

**MINUTES** of the special meeting of the Uintah County Commission held March 3, 2026 in the Commission Chambers of the Uintah County Building at 147 East Main, Vernal, Utah. Meeting commenced at 1:34 p.m.

**PARTICIPANTS:** Commissioners Sonja Norton and Willis LeFevre; John Laursen, absent.

**ATTENDANCE:** Mike Wilkins, Laurie Brummond, Kevin Yack, Nate Zilles, William Merkley, Marcus Perry, Cheryl Meier, Trudy Wheeler, Gennie Bird, Russell Grant, Julie Jay-Hundley, Shawn Labrum, Mark Raymond, Matt Wilber, Keith Despain, Jeremy Raymond, Barry Johnson, Travis Campbell, Bart Jensen, Loren Anderson, Mike Davis, Richard Wallis, Isaac Hatch, Jon Stearmer, Ron Richards, and others.

Minutes recorded by Tai Duncan.

**WELCOME:** Commissioner Norton, as acting Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**PERMANENT COMMUNITY IMPACT FUND – CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS LIST PUBLIC HEARING:**  
Uintah Basin Association of Governments (UBAOG)

Kevin Yack and Nate Zilles from UBAOG began the meeting by sharing information. The Government in the Basin Conference will be held in Vernal at the Conference Center April 1st from 3 pm to 8 pm. They will have excellent speakers. There is no fee, please register. All government officials and employees as well as those that are involved, such as surveyors and planners, are encouraged to attend. The Utah Association of Counties will have representatives to answer questions. April 16th is the mandatory CIB (Community Impact Board) Tutorial; it will be held in Duchesne at the Events Center at 10 am. This is not only mandatory but very informative, please attend. Kevin continued by explaining the CIB is transitioning from a spreadsheet to an online portal for this next fiscal year. The Governor's office has made it known this is planned for all projects in all the different state divisions, CIB is just taking the first jump. CDBG, Community Development Block Grant, will be following suit soon. A printed list of projects was made available to all attendees but is the list from last year and not up to date. The portal is a living document and subject to change up until the deadline of May 1st. The projects will receive a time stamp and anything done after May 1st will not be valid for the next fiscal year. When speaking of the next fiscal year, that includes June 2026, October 2026 and February 2027. The funding year for all these projects will be listed as 2027. Each entity will want to make sure the appropriate County is listed for them as well. The portal has specific requirements for projects; entities must make sure they complete what is required. This is a new method and Kevin and Nate are available to help in any way they can. Many individuals are on different boards and will need to work with UBAOG to obtain access to different entities.

Commissioner Norton began the public hearing with a statement. This public hearing is an opportunity for all of the entities to come together to review projects, ask questions, and collaborate where able. CIB favors collaboration. UBAOG cannot add, edit, or delete projects without explicit approval. Each entity is required to keep their portal up to date and complete. She also added, each entity must be aware that the project must go through the UBAOG planner and a UBAOG meeting before going before the CIB. Coordination and planning is key. Working together will ensure more funding is made available for the Uintah Basin, thus supporting our area as a whole. Once all projects are reviewed and all questions are asked, a motion and vote will be taken. In the future, she would like all entities to have the opportunity to review all of the project lists prior to the meeting so as to be prepared with more questions during the meeting. Please be sure to sign the attendance sheets in the back of the room.

Entities presented their list of projects as they were listed in the portal, the spreadsheet was inaccurate.

First to present their list of projects is the Ashley Valley Sewer Management Board, represented by Richard Wallis. For the first priority they would like to update the sewer master plan, showing the manholes and lines that have been added since the last master plan in 2009. An accurate picture of the system will allow them to plan for growth and calculate capacity. This is projected at \$130,000,

requesting \$50,000 from the CIB. 1500 E Sewer Line project will replace the line from 500 N to 135 S. This is a major 36 inch line that is old and has flow issues. The total project is \$1.2 million.

Isaac Hatch presented the projects for Ashley Valley Water and Sewer Improvement District. Priority one is installing sewer and water system improvements along 2500 S in Naples for \$2.5 million; \$50,000 from AVWSID the rest is requested from CIB. Priority two is replacing undersized lines in the Ashley area for a total of \$1.5 million; asking for \$1.25 million and AVWSID contributing \$250,000. Priority three is the Canyon Line replacement, 16 inch to 24 inch pipe above and below the Ashley infrastructure to reduce flow restriction. This is 1.25 miles at a cost of \$2.5 million; asking \$2 million. Priority four is in conjunction with Vernal City to do Ashley Springs improvements to measure water quality and quantity and some structural improvements for \$895,000; asking for \$845,000. They also have a fire-flow project replacing water lines along Highway 40 and in Naples for a total of \$1.5 million; asking for \$1.25 million. They would also like to purchase water rights, asking the CIB for \$1 million and contributing \$500,000 themselves. Mark Raymond asked how they plan to purchase water rights when the Division of Water Rights isn't offering any. Isaac responded they plan to purchase what local rights they can; turn irrigation into residential. They are open to any options at this point. There are other districts in the state going through similar issues.

