

1 **MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION STAKEHOLDERS**
2 **COUNCIL MEETING HELD WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2019 AT 3:00 P.M.,**
3 **COMMUNITY ROOM, 2277 EAST BENGAL BOULEVARD, COTTONWOOD**
4 **HEIGHTS, UTAH**
5

6 **Present:** Chair Greg Summerhays, Brian Hutchinson, Tom Diegel, Paul Diegel, Troy
7 Morgan, Will McCarvilll, Carl Fisher, Dan Knopp, Dave Fields, Randy
8 Doyle, Del Draper, John Knoblock, Carolyn Wawra, Don Despain, Nathan
9 Rafferty, Ed Marshall, Pat Shea, Sarah Bennett, Steve Issowits, CWC
10 Attorney Shane Topham, Executive Director Ralph Becker, Deputy
11 Director Blake Perez, Communications Director Lindsey Nielsen, Intern
12 Carly Lansche
13

14 **Alternates:** Barbara Cameron (Linda Johnson)
15

16 **Excused:** Kurt Hegmann, Kelly Bricker, Analee Munsey, Bill Malone, Jan Striefel,
17 Kirk Nichols, Mike Maughan, Megan Nelson, Matt Kirkegaard, Michael
18 Braun, Nate Furman, Stetson West, Steve Issowits, Wayne Crawford
19

20 **A. OPENING**
21

- 22 **i. Greg Summerhays will Conduct the Meeting as Chair of the Stakeholders**
23 **Council (“SHC”).**
24

25 Stakeholders Council Chair Greg Summerhays called the meeting to order at 3:18 p.m.
26

- 27 **ii. The Stakeholders Council will Consider Approving the Meeting Minutes of**
28 **Wednesday, September 18, 2019.**
29

30 **MOTION:** Paul Diegel moved to approve the minutes of Wednesday, August 21, 2019. John
31 Knoblock seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Council.
32

33 **B. TRANSPORTATION DISCUSSION**
34

- 35 **i. Update on CCTAP.**
36

37 Central Wasatch Commission (“CWC”) Executive Director Ralph Becker reported that there has
38 been a succession of actions by UDOT to pull back from the CWC. As a result, Carlos Braceras
39 tendered his resignation effective the following month. UDOT has also decided not to pursue the
40 Cottonwood Canyons Transportation Action Plat (“CCTAP”). Elements that are necessary to
41 make decisions in Little Cottonwood Canyon will be moved into the Little Cottonwood Canyon
42 Environmental Impact Statement (“LCCEIS”) prior to moving forward. Going forward, the CWC
43 desires to be a good partner and support good transportation solutions.
44

45 Mr. Becker reported that a process was laid out for the Stakeholders Council and the CWC to be
46 regularly informed and engaged in a process that was decided upon previously. UDOT was

1 working with various entities and will engage in a public development process that follows the
2 NEPA process. The intent is to remain informed and react in a timely manner as UDOT makes
3 decisions going forward. In the meantime, staff had been working on short-term solutions. The
4 CWC took action the previous Monday to confirm action the CWC has taken in partnership with
5 the local governments with the help of the Utah Transit Authority (“UTA”).
6

7 Deputy Director Blake Perez reported that UDOT discontinued the CCTAP because there were
8 other plans and processes in place to accomplish what they wish to in Big Cottonwood Canyon.
9 Mr. Becker reported that as part of an ongoing discussion regarding toilets, UDOT is working on
10 parking areas and restrooms to address immediate needs. They plan to continue looking at
11 alternatives for the canyons as well as parking outside the canyons to provide staging areas for
12 transit, ride sharing, and carpooling.
13

14 Will McCarvilll commented that not only is UDOT taking a piecemeal approach, but he considered
15 there to be a lack of transparency. He was of the opinion that having a representative from UDOT
16 attend CWC meetings at least periodically should be required. He found it troublesome for UDOT
17 to no longer be involved.
18

19 John Knoblock did not want to lose sight of actions discussed previously such as vehicle and tire
20 inspections. He suggested a process be in place that is open and transparent. Mr. Becker stated
21 that from the group discussions, UDOT has not been participating in any significant way. That
22 has not, however, stopped them from gaining traction.
23

24 **ii. Discuss Future Involvement on Transportation Projects.**
25

26 Mr. Perez reported that staff has been working with other partners to deliver transportation
27 solutions this coming year. They have worked closely with UTA on the most recent change day
28 where new busses and routes were introduced. UTA prepared two proposals consisting of a service
29 enhancement proposal and a congestion mitigation strategy for the busses. The CWC took action
30 on the service improvements to two bus routes where significant increases were anticipated. On
31 Route 972, the Bingham Junction Trax stop will be eliminated. That route will begin at the
32 Midvale Trax Station. Last season, there were 61 one-way trips on weekdays, 65 on Saturdays,
33 and 62 on Sundays. Going forward there will be 79 every day of the week. That represents an
34 increase of 121 trips per week. For Route 953, service was added and the time busses are driven
35 empty was minimized. Route 953 will increase from 17 weekday trips and 23 weekend trips to 35
36 seven days per week. That is an increase of 114 trips per week.
37

