

1 **MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION STAKEHOLDERS COUNCIL**
2 **MEETING HELD WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 2019 AT 4:00 P.M., PROMISE ROOM, 3330**
3 **SOUTH 1300 EAST, MILLCREEK, UT 84106**
4

5 **Present:** Greg Summerhays-Chair, Sarah Bennett, Kirk Nichols, Brian Hutchinson,
6 Steve Issowits, Will McCarvill, Matt Kirkegaard, Jan Striefel, Carl Fisher,
7 Mike Maughan, , Troy Morgan, Dan Knopp, Megan Nelson, Nathan Rafferty,
8 Julia Geisler, Del Draper, John Knoblock, Randy Doyle, Michael Braun,
9 Carolyn Wawra, Barbara Cameron, Annalee Munsey, Patrick Shea, Tom
10 Diegel, Dave Fields, Don Despain, Kurt Hegmann, Chris McCandless, CWC
11 Attorney Shane Topham, Executive Director Ralph Becker, Deputy Director
12 Jesse Dean, Communications Director Lindsey Nielsen
13

14 **On the Phone:** Michael Marker, Ed Marshall
15

16 **Alternates:** Julia Geisler (Nate Furman), Will McCarvill (Ashley Soltysiak)
17

18 **Excused:** Serena Anderson, Kelly Bricker, Wayne Crawford, Stetson West, Bill Malone,
19 Paul Diegel
20

21 **A. OPENING**
22

- 23 **i. Greg Summerhays will conduct the Meeting as Chair of the Stakeholders**
24 **Council.**
25

26 Central Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council Chair Greg Summerhays called the meeting to
27 order at 4:06 p.m.
28

- 29 **ii. The Stakeholders Council will Consider Approving the Meeting Minutes of**
30 **Wednesday, April 17, 2019.**
31

32 **MOTION:** Matt Kirkegaard moved to approve the minutes of Wednesday, April 17, 2019. Dan
33 Knopp seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the council.
34

35 **B. CWC STAKEHOLDERS COUNCIL RULES AND PROCEDURES**
36

- 37 **i. Chair Greg Summerhays will Review the Guidelines for Engagement and**
38 **Participation in Stakeholders Council Meetings.**
39

40 Chair Summerhays wished to review the rules and procedures and adhere to them better in the future.
41 The agenda must be posted online at least 24 hours in advance of a meeting so staff should be advised
42 of items that need to be added.
43

44 In response to a question raised, CWC Attorney Shane Topham reported that the Open and Public
45 Meetings Act allows non-agendaed items to be brought up although no action can be taken. An issue
46 arose at the previous meeting where an item was addressed that was not on the agenda and action was
47 taken. He wanted to be sensitive to the fact that this is a large group with varying interests and it may
48 be more informal in nature. Beyond the Open and Public Meetings Act, the purpose of the agenda is

1 to give the public notice of what is to be discussed so that the public can engage if desired. Chair
2 Summerhays asked that any member of the Council contact him, staff, or Kelly Bricker if they wish
3 to have an item added to the agenda. In order to maintain order, he asked that Council Members wait
4 to be called before speaking. The intent was for all to have an opportunity to comment.
5

6 **C. DISCUSSION AND ACTION TO 2019 STAKEHOLDERS COUNCIL MEETING**
7 **SCHEDULE**
8

9 **i. CWC Executive Director Ralph Becker will Lead a Discussion surrounding a**
10 **New Meeting Location and Date for the Stakeholders Council.**
11

12 Deputy Director Jesse Dean reported that the Council has quickly outgrown the current meeting space
13 and staff is working to find a new location. They are currently looking to meet in the Cottonwood
14 Heights Community Room, which is much larger and across the hall from where the Central Wasatch
15 Commission holds their public meetings. The challenge is that the Wednesday time slot is not
16 available. The possibility of changing meeting dates was discussed.
17

18 At the suggestion of Pat Shea, staff agreed to look into the possibility of meeting at the Crocker
19 Science Center.
20

