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9 **MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) STAKEHOLDERS**  
10 **COUNCIL ECONOMY SYSTEM COMMITTEE MEETING HELD WEDNESDAY,**  
11 **APRIL 8, 2026, AT 3:30 P.M. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED BOTH IN-PERSON**  
12 **AND VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM. THE ANCHOR LOCATION WAS THE CWC OFFICES,**  
13 **LOCATED IN THE BRIGHTON BANK BUILDING AT 311 SOUTH STATE STREET,**  
14 **SUITE 330, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.**

15  
16 **Committee Members:** John Adams, Chair  
17 Brendan Smith  
18 Becca Gerber  
19 Kim Doyle  
20 Hilary Arens

21  
22 **Staff:** Lindsey Nielsen, Executive Director  
23 Sam Kilpack, Director of Operations  
24 Will McKay, Communications Director

25  
26 **OPENING**

27  
28 **1. Chair John Adams will Open the Public Meeting as Chair of the Economy System**  
29 **Committee of the Central Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council.**

30  
31 Chair John Adams called the Central Wasatch Commission (“CWC”) Stakeholders Council  
32 Economy System Committee Meeting to order at approximately 3:30 p.m. and welcomed those  
33 present.

34  
35 **2. Review and Approval of the Minutes of the February 11, 2026, Meeting.**

36  
37 Chair Adams reported that at the last Economy System Committee Meeting, there were action  
38 items identified by Committee Members. Those will be discussed after a vote on the Meeting  
39 Minutes.

40  
41 **MOTION:** Brendan Smith moved to APPROVE the February 11, 2026, Meeting Minutes. Hilary  
42 Arens seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.

1 **PREVIOUS MEETING ACTION ITEM REVIEW**

2  
3 **1. The Committee will Discuss Updates on Action Items from the February 11, 2026,**  
4 **Economy System Committee Meeting.**

5  
6 Chair Adams asked if there were any updates on the action items that were identified during the  
7 February 11, 2026, Economy System Committee Meeting. He noted that in the second section of  
8 the meeting, the Central Wasatch Symposium presentation from Dr. Jordan Smith was mentioned.  
9 This was added as an agenda item and will be discussed by the Committee later on in the meeting.

10  
11 At the last meeting, there was a discussion about canyon funding needs. John Knoblock asked if  
12 there was anything the Committee could do to advocate for year-round sustainable business at the  
13 ski resorts. Hilary Arens offered to think about that and report back, but she did not have updates  
14 to share. During the last meeting, it was also stated that Becca Gerber could share insights on  
15 potential sources of canyon funding. That is something that can be discussed by the Committee in  
16 the future.

17  
18 Chair Adams acknowledged that there are smaller foundations in the Cottonwood Canyons  
19 already, but he has not done additional research into those. He would like to understand how those  
20 are managed. There have been past discussions about the canyon's needs and potential funding  
21 ideas. He asked if Snowbird has connections to any of the smaller foundations. Ms. Arens  
22 mentioned the National Forest Foundation and explained that a portion of the rooms sold each year  
23 is donated directly to the National Forest Foundation. The Ski Conservation Fund provides a  
24 certain match, and that money goes back to the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation. It is possible  
25 to direct that money to the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation because they started the Ski  
26 Conservation Fund with the National Forest Foundation back in the early 2000s. The Cottonwood  
27 Canyons Foundation does a lot in the canyons, so it is a priority for Snowbird to direct the funds  
28 there. Ms. Arens reported that this past year, the Snowbird donation and the match amount totaled  
29 approximately \$68,000.

30  
31 There are donations made to different organizations through Play Forever. Different non-profit  
32 organizations apply each year and there are 22 spots available on Wednesdays throughout the  
33 season. \$5 of every ticket sold at that time is donated to a different non-profit. In addition, there  
34 are smaller donations made on a one-off basis to non-profit organizations. There are also in-kind  
35 donations.

