

Emery County Travel Board

Minutes

March 10, 2026 1:00 pm

Castle Dale, Utah/Green River, Utah

Attendance: Danny VanWagoner, David Wilson, Danna Engleman , Tanya Bigelow, Travis Bacon, Larry Johansen, Cathy Gardner, Lacy Hardman, Janeice Pfander, Tifnie Hansen, AnnDee Mead, Amanda Leonard, Kevin Butler, Robin Hunt, Terri Bennett

Conducting and Welcome: Chair Danny VanWagner

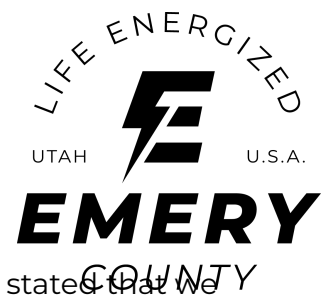
1. Approval of Minutes: Minutes February 2025. Motion to approve with the correction of a name spelling made by Larry, seconded by Cathy. **Motion passed.**

2. Discuss/Approve/Deny: Event Applications. Amanda explained the application process for event sponsorships. She plans to bring a group of events that have applied during the last month to the travel board to be voted on. She compiled a list of the events and adjustments to the sponsorship amount as well as what the ECTB will be providing. The board opted to vote on all 10 events presented this month at once. Motion to approve event sponsorships made by Tifnie, seconded by Larry. **Motion passed.**

3. Discuss/Approve/Deny: YESCO Billboard Renewal \$6,630.00. This is the billboard on Main Street in Green River that currently features the John Wesley Powell Museum. It is an annual contract and the price shown is to keep the current billboard up as is. Kathy brought up the point that since the billboard is already in town, it may not be making as much difference as would be ideal. It has been in place for 2 years at this point. Motion to deny renewal of the contract made by Larry, seconded by Lacy. **Motion passed.**

4. Discuss/Approve/Deny: Tourism Business Development Workshop Rooms. This is a free training offered by the state. Last year's workshop was very beneficial to those who went. The Swell Retreat and Tifnie from state park, as well as AnnDee are planning to go this year. The conference is in April in Kanab this year. Any board members who are interested are invited to attend. Cathy made a motion to approve up to 4 hotel rooms for attendees, seconded by Larry. **Motion passed.**

5. Discuss/Approve/Deny: Contract with Kolossal Media for event marketing and social media \$1000 monthly/\$12,000 annually. Kevin has been working with Amanda



with social media/marketing for the last year. The original contract stated that we

could extend the contract for up to 5 years based on budget and grant funding. AnnDee and Amanda have both agreed that this contract is beneficial to keep going. The only amendment to the current contract is the implementation of monthly event team meetings. The contract is \$1000 a month and is wrapped into the co-op marketing grant from the state. Kevin mentioned awareness of, and lack of issues with conflict of interest with the current commissioner campaigns and election process. Motion to approve made by Lacy, seconded by Travis. **Motion passed.**

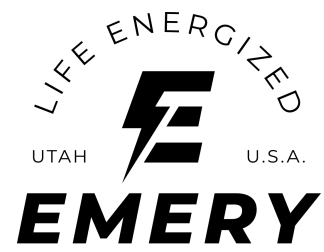
6. Discuss Reports of the Following:

a. Event Coordinator: Amanda presented the Volunteer of the Month award to Patsy Stoddard. She is very involved and appreciated in the community. Amanda also reported having finished the table tents which will be printed and distributed soon, as well as shared plans for a mountain bike race at the Swell Retreat which will be part of the county fair. She expressed gratitude to the Christiansen family for taking on the Cowboy Memorial Rodeo which will be an RMPRA sanctioned event. Millsite Off Ice is coming up next weekend. They were able to maintain most entries even after adjusting to no ice this year. Amanda recently attended the State Tourism Office's marketing and AI training. She learned some really exciting things that will be implemented into the work going on in the office. She explained our swag availability and mentioned that some restocking is being done. Also gathering some radio ad quotes to give insight on where those marketing dollars would be best spent. Finishing up the Junior Entrepreneurs program for the year, there were 31 youth businesses in the program this year, being awarded \$13,000 to these kids and their businesses. Amanda remarked on many of the kids creating businesses that cater to visitors and will be part of upcoming local events.