21 Michael Braun liked holding meetings in the Cottonwood Heights area because it serves people who
22 may be traveling from the south or north. Jesse Dean stated that if held in Cottonwood Heights,
23 meetings would be held the third week of the month. The intent was to maintain a regular schedule.
24

25 Sarah Bennett requested that meetings continue to be held on Wednesdays. Conflicts among Council
26 Members were acknowledged. Chair Summerhays stated that every effort would be made to
27 accommodate schedules so that as many can attend as possible.
28

29 **ii. Action by Stakeholders Council to Adopt a New Meeting Location and Date.**
30

31 No action was taken on the above matter.
32

33 **D. 2019 CWC OBJECTIVES OVERVIEW AND DISCUSSION**
34

35 **i. CWC Board Chair Chris McCandless will provide an Overview of the CWC's**
36 **2019 Objectives.**
37

38 CWC Board Chair Chris McCandless addressed the focus of the Council and stressed that their
39 responsibility is the safety of canyon users and preventing problems in the future. He asked that the
40 Council focus be on those two primary issues. The Board set forth goals they hope to accomplish
41 this year. In addition to transportation, they would like to move forward with the Conservation
42 Recreation Area Legislation. He explained that both primary objectives have to move along almost
43 at the same time. Other objectives include the Environmental Dashboard, which is challenging.
44

45 Chair McCandless reported that the package is moving forward. Pat Shea expressed doubt that the
46 legislation will not pass. Executive Director Ralph Becker stated that he was born and raised in
47 Washington, D.C. and has spent a good part of his life there. His opinion was that the legislation may
48 or may not pass in this Congress, however, there are committed members in the delegation to run it.

1 They have also met over the years with the majority, minority, and the last two administrations on it.
2 He felt there was enough support that there was a decent chance of getting it passed.

3
4 Chair Summerhays stated that as a Council they will do all in their power to get it passed. Chair
5 McCandless also agreed to continue to work on it after he is no longer an elected official. He stressed
6 the importance of the group remaining united with a focus on the task at hand. Chair Summerhays
7 expressed appreciation to Chair McCandless for his efforts.

8
9 **E. UPDATE SURROUNDING ANALYSIS OF VISITOR CAPACITY IN CENTRAL**
10 **WASATCH MOUNTAINS**

11
12 **i. CWC Executive Director Ralph Becker will provide an Update on the CWC**
13 **Board Direction and Process Regarding Visitor Capacity Analysis.**

14
15 Mr. Becker reported that the above matter was brought up with the Central Wasatch Commission
16 (“CWC”). In preparation for that meeting, staff met with the Forest Service, Stakeholders Council
17 Vice Chair Dr. Kelly Bricker who also Chairs the University’s Parks and Recreation Department, and
18 others to lay out a schedule to incorporate a capacity study into the work of this group and the
19 Commission to work around the Little Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Impact Statement (“EIS”)
20 and the Cottonwood Canyons Transportation Action Plan (“CCTAP”). The tentative schedule after
21 discussion was to bring the matter back in June for a presentation by Dr. Bricker with representatives
22 from the Forest Service to answer questions.

23
24 Wasatch Cache Uinta Forest Supervisor Dave Whittekiend will also lead a presentation from the
25 Forest Service. Mr. Becker explained that they manage matters in the canyons so staff has worked
26 closely with them in terms of the processes they use and their expertise. At the July 1 meeting, there
27 will be a discussion with the Central Wasatch Commission that summarizes information, addresses
28 potential approaches, and determines how the Forest Service feels they can best blend all of that
29 together. They will then meet again as a Stakeholders Council at the July meeting for a
30 recommendation to the CWC as to how it can be integrated into the overall work. At the August
31 meeting, the CWC can take action.

32
33 Pat Shea pointed out that the U.S. Forest Service does not manage watersheds so he was not sure why
34 they were involved with the carrying capacity. Mr. Becker explained that Salt Lake City Public
35 Utilities has been part of the discussion and has studied the issue as well. Mr. Dean indicated that
36 next month they are tentatively planning to hear presentations from other jurisdictions including Salt
37 Lake City who will discuss their Watershed Management Plan. The intent was to put the pieces
38 together to provide a better understanding of where there are gaps in the data and information.

