MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION ("CWC") EXECUTIVE/ BUDGET/AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2026, AT 9:00 A.M. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED WITH A VIRTUAL OPTION AT THE CWC OFFICES, LOCATED IN THE BRIGHTON BANK BUILDING, 311 SOUTH STATE STREET, SUITE 330, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.

Present: Mayor Erin Mendenhall, Chair
Mayor Roger Bourke, Co-Chair
Christopher Robinson, Secretary/Treasurer
Jack Stauss, Special Advisor
Maura Hahnenberger, Stakeholders Council Chair

CWC Staff: Lindsey Nielsen, Executive Director
Sam Kilpack, Director of Operations
Will McKay, Director of Public Affairs

OPENING

1. Chair Erin Mendenhall will Open the Public Meeting as Chair of the Executive/Budget/Audit Committee of the Central Wasatch Commission.

Co-Chair Roger Bourke called the Central Wasatch Commission ("CWC") Executive/Budget/Audit Committee Meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and welcomed those present.

2. Review and Approval of the Minutes of the July 23, 2026, Meeting.

MOTION: Erin Mendenhall moved to APPROVE the July 23, 2026, Executive/Budget/Audit Committee Meeting Minutes. Roger Bourke seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.

BOARD RETREAT DISCUSSION

1. The Committee will Discuss the August 17, 2026, CWC Board Retreat.

Co-Chair Bourke reported that the CWC Board Retreat was held on August 17, 2026. It was a productive meeting. Executive Director, Lindsey Nielsen, explained that the intention was to discuss a strategy for the Central Wasatch National Conservation and Recreation Area Act ("CWNCRA"). The CWNCRA was last drafted and released for public comment in October 2020.

The needs and issues that the CWNCRA aims to resolve have not gone away over time. In some cases, the needs and issues have been exacerbated over time. There is a potential political window opening with Ben McAdams winning his primary election for the newly created Congressional District 1 in Utah. Mr. McAdams was involved in the Mountain Accord process and was an original writer of the CWNCRA. He has expressed enthusiasm to reintroduce the CWNCRA.

There are several factors that indicate now is an appropriate time to look into a redraft of the legislation. Ms. Nielsen reported that this is what the CWC Board Retreat focused on. During the CWC Board Retreat, Commissioner Christopher Robinson led the discussion. The General Managers of all four Cottonwood Canyon ski resorts were present at the retreat. There were also CWC Board Members and other important stakeholders. An ambitious timeline was presented, and there was a discussion about how to achieve the goal of redrafting the CWNCRA.

Commissioner Robinson thought the CWC Board Retreat was meaningful because there was clear communication. The next step in this process is a meeting between Salt Lake City Public Utilities and the ski resorts, where there will be discussion about snowmaking water. Chair Erin Mendenhall thanked Commissioner Robinson for facilitating the CWC Board Retreat. There was a productive conversation overall, but it was disheartening to hear that certain key pieces of land might be non-negotiable. She asked if there has been a date set for the meeting between Salt Lake City Public Utilities and the ski resorts. Ms. Nielsen reported that the pre-negotiation meeting focused on water has been scheduled and will take place in approximately two weeks. The pre-negotiation meeting will determine whether the negotiation planned in October will move forward.

Co-Chair Bourke stated that based on the CWC Board Retreat discussion, snowmaking water is becoming more important. He was not previously aware of the temperature limits associated with this process. It is possible that the limits will become more of a constraint as the temperatures rise.

Commissioner Robinson reported that he attended some meetings recently related to water scarcity and Great Salt Lake issues. Dave Fields has articulated that it is more difficult to make snow due to the temperature thresholds. Snowmaking water is important to the ski resorts because there are struggles to maintain the number of skier days. Ms. Nielsen stated that a summary of the CWC Board Retreat can be included on the October 5, 2026, CWC Board Meeting agenda. There will be additional updates as well, because the pre-negotiation meeting on water will have taken place.

