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9 **MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) STAKEHOLDERS**
10 **COUNCIL ECONOMY SYSTEM COMMITTEE MEETING HELD WEDNESDAY,**
11 **JUNE 10, 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, Co-Chair
18 Scott Hotaling
19 Becca Gerber
20 Kim Doyle
21 Hilary Arens

22
23 **Others:** Pete Benda (CWC Youth Council)

24
25 **Staff:** Sam Kilpack, Director of Operations
26 Will McKay, Director of Communications

27
28 **OPENING**

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

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

35
36 **2. Review and Approval of the Minutes of the April 8, 2026, Meeting.**

37
38 **MOTION:** Hilary Arens moved to APPROVE the April 8, 2026, Meeting Minutes. Brendan
39 Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.

40
41 **STAKEHOLDERS COUNCIL MEETING DISCUSSION REVIEW**

42
43 **1. The Committee will Review the Discussions from the June 3, 2026, Stakeholders**
44 **Council Meeting.**

45
46 Chair Adams reported that the last Stakeholders Council Meeting took place on June 3, 2026. He

1 informed the Economy System Committee that it is possible to receive email notifications when
2 meeting information is posted. There is a link to the agenda, recording, and Meeting Minutes.
3
4 Something discussed at the last Stakeholders Council Meeting was the letter put together by Kelly
5 Boardman with recommendations related to transit. Chair Adams noted that Council Members
6 were able to submit comments ahead of the Stakeholders Council vote on the letter. It was an
7 accomplishment to reach consensus on the letter that will be forwarded to the CWC Board.
8
9 There was a Breakout Session, and there were discussions about how to better support the work of
10 the CWC Board. Something that came out of those discussions was a desire for more information
11 about the Central Wasatch National Conservation and Recreation Area Act (“CWNCRA”). In
12 addition, there was Council Member support for the Capacity Study that is being pursued. Chair
13 Adams reported that the CWC Board recently created the Capacity Committee, which includes four
14 voting members from the CWC Board. During the Stakeholders Council Meeting, there was a
15 discussion about how the Council could be involved, as Council Members want to provide input.
16
17 The Stakeholders Council decided to wait and see what happened at the first Capacity Committee
18 Meeting. Director of Operations, Sam Kilpack, reported that the first Capacity Committee Meeting
19 took place on June 8, 2026. Chair Adams serves on the Committee as a non-voting member.
20 During the first meeting, there was a conversation about the direction of the Committee and the
21 rationale for a Capacity Study. The meetings will be held on a monthly basis moving forward.
22 Chair Adams encouraged the Economy System Committee to listen to the meeting recording.
23
24 Becca Gerber asked if a third party would be hired to conduct the Capacity Study. She also wanted
25 to know if the Capacity Committee discussed the request for proposal (“RFP”) process. Chair
26 Adams confirmed that this was discussed. By the end of the meeting, it was determined that there
27 is a lot of work that needs to be done before that process moves forward. CJ Blye serves on the
28 Capacity Committee and suggested that certain details be determined before moving forward with
29 a request for information (“RFI”) or an RFP. At some point, one of the deliverables will be an RFI
30 or RFP, but the Capacity Committee needs to figure out an appropriate approach.
31
32 Ms. Gerber pointed out that capacity is a sensitive topic. As a result, it makes sense to have a third-
33 party come in to handle the study, potentially even from another state. Chair Adams confirmed that
34 an RFP would result in a third-party handling the Capacity Study work so there is objectivity.
35 Ms. Gerber noted that there are many different ways to talk about capacity, so having someone who
36 has worked in that area will be important. There is a lot of local expertise, but it is a sensitive
37 subject.
38
39 Chair Adams reported that at the Capacity Committee Meeting, there was an acknowledgement that
40 determining capacity could result in pushback. There has to be a systems approach taken. Some
41 members of the Capacity Committee stated that in order to make major transportation decisions, it
42 is essential to better understand capacity. Based on comments shared during the meeting, it sounded
43 like the Capacity Study might be a natural part of the process if the CWNCRA moves forward.
44
45 Ms. Kilpack explained that the CWNCRA would require a new Central Wasatch-specific
46 management plan as part of the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest Plan. There is a Central

1 Wasatch plan that is much broader than the area the CWC studies. The passage of the CWCRA
2 would require a more specific management plan to be completed within three years. That plan
3 would update the current U.S. Forest Service levels of use and management prescriptions to
4 incorporate the increased use that has been seen since 2003, when the Forest Plan was last updated.
5