39
40 Barbara Cameron asked for an update on the Environmental Dashboard. Communications Director
41 Lindsey Nielsen reported that they have turned the contract over to ESRI, which is based in Fort
42 Collins, Colorado. They are currently establishing a timeline for the work, benchmarks, and
43 budgeting. Ultimately, the intent is to enter into an interlocal agreement. The goal was to complete
44 the work by the end of 2019. Mr. Becker reported that additional pieces have been added that will
45 make it more useful and accessible. ESRI, who is the world’s main GIS provider, is donating services
46 as a pilot program that will allow it to be interactive with the public.

1 Brian Hutchinson commented that there seem to be significant categories missing and asked for more
2 details on the process and composition of the Steering Committee. Ms. Nielsen stated that the
3 Steering Committee is comprised of many people including several who serve on the Stakeholders
4 Council.

5
6 John Knoblock asked if any information was available on the timetable for performing the carrying
7 capacity study and how it relates to the EIS and CCTAP so that they can move forward without
8 significant delay. He recalled that Mayor Silvestrini expressed that concern. Mr. Becker explained
9 that many are spending a significant amount of time figuring out how to mesh it all together and
10 address the timeline. He stated that they will need to wait until some of the work is done.

11
12 Michael Braun suggested they change the term “carrying capacity” to “human visitation capacity”
13 since carrying capacity deals with wildlife specific to food, water, space, air, and shelter availability.
14 In addition, he noted that a discussion of rules and procedures is not on the agenda. He suggested the
15 agenda be followed and leave the open agenda to address items that are not on the agenda.

16
17 In response to Barbara Cameron’s question, Pat Shea stated that ESRI is no longer volunteering and
18 there has been one meeting of the Environmental Dashboard Steering Committee. Ms. Nielsen
19 described the timing and stated that in August the project was transferred to CWC prior to staff being
20 hired. Once staff was hired, they spent time in a discovery phase. During the 1½ years between the
21 time work was being done on the project and when staff was hired in August, they needed to determine
22 what information the new team did not have. The soonest that staff, the CWC, and ESRI were able
23 to meet was January.

24
25 Carl Fisher commented that the user capacity analysis needs to be a top priority if they feel that things
26 they are going to do will fundamentally change capacity. There are a number of projects that are
27 going forward and only resources to do only so many. He thought the carrying capacity should be a
28 priority but only if they are looking at significantly increasing capacity in the canyon. He was not
29 clear on the EIS and the CCTAP processes. He asked if either is intended to increase capacity. Chris
30 McCandless stated that from a transportation perspective there are immediate needs for transportation
31 solutions. As a Sandy City Council member, he has concerns about the safety of citizens in the
32 canyon. He saw a short, medium, and long-term solutions. From an environmental perspective, he
33 could see the carrying capacity question be complicated. It will have to come over time although they
34 can conduct an initial analysis. He felt that the immediate needs first need to be met. The short-term
35 carrying capacity determination can be answered in concert with the EIS. Mr. McCandless stated that
36 studies will be costly and take multiple years to conduct.

37
38 Dave Fields commented that when he thinks of capacity limits come to mind. He stressed that they
39 cannot lose sight of efficiency in transportation because efficiency means safety and experience. He
40 noted that on December 27 it took Mike Maughan six hours to travel from the resort to his home.
41 They could possibly specify that there be no more than 10,000 skiers in Little Cottonwood on any
42 given day but ultimately, the transit system is broken and they are not able to get people up the canyon
43 safely and efficiently. It is a miserable experience for their employees and guests and many are
44 refusing to be part of it any longer. He felt that carrying capacity versus efficiency were key. Council
45 Member Fields believed it was possible to have good transit without blowing up capacity.

