

Emery County Travel Board

Minutes

February 6, 2026 3:30pm

Castle Dale, Utah/Green River, Utah

Attendance: Keven Jensen, Belinda Peacock, Judy Bishop, Danny VanWagoner, AnnDee Mead, Lacy Hardman, Amanda Leonard, Tifnie Hansen, Larry Johansen, Camie Bell, Robin Hunt, Travis Bacon, Terri Bennett, Janeice Pfander, Danna Kay, Edward Bennett

Conducting and Welcome: Chair Danny VanWagner

Introduction of new members

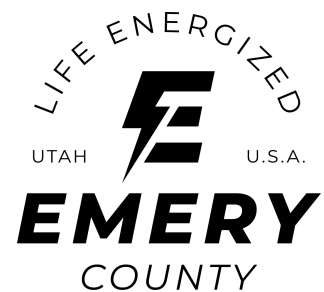
1. Discuss/Approve/Deny: Minutes November 2025 Motion to approve minutes made by Keven, seconded by Lacy. **Motion passed**

2. Presentation: Event Report 2026. Amanda is currently holding the junior entrepreneurs event but also provided an update on the recent event holder workshop. There was a good turnout and everyone seems to appreciate the event, the things they learned, and the networking that took place. She's already received some applications and is looking forward to good results from event coordinators as a result of the workshop. Amanda has finished the 2025 community report, she figured and provided some more precise numbers on economic impact this year showing an even greater impact than expected. The overall estimated impact for 2025 was just over \$1.9 million. They had a good turnout with survey results, showing that 86% of visitors from these events stayed at least one night. She will now be working on dates for 2026 events and table tents, as well as boosting some of the bigger events on social media. AnnDee also shared that the office has been meeting as an "Event Team" which has been beneficial. Keven's contract renewal will be discussed at next month's meeting.

3. Discuss/Approve/Deny: Selection of Chair and Vice Chair for 2026. AnnDee explained to new board members that a new chair and vice chair are voted in annually.

Keven nominated Danny as chair. Motion passed. Danny nominated Travis as vice chair. **Motion passed.**

4. Discuss/Approve/Deny: 2026 Meeting Schedule. Discussion on moving the rest of the meetings for the year to 1:00, remaining on the second Tuesday of



every month. We will plan to skip August as it usually ends up being skipped due to a busy time of year. If the board feels that a meeting is needed when the time comes, a meeting can still be scheduled. The December meeting is also planned to be canceled and the schedule reflects as such. Motion to approve made by Keven, seconded by Lacy. **Motion passed.**

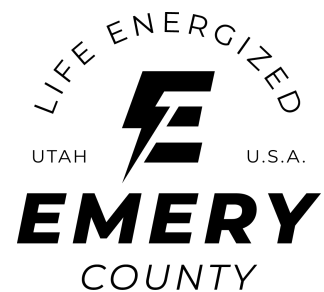
5. Presentation: TRT/TRCCA Tax and Travel Board Explanation. Presentation by AnnDee on TRT/TRCCA tax and the tourism board. The presentation explained some common language and recent legislation changes, as well as how tourism funds are spent and the stipulations that guide that spending. Discussion on this year's marketing budget and some current contracts. Discussion on PlacerAI, how the system works, and how that contract can be used in the next year to get the most useful information.

6. Ratify: Booth and advertising space at SLOREX in the amount of \$900. SLOREX will be attended this year by representatives from Big Mountain Lodge and The Swell Retreat. Motion to ratify made by Travis, seconded by Keven. **Motion passed.**

7. Discuss/Approve/Deny: 1-70 Signage Project- Amount \$2,345.28. The Wild Horse Station is a relatively new business in Emery with the old gas stations, some RV spaces and a couple cabins. They have installed some signs on the i70 exits and have asked for funding input from the board. Other appropriate businesses will also have the opportunity to be featured on the sign for a yearly fee. Discussion on approaching the Travel Board before starting projects in order to obtain the best collaboration and most efficient funding. Discussion on surplus funding and how that money can be used. There will be \$100,000 available for this year, the rest has been put back but could be used to budget for next year with proper planning. Motion to approve the i70 signs by Lacy, seconded by Larry. **Motion passed.**

8. Discuss/Approve/Deny: Green River/JWP Veteran's Memorial -Amount \$3,500.00 There was some damage done to the Veterans Memorial sign in Green River in 2023. The museum made efforts to get it repaired but it ended up falling through the cracks. It has recently been brought up again and the amount asked for is to help supplement the repair costs. Originally it was \$6200, the replacement cost has been quoted for \$13,000. These funds would come out of the special projects fund. Motion to approve \$3500 for the replacement memorial made by Larry, seconded by Judy

