MINUTES of the public meeting of the Uintah County Commission held **October 13, 2026** in the Commission Chambers of the Uintah County Building at 147 East Main, Vernal, Utah. The meeting commenced at 3:00 pm

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

ATTENDANCE: Mike Wilkins, Margie Shewell, Maury Bergman, Gennie Bird, Keith Campbell, Melissa Yergensen, Brenda McDonald, Karen England, Jim Justice, Mac Louder, Jo Gardner, Jackie Sweet, Cindy Dilsaver, Dan Dilsaver, Wendi Long, Jess Hermann, Dan Mortensen, Deanna Baum, Matt Cazier and Joel Brown
Minutes by Leasha Williams

WELCOME: Commissioner Norton welcomed everyone to the meeting.

PRAYER by Maury Bergman

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE by Sonja Norton

1. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** October 6 Commission meeting and October 7 Work Session.

Commissioner LeFevre motioned to approve the minutes for October 6 and October 7. Motion passed unanimously.

2. **APPROVAL OF WARRANTS** – Mike Wilkins, Clerk-Auditor
Mike Wilkins presented warrants dated October 9, 2026, totaling $965,678.68. He noted that the total included a pass-through federal grant warrant for Central Canal in the amount of $415,911.72, which will be held until the funds are received, with the remaining items consisting of standard county expenses. Clarification was also requested regarding the status of the project and whether this represents one of the final payments for Central Canal.
.
Commissioner Norton motioned to approve the warrants as presented by Mike Wilkins. *Motion passed unanimously.*

3. **TAX MATTERS -** none

4. **RESOLUTION # 10-13-2026 R1 APPOINTMENT OF UINTAH COUNTY REPRESENTATIVE FOR UCIP** - Mike Wilkins, Clerk-Auditor
Mike Wilkins explained that this appointment is specifically for the upcoming voting meeting in November. He currently serves on the UCIP Board and requested to be designated as the voting member, with Commissioner John Laursen designated as the alternate. He noted that this appointment applies only to the single meeting in November.

Commissioner Lefevre motioned to approve Resolution #10-13-2026 R1 as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

5. **REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL OPENING: UC26-14 Uintah County Building North Parking Lot and Entrance Remodel-** Mike Wilkins, Clerk-Auditor
Mike Wilkins reported that three bids were received for RFP UC26-14: North Peak Construction (Grand Junction, CO), Acme Construction (North Salt Lake, UT), and Sibon Construction (Vineyard, UT).
The bids will be taken under consideration and reviewed by the evaluation committee, which will bring recommendations back to a future meeting.

6. REIMBURSEMENT CONTRACT BETWEEN UINTAH COUNTY AND THE UINTAH BASIN ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS (UBAOG) - Ashley Valley Food Pantry Project - Gennie Bird, Grants and Purchasing

Gennie Bird presented a reimbursement contract between Uintah County and the Uintah Basin Association of Governments (UBAOG) for the Ashley Valley Food Pantry Project. Uintah County was awarded $150,000 from the Uintah Basin Revitalization Board for the project, which involves interior and exterior improvements to the building owned by UBAG on 1000 South. UBAG will oversee procurement and project management, submitting invoices to the County for reimbursement up to $150,000. The contract term extends through December 2028, with reimbursement terms specifying payment within 30 days for invoices under $10,000 and within 15 days for invoices exceeding $10,000. Legal counsel has reviewed and approved the contract language, and UBAG has concurred.

Commissioner Norton motioned to approve the contract between Uintah County and the Uintah Basin Association of Governments(UBAOG). Motion passed unanimously.

7. MUC-COL-001 NAGPRA COMPLIANCE POLICY - Karen England, Museum

Karen England presented Policy MUC-COL-001, NAGPRA Compliance Policy. She explained that NAGPRA (Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act) is a 1990 federal law requiring museums to treat Native American human remains, burial objects, sacred objects, and items of cultural patrimony respectfully and return them to lineal descendants or culturally affiliated tribes upon request. Updated federal regulations taking effect in 2024 mandate closer consultation and consent from tribes prior to displaying covered items. This policy establishes the museum's procedures to comply with federal requirements and avoid civil penalties while demonstrating commitment to respecting tribal heritage.