6 Chair Adams explained that if the CWCRA process moves forward, there needs to be a Capacity
7 Study of some sort. However, if the CWCRA process does not move forward, then there is still
8 a desire to explore the capacity outlined in the Mountain Accord. No matter what happens with the
9 CWCRA, an exploration of capacity in the Central Wasatch supports the work of the CWC.
10

11 Additional information about the Stakeholders Council Meeting was shared. Chair Adams reported
12 that there was a discussion about the connection between the Wasatch Front and Wasatch Back as
13 well as the differences. The transportation options and environmental conditions were highlighted.
14

15 **CANYON TOLLING DISCUSSION**

17 **1. The Committee will Discuss Ideas Regarding Planned Canyon Tolling.**

18
19 It was noted that Co-Chair Brendan Smith suggested the Economy System Committee discuss the
20 planned canyon tolling. Co-Chair Smith explained that he looked into where tolling exists and
21 how this could impact the recreation industry, particularly the ski industry. He could not find other
22 examples where tolling was mandatory in order for guests to access a ski resort. In Utah, that
23 would disadvantage the immediate economy and make it more advantageous for the ski resorts
24 that do not have tolling requirements. In destination areas, tolling is mostly nonexistent across the
25 globe. He found some examples of National Parks with entry fees that have ski resorts within
26 them, but he could not find examples where there was a mandatory tolling fee to access a resort.
27

28 Co-Chair Smith expressed concerns about adding tolls to the canyons, particularly right before the
29 ski resorts, rather than at the base of the canyon. This would disadvantage the ski resorts and
30 would be unprecedented in the ski industry. He asked for Committee Member feedback about the
31 proposed tolling in the Cottonwood Canyons. A question was asked about whether the canyon
32 tolling is proposed to reduce traffic or raise money. Co-Chair Smith believed it is intended to
33 incentivize carpooling and reduce traffic. Chair Adams stated that the idea was to have variable
34 tolling. On a weekday, when there is not much traffic, there would not necessarily be a toll. When
35 it is busier, and additional bus service is established, the toll can incentivize bus use in the canyons.
36

37 Chair Adams heard that the reason for toll placement before the ski resorts is because the traffic
38 problem is associated with wintertime ski resort use. There is no desire to toll those who plan to
39 recreate in the parts of the canyon that do not involve paid services. The toll placement would
40 allow visitors to drive to trailheads without passing the toll booth. Chair Adams does not believe
41 the idea is to raise money, though the money could be used to offset the costs of the buses. Co-
42 Chair Smith asked if there was information about when tolls could be implemented. Chair Adams
43 reported that there is information in the Big Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Assessment
44 (“EA”). There is also information in the Utah Department of Transportation (“UDOT”) Little
45 Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Impact Statement (“EIS”). Enhanced buses are in Phase I.
46

1 Chair Adams explained that the idea is to have tolling in both Big Cottonwood Canyon and Little
2 Cottonwood Canyon, because tolling in only one canyon could shift use to the other canyon.
3 Tolling could reduce the number of vehicles in the canyons on the busiest days and could also
4 resolve the parking issues at the ski resorts on the busiest days. The buses could result in additional
5 visitation at the resorts, but the implementation of tolling could change how people travel there.
6

7 Hilary Arens stated that tolling has its place and noted that there are some benefits. However, the
8 toll amount would have to be quite high in order for people with money to shift from a personal
9 vehicle to a bus. Ms. Gerber asked if there will only be wintertime tolling or if there will also be
10 a toll in the summer. It will only be in place during the winter months and will start in 2028.
11

12 Chair Adams explained that the letter that was voted on during the last Stakeholders Council
13 Meeting include language about a mobility hub on 9400 South, so people coming from the south
14 that want to enter Little Cottonwood Canyon do not have to drive all the way to the mobility hub
15 at 6200 South to access a bus that enters the canyon. There was discussion about the parking that
16 will be added. Chair Adams stated that the plan shows how the road will be improved from the
17 mobility hub to the entrance of Big Cottonwood Canyon. As for traction law checks, it is difficult
18 in Big Cottonwood Canyon due to the proximity to the light. In Little Cottonwood Canyon, the
19 traction law checks happen further up the road because there is an area to conduct the checks.
20

21 Co-Chair Smith does not know how to turn the tolling information into an action item for the
22 Economy System Committee, but it is important for Committee Members to be aware of what is
23 planned. Scott Hotaling stated that there could be input provided about how to implement what is
24 planned in the most thoughtful way possible. There could be a similar letter to the one forwarded
25 to the CWC Board. Discussions were had about variable tolling and potential equity issues.
26