Special Advisor, Jack Stauss, explained that water is a touchstone issue. He noted that approximately 80% of snowmaking water returns to the watershed and highlighted the importance of forest health. He has spoken to the ski resort General Managers about certain parcels of land. If there is a trade made for valuable water, then the trade will need to be mutually beneficial.

Chair Mendenhall believed the willingness to protect critical lands should be greater than it was 10 years ago when the Mountain Accord process happened. The effects of climate change and the impacts on the industry have grown in that time. She is trying to remain hopeful that these negotiations will be productive. If Salt Lake City Public Utilities is willing to dedicate more water resources for snowmaking, then the ski resorts need to be willing to offer something in return.

WASATCH CANYON MEETING ENGAGEMENT

1. The Committee will Discuss Future Engagement with Senator Cullimore's Wasatch Canyons Meetings.

Co-Chair Bourke shared information about the Wasatch Canyon Meeting that took place yesterday. Senator Kirk Cullimore asked that a group be pulled together as a precursor to the introduction of some legislation related to transportation. There was a wide-ranging discussion during the meeting. Ms. Nielsen clarified that these meetings are not related to the CWC. There is no input provided on the scope of the meetings, but the organization has been invited to attend. At this time, those leading the effort include Jeff Silvestrini, Ralph Becker, and Senator Cullimore.

Ms. Nielsen asked the Executive/Budget/Audit Committee how they would like the CWC to engage with these meetings. It might be possible for CWC Staff to provide a memo summarizing the meeting discussions. Co-Chair Bourke asked Mr. Silvestrini whether a synopsis would be created. This was confirmed, but there is still uncertainty about who will produce the synopsis.

Commissioner Robinson reported that he attended the meeting. The intention was to create metrics to determine how Phase I of the bus service will be evaluated. This could eventually lead to legislation that Senator Cullimore would sponsor. It could require the Utah Department of Transportation ("UDOT") to submit a report focused on those metrics. A 10-page draft of potential metrics from Wasatch Transit Solutions was reviewed during the meeting.

Commissioner Robinson believed the real question is whether buses will work. If buses do not work, the question is what else will. He thought it might make sense to hold a meeting where each proponent of a transportation solution is given a certain amount of time to share their position. It would be interesting to have a friendly debate and discussion about transportation solutions.

Chair Mendenhall liked the suggestion about a meeting focused on transportation. It could be productive and show that there are more robust interests than gondola versus no gondola. It could be meaningful to raise other transit arguments. However, she is not certain that a debate format will resolve some of the technical issues some have with the UDOT Little Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Impact Statement ("EIS"). Commissioner Robinson pointed out that it is possible to have a friendly debate or discussion. If Senator Cullimore wants a dialogue to see if an agreement can be reached, it does not necessarily make sense to spend a lot of time on metrics.

Special Advisor Stauss believed the initial idea was to have different stakeholder groups come together to discuss Phase III. The turnout at the Wasatch Canyon Meeting was impressive, but it has turned into a metrics conversation. During the meeting, it was acknowledged that expanding that out can become challenging. It would be meaningful to focus on a simpler deliverable. He hopes that buses in the Cottonwood Canyons will be successful. However, if this does not happen, there could be an Adaptive Management Plan in place. If the metrics are not met, then certain levers could be pulled to improve the situation. For example, the service levels could be increased, the roads could be restriped, or other tools could be used to better manage transit. The idea is to create a plan that has specific numbers or a clear timeline so there can be an assessment done.

Commissioner Robinson agreed that there was a meaningful convening of stakeholders at the meeting. He is not certain that the same level of convening will continue if the focus is only on metrics. Commissioner Robinson reiterated the idea of a friendly debate or discussion where different interests can comment. There could be a panel of moderators who ask questions of each proponent. It is possible to create a format that is engaging and will move the discussions forward.

