

Emery County Travel Board

Minutes

April 14, 2026 1:00 pm

Castle Dale, Utah/Green River, Utah

Attendance: Brandon Carter, Tia Carter, Janet Smoak, Collin ____, Tonya Bigelow, OT Seeks Team, Terri Bennett, Amanda Leonard, AnnDee Mead, Tifnie Hansen, Danny VanWagoner, Lacy Hardman, Larry Johansen, Camie Bell, David Wilson, Nathan Martinez, Janeice Pfander, Judi Bishop

Conducting and Welcome: Chair Danny VanWagner

1. Approval of Minutes: Minutes March 2025. Motion to approve made by Larry, seconded by Lacy. **Motion passed.**

Amanda presented this month's Energized Volunteer Award to Tia and Brandon Carter. They have been serving as members of the Emery County Fishing Committee and are pivotal in helping run fishing tournaments in the county. They have shown their love for fishing and service through their efforts, and fishing events are greatly improved thanks to their work and input.

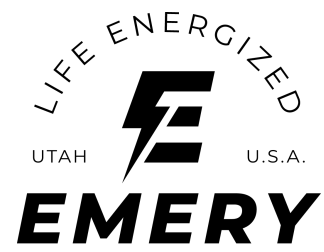
Conducting and Welcome: Chair Danny VanWagner

1. Discuss/Approve/Deny: Minutes March 2026

2. Presentation: OTSeeks. Presentation on OT Seeks, their AI platform, and the applicability of their platform to ECTB.

3. Discuss/Approve/Deny: OTSeeks Partnership Discussion on time required and the return on investment to be expected. AnnDee would be spending about 2 hours a month working with their team to refine AI efforts to better fit the needs of the travel office. Motion to approve the partnership agreement made by Lacy, seconded by Larry. **Motion passed.**

4. Discuss/Approve/Deny: Eventeny Subscription Renewal. The county Eventeny subscription is up for renewal. Discussion on the different contract lengths and options. Robin has been using the program a lot in the last year and seen success with it. Discussion on the experience of those who have used it, the upfront time investment and the advantages/disadvantages, as well as how event coordinators



might adjust their usage to work more efficiently. Motions were made to approve and then rescinded as the board determined that while they did wish to renew the contract, further discussion, information, and voting would be needed to determine the contract length and payment. Discussion on payment options and how to lock in the 5 year agreement but pay using annual payments. Motion to table the topic till next month made by Larry, seconded by Lacy. **Motion passed.**

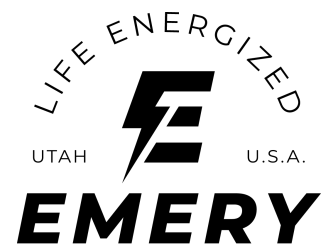
5. Discuss/Approve/Deny: Radio Advertising for Events. Amanda has gathered quotes from different radio stations for event advertising for the year. She brought the quote from KOAL to present to the board as being the best value. The board discussed the reaches of KOAL and the efficiency of the money spent on the contract. Motion to approve made by Larry, seconded by Judi. **Motion passed.**

6. Discuss Reports of the Following:

a. Event Coordinator: Amanda reported on Millsite Off Ice in March. They raised over \$2700 for a local charity cause. They had over 35 fishermen. One issue they ran into was a larger number of chub in the lake, inhibiting the numbers of rainbow trout and their ability to thrive. Amanda was able to meet with officials to discuss this issue, learning about the causes and implications of the chub issue. In an effort to help, they would like to put on a fishing tournament for chub to try to improve the integrity and health of the fish in Millsite. Amanda will keep the board posted as details for that tournament develop. Amanda attended and presented at the Eastern Utah Academy Leadership Conference and was able to provide some answers and clarification on some misconceptions.

