

MINUTES of the work session of the Uintah County Commission held **October 7, 2026** in the Commissioner Chambers of the Uintah County Building at 152 East 100 North, Vernal, Utah. The meeting commenced at 10:00 a.m.

PARTICIPANTS: Commissioners Sonja Norton and Willis LeFevre. Commissioner Laursen was excused.

ATTENDANCE: Mike Wilkins, Margie Shewell, Angela Hawkins, Sar Bell, James Sharp, Melissa Yergensen, Jenny Garcia, Karen England, Karina Valencia, Gennie Bird, Steve Labrum, Deanna Baum, Matt Crazier and Brenda McDonald.
Minutes by Leasha Williams

WELCOME: Commissioner Laursen, Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL OPENING: UC26-13 INTEGRATED INMATE COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY SERVICES - Mike Wilkins, Clerk-Auditor

Mike Wilkins presented the seven proposals received for RFP UC26-13 Integrated Inmate Communications Technology Services: ICSolutions (San Antonio, TX), HomeWav (St. Louis, MO), Securus Technologies (Plano, TX), NCIC Correctional Services (Longview, TX), Consolidated Telecom (Irving, TX), LIAM Connect (Bayport, NY), and Cidnet (La Vista, NE). Gennie Bird advised that Purchasing will review all proposals to ensure minimum mandatory requirements are met, after which the committee will evaluate, conduct interviews, and establish a foundation for selection.

2. DISCUSSION OF MUC-COL-001 NAGPRA COMPLIANCE POLICY - Karen England, Museum
Karen England presented the MUC-COL-001 NAGPRA Compliance Policy. She explained that NAGPRA stands for the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. The policy establishes a framework for the Museum of Uintah County to fulfill its obligations under NAGPRA (1990), updated by federal regulations effective January 12, 2024, ensuring ethical stewardship, legally compliant care, and repatriation of Native American human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony in its custody. The policy was developed over several months by museum staff, leadership, and the board, and was officially approved at the most recent board meeting.

3. DISCUSSION OF MUC-COL-005 IP, COPYRIGHT, DIGITAL RIGHTS POLICY - Karen England, Museum
Karen England presented the MUC-COL-005 Intellectual Property, Copyright, and Digital Rights Policy. The policy outlines how the Museum of Uintah County manages, uses, and publishes intellectual property, including collection images, digitized surrogates, exhibition texts, digital publications, staff-created content, and community-submitted materials. Additionally, it addresses compliance with federal copyright laws, including the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA), for the museum's digital platforms.

4. DISCUSSION OF MUC-OPS-003 PHOTOGRAPHY, FILMING, VIDEOGRAPHY POLICY - Karen England, Museum
Karen England presented the MUC-OPS-003 Photography, Filming, and Videography Policy. She explained that the policy works in conjunction with the intellectual property policy and establishes standards for photography and filming conducted by the museum, visitors, and third parties. The policy aims to balance the museum's promotional interests with visitor privacy rights, particularly regarding minors.

5. DISCUSSION OF MUC-SAF-001 CHILD SAFETY AND VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY - Karen England, Museum
Karen England presented the MUC-SAF-001 Child Safety and Vulnerable Adults Policy. The policy outlines the Museum of Uintah County's commitment to providing a safe, welcoming, and protective environment for all visitors, with special emphasis on children and vulnerable populations, including

individuals with disabilities and elderly visitors. It establishes standards for interactions with vulnerable individuals across all museum settings, including public programs, school tours, volunteer activities, and special events. England noted that the policy was developed in response to state guidelines requiring libraries, archives, and museums to implement child safety policies for educational spaces.

6. 2027 EMPLOYEE INSURANCE BENEFIT RENEWAL RECOMMENDATIONS - Melissa

Yergensen, Human Resources

Melissa Yergensen presented the 2027 employee insurance benefit renewal recommendations. Following feedback regarding dissatisfaction with current health insurance carrier Meritain Aetna, the recommendation is to move to Regence Blue Cross Blue Shield on a self-funded basis. Although in a three-year contract with Meritain, Regence offered to cover \$20,000 in termination fees and provide a \$40,000 implementation credit for claim runoff. The move is anticipated to improve employee satisfaction and customer service, functioning with a fully-insured experience for users. A 3% to 5% premium increase is recommended to maintain fund health. Stop-loss max liability will remain unchanged. Ancillary coverages (dental, vision, life insurance, and long-term disability) received 0% rate increases; the recommendation is to renew with current carriers with no plan changes. Melissa recommended adding HealthJoy as a healthcare concierge and virtual care platform. At \$6.75 per employee per month, HealthJoy provides 24/7 free telehealth visits, healthcare navigation, specialist scheduling assistance, and medical bill review. Telehealth visits do not hit the health plan, generating estimated savings that offset implementation costs. To offset costs, the county will discontinue BloomQuest Hale EAP (saving \$14,000 annually) and transition to Lincoln Financial's EAP, which is provided at no cost through current life and disability coverage. Lincoln Financial's EAP includes up to five free counseling sessions per issue, 24/7 crisis support, and work-life services, including support for law enforcement personnel. Additionally, Melissa recommended adding employer-paid short-term disability for hourly employees at an annual cost of \$39,196 (excluding salaried exempt employees who already have coverage per policy). Following a 14-day waiting period, the benefit pays 60% of salary for up to 12 weeks, running concurrently with FMLA before long-term disability kicks in at week 13.