Commissioner LeFevre motioned to approve policy MUCC-COL-001 NAGPRA as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

8. MUC-COL-005 IP, COPYRIGHT, DIGITAL RIGHTS POLICY - Karen England, Museum

Karen England presented Policy MUC-COL-005 IP, Copyright, Digital Rights Policy. Karen explained that as the museum expands its online collection and digital content, this policy establishes guidelines for public use and reproduction fees. Standard fees will apply to commercial use, while educational and non-profit uses may qualify for reduced or waived fees. The policy also outlines procedures for digital preservation, user-submitted content, and compliance with the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) to protect County property, respect creator rights, and maintain legal compliance.

Commissioner LeFevre motioned to approve Policy MUC-COL-005 IP, Copyright, Digital Rights as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

9. MUC-OPS-003 PHOTOGRAPHY, FILMING, VIDEOGRAPHY POLICY - Karen England, Museum

Karen England presented Policy MUC-OPS-003 Photography, Filming, Videography Policy, noting that it works in tandem with the previous policy. Visitors are welcome to take photos in the galleries for personal use, while commercial photography or filming requires prior approval from the museum. Signs will be posted to notify visitors when the museum is capturing photos or video of its own events, and individuals may opt out upon request. Children will not be photographed for museum use without signed parental consent. This policy balances program promotion with visitor privacy.

Commissioner Norton motioned to approve MUC-OPS-003 Photography, Filming, Videography Policy as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

10. MUC-SAF-001 CHILD SAFETY AND VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY - Karen England, Museum

Karen England presented Policy MUC-SAF-001, Child Safety and Vulnerable Adults Policy. Karen

noted that school groups, families, and community members of all ages visit the museum, and this policy establishes clear guidelines to protect children and vulnerable adults, including individuals with disabilities and elderly visitors requiring additional assistance. Under the policy, staff and volunteers who interact regularly with children must undergo background checks, and at least two adults should be present whenever possible. She highlighted that Utah law mandates immediate reporting of suspected abuse or neglect by all staff and volunteers, and this policy outlines those procedures to reassure parents and the public that consistent safety standards are maintained across all museum programs.

Commissioner Norton motioned to approve MUC-SAF-001 Child Safety and Vulnerable Adults Policy as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

11. MOA OVERDRIVE WITH BEEHIVE LIBRARY CONSORTIUM - Karen England, Library
Karen England presented the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with OverDrive through the Beehive Library Consortium. She explained that the agreement allows the library to continue providing digital eBooks and audiobooks to county residents through the OverDrive platform in cost-effective partnership with the statewide consortium.

Commissioner Norton motioned to approve the MOA as presented. Motions passed unanimously.

12. QUALITY LIBRARY AWARD - Karen England, Library
Karen England presented the Quality Library Award item, noting that the Uintah County Library was selected to receive the Utah Quality Library Award from the State Library Board. She detailed the criteria met to achieve this recognition, including staff development, community outreach, and service standards, and expressed appreciation to the staff and Commission for their continued support.

13. 2027 EMPLOYEE INSURANCE BENEFIT RENEWAL RECOMMENDATIONS, Melissa Yergensen, Human Resources
Melissa Yergensen, Human Resources Director, presented the 2027 employee benefit renewal recommendations, outlining proposals across five key areas:

