavior and Decide Whether to Pursue Creating a Survey to Better Understand**
5 **Visitor Attitudes and Associated Behaviors.**

6
7 a. **If so, the Committee will Determine Potential Next Steps and Timelines.**

8
9 Co-Chair Zalles reported that this is a continuation of a discussion the Committee had in December
10 related to visitor behavior in the Central Wasatch. He offered to summarize the previous discussion
11 before the Committee starts to focus on more concrete priorities. At the last Environment System
12 Committee Meeting, there were many ideas shared. There was a suggestion to educate people about
13 the Central Wasatch. It is possible to use a survey as an instrument of education. It can also be used
14 to receive feedback. He explained that there were previous discussions about the potential audience.
15 For example, the survey could be posted for people already on a bus or waiting for a bus. There could
16 be direct feedback received about the bus experience and information could also be provided.

17
18 Co-Chair Zalles explained that there could be a QR code created for the survey. During previous
19 Committee discussions, it was determined that the survey itself should be short and take no more than
20 five minutes. It was noted that sharing a list of sustainable actions could be considered education.

21
22 The survey would be a convenient sample rather than a representative sample, but that can still be
23 meaningful. The Environment System Committee also discussed educating people about the vision
24 of the Mountain Accord. Co-Chair Zalles reported that the Recreation System Committee recently
25 created a pamphlet of short historical hikes in the Central Wasatch. The Environment System
26 Committee could do something similar and create a pamphlet about the natural history of the Central
27 Wasatch. It could be an informative document that highlights wildlife and plant life. There is some
28 information on the Central Wasatch Dashboard already, so that could be included in a pamphlet.

29
30 It was noted that the Utah Transit Authority (“UTA”) has a precedent for surveying ridership and has
31 done so occasionally. As a result, there could be some outreach conducted to UTA about the systems
32 in place. Director of Operations, Sam Kilpack, wanted to know if the suggestion is to ask UTA what
33 kind of information gathering has been done before. Co-Chair Zalles stated that the Committee can
34 ask what has been done before, whether outreach is currently taking place, and how it is normally
35 done. There is no desire to duplicate efforts. Ms. Kilpack believed UTA would be open to
36 collaborating on a survey effort. There could be a request to post a QR code created for the survey.

37
38 Maura Hahnenberger pointed out that it is important to determine the goal of the survey. Whatever
39 is created, it is unlikely that there will be enough data obtained that it will lead to something
40 actionable. As a result, it makes sense for the survey to be focused on education. She left an example
41 in the Zoom chat box. It might make sense to do something similar that is related to visitor
42 modification. This kind of survey leads a respondent through a series of questions and then provides
43 recommended actions. Rather than create a data collection survey, this survey style might be best.

44
45 Doug Tolman expressed support for the suggestion. It sounds like it would be accessible and
46 engaging. There are two ways this survey could be approached: short-term and long-term. He
47 discussed what the educational component could look like if the Central Wasatch National
48 Conservation and Recreation Area Act (“CWNCRA”) was passed. Having an educational tool would

1 be meaningful. General education would be short-term, while CWNCRRA education would be long-
2 term. Mr. Tolman shared information about Wildlife Management Areas and explained that these are
3 mostly paid for through hunting and fishing license fees. There are also optional stewardship funds.
4

5 Co-Chair Zalles was interested in the concept shared by Ms. Hahnenberger. It might be challenging
6 to create a survey in that style, but Committee Members can start to think about possible questions.
7 Olivia Juarez explained that she has noticed that there is a desire for educational tools. Mr. Tolman
8 asked if there is a survey associated with the Central Wasatch oral history project she is working on,
9 which was confirmed. That information can be shared with the Committee in the future.
10

11 Jonny Vasic stressed the importance of understanding the overall goal. If the survey is focused on
12 education, that broadens where the QR code can be shared. He thought the Environment System
13 Committee should further discuss what there is a desire to educate survey respondents about. He
14 mentioned the Central Wasatch Dashboard survey and pointed out that a lot of time was spent
15 finalizing the questions. He is not certain what came out of the survey that was not already known.
16 As a result, he prefers the educational focus that has been suggested for the visitor behavior survey.
17

18 Co-Chair Zalles asked Committee Members to start drafting survey questions. At the next
19 Environment System Committee Meeting, there can be a review of the questions that have been
20 brainstormed. Brenden Catt suggested that there be a shared document for the Committee. Mr. Vasic
21 noted that Committee Members can start to think about what there is a desire for visitors to know.
22