7. CONSIDERATION OF SUBDIVISION AMENDMENT - Request to adjust north boundary line, reduce size of retention pond, and adjust easements in Basin Acres Subdivision located at 300 E 2000 S, Vernal, Utah. - Deanna Baum, Community Development

Deanna Baum presented the proposed amendments for the Basin Acres Subdivision, located at 300 E 2000 S, Vernal, Utah. The applicant is requesting a boundary adjustment along the north boundary line, which currently runs through a public access road leading to the Vernal Cemetery. Under the proposed plan, the boundary will be shifted below the road, and the property underlying the road will be dedicated to Uintah County. Additional proposed modifications include reducing the size of the retention pond, converting it from a detention pond to a retention pond, and adding a dedicated storm ditch easement. Drainage from the basin will feed into an existing natural drainage wash on the south side of the cemetery property that connects to a culvert under Fifth East. It was noted that the design was prepared by a professional engineer to ensure discharge rates do not exceed historical pre-development runoff levels. Scott from the Uintah County Road Department has reviewed and approved the engineered drainage design. Community Development confirmed that county stormwater retention regulations requiring 100% on-site retention apply specifically to commercial developments, whereas residential subdivisions are permitted to discharge controlled runoff into existing natural drainage systems. Although final subdivision approvals no longer require commission action, county code requires County Commission approval for subdivision amendments.

8. CONSIDERATION OF REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST - Requesting reimbursement of fee for Basin Acres Subdivision Amendment application. - Deanna Baum, Community Development

Deanna Baum presented a request for reimbursement of the \$400 application fee for the Basin Acres Subdivision Amendment. She explained that the applicant requested the refund because the amendment was initiated primarily to resolve a boundary conflict involving a public road and dedicate the underlying property to Uintah County. Additionally, the applicant absorbed all surveying and

engineering expenses to accommodate county recommendations, including providing a ten-foot buffer along the road for snow removal. Commissioners expressed support for the reimbursement, recognizing the mutual benefit to the county and the applicant's substantial financial investment. While supportive, Commissioner Norton emphasized the need to ensure clear justification to avoid setting an unfavorable precedent for future fee waiver requests. The general consensus favored approving the \$400 reimbursement at the upcoming formal commission meeting.

9. CONSIDERATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF PLOT MAP FOR ROCK POINT CEMETERY - James Sharp, Cemetery

James Sharp presented the plat map for the Rock Point Cemetery eastern expansion, covering an additional 4.5 acres. He noted that the lawn, trees, paved roads, and survey are complete. County Surveyor Brock Slauch signed off on the plat map, and Loren Anderson reviewed it. James requested formal acceptance of the plat map from the Commission so the new plots can be opened for sale.

10. CONSIDERATION OF LIMIT OF PURCHASING PLOTS IN UINTAH COUNTY CEMETERIES - James Sharp, Cemetery

James Sharp presented a proposal to reduce the limit on cemetery plot purchases from eight to four per family. He explained that purchasing excessive plots depletes county resources and creates long-term availability issues for future generations. Reducing the limit to four plots provides sufficient capacity for families while preserving land and delaying costly future cemetery expansions. The Commission discussed historic unused plots purchased decades ago. It was noted that county policy restricts repurchasing plots above their original purchase price (e.g., \$600), leading many owners to resell privately. Abandonment under state statute and the legal complexities of tracking deceased owners or non-probated estates were highlighted. Trust agreements and wills are honored when available, though documented in only a small percentage of cases. James noted that limiting upfront purchases prevents non-resident fee evasion and simplifies administration for future cemetery managers. Case-by-case accommodations will continue to be made for specific circumstances, such as families with dependents with disabilities. Because the plot purchase limit is established in the county fee schedule rather than county code, legal staff advised that the fee schedule may need to be amended. To avoid an influx of speculative purchases before the new rule takes effect, Sharp requested delaying the formal opening and acceptance of the Rock Point Cemetery eastern expansion plat until the fee schedule amendment is finalized. The consensus was to coordinate the fee schedule amendment with the annual county budget process in December, allowing all department fee updates to be considered.

ADJOURN: The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:55 am.


SONJA NORTON, COUNTY COMMISSIONER

MICHAEL W. WILKINS, CLERK – AUDITOR