MINUTES
WORK SESSION - BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF WEBER COUNTY
Wednesday, July 13, 2016 - 1:30 p.m.
Commission Chambers, 2380 Washington Blvd., Ogden, Utah

COMMISSIONERS: Kerry W. Gibson, Matthew G Bell and James Ebert.

DISCUSSION REGARDING THE PROGRESS OF THE OGDEN VALLEY GENERAL PLAN:

This was the second work session to discuss the Ogden Valley General Plan (Plan). Charles Ewert, of the County Planning Division, presented the proposed changes from the Planning Commission draft that included softening some of the directives.

The County Commission sought a better understanding of other perspectives in the plan. The conversation centered on public services and parks and recreation. An emerging dialogue is concern for the valley's water quality and waste water provisions. The commissioners discussed the likelihood that a valley-wide sewer and water system may be needed at some point in the distant future. They are concerned that the plan is silent on the issue. Staff committed to providing alternative language. Staff suggested that the Commission take a few more weeks to review the plan and to make specific recommendations for changes for staff to consider. Staff will then take those recommendations and incorporate them into the County Commission's final draft of the Ogden Valley General Plan.

Chair Gibson invited public comments and following is a summary:
Kirk Langford, of Eden, has been involved in planning for Ogden Valley for 20 years. He feels it is a good strategic plan and said that it represents the citizens' views and not special interest groups or a handful of people on any end of the spectrum. Initially, there had been a lot of dissent but now the consensus for the Plan is powerful and more people attended those meetings than ever before. The Plan is a vision for all of the Valley residents and visitors. He said there was a significant amount of debate at the meetings on the Plan's language use of "will" and "should" and he said that 95% of the people wanted "will," however, upon further reading in those sections, the Plan does not say that the county will provide certain things—i.e., recreation facilities—but that it will look into/consider those things. During the process he did not see people that wanted no-growth in the Valley but rather they wanted a good plan that allowed smart growth in a unique community and respected its cultural heritage. He said that people want sewer and there is no conflict about cluster subdivisions tying into sewers and septic tanks. Developers have been making significant investments in sewer systems and are charging those buying lots the cost of the systems, and people continue to buy into that. He said that coordination of districts is fine and to take the government out of people's lives is a good thing, but to mandate a valley-wide sewer system may result in significant opposition.

Chair Gibson said that he had not suggested mandating a centralized sewer system and disagreed with Mr. Langford's statement that the private sewer systems are taking the government out of people's lives. The government regulates sewer; Weber County is the body politic for every private sewer system in the Valley, and it is a challenge to deal with all the individual systems. He would like better coordination of these systems and said that discussion is needed. Mr. Langford explained that the citizens want to avoid the government intervention of having a bond issued to pay for a valley–wide system and being forced to hookup, and feedback was provided to previous commissions about how residents feel. He reiterated that the Plan's language represents the will of a large percentage of the people. Chair Gibson stressed that the commissioners spend a lot of time studying Valley issues and are extremely sensitive to them. Commissioner Ebert asked that as Mr. Ewert identifies the "will" language that he review that section sufficiently to see if there are requirements that would cause concerns. He expressed frustration that some residents may feel that the commissioners don't understand the Valley stating that they do understand the issues and concerns and that it is a unique community. Money has been spent on studies to get the best information and the Plan is being reviewed carefully. He understands the costs associated with a centralized sewer system. Mr. Langford said that the residents appreciate the commissioners' efforts and that he believes that they are involved and are listening to the issues. Commissioner Bell wants to have a discussion with Mr. Ewert about standards for parks, etc.

Terry Danger, Ogden Valley resident, encouraged the commissioners that when they see the "will" language in the Plan that they see those as a red flag; the residents are trying to state that those issues are really important to them. She said that there is a level of frustration for the Valley residents because it is sometimes looked at as a cash cow instead that people reside there. Some of the things coming into the Valley are really impacting their life style. The traffic is atrocious on weekends and the speed limits make it scary to be out on the roads. A lot of time was spent debating with each other about what is really important to maintain the lifestyle that they want for the Valley. Commissioner Ebert has spent a tremendous amount of time speaking with community members and there is a general feeling that they want an open space feel but development needs to be clustered to preserve it. Barriers to developers can hinder clustering.

Attest:

Matthew G Bell, Chair
Weber County Commission

Ricky D. Hatch, CPA
Weber County Clerk/Auditor