23 Co-Chair Zalles believed there was a list created previously that had to do with good stewardship.
24 That list could be the basis for the questions that are drafted. Ella Abelli-Amen shared information
25 about a new program the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation is trying to start. There will be a group
26 of trail stewards who will be trained in Leave No Trace trail etiquette. If there were educational
27 materials created by the Environment System Committee, those volunteers could assist with
28 distribution. There could be a presentation about this program at the next Committee Meeting.
29

30 Meaghan McKasy mentioned the comments from Mr. Vasic about the overall objectives. She
31 explained that it is possible to have both knowledge-related objectives as well as attitude and behavior
32 change objectives. This is something that can be discussed further as the survey questions are created.
33 She reported that establishing a clear goal is the best place to start. Co-Chair Zalles asked CWC Staff
34 to create a shared document for the Environment System Committee. Once that is created, Committee
35 Members can start to brainstorm goals and questions. He reiterated that the previously created list
36 should be reviewed by Committee Members as well. It was noted that Ms. Hahnenberger shared the
37 list in the Zoom chat box. Ms. Kilpack offered to email that list to the Committee Members.
38

39 Mr. Vasic stressed the importance of learning and education. In his experience, when there is an
40 educational component, visitors are much lot more likely to change their behaviors. Co-Chair Zalles
41 asked if there are example questions from his work on the Great Salt Lake. Mr. Vasic clarified that
42 there has not been a formal survey, but based on the in-person presentations, the educational
43 component has been beneficial. He shared questions that have been posed to the in-person
44 presentation attendees.
45

1 **CENTRAL WASATCH DASHBOARD LANDING PAGE REVIEW**

2
3 **1. The Committee will Review the New Landing Page for the Central Wasatch Dashboard.**

4
5 Co-Chair Zalles reported that there were supposed to be some improvements made to the Central
6 Wasatch Dashboard in January 2026. He visited the Central Wasatch Dashboard that morning and
7 did not notice any of the changes that were previously discussed. Ms. Kilpack reported that the
8 updates are not complete at this time. The students from the DIGIT Lab who were assisting with the
9 work took leave for the winter holiday, which pushed back the timeline. She expects the updates to
10 be completed in the next month. By the next meeting, there should be changes for the Environment
11 System Committee to review. Ms. Kilpack has seen a preview of the updates and there is a map with
12 layers for land ownership in the CWC study area, the proposed CWNCR boundary, watershed
13 boundary, jurisdictional boundaries, and icons that link specific information for each area. The Table
14 of Contents and other items are largely complete, but the map is the last piece to be finished.

15
16 Mr. Tolman pointed out that the updates might provide an opportunity for some positive public
17 relations. He has enjoyed seeing more CWC posts on various social media platforms. Social media
18 followers can be encouraged to visit the new and improved Central Wasatch Dashboard.

19
20 **LEGISLATIVE SESSION DISCUSSION**

21
22 **1. The Committee will Discuss Bills Being Considered During this Legislative Session that**
23 **Could Impact the Central Wasatch and Potential Action Items.**

24
25 Co-Chair Zalles reported that he visited the Save Our Canyons website to see their positions on some
26 of the bills from this Legislative Session. There were four bills mentioned, including Senate Bill
27 (“S.B.”) 44, which has a small section mentioning the possibility of a Millcreek Canyon State Park.
28 He suggested that there be a discussion about the State Park issue that has been raised. It is an
29 interesting idea, but is also something that he struggles with. He pointed out that there are
30 inconsistencies with the Federal commitment to environmental issues. It is possible that the State
31 might do a good job of preserving Millcreek Canyon for the betterment of all, but there are concerns.

32
33 Co-Chair Zalles next discussed House Bill (“H.B.”) 376, which is related to a southwest ecological
34 research institute to study forest issues. Mr. Tolman reported that Save Our Canyons is supporting
35 that conditionally and those conditions have been met. Co-Chair Zalles mentioned another bill that
36 has to do with access for recreators to Wildlife Management Areas. There is also a bill related to dust
37 mitigation, which is H.B. 378. The gravel pits around Utah would need to have signs that include
38 permit and contact information so if there is a complaint about dust from that pit, all contact
39 information would be clear. That bill sounds like it has a lot of support in the House. Mr. Tolman
40 believed it passed committee and is on the floor now. Co-Chair Zalles reported that there is also a
41 bill related to outdoor recreation accessibility support, which is H.B. 12. He asked if there are any
42 other relevant bills that Committee Members have been following during the Legislative Session.