AnnDee added that a youth wrestling tournament was held Saturday with around 100 participants. It all went well and will hopefully be an event to grow in the future.

Robin reported having just wrapped up the Energized Expedition with the celebratory BBQ social and awards. They had 64 participants this year and 74 BBQ attendees, this is the second year and they hope to see the event continue to grow. Robin also shared the upcoming Bowline Festival for the museum and a busy month coming up in April with Green River Rocks, the Dirt Bike Rally, and the Watermelon Crawl in the beginning of May.

b. Marketing: AnnDee also attended the AI workshop and found it extremely



helpful and gave good insight on how to best use AI resources effectively. She has been having conversations with the Utah Office of Tourism, they are looking forward to doing some documentational marketing featuring our area to help with their international messaging. She also reported working with the new liquor store in Castle Dale and their desires in sharing/marketing local businesses and events inside their store. They are currently seeing around 2000-3000 visitors a week which would include a lot of visitors.

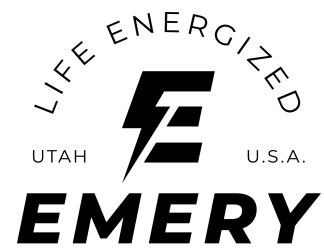
c. Museums: AnnDee brought word from the Museum of the San Rafael, they had to cancel a speaker event this last week, but they did have a successful Valentines Scavenger hunt and are looking forward to an Easter event on April 3. Their total visitors for the month was 171 with 11 from out of state, these numbers show a lot of growth from last year. They will be attending Green River Rocks and have another wire wrapping night in March.

d. State Parks: Tifnie has been preparing for the Ice Off event next week. They are planning a star gazing event in Huntington on April 25 with 6 telescopes coming and a group of star gazers to help facilitate the event. Tifnie is also working on another sound bathing event and is open to other event ideas for the parks. She also shared that there is an upcoming renovation project on the shower house at Huntington which will lower visitor numbers for a couple years.

AnnDee mentioned having had conversations with the UOT social media crew about April's Dark Sky Month initiatives. We hope to see some posts featuring Emery County. There will be some fun astrology events going on around the county and state.

e. Trail's: AnnDee brought news from Trails, including having worked on the culvert trail down by Lone Tree. Though the Trails Crew had plans to work on a new parking lot up Straight Canyon, the county road crew graciously took the project on and completed it quickly and effectively. This parking lot will help mitigate the increasing coal truck traffic and climber traffic/safety. AnnDee explained that the travel office funds a full time road crew employee and shared some of the positives that are a result of that. The Trails Committee voted on and are working with the commissioners to write a letter to open up The Mountain Dew Trail which is a newly designated BLM trail that lacked continuity of accessibility throughout the trail. The Dirt Bike Rally, Watermelon Crawl, and an OHV Jamboree based at the Swell Retreat are all being worked on.

f. Grants: We finished the close-out on the co-op marketing grants in February. These grants are getting a little harder to manage with changing



budgets and limitations. Moving forward, we have to seek preapproval with co-op grants. AnnDee was able to submit the OHVR application for the signage crew and she is currently working on the RTP application for that project.

The grant that we administer will be opening soon, it's a small grant but it helps as start-up or match money for projects.

g. Financials: Presentation of 2025 tax collection numbers and trends. Our numbers are up from past data. Discussion on changes and data interpretation. Discussion on the recent TRCCA bill that did not end up getting passed but may become a reoccurring issue in the future. AnnDee expressed appreciation for Edward from Green River for being very active in those conversations.

h. Board Member AnnDee shared a report on a tourism business coalition that met for the first time this last month. The idea is to get the business owners on the west side of the county together to share their thoughts, struggles, successes, etc; and also to help facilitate positive interactions and aid from the travel office. One idea that came from this meeting was an itinerary initiative that the office will continue to work on.

Adjourn - Thank you for coming!