- **Medical Coverage:** Recommended transitioning health insurance carrier from Meritain/Aetna to Regence BlueCross BlueShield due to coverage and customer service concerns, as well as strong employee feedback. Regence offered incentives including covering the $20,000 contract termination fee with Meritain and providing a $40,000 credit for claims runoff. A 3% to 5% premium increase was recommended, which would apply regardless of carrier choice.
- **Ancillary Benefits:** Recommended maintaining current contracts and rate holds with existing carriers for voluntary dental (Delta Dental), vision (iMed), and life and long-term disability insurance (Lincoln Financial).
- **Healthcare Concierge & Telehealth:** Recommended adding HealthJoy to provide healthcare concierge services and 24/7 virtual healthcare at zero cost for employees or the county. Quarterly utilization reports will be provided to track return on investment.
- **Employee Assistance Program (EAP):** To fund the addition of HealthJoy ($6.75 per employee per month), HR recommended canceling the current EAP with Bloomquist Hale ($14,364 annual cost at $4.50 per employee per month) and transitioning to Lincoln Financial's EAP, which is included at no additional cost. The Lincoln Financial EAP provides 24/7 telephonic support and up to five in-person counseling sessions.
- **Short-Term Disability:** Recommended offering short-term disability coverage for hourly employees as an employee-paid voluntary benefit at no cost to the County.

All approved benefit changes will take effect January 1, 2027.

Commissioner LeFevre motioned to approve transitioning medical insurance coverage to Regence BlueCross BlueShield as presented. Motion passed unanimously.
Commissioner LeFevre motioned to approve maintaining the ancillary lines with current carriers under existing rate holds as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner LeFevre motioned to approve the addition of HealthJoy, funded by canceling the Bloomquist Hale EAP contract and adopting Lincoln Financial's EAP services. Motion passed unanimously.
Commissioner LeFevre motioned to approve offering short-term disability coverage as a voluntary employee-paid benefit for hourly employees. Motion passed unanimously.

14. 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, Community Development, presented a proposed amendment to the Basin Acres Subdivision located at 300 E 2000 S, Vernal, Utah, south of the Vernal Cemetery. She outlined the requested changes:

- **North Boundary Line Adjustment:** The property boundary currently running through a public road will be adjusted south of the road, dedicating the property beneath the road right-of-way entirely to Uintah County.
- **Retention Pond & Drainage Easement:** The detention pond on Lot 8A will be reduced in size and re-engineered as a retention pond with an added drainage easement. The system is engineered to control outflow so stormwater discharge does not exceed historical runoff levels.

In response to questions regarding stormwater retention policies, Deanna clarified that requirements to retain all stormwater on-site apply to commercial properties rather than residential developments. Commission noted that dedicating the road property to the County provides a mutual benefit and confirmed that elevation levels and potential impacts on future residential basements have been addressed.

Commissioner Norton motioned to approve the amendment to the Basin Acres Subdivision as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

15. 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 subdivision amendment application fee for the Basin Acres Subdivision. She noted that the applicants requested the waiver because the amendment provides a mutual benefit to Uintah County through the dedication of road right-of-way property rather than an easement. She added that the applicants also covered all engineering and surveying expenses associated with the boundary line adjustments.

Commissioner LeFevre motioned to approve the reimbursement request in the amount of $400 as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

16. PUBLIC COMMENT - none

Uintah and Ouray Safe Trails Task Force 2027 FY cost reimbursement agreement with UCSO

17. CLOSED SESSION to discuss the purchase, exchange, or lease of real property when public discussion of the transaction would disclose the appraisal or estimated value of the property under consideration or prevent the public body from completing the transaction on the best possible terms in accordance with Utah Code 52-4-205 (1)(d)

At 3:52 pm Commissioner LeFevre motioned to go into Closed Session for the purpose of discussing the purchase, exchange, or lease of real property when public discussion of the transaction would disclose the appraisal or estimated value of the property under consideration or prevent the public body from completing the transaction on the best possible terms in accordance with Utah Code 52-4-205 (1)(d) in the Small Conference Room and when discussion is complete, adjourn, and reconvene Commission meeting in order to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously.

The closed session began at 4:07 pm with Commissioner Norton, Commissioner LeFevre, Matt Cazier, Loren Anderson and Margie Shewell.

Closed session adjourned at 4:21 pm.

ADJOURN: The meeting adjourned at 4:22 pm.

JOHN LAURSEN, CHAIR

MICHAEL W. WILKINS, CLERK – AUDITOR