36  
37 Ms. Arens explained that the National Forest Foundation is the non-profit arm of the U.S. Forest  
38 Service and that is where the donations are managed. She shared additional information about the  
39 Ski Conservation Fund. For every other ski resort that donates to the National Forest Foundation  
40 Ski Conservation Fund, money is split amongst different non-profit organizations within the forest  
41 that the donation came from. However, due to the original contract, Snowbird is able to direct  
42 their funding to the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation. Ms. Arens stated that there are pros and  
43 cons when it comes to making donations to the National Forest Foundation. There are many ski  
44 resorts throughout the country that currently participate in the match program that has been  
45 described.

1 Chair Adams noted that the Economy System Committee has created a list of potential funding  
2 needs in the canyons. There have been questions about where the money could come from in order  
3 to address those needs, so it is beneficial to understand what is happening at the ski resort level.  
4 He thanked Ms. Arens for sharing information about the National Forest Foundation Ski  
5 Conservation Fund. Brendan Smith reported that Solitude hosts the Cottonwood Canyons  
6 Foundation for a wildflower event and clean-up days. There will also be a presentation related to  
7 invasive weed control.

8  
9 Chair Adams asked if the kind of work discussed is appropriate for the Economy System  
10 Committee and the broader Stakeholders Council. The Committee has spent time looking into  
11 funding needs as well as potential sources of funding. He wanted to know if it makes sense to  
12 continue that work or if Committee Members feel the appropriate processes already exist. Ms.  
13 Arens believed there are opportunities for non-profit organizations to be added to the National  
14 Forest Foundation list. In addition, relevant non-profit organizations could submit an application  
15 to participate in Play Forever.

16  
17 Mr. Smith asked if Ski Utah has a non-profit branch. Ms. Arens reported that Ski Utah has  
18 something called Discover Winter, which is a community-focused program, but she does not  
19 believe Ski Utah has a non-profit environmental arm. Additional discussions were had about Ski  
20 Utah. It was noted that Ski Utah is primarily a marketing agency. Mr. Smith noted that they  
21 highlight sustainable efforts made by the ski resorts as part of their marketing, but wondered if it  
22 would be possible to have multiple resorts focus on a single locally based fund. Director of  
23 Operations, Sam Kilpack, reported that Ski Utah is a 501(c)(6) non-profit. Mr. Smith offered to  
24 reach out to Ski Utah to find out more.

25  
26 Executive Director, Lindsey Nielsen, reported that Ski Utah was historically a member of the  
27 Stakeholders Council. Chair Adams asked if Nathan Rafferty from Ski Utah was previously on a  
28 subcommittee of the Stakeholders Council. Ms. Nielsen reported that Mr. Rafferty served on the  
29 Economy System Committee when he was a member. It was reiterated that Mr. Smith will reach  
30 out.

31  
32 Chair Adams reported that in previous meetings, there were discussions about studies from the  
33 Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute on the revenue generated by the ski industry in the State of Utah.  
34 He has added those documents to the shared folder for the Economy System Committee for  
35 Committee Member review. Those studies are informative, but the specific information is  
36 proprietary. Mr. Knoblock was going to look into RRC Associates, which was listed on the study.  
37 Chair Adams explained that there is a desire to determine what percentage of the data is driven by  
38 the four ski resorts in the Cottonwood Canyons. Ms. Arens was told that Snowbird does not share  
39 specific numbers. She does not believe the other ski resorts in the canyons would be willing to do  
40 so either.

41  
42 Chair Adams asked if there is a way to anonymize the data. He shared information about how data  
43 is anonymized in other situations. As for the money that goes into the General Fund, once it is  
44 there, there is a vote on how it will be spent. He noted that there could be money used to support  
45 the environment in which the businesses operate. The question is whether some of the money that  
46 is generated from the canyons could be reallocated back to address unintended consequences. As

1 businesses grow and there are more demands made on the canyons, it makes sense to address the  
2 canyon needs that arise as a result of the use. Some money could potentially be reallocated since  
3 the health of the canyons is needed in order for the various businesses in the canyons to continue  
4 to exist.