Cheryl Meier presented the priority list for Uintah Special Service District 1. They have the projects up to date in the portal. She has been told in the past, so it may have changed since, that CIB wanted projects in progress left on the list. The Athletic expansion is in progress at \$21 million. Redoing the Golf Course irrigation system has been on the list for years. The system is 35 years old and deteriorating. This is a cost of \$6 million. The third priority is the park and athletic field update. This will stay on this list as they are waiting on a Water Smart federal grant that is currently held up. As soon as it becomes available, they can move on with the project at a cost of \$12 million. The federal grant is \$5 million and they will ask for grant and loan and match with \$2 million.

Uintah Water Conservancy District projects were presented by William Merkley. They are planning on a master plan and capital assessment management plan for \$200,000. State funding requires a management plan. They will match with \$100,000.

As no one was available to represent Ballard City, Nate presented their two projects. 2000 S intersection realignment for \$200,000 and Highway sidewalks and lighting to be more safe and ADA compliant for \$1.2 million.

Nate also presented for Ballard Water who also has two projects. A water master plan at a cost of \$100,000 with a 50/50 match and a secondary source project for drinking water at \$4 million. They will ask CIB for \$3 million and contribute \$1 million.

Jensen Water Improvement District projects were presented by Trudy Wheeler. Priority one is a water system upgrade, 3.5 miles of 12 inch line along Brushcreek and Sunbench for a project total of \$3 million asking for a 70/30 split. Priority two is a meter communication upgrade for new radio reads and necessary infrastructure for a cost of \$2 million. This project has a \$100,000 Water Smart grant and \$100,000 matching so some of the upgrading has begun. Priority three is a water system update, 3 miles of 8 inch line on Redwash for \$5 million. This is in conjunction with the Uintah Transportation Special Service District; they want to be prepared in case the road upgrades require moving the water lines. They also want to replace aging lines for \$2 million. They will look for other sources of funding but are hopeful for the 70/30 split; 70% grant and 30% loan from CIB.

Maeser Water Improvement District did not have anyone present to discuss their projects.

Mike Davis presented for Naples City. First priority is curb, gutter, and sidewalk on 2500 S from 7-11 to 2000 E. This is in process with plans to go to the CIB meeting in April asking for a \$2.3 million grant and \$969,000 loan.

Isaac Hatch also presented the project for Ouray Park Water Improvement District. They plan on water source improvements, including a pilot treatment plant study for water that needs to be treated for a cost of \$4.5 million. They have funding sources for \$2 million so they will be asking for \$2.5 million from the CIB.

Tridell-Lapoint Water Improvement District projects were presented by Marcus Perry. Priority one is updating the master plan at \$130,000 which is currently underway. Priority two will be the main line improvements that result from the master plan for \$2 million.

UBAOG did not have anything on the one-year priority list.

Commissioner Norton spoke on behalf of the Uintah County Municipal Building Authority (MBA). The Western Park and Buckskin Hills Master Plans are in process. That leaves the Road Department building for \$15 million, \$5 million from other sources, and the Search and Rescue Building for \$2 million, half from other sources. They anticipate applying in February 2027 but probably not for both at the same time. Gennie Bird, Purchasing & Grants, confirmed the portal has the correct information. The community has outgrown the Ashley Valley Food Pantry and we will be working with UBAOG to do a combined building to include the bus transit. This project may be added to the list as a remodel or new construction, at least \$500,000. That will be finalized before the May 1 deadline.

Jeremy Raymond presented the Uintah Fire Suppression Special Service District projects. They plan to replace a Jensen Rescue Truck for \$500,000 with a \$250,000 match this October. They also plan to replace an aging Brush Truck at \$2.1 million, half match and half grant, in February 2027.

The Uintah Transportation Special Service District projects were presented by Mark Raymond. Phase 2 of Independence Road is the top priority at \$20 million. The 500 N project will run from 1500 E to the Sunshine Bench intersection, 2850 E. The total cost is around \$5 million and they have some funding from Joint Highways. The Stanton Road project will cost \$20 million, Old Bonanza Highway at \$10 million, and Glen Bench Road at \$28 million. They will request the typical 70% grant and 30% loan for each project.

Keith Despain presented the nine Vernal City projects. Sewer system improvements include a system upgrade to prevent the waste water infiltrating the system at a cost of \$2.5 million. There are streets that need to be reconstructed at a cost of \$2 million. Old cast iron water lines need to be replaced for \$5 million. The 600 S affordable housing infrastructure is in progress working with the CDBG for \$350,000. The water development study is also in progress at \$90,000. Downtown Revitalization will continue at \$2 million. The Affordable Housing project is in its second year and in progress with CDBG funding and requires \$350,000. The sewer hydrology model and master plan update will cost \$100,000 and will be a collaboration with other entities. They would like to purchase additional drinking water at \$1.5 million.

Commissioner Norton reminded the entities that CIB has made it clear they appreciate collaboration on projects. Working together, particularly with water, sewer, and road projects will save everyone money. She then closed the public hearing and asked for a motion.

Mark Raymond, UTSSD, moved to approve the one year project list as presented. Keith Despain, Vernal City, seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**ADJOURN:** The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:45 pm

  
SONJA NORTON, ACTING CHAIR

  
MICHAEL W. WILKINS, CLERK – AUDITOR