43
44 It was noted that the CWC request for appropriations was heard this morning in the Transportation
45 Appropriations Subcommittee and received a favorable vote. It will be voted on next by the Executive
46 Appropriations Committee, which will be on either February 18 or 19, 2026. The appropriations
47 request included a three-year pilot program for a Millcreek Canyon shuttle. Communications

1 Director, Will McKay, explained that the \$750,000 per year that was requested is what it would cost
2 to run a shuttle. However, the fee structure for the shuttle is something that still needs to be finalized.

3
4 Co-Chair Zalles mentioned the Bonanza Flat shuttle and the incentives that have been put in place.
5 He explained that there will likely need to be incentives implemented to encourage ridership on a
6 Millcreek Canyon shuttle. On the Bonanza Flat shuttle, there are free muzzles provided for dog
7 owners who do not have one. Since a lot of people walk their dogs in Millcreek Canyon, something
8 similar could be implemented. It is wonderful to hear that the request is continuing to move forward.

9 10 **CENTRAL WASATCH SYMPOSIUM DISCUSSION**

11 12 **1. The Committee will Discuss the Recent Central Wasatch Symposium.**

13
14 There was discussion about the recent Central Wasatch Symposium. Co-Chair Zalles reported that
15 there was a presentation that focused on the Bonanza Flat shuttle service that is available. He thanked
16 CWC Staff for their hard work on the Central Wasatch Symposium, as both the first and second year
17 of the event were successful. Ms. Kilpack thanked Ms. Hahnenberger and Ms. Juarez for
18 volunteering. Co-Chair Zalles shared comments about the presentation related to the history of skiing
19 in the Central Wasatch. It can be challenging to understand what the ski resorts need to thrive while
20 still considering the need for sustainability. He stressed the importance of balanced systems.

21
22 Mr. Tolman noted that it is clear the CWNCRA has a quickly approaching and finite window of
23 opportunity. Co-Chair Zalles shared additional comments about the ski resorts. As much as the ski
24 resorts provide challenges as far as transportation and potential overuse, it is preferable that the
25 primary economy of the Central Wasatch is skiing rather than mining or timber, which are extractive.

26 27 **COMMITTEE UPDATES**

28 29 **1. The Committee will Discuss the Public Comment Period for the Big Cottonwood Canyon** 30 **Environmental Assessment.**

31
32 Co-Chair Zalles reported that the CWC Board submitted a public comment as part of the public
33 comment period for the Big Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Assessment (“EA”). He
34 summarized some of the key points the CWC Board made in their public comment. It stated that over
35 34 acres of land would be converted to transportation use for the gravel pit mobility hub, grade-
36 separated interchange on Wasatch Boulevard, bus transitway at the base of Big Cottonwood Canyon,
37 resort bus stops, mid-canyon bus stops, and the bus priority lane around Brighton Loop Road. The
38 proposed actions would require land acquisitions and amendments to the U.S. Forest Service Plan.

39
40 The CWC Board stated in their comment that the impacts of these needed transit and transportation
41 improvements could be offset by future drafts of the CWNCRA, which would place protections on
42 the land, water, flora, fauna, and wildlife found within the canyons while further stewarding
43 recreational access and providing pathways for development around clustered nodes in the canyons.

44
45 The CWC Board comment mentioned tolling and the need to implement it in Little Cottonwood
46 Canyon as well if it is implemented in Big Cottonwood Canyon. This would neutralize any toll
47 avoidant behavior and impacts on neighboring canyons. It was noted that transportation

1 improvements should be coupled with improved land and natural resource protection. There were
2 additional references to the CWNCRA. The public comment period for the EA recently ended.

3
4 **2. The Committee will Discuss the Proposed Permit for a Gravel Pit in Parleys Canyon.**

5
6 Co-Chair Zalles reported that there was a meeting held in Millcreek about the proposed permit for a
7 gravel pit in Parleys Canyon. He explained that the acreage request was reduced down to six acres.
8 Mr. Vasic reported that he and Mr. Tolman attended that meeting. There were hundreds of attendees
9 and it was meant to allow for technical comments on the permit. The Parleys Canyon Working Group,
10 who has been meeting regularly for the last three or four years, requested that there be a public
11 hearing. In addition, there was a request made for an extension on the comment period. It was
12 extended to January 31, 2026. He contacted CWC Staff to see if the CWC Board would submit a
13 written comment. The CWC Board approved a comment expressing opposition to the proposed mine.