5  
6 Ms. Gerber noted that some of the Transient Room Tax (“TRT”) money can be used for mitigation,  
7 but what mitigation means is clearly defined in the State Code. For a lot of the taxes, it is difficult  
8 to discuss different disbursements, because the funds are already being used. Ms. Gerber reported  
9 that there are economic impact studies done in Park City, so it is possible to determine how many  
10 tourism dollars are generated in Summit County from the visitor economy. If the Economy System  
11 Committee is looking for a way to protect the environment, a whole new tax would likely need to  
12 be considered. Chair Adams did not think it was likely that a new tax would be implemented. The  
13 idea that has been discussed at a Committee level is the reallocation of some of the existing  
14 funding. Ms. Gerber believed that most of the County TRT budget is generated in Salt Lake rather  
15 than the resorts.

16  
17 Ms. Gerber does not know that it makes sense for the Economy System Committee to continue to  
18 focus on the current discussion. Chair Adams reported that the Committee has been talking about  
19 canyon needs for some time. This is the first time a Committee Member has pushed back on the  
20 idea. He asked if there were other Committee Members who wanted to share comments. Mr.  
21 Smith asked if there is a clear idea of the money needed to address the identified canyon needs.  
22 Chair Adams clarified that a list had been created. Some of the items on the list have cost estimates  
23 included.

24  
25 Chair Adams would like to hear more feedback about the comments shared by Ms. Gerber.  
26 Ms. Kilpack reported that Mr. Knoblock and Scott Hotaling are not present at the current meeting.  
27 The list of canyon needs was shared. Chair Adams informed Mr. Smith that it is a working  
28 document for the Economy System Committee. Ms. Gerber noted that a lot of the items on the list  
29 related to the environment rather than the economic needs. She understands that having a healthy  
30 environment is part of the economic draw, but she wondered whether the focus should be on  
31 creating resilient communities. For example, looking at how to support the workforce. There are  
32 other sustainability pieces that could be discussed as well, such as attracting visitors and focusing  
33 on accessibility.

34  
35 Chair Adams reported that there was a survey shared with the Stakeholders Council. Some of the  
36 questions had to do with the purpose of the Stakeholders Council and the role of Council Members.  
37 There was also a question about the reason each Council Member chose to join the Stakeholders  
38 Council. Chair Adams understands that his idea about canyon funding needs is a little bit different,  
39 but he pointed out that the Mountain Accord and CWC have to do with the interconnected systems.  
40 When it comes to economic growth and economic resilience, there are people who are paid a lot  
41 of money to think about those issues and resolve those problems. The Chamber of Commerce  
42 serves that purpose in certain areas. However, the Mountain Accord outlines a systems-based  
43 process. If that is not something the Economy System Committee is interested in pursuing, he is  
44 willing to step down from the Chair position to allow there to be a different focus at the Committee  
45 level.

1 Ms. Gerber does not believe she has a completely different view than the rest of the Committee,  
2 but noted that she is looking at things from a slightly different perspective. Something that she  
3 has spoken about previously is how to shift the use. There are currently busy weekends and then  
4 slower periods in the middle of the week. She noted that there could be discussions about how to  
5 flatten out some of the use. It is meaningful to think about the employees. When people who  
6 might usually be a full-time ski instructor or lift operator are being sent home early, that impacts  
7 their paychecks. There are many ways the Economy System Committee can discuss supporting  
8 the economy and making sure it is resilient. There might also be ways the Committee can work  
9 with the businesses that exist.

10  
11 Chair Adams discussed the peaks and valleys that are seen at the ski resorts. He does not see a  
12 way to even those out, because people often choose to ski when the weather conditions are good.  
13 He likes the ideas that were shared by Ms. Gerber, but wanted to know if those fit into the work  
14 of the Economy System Committee. Ms. Nielsen explained that the purpose of the CWC is to  
15 balance the four systems of the study area: economy, transportation, environment, and recreation.  
16 The Committee can choose to focus on the businesses in the economy as well as the  
17 interconnectedness of the other systems.