46
47 Ashley Soltysiak was present on behalf of Will McCarvill but wondered what the timeline was for
48 determining the carrying capacity. Mr. Dean stated that the timeline has been established. In addition,

1 there are a number of studies taking place or have been completed that relate to visitor capacity. The
2 intent is to understand what is missing. Much more robust discussion was needed between every
3 jurisdiction.

4
5 Chair Summerhays suggested they receive more information about the capacity study. Dr. Kelly
6 Bricker will make a presentation along with the other parties involved and provide the information
7 needed to make a proper recommendation.

8
9 Pat Shea expressed frustration and mistrust for Chris McCandless. Chair Summerhays called for
10 order.

11
12 Carl Fisher thanked Mr. McCandless for his input. He appreciated where the CWC is but the bigger
13 question to him was whether UDOT has agreed to it since they are ultimately “driving the ship”.
14 When they were notified that the EIS was to be revised again, he was informed that they intend to
15 take it from efficiencies to capacity, which was concerning. He asked what the CWC can do to help
16 get UDOT on the same page with respect to this issue. Mr. Becker estimated that 20 hours per week
17 were being spent trying to answer the question between the UDOT consultants and those involved in
18 the broader discussions. Until recently staff has been in 15 hours of meetings per week. The NEPA
19 work, which is being done with the Little Cottonwood Canyon EIS, looks at direct and indirect
20 impacts. Within that context, things like the visitor capacity analysis are done to the extent it is
21 needed. This is the way UDOT or any federal agency works through the process. They are hearing
22 clearly from the CWC that the capacity issues need to be addressed in a meaningful way. With respect
23 to the Little Cottonwood Canyon EIS, they separated out items that were not directly related to the
24 roadway improvements and formed the CCTAP.

25
26 With respect to the revision of the scope of the EIS, they have indicated that they will consider a third
27 lane. What is unknown is whether a third lane will include the efficiency of moving up and down the
28 canyon or increasing capacity. Those questions will be studied and analyzed through the course of
29 the EIS.

30
31 Mr. Dean stated that the issue of addressing capacity is complex. Between the various entities, they
32 are trying to make the best path forward while not delaying the work that needs to be done in the
33 canyons. They have outlined the process in order to make an informed decision. Mr. Becker
34 commented that capacity will be a significant part of the decision-making process. UDOT will not
35 make a decision without understanding the impacts of the various options for making improvements
36 to Little Cottonwood Road and Wasatch Boulevard to Big Cottonwood Canyon.

37
38 Carl Fisher remarked that additional lanes are added to I-15 to accommodate growth and increase
39 capacity. In 2006, UDOT identified simple things that can be done. That is what he thought they
40 were going to be working toward. He agreed with some of the efficiencies and wanted to be part of
41 that, however, when it diverted and changed to capacity it was of concern because that was not
42 something the Mountain Accord ever intended. He questioned the vision they are heading toward.

43
44 Brian Hutchinson suggested they be provided with data to help drive ideas. He suggested they share
45 the basic thinking and the data that goes with the capacities and show more technical background.
46 Mr. Dean stated that they are still in the scoping phase and much of the work being discussed has
47 been goal setting for the CCTAP. A process is in place for how they will address certain issues.
48 Council Member Hutchinson commented that it is not a fair presentation of the idea being considered.

1
2 Chris McCandless commented that he typically does not attend Stakeholders Council Meetings so as
3 not to impact the discussion. He was present tonight as a guest and would attend again when invited.
4 He was sorry that Pat Shea does not trust him and hoped to someday gain his trust and respect. Chris
5 McCandless excused himself from the remainder of the meeting.

6
7 Mike Maughan addressed the issue of capacity and stated that this past season was strong with more
8 congestion than ever before. The common theme had been that demand is outpacing the ability for
9 the transportation system to deliver guests. The resorts have the capacity but do not have efficient
10 transportation. The industry has changed and resulted in more vehicle traffic than ever before. With
11 regard to the EIS, he stated that they need to determine how to best address current demand and
12 prepare for the future.