14
15 The meeting was intended to run for two hours, but it lasted three and a half hours. Mr. Vasic reported
16 that all those who wanted to speak were given the opportunity to do so. He explained that only
17 technical comments based on the actual permit will be considered, but it was still meaningful to have
18 such a strong turnout. Many of the comments were technical in nature. He explained that with the
19 new permit, it is believed the intention is to get around some rules and regulations, as a six-acre mine
20 there is not economically feasible. There are concerns about Legislation that was passed last year
21 that would allow an expansion of the mine. Mr. Vasic pointed out that there will be issues with
22 bringing in water because there is no water source there. As for the technical comments, there was a
23 request made for dust monitoring. It was also noted that the permit is lacking in several areas. It is
24 premature to issue a permit when there is no Conditional Use Permit (“CUP”) from the County.

25
26 Mr. Tolman reported that to open a gravel mine, there must be a CUP received from the Land Use
27 Authority, which is the County in this case. In addition, there needs to be approval from the Utah
28 Department of Transportation (“UDOT”) to build a road and water is needed from a water supplier
29 to mitigate the dust. Even though the CUP is the most important, the applicant seems to be obtaining
30 all of these other permits. There were a lot of comments about the request being premature without
31 the CUP from the County. He noted that this appears to be an improper segmentation of a larger
32 project. Many comments also mentioned that the permit was based on wind speeds and directions
33 from the airport, which is several miles away and has different wind patterns than Parleys Canyon.

34
35 Co-Chair Zalles asked about the ability to expand. Mr. Tolman explained that the concern is that
36 there is now a proposal for a small six-acre mine. However, if that six-acre mine is approved, the
37 Legislation from last year would allow them to expand that further. Co-Chair Zalles wanted to
38 understand how the applicant would address the water needs. Mr. Vasic reported that right now, the
39 proposal is to truck in the water. The original submission was for a 20-acre mine and then a new six-
40 acre permit was applied for more recently. There has been a lot of opposition to the proposal. There
41 was additional discussion about the proposal in Parleys Canyon. Mr. Vasic expressed appreciation
42 that the CWC Board decided to submit a public comment in opposition to the proposal.

43
44 **3. Staff will Discuss the Status of the Central Wasatch National Conservation and**
45 **Recreation Area Act (CWNCRA).**

46
47 Co-Chair Zalles reported that the CWC Board discussed the CWNCRA at the CWC Board Meeting
48 last month. Ms. Kilpack explained that there is interest from some of the key players in further

1 discussing the CWNCRRA. There has been one meeting so far, and another meeting has been
2 scheduled. The re-engagement in the CWCNRA is promising. Co-Chair Zalles asked who the key
3 players are who are involved in the meetings. Ms. Kilpack clarified that it includes the ski resorts
4 and the water managers. The CWC is currently facilitating discussions related to the CWNCRRA.

5
6 **NEXT MEETING AGENDA**

7
8 **1. The Committee will Discuss Items for the Next Meeting Agenda.**

9
10 Co-Chair Zalles reported that before the next Environment System Committee Meeting, all
11 Committee Members are asked to contribute questions and suggestions for an education-oriented
12 survey. There will be a shared document that Committee Members can add to. It is also possible for
13 Committee Members to review the list of behaviors that was shared earlier in the Zoom chat box.

14
15 Co-Chair Zalles suggested that at the next meeting, there be continued discussions about relevant
16 Legislation. It will be possible to talk about what moved forward and what did not. There can also
17 be further discussions about the CWNCRRA, Parleys Canyon, and the Central Wasatch Dashboard.
18 Mr. McKay stated that the CWC Board comment on Parleys Canyon is already on the CWC website.

19
20 Mr. Tolman reported that the Environment System Committee can talk about the Roadless Rule
21 recission at the next meeting. It is expected there will be another 30 day comment period in March.
22 He offered to send information to the Chair and Co-Chair of the Environment System Committee.

23
24 **OTHER ITEMS**

25
26 There were no additional discussions.

27
28 **CLOSING**

29
30 **1. Chair Boardman will Call for a Motion to Adjourn the Environment System Committee**
31 **Meeting.**

32
33 **MOTION:** Doug Tolman moved to ADJOURN the Environment System Committee Meeting.
34 Maura Hahnenberger seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the
35 Committee.

36
37 The Environment System Committee Meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

1 *I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Central*
2 *Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council Environment System Committee Meeting held Tuesday,*
3 *February 10, 2026.*
4

5 Teri Forbes

6 Teri Forbes
7 T Forbes Group
8 Minutes Secretary
9

10 Minutes Approved: _____