9. Discuss/Approve/Deny: OHV-R Grant Application for Trails Signage Crew. We were approached by Wade Allinson from the state with the idea of creating a signage crew. There is a gap in federal funding and there won't be seasonals being hired this year. This leaves a work load undone and a missed opportunity



for kids to work seasonally. The forest also faces a problem of having extremely old and outdated signage. The idea is that the travel office will apply for a grant to hire seasonal employees to work through the summer on updating signs. Sanpete county is going to donate \$8000 to the project, OnX has expressed their desire to collaborate, the FS is going to donate some supplies and will direct the employees on the forest. If the board decides to move forward, the travel office would apply for funding to pay wages and purchase equipment, the match would come from partners, Jim and AnnDee's time, and one of our leased trucks. It will be about \$100,000 total value for one year. Conversations with HR and others are still happening to figure out hours and other logistics. If things go as planned, the hope is to hire at least 2 seasonal employees, maybe stretching up to 4 employees if deemed appropriate. Moving forward is contingent on receiving the grant, but the hiring process would need to begin before the grant is finalized. Motion to approve made by Lacy, seconded by Travis. **Motion passed.**

10. Discuss/Approve/Deny: RTP Grant Application Signage Crew Equipment. This is a second piece of the grant. Because RTP is a federal grant that's run through the outdoor office of recreation but funded federally, we are able to stack grants. That means that we can apply through RTP and then match it with the OHVR funds. This application would be for a side by side and a trailer for the sign crews (and would then be owned by the county). We would apply for it for the crew and then use it as a match for the other grant. Motion to approve by Keven, seconded by Larry. **Motion passed.**

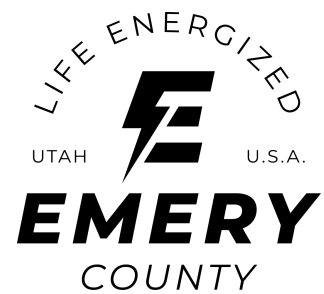
11. Discuss/Approve/Deny: Funding for the 2026 Emery County Trails Grant. This is the grant that we administer and fund. In the budget last fall we set aside \$30,000. The grant opens in Feb/March and closes in April. Applicants can ask up to \$15,000. Past projects include walking trails in Green River, Castle Dale, and Huntington; Epicenter, Swell Retreat NICA trail, Backcountry Horsemen parking lot, an equine high line in Goblin Valley, and Little's Creek Bike Trail. The motion would be to approve the \$30,000 budgeted last fall for spending this year. Motion to approve made by Travis, seconded by Judy. **Motion passed.**

12. Discuss Reports of the Following:

a. Event Coordinator:

b. Marketing: AnnDee reported finishing up the placerAI training. Last year we signed a multi-year contract for the billboard in Huntington so that's off the docket for this year. We did a half page ad in the Miss Teen Utah pageant. We've been updating social media strategies for the year and supporting the event team for the upcoming year. Maps are also still in progress and will hopefully be wrapped up soon.

c. Museums: Belinda reported good numbers that are starting to come up



for the season. They saw 140 in January, last year they had 103. In February they are holding a month-long scavenger hunt in the museum. Kids who attend and complete the hunt will receive a prize. They have a bigger event coming up on March 6, Maria Allington will be coming to lecture on the Nezca Lines and the Rochester Panel. AnnDee provided a brief introduction to new board members regarding the museum and the ladies that work there.

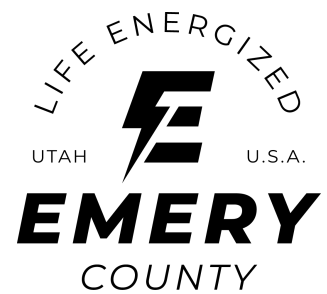
d. State Parks: Tifnie shared preparations to open up for the season on April 1. They are working on campsites and adding a new restroom at Huntington and adding sites at Millsite. Applications for seasonals opened on Feb 2. Applicants must be 16 or older. She's working on planning some events this year and is open for more.

e. Trail's: Terri reported having ridden the Swell Retreat bike trail and said that it is coming along and will provide for a great event in 2027. AnnDee provided an explanation of the relationship between the trails committee and travel board. They are working on a new system for reporting trail conditions using a google form with a shareable link and QR code. AnnDee shared the survey with the board and explained how it will be marketed and posted out on the trail systems. The Trails Committee has also been discussing the Mountain Dew Trail on the back side of Cedar Mountain. A small part of it wasn't designated in the travel management plan and interests have been expressed to write and petition to get this portion included in the recognized route. The Backcountry Horsemen recently received a nationally recognized volunteer award from the BLM. This is a group that has been working for many years to improve public lands, obtain funding, and cooperate efforts with agencies.

f. Grants: We're closing out the coop grant from 2025 which funded a lot of last year's events. We're open to bigger marketing project ideas to apply for that grant this year.

g. Financials: Presentation of the last months' TRT and TRCCA taxes and comparison with past years and months. Discussion on possible reasons for fluctuations and different tax income levels. Discussion on long term renting vs short term renting in terms of TRT. Presentation of each town and their tax revenues.

h. Board Members: Lacy reported a business coalition meeting for tourism business on the west side. They are going to meet monthly anyone involved in a tourism related business is invited to come and learn and support and collaborate with others. They are planning to meet every 4th



Tuesday of the month at 11:30 in the Canyon Room. Green River also has a business alliance forming.

Keven brought up a discussion on a feasibility study for a motel on the west side of the county. He posed the question on involving the travel board and economic development to get another study underway. Discussion on the need for more rooms and a nice place to stay to meet the needs of growing events.

Adjourn - Thank you for coming!