13
14 Dan Knopp did not understand claims from people stating that they are not getting enough
15 information. At the last two meetings, UDOT was present to make a presentation and they were
16 blown off. He was embarrassed by that as a member of the Council. Chair Summerhays commented
17 that it did not play out like as it was supposed to. He noted that the CWC Board asked the Council
18 to provide additional information about what carrying capacity will look like. For that reason, they
19 outlined the timeline. The Council acts in response to what they are asked to do by the CWC.

20
21 Barbara Cameron pointed out that the summer months matter too. Council Member Maughan stated
22 that summer and winter carrying capacities are different.

23
24 With regard to the third lane, John Knoblock asked for more information on where that originated.
25 He questioned whether it was driven by the Wasatch Front Regional Council's ("WFRC")
26 requirement for a third lane. He asked how that process works. Mr. Dean explained that part of
27 WFRC's Regional Transportation Plan ("RTP") through 2050, they have highlighted hundreds of
28 projects along the Wasatch Front. Part of Phase 3 of the RTP includes a third lane in Little
29 Cottonwood Canyon. Phase 1 is for 2020 to 2030, Phase 2 is for 2030 to 2040, and Phase 3 is for
30 2040 to 2050. It was noted that not every project on the plan will be developed. Mr. Becker did not
31 know that a third lane was being considered and assumed those options would be get fleshed out after
32 going through the scoping process. UDOT, however, made a determination to construct it on the
33 front end among the options to be considered. It is an option that would be considered as part of the
34 EIS. He stressed that it is not a proposed action but could be and is an option that is on the table. He
35 noted that it raises a new series of questions.

36
37 Carl Fisher reported that he met with the Wasatch Front Regional Council and part of his
38 disappointment and growing distrust with the EIS process was that they skipped over Phases 1 and 2.
39 Rather than taking all of the recommendations from the WFRC, UDOT cherry picked the road
40 projects and overlooked the transit projects. He stated that there is still no clarity with respect to the
41 purpose or need for the federal action.

42
43 Mr. Becker stated that with regard to transit options, his experience at meetings was that at least one-
44 third of the time is spent discussing transit. Council Member Fisher felt the way he did because he
45 did not see it rising to the level in the documents as other options. Mr. Becker commented that it has
46 been a major topic of conversation.

1 Pat Shea remarked that historically, there was a lot of “fluff” surrounding Legacy Highway. He
2 wanted to take the time now to avoid the cost of litigation in the future. He understood the financial
3 concern and recognized that the winter months are when the ski resorts make money. There are,
4 however, four seasons in the year and three of those will have irreparable harm done if they continue
5 to bring more people into the canyons without considering the impact. He asked that all four seasons
6 be considered. Mike Maughan agreed. Procedural issues were discussed as well as the potential
7 recommendation to the CWC. Chair Summerhays stated that the CWC indicated that they did not
8 have enough information to make an informed decision and asked the Council to bring them
9 additional information. Mr. Dean stated that they are also relying on the professional expertise of
10 both bodies to help them with the decision-making.

11
12 John Knoblock understood that a couple of Board Members wanted clear criteria and scientific
13 background for what the capacity will measure. They want to know what specifically is being looked
14 at and measured and the scientific process by which it will be calculated.

15
16 Sarah Bennett noted that there are other issues with regard to capacity that are entirely subjective,
17 which is problematic. Mr. Becker stated that those questions are the most subjective but individuals
18 like Dr. Bricker have been developing tools for how to assess that. Agencies such as the Forest
19 Service have spent decades trying to figure out how to mesh that into their decision making. Council
20 Member Bennett stated that it may be helpful to get exposure to past studies and look at the different
21 criteria.

22
23 Kirk Nichols stated that it will likely be broken into two areas consisting of the physical recreation
24 and ecology and the other will be social. A determination will be made as to what works for the
25 majority of people after which they begin zoning the areas. He commented on the Environmental
26 Dashboard and what it will contribute. Because they are Biologists they will address the biological
27 aspect. It will be very complex and simplified to the extent possible.