b. Marketing: Utah in April is Dark Sky Month and AnnDee has been working with the State Office to collaborate social media posts and highlight that strength is Emery County. They are also working on an itinerary for international tourism that will contain a focus on our outdoor assets as well as an effort to push visitors back into the towns for dining and lodging. Tomorrow the Utah Office of Film is dropping off a film marker to the JWP in Green River that will be a part of a state-wide Film-Tour initiative that has been a popular draw for visitors. AnnDee also presented at the Eastern Utah Academy Leadership Conference on travel, tourism, and tourism tax.

c. Museums: Janet shared an update from JWP, March and April have been off to a great start. They are starting their Bowline Festival for its first year. They



pulled it off in 6 months and are excited to have it going. They had a successful first year with films and high visitation. The festival starts in March to add to the effort of starting the visitor season early. They had around 30-40 hotel rooms booked, and Janet credits the festival to an approximate increase in visitation of 300 people compared to last year. They also held Green River Rocks recently despite poor weather. This year's event proved to be the biggest yet. One field trip was negatively impacted by the weather but the vendors were moved indoors and everything else carried on well. Janet asked for some clarification on the timeline for the film marker.

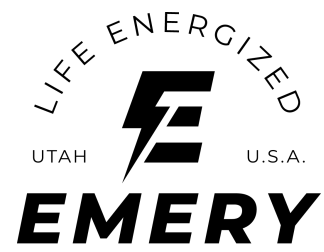
Belinda was unable to make it to the meeting but sent word that they were able to attend Green River Rocks, with Kaylee staying to work at the museum. They've stayed busy and continued to see visitors, including visitors from out of the area.

d. State Parks: Nathan reported a busy season since about mid-March with campgrounds fillings. They have their disc golf tournament coming up this week and are participating in an upcoming Astro-Fest.

Tifnie attended the Eastern Utah Academy Leadership Conference and was on a panel for outdoor recreation. She will also be participating in the Astro-Fest and holding a star gazing event toward the end of the event. Huntington just saw demolition on the shower house as they prepare to replace it. The project should be finished in August. Millsite is busy now.

AnnDee added a report on efforts to update signage at Little Wildhorse. They continue to have a lot of emergency and rescue efforts deployed there. We're working to update verbiage and warnings on the signage to hopefully help to better educate visitors on the dangers of the area. Discussion on how to make the information more impactful and further reaching.

e. Trail's: Terri shared that the trails crew has been out working this month. They fixed a trail for the upcoming Watermelon Crawl. They attempted to work on a project today down near i-70 but found themselves delayed by a car accident and then recruited for a snowstorm search and rescue effort. The Backcountry horsemen camped for 3 days out at Sid's Mountain to make a report. SHPO has a site stewardship program that allows people to visit sites and make reports on conditions. Jurassic National Monument is open Thursday through Sunday. They are doing some construction that is expected to be finalized by September.



f. Grants: The trails grant that is administered by the travel office closes tomorrow. We applied for the grant for the signage crew. The funding for the workers and the equipment has been approved. The RTP for the side by side and trailer has been submitted. The job applications close tomorrow (4/15). Co-op marketing grants will be coming up which have historically been used for events. The way these funds can be used is becoming more and more strict. Efforts will be required to re-think how we are using funds and how to best fit the updated requirements.

g. Financials: Presentation of the month's tax information and discussion of the results. The state records show some major declines in Green River, especially this month. Discussion on whether this is a Green River issue or a state recording issue.

h. Board Members

Janeice shared that her perspective of business in Green River is that business the past couple months has been good (supporting the idea that the state tax records must be off)

Lacy shared that the business coalition has met twice now. In the last meeting they discussed Emery County as a business community and how important it is for business owners to team up and work together. They're going to start working together to paint a better picture of all that's offered here. They do have some business owners coming consistently but want to reach out to all business owners and get everyone involved. AnnDee also remarked on how effective it has been to have everyone around a table sharing what they offer and how they can help each other. Efforts are underway to provide better materials and itineraries to better market the area and the businesses to visitors.

Terri shared that she had recently noticed a lot of climbers bringing mountain bikes to the county with them on their climbing trips. Discussion on how to connect the two activities and spread information across user groups.

Adjourn - Thank you for coming!