27 Chair Adams noted that it would have been interesting if tolling was implemented before the ski
28 resorts started to charge for parking. If tolling encourages more people to carpool and that resolves
29 the parking issues, then it might be possible for ski resorts to eliminate the parking fee. He pointed
30 out that having a toll as well as a parking fee will make the skiing experience far more expensive.
31

32 Committee Members discussed an article in The Salt Lake Tribune that mentioned a gondola. It
33 was clarified that a gondola in Big Cottonwood Canyon was not pursued due to the nature of the
34 road in the canyon. That road is more winding than what is in Little Cottonwood Canyon, so there
35 would be geographical issues with a gondola in Big Cottonwood Canyon. Chair Adams added
36 that Big Cottonwood Canyon is longer by approximately 3.5 miles, and a gondola would have
37 required several additional angle stations. Ms. Gerber acknowledged that there are issues in the
38 canyons. It is difficult when there are obvious issues, but the solutions are complicated. Chair
39 Adams believed this is what is driving the proposed Capacity Study, because there is a desire to
40 understand the capacity when it comes to personal vehicles and canyon visitors. The UDOT
41 proposed would increase the number of visitors who could access Little Cottonwood Canyon.
42

43 Ms. Gerber believed tolls are inherently inequitable. As mentioned earlier by Ms. Arens, those
44 who can afford to pay the toll will pay it every time and those who cannot afford to pay the toll
45 will see the ski experience as less accessible. Co-Chair Smith does not understand why there is

1 room to park vehicles on either side of the road, but not room to eliminate roadside parking and
2 create a bus lane or paid HOV lane. He noted that roadside parking can create unsafe conditions.

3
4 Chair Adams suggested that members of the Economy System Committee read the UDOT Little
5 Cottonwood Canyon EIS. There were several different options explored, including buses, road
6 widening, rail, and a gondola. UDOT determined the gondola was the preferred alternative, as it
7 would take more vehicles off of the road, but there has been a lot of public backlash about that
8 decision. Chair Adams reminded Committee Members that the CWC considers the whole system,
9 where UDOT considered how to address the traffic in Little Cottonwood Canyon. The scope of
10 the project was defined as removing 30% of vehicles from the road on the busiest days.

11 **BUSINESS SURVEY DISCUSSION**

12 **1. The Committee will Discuss Replicating the Park City Business Survey in the** 13 **Wasatch Front.**

- 14 **a. Consider Tourism Dependence in the Wasatch Back versus Wasatch Front.**
- 15 **b. Determine Alignment with How Business in and Around the Canyons is**
16 **Conducted.**
- 17 **c. Include Ideas to Encourage Stewardship by all Businesses.**

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21
22 Chair Adams noted that at the previous meeting, there was a business survey in Park City
23 mentioned by Ms. Gerber. He asked her to share additional information about that. Ms. Gerber
24 wondered whether it would be possible to reach out to the businesses in the Wasatch Front and
25 Wasatch Back. There could be a survey that asks about the business, the number of employees,
26 and any concerns. At future meetings, the feedback could be taken into consideration. There has
27 not been a lot of discussion about how the economies in the canyons are currently functioning.

28
29 Chair Adams reported that in the Cottonwood Canyons, there are not as many businesses as there
30 are in Park City. Most of the businesses are located within the ski resorts. For example, the
31 businesses at the base of Snowbird are owned by Snowbird. While Solitude Mountain Resort
32 might work with third parties, the businesses are still owned by the resort. He believes the same
33 is true at Brighton Resort. When there is a difficult winter season, many aspects of the ski resort
34 business are impacted. However, there are smaller shops in other areas that rent skis, sell gear,
35 and are frequented by canyon visitors. Those businesses are impacted by weather conditions as
36 well. He mentioned the Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute study that looked at the ski industry
37 business. While there was a drop in skier numbers, the revenue generated almost doubled. There
38 is clearly something being done to generate more revenue, but the details of that are not known.

39
40 It was noted that the numbers from this year will likely look different. There are concerns about
41 more variability with the snowpack and the weather. In addition, there are a lot of concerns about
42 how this will impact the economy and tax generation. Discussions were had about spreading
43 tourism across the calendar more broadly. Chair Adams offered to speak to the Mayor of Alta,
44 Roger Bourke, and the Mayor of Brighton, Scotty John. Co-Chair Smith noted that there could be
45 a discussion about whether there is an appetite for the canyons to expand business opportunities.