28
29 Michael Braun estimated that he has spent 30 hours over the past month on the internet reading
30 different capacity studies. They all are well aware of what is happening to the area. The question
31 was how to balance all of those issues. When he looks at the special projects on the objectives list,
32 they identify specifically the tasks of the Stakeholders Council. He stressed the need for the Council
33 Members to focus. He was concerned about the time it will take to wait for the data on the Visitor
34 Capacity Study. He suggested they work concurrently to meet the objectives identified.

35
36 Jesse Dean commented that the CCTAP and the EIS are slated to be conducted the spring of 2021.
37 Additional processes could be triggered depending on the alternative that comes out of the plan. He
38 stressed that it is imperative for all of the pieces to move forward.

39
40 Michael Braun suggested an addition in that there appears to be a focus on academic research to
41 visitor capacity. He recommended that governmental and/or private studies also be considered since
42 there are major objectives that an academic study may miss that private visitor studies will provide.

43
44 Mr. Becker stated that for that reason the Forest Service and other agencies are listed. They also rely
45 heavily on what the ski areas report in terms of visitor use. Dr. Bricker has taken the lead and has a
46 great deal of practical experience as well.

47
48 Dan Knopp requested a presentation be made by Dr. Bricker and the Forest Service.

1
2 **MOTION:** Dan Knopp moved to table the discussion. Kurt Hegmann seconded the motion. The
3 motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Council.
4

5 **F. OPEN DISCUSSION**
6

7 Annalee Munsey recalled that John Thomas talked about a tool that would be used to provide
8 comments called the Decision Lens. She thought that was something they could follow up on in a
9 future meeting. Mr. Dean stated that one of the challenges is that they develop criteria in order to use
10 it. Staff had begun to put together that framework. Currently, they have overarching goals that relate
11 to the CCTAP. Mr. Becker had received good feedback from others who have used Decision Lens.
12

13 John Knoblock asked about the role of the Stakeholders Council in working on the planning issues
14 and asked if they will have a say in the process. Mr. Becker stated that the CWC has been developing
15 a budget with a Budget Committee and going back and forth to the Commission for the past several
16 months. At the next CWC meeting, they will adopt a budget pending final action by the municipalities
17 and the counties. At that point all will know what their budget is and if funds are allocated for special
18 projects. That will determine whether there is a fund that includes special projects.
19

20 John Knoblock referenced a list of projects slated for 2019 and was of the opinion that for an area
21 that gets this amount of visitation, it is insufficient, unreasonable, and impractical. Ultimately, it
22 causes people to go to the bathroom in the woods. He questioned when they will start to address these
23 types of serious issues.
24

25 Pat Shea suggested that by the next meeting they include a report from UDOT as to how they intend
26 to spend the \$66 million. Mr. Dean stated that part of the alternatives process will include the EIS.
27 A determination had not yet been made on how the \$66 million will be spent based on the public
28 process and input from the Stakeholders Council.
29

30 Michael Braun commented that in 2017, the Granite Community Council engaged University of Utah
31 Civil Engineering students to come up with ideas and plans for Big Cottonwood Canyon. Many of
32 the ideas generated by UDOT and the CWC came from this group. He asked when action will be
33 taken.
34

35 Kirk Nichols stated that for the EIS, they could use a much clearer purpose and needs statement. It
36 seemed to him that the purpose is increased recreation.
37

38 John Knoblock asked for feedback on the distribution of handouts from individuals during meetings.
39 Chair Summerhays did not feel that was appropriate.
40

41 **G. ADJOURNMENT**
42

43 **MOTION:** Kurt Hegmann moved to adjourn. Mike Maughan seconded the motion. The motion
44 passed with the unanimous consent of the Council.
45

46 The Central Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council meeting adjourned at approximately
47 5:42 p.m.

1 *I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate and complete record of the Central*
2 *Wasatch Commission Stakeholder Council meeting held Wednesday, May 15, 2019.*

3

4 Teri Forbes

5 Teri Forbes

6 T Forbes Group

7 Minutes Secretary

8

9 Minutes Approved: _____