

TOURISM TAX ADVISORY BOARD APPROVED MEETING
MINUTES APRIL 30, 2026

Victor Iverson called the meeting of the Tourism Tax Advisory Board of Washington County to order at 9:00 AM on Thursday, April 30, 2026, at the Best Western Abbey Inn, 1129 S Bluff St, St. George, UT 84770. Those in attendance included the Tourism Tax Advisory Board: Kevin Smith, Nate Wells, Shayne Wittwer, Dustin Warren, David Moody, and Zac Nixon. Other attendees included Deputy County Attorney Steven Scott, Commissioner Victor Iverson, Tourism Director Brittany McMichael, Macrae Heppler, and Tourism staff members: Matthew Watson, Joyce Kelly, Linné Marsh, Chad McWilliams, and Jamie Allen.

WELCOME

Victor Iverson welcomed all attendees, confirmed that a quorum existed for voting on action items.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES FOR FEBRUARY 26, 2026

MOTION: **Motion by Shayne Wittwer to approve February 26, 2026, Meeting Minutes**
 Motion seconded by David Moody and carried by a unanimous vote.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Brittany McMichael reported that transient room tax is down 0.2% and the TRCCA restaurant portion is down 0.3% versus the same period in 2025, while March lodging performance shows occupancy down 0.5%, with ADR up 5.6% and RevPAR up 6.0%. Zion National Park visitation is up 11.0%, and the airport is up 19.0%. Overall performance is strong.

Recent sales and marketing activity includes participation in ITB, a French sales mission, New York City and Los Angeles Travel & Adventure Shows, Sports ETA, and IPAC, as well as a marketing workshop for guides and outfitters and the launch of the first northern Utah ad buy in years for the “No Greater Feeling” campaign.

Ongoing PR efforts include the first quarterly report to be reviewed in June and planning for two satellite media tours with travel expert Janene Tornatore, to be filmed at Cable Mountain, with B-roll showcasing activities across Washington County. She noted the successful hosting of the Greater Zion Cup – PPA Pro Pickleball Challenge at Black Desert, the strong early performance of the newly opened Zion Corridor Park & Ride, and the SunTran shuttle ahead of the June tunnel closure. Construction of the National Interscholastic Cycling Association (NICA) course at Desert Color has started, and approximately two miles of the trail are complete. The trail is targeting completion by October 2026 in time for state and Western regional finals.

CONSIDERATION OF FUNDING REQUESTS

CONSIDERATION OF THE ZION SHUTTLE – HOLIDAY COVERAGE REQUEST

Heath Hansen presented a request to approve up to \$60,000 for the Springdale Town Shuttle during the December 2025 Holiday season.

**MOTION: Motion by Shayne Wittwer to approve up to \$60,000 to operate the Springdale Town Shuttle in December 2025.
Motion seconded by Nate Wells and carried by a unanimous vote.**

CONSIDERATION OF A STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT – “WHAT’S HAPPENING SOUTHERN UTAH?”

Brittany McMichael introduced Macrae Heppler to present a strategic partnership opportunity. Heppler presented a proposal for a one-year strategic partnership between the Greater Zion Convention & Tourism Office and his new “What’s Happening Southern Utah” website and mobile app. Building on his long-running local development video series and newsletter (approximately 500,000 monthly views), the platform will aggregate and map county-wide events, restaurants, and outdoor outfitters into a single, filterable hub for locals and visitors.

Tourism Director, Brittany McMichael, and Tourism Operations Manager, Jamie Allen, noted that this partnership fulfills a mid- to lower-funnel marketing strategy for the Greater Zion Tourism Office, especially in supporting restaurants and outfitters during slower periods, promoting deals and packages that the tourism office cannot offer directly, and helping visitors discover more to do and potentially extend their stays. Greater Zion Convention & Tourism Office would be the founding “official dining partner.” All restaurants and outfitters are listed at no direct cost to the businesses, and the tourism office would receive monthly analytics and one tourism-focused video each month.

**MOTION: Motion by Kevin Smith to approve a partnership with Macrae Heppler/ “What’s Happening Southern Utah” for up to \$10,000 per month for a term of up to one year.
Motion seconded by Zach Nixon and carried by a unanimous vote.**

CONSIDERATION OF PLEIN AIR EVENT REQUEST

Director Brittany McMichael requested approval for the Greater Zion Convention & Tourism Office to host a major plein air conference in May 2027, with approximately 800 attendees staying approximately five nights. The event will include multiple “paint-out” sessions using motorcoaches to reach Zion National Park, Snow Canyon, and other scenic locations.

McMichael requested approval for up to \$60,000 to cover the costs of hosting the Plein Air Event happening in 2027.

MOTION: Motion by Shayne Wittwer to approve up to \$60,000 in TRT funding to host the plein air conference in 2027.
Motion seconded by Dustin Warren and carried by a unanimous vote.

The next meeting will be held on June 25, 2026.

MOTION: Motion by Kevin Smith to adjourn.
Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Minutes prepared by Linné Marsh,
Washington County Deputy Clerk
Adjourned at 9:51 AM