1 Committee Members discussed the difficulties associated with a low snow year, including the
2 length of employment for ski resort employees. Chair Adams reported that there has been a lot of
3 creativity when it comes to activities at the base of Solitude. There could be a future Committee
4 discussion about how those creative ideas work and how to better support those efforts.
5

6 Chair Adams explained that there is a newer business model where people purchase their ski passes
7 the season before. He shared information about Alterra, which allows a refund if someone has not
8 skied by the middle of January. That is a sign of the times, because the risk is higher for skiers if
9 the weather conditions are not ideal on a consistent basis. There was discussion about how to
10 focus on activities at other times of the year in order to better spread out visitation to the resorts.
11

12 Chair Adams asked whether uphill ski touring is something that could be built out at the resorts.
13 Solitude has already hosted a number of events, including the Ski Mountaineering events that have
14 taken place on part of the lower hill. He noted that uphill skiing is an interesting way for visitors
15 to explore the area. It is fun to do even when there are not ideal weather conditions.
16

17 Committee Members agreed that there are creative options that can be explored. It is possible to
18 ask existing business owners what is needed and what the most common issues tend to be. Once
19 there is information about what is happening in the business community, there can be discussions
20 about sustainability. Co-Chair Smith asked for additional information about the Park City survey.
21

22 Ms. Gerber reported that the Park City Chamber conducts a member survey every other year. A
23 lot of information comes out of that member survey. For instance, what services are useful, what
24 services are not useful, and how many people are involved in each business. Some of the questions
25 are pertinent to Park City, but it is possible to ask broader questions to canyon business owners.
26

27 It was noted that there could be a database created of all of the businesses that depend on the
28 canyons. That would be an interesting resource. It might also be possible for businesses to support
29 the CWC in some way in the future. Ms. Gerber believed part of the reason the Economy System
30 Committee exists is because there were concerns about the different systems, such as the economy.
31

32 Chair Adams suggested there be content created about water in the canyons. There could be a
33 video that looks at snow in the mountains, but that video could follow the water so it is possible to
34 understand where the water goes on the journey down. The video could make it clear how water
35 supports the economy. He pointed out that there are jobs created because of water in the canyons.
36 It was reiterated that there could be a water series of videos created for educational purposes.
37

38 **MILLCREEK CANYON DISCUSSION**

39 **1. The Committee May Discuss Economic Issues Pertinent to Millcreek Canyon.**

40 There were no discussions about Millcreek Canyon related issues.
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1 **OTHER ITEMS AND NEXT MEETING AGENDA**

2
3 1. **The Committee May Raise Other Topics, if Desired.**

4
5 2. **The Committee will Discuss Topics for the Next Meeting Agenda.**

6
7 Chair Adams asked if there is anything the Economy System Committee should focus on before
8 the next meeting. He reminded Committee Members that Co-Chair Smith was appointed as Co-
9 Chair of the Economy System Committee during the last Stakeholders Council Meeting.

10
11 Co-Chair Smith suggested that a survey be created that is sent out to applicable canyon businesses.
12 Ms. Gerber offered to look into a list of the questions asked in Park City to see what might be
13 applicable in the CWC study area. This can be shared via email, and there can be additional
14 Committee discussions. Ms. Gerber wanted to know if the CWC Board should be approached
15 before a survey is released. There is interest in getting a better idea of the economic health of the
16 businesses in the Central Wasatch. Ms. Kilpack reported that there does not need to be CWC
17 Board permission to undertake something like this. CWC Staff can support the efforts of the
18 Economy System Committee, as needed. Discussions were had about how to encourage survey
19 participation. It is important to be strategic to encourage businesses to participate.

20
21 Ms. Kilpack reported that Committee Members can circulate example questions via email in
22 between Economy System Committee Meetings. Alternatively, it is possible to create a shared
23 document where brainstorming can be done. There could also be a Working Group formed that
24 meets in between scheduled Economy System Committee Meetings. She noted that there could
25 be an additional Economy System Committee Meeting scheduled if a quorum wants to meet.

26
27 At the next meeting, the Economy System Committee can brainstorm how to conduct outreach to
28 businesses and how to disseminate the survey. Chair Adams asked if there is any interest in talking
29 about the Central Wasatch Dashboard and the economic contributions in between Economy
30 System Committee Meetings. Co-Chair Smith expressed an interest in having that discussion.

31
32 **CLOSING**

33
34 1. **Chair Adams Will Call for a Motion to Adjourn the Economy System Committee**
35 **Meeting.**

36
37 **MOTION:** Becca Gerber moved to ADJOURN the Economy System Committee Meeting.
38 Brendan Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the
39 Committee.

40
41 The Economy System Committee Meeting adjourned at approximately 4:39 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, June 10, 2026.*

4

5 Teri Forbes

6 Teri Forbes

7 T Forbes Group

8 Minutes Secretary

9

10 Minutes Approved: _____