The Executive/Budget/Audit Committee further discussed the meeting. Commissioner Robinson pointed out that the group of attendees was diverse. There will need to be more discussion before a consensus plan is created. If there is no opposition from members of the Executive/Budget/Audit Committee, he would like to share his suggestion for a friendly debate with Mr. Silvestrini. Chair Mendenhall supported sharing this idea. She also suggested that he share his earlier comments, which indicated that an opportunity could be lost if the focus remains only on a bus metrics evaluation. Special Advisor Stauss stressed the importance of prioritizing environmental goals.

Ms. Nielsen reported that she will continue to attend the meetings unless she receives different direction from the CWC Board. She mentioned the "Pillars for Transportation Solutions in the Central Wasatch Mountains" document, which talks about a transportation system being equitable, accessible, and able to fit into the existing transit network. That is how she will approach the discussions during the next meeting, which is scheduled to take place in October 2026. Commissioner Robinson asked if there is an opportunity to hold a meeting sooner than that. He does not want to see two months pass before there is additional transportation discussion.

UPCOMING BOARD MEETING AGENDA DISCUSSION

1. The Committee will Discuss the Agenda for the Upcoming October 5, 2026, CWC Board Meeting.

Ms. Nielsen reviewed the meeting agenda for the CWC Board Meeting scheduled for October 5, 2026. The meeting will open; there will be a public comment period, and the Board Business will start. There are some contracts included in the Board Business section of the agenda, including contracts for the Central Wasatch Symposium, which will take place in January 2027 in Park City.

Following the Board Business section of the meeting agenda, there will be a CWNCRA discussion. There will be a summary of the CWC Board Retreat discussion, and updates will be provided on the pre-negotiation meeting between Salt Lake City Public Utilities and the ski resorts. There will then be a discussion about the approach for the negotiation meeting, which will take place a few weeks later. Ms. Nielsen reported that a plan will be presented that outlines what will happen if and when there is a new draft of the CWNCRA. Director of Public Affairs, Will McKay, will share his public engagement and communications plan. From there, the agenda will focus on the Stakeholders Council. Chair of the Stakeholders Council, Maura Hahnenberger, will lead that discussion. Some Stakeholders Council Members will then be released and appointed. The next item on the CWC Board Meeting agenda is focused on Staff Announcements. She asked if there are additional discussion topics the Executive/Budget/Audit Committee would like to see added.

Commissioner Robinson asked about the pre-negotiation meeting. Ms. Nielsen reported that it will take place on September 16, 2026. Commissioner Robinson wondered when there will be a follow-up to the CWC Board Retreat discussions. He asked if this will occur during the CWC Board Meeting, as he would like the CWC Board to continue to have a conversation about the issues. Chair Mendenhall believed the discussions between Salt Lake City Public Utilities and the ski resorts must occur before the CWC Board can continue to have conversations about the process.

Commissioner Robinson reported that he spoke to Dave Fields and Amber Broadaway recently. It was indicated that water is one piece of the negotiation, but there is a desire to discuss different items as well. He would like to increase the amount of discussion that is happening between the CWC Board, ski resorts, stakeholders, and other interested parties. It seems possible to have a more robust discussion about the CWNCRA during the next scheduled CWC Board Meeting.

Chair Mendenhall suggested that the ski resorts be invited to the CWC Board Meeting. During that meeting, the ski resorts can highlight issues outside of water. Ms. Nielsen expressed support for this suggestion. The appropriate adjustments will be made to the CWC Board Meeting agenda.

OTHER ITEMS

Co-Chair Bourke took a moment to acknowledge that the Voyager 1 was launched 49 years ago this coming Saturday. He reported that it is still operating and sending back useful data.

Closing

1. Chair Mendenhall will Call for a Motion to Adjourn the Executive/Budget/Audit Committee Meeting.

MOTION: Christopher Robinson moved to ADJOURN. Erin Mendenhall seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.

The Central Wasatch Commission Executive/Budget/Audit Committee Meeting adjourned at approximately 9:52 a.m.

I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Central Wasatch Commission Executive/Budget/Audit Committee Meeting held on Wednesday, September 2, 2026.

Teri Forbes

Teri Forbes
T Forbes Group
Minutes Secretary

Minutes Approved: ____________________