18  
19 Chair Adams asked if there are Committee Members who would like to work on specific agenda  
20 items related to the suggestions shared by Ms. Gerber. Mr. Smith believed it is important to focus  
21 on creating an environment where businesses can grow. That being said, there does not need to  
22 be a focus on a specific business. It would make sense for the Economy System Committee to  
23 look at the economy broadly rather than focus specifically on the ski industry. It is critical that  
24 there be alignment on how business is conducted. This Committee can encourage stewardship  
25 from all businesses.

26  
27 Ms. Gerber noted that there are a lot of businesses in Park City that are dependent on the resorts.  
28 There is a community that is fully supported by tourism, so work has been done to achieve a  
29 balance. It would be interesting to know what businesses are located in or near the canyons that  
30 are dependent on the canyons for success. The Committee can talk about the issues that those  
31 businesses are facing. Ms. Gerber reported that there was a business survey conducted in Park  
32 City. This winter had impacts on many of the businesses, so there have been discussions about  
33 how to best support those businesses.

34  
35 Ms. Nielsen suggested that there be outreach to some of the business owners in the Wasatch Front  
36 and Wasatch Back. Business owners could be invited to future Economy System Committee  
37 Meetings to discuss concerns. Chair Adams shared comments about weather conditions and the  
38 economic impacts. Ms. Gerber asked if businesses in the Cottonwood Canyons are open  
39 throughout the year. Chair Adams reported that there are not a lot of businesses outside of the ski  
40 resorts, but there are businesses located at the mouth of the canyon. Ms. Gerber noted that there  
41 could be a survey sent out to canyon businesses. Alternatively, there could be some kind of  
42 outreach conducted.

1 **OUTDOOR RECREATION ECONOMY DISCUSSION**

- 2
- 3 1. **The Committee will Discuss Dr. Jordan Smith’s Presentation from the Central**  
4 **Wasatch Symposium Regarding the Outdoor Recreation Economy.**

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6 It was determined that this item will be discussed at the next Economy System Committee Meeting.

7

8 **CENTRAL WASATCH DASHBOARD DISCUSSION**

- 9
- 10 1. **The Committee will Discuss Potential Data Additions to the Central Wasatch**  
11 **Dashboard.**

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13 It was determined that this item will be discussed at the next Economy System Committee Meeting.

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15 **CANYON CAPACITY DISCUSSION**

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- 17 1. **The Committee will Discuss the Concept of Canyon Capacity.**

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19 It was determined that this item will be discussed at the next Economy System Committee Meeting.

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21 **OTHER ITEMS AND NEXT MEETING AGENDA**

- 22
- 23 1. **The Committee May Raise Other Topics, if Desired.**
- 24
- 25 2. **The Committee Will Discuss Topics for the Next Meeting Agenda.**
- 26
- 27 a. **Potential Stakeholders Council Feedback Survey Discussion.**

28

29 Chair Adams noted that Committee Members can submit future agenda suggestions ahead of the  
30 next Economy System Committee Meeting. He asked Ms. Gerber to brainstorm ideas related to  
31 the earlier discussion. There could be a new focus for the Committee rather than looking into  
32 revenue sources.

33

34 **CLOSING**

- 35
- 36 1. **Chair Adams Will Call for a Motion to Adjourn the Economy System Committee**  
37 **Meeting.**

38

39 **MOTION:** Brendan Smith moved to ADJOURN the Economy System Committee Meeting.  
40 Becca Gerber seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the  
41 Committee.

42

43 The Economy System Committee Meeting adjourned at approximately 4:35 p.m.

1 *I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Central*  
2 *Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council Economy System Committee Meeting held on*  
3 *Wednesday, April 8, 2026.*

4

5 Teri Forbes

6 Teri Forbes

7 T Forbes Group

8 Minutes Secretary

9

10 Minutes Approved: \_\_\_\_\_