38 Mr. Perez reported that the CWC approved funding for a portion of the changes and were
39 responsible for moving it forward. They will also reach out to community groups and ski resorts
40 to potentially contribute and fill the gaps in the funding. Other congestion mitigation plans
41 included the elimination of ski racks inside busses, p.m. traffic control assistance at the ski resorts,
42 and eliminating the Park and Ride stop at the mouth of Little Cottonwood Canyon. It was noted
43 that that stop has proven to be difficult for busses to get in and out of. There is capacity at the
44 9400 South 2000 East parking lot to take on the additional demand that may be created. Staff was
45 also pursuing a potential police escort for busses on heavy snow days.
46

1 Staff had also begun a discussion with representatives from Enterprise Car Rental about educating
2 their customers on the ordinances and traction laws. Although there will not be snow tires on
3 rental cars, options can be provided to customers on how to get up the canyon if they are turned
4 around. Staff continued to evaluate traction policy ordinances.

5
6 In response to a comment made by Pat Shea, CWC Legal Council Shane Topham explained that
7 the Interlocal Agreement specifies that CWC Board Members have to be designated by members
8 of the CWC, which includes member municipalities and counties. There are also two non-member
9 Board Members including UDOT and the Wasatch Back. The Interlocal Agreement would have
10 to be amended in order to bring UTA on board.

11
12 Mr. Becker reported that membership will be a topic of discussion at the upcoming CWC retreat
13 scheduled for November 7 and 8 at the Homestead Resort in Midway. Wasatch County has
14 expressed an interest in joining the CWC as well as others. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the
15 Advisory Council have also been invited to attend the retreat.

16
17 Brian Hutchinson was concerned about the fact that Utah seems to be locked into a mindset of
18 supporting the Alpine ski industry by providing enhanced bus service. He asked if there is a plan
19 in the spring through fall to support UTA and the CWC. He pointed out that there are more canyon
20 visitors during the other three seasons that in the winter months. John Knoblock stressed the
21 importance of having the discussion now due to limited funding. Mr. Becker explained that in
22 addition to UTA, the CWC, and local governments, the ski resorts and non-profit organizations
23 are also contributing.

24
25 Mr. Becker stated that more detailed discussions will take place once they finalize this major
26 change. He doubted anything could be implemented prior to next summer due to the timing of
27 decisions for UTA to make service changes. In this case, no service changes were proposed and
28 they were preparing to deliver the service faster and more efficiently.

29
30 Dave Fields commented that summer bus service is paid for by Snowbird and brings employees
31 up and down the canyon. While no one disputes the fact that it would be nice to have spring,
32 summer, and fall bus service, the reality is that 80 to 90 percent of the bus service in the winter is
33 paid for by the resorts. \$7.20 for each round trip is paid for every employee and season passholder.
34 What is missing from the formula is the fact that the cost is not subsidized any other time of the
35 year. He commended UTA for their efforts. Mr. Fields remarked that if there is more ridership it
36 is typically being paid for by someone other than the rider.

37
38 Del Draper was pleased that UTA was increasing its bus service to the ski resorts in the winter but
39 thought it was important to remember that some of the issues are interconnected. In Little
40 Cottonwood Canyon, the existing road is adequate 95% of the time. On the days when the canyons
41 are congested, the road works well for those who wait and travel up later in the day. The problem
42 with busses is that they are caught in traffic from the Mouth of Big Cottonwood to the Mouth of
43 Little Cottonwood Canyon. Once traffic merges into the canyon, the traffic moving. One possible
44 solution was to have the road between Big and Little Cottonwood be double laned or provide a
45 side lane for busses to travel on. If busses could bypass the congestion, ridership would increase.

1 Conversely, riders are less likely to take the bus when it is not expected to arrive at the resort any
2 sooner than a car.

3
4 Staff had been working with UPD, the Sandy Police Department, the Cottonwood Heights Police
5 Department, and UTA about providing expanded bus service on heavy snow days and place them
6 at the front of the line.

7
8 Del Draper reported that the longer-term problem involves changing the road between Big and
9 Little Cottonwood Canyons and allowing busses to utilize the shoulder. Mr. Becker stated that
10 over the last two weeks there have been four meetings in Cottonwood Heights. The hope was to
11 put something in place this winter in terms of an escort service for busses.

12
13 In response to a question raised about parking, Mr. Perez stated that UTA has indicated that there
14 is ample parking in all of its Park and Ride stations other than at the mouth of the canyon. At 9400
15 South 2000 East there are nearly 300 stalls. There is also ample parking at the Midvale station
16 where Route 953 starts. In conjunction with Cottonwood Heights, they have been working with
17 businesses in the area to utilize unused parking on weekends.

18
19 **C. COTTONWOOD CANYON TOILETS PROJECT**

20
21 **i. Discussion with Forest Service on New and Upgraded Toilets in Cottonwood**
22 **Canyons.**

23
24 Bekee Hotze from the U.S. Forest Service reported that she began as the District Ranger in 2016
25 and it quickly became apparent that action needed to be taken to address bathrooms in the canyons.
26 In 2017, they began working with their partners with regulatory or administrative oversight over
27 the bathrooms in the canyons. The last bathroom that was changed or upgraded in the canyons
28 was in 2006. The most recently updated trailhead bathroom was Donut Falls in 2003. Ms. Hotze
29 acknowledged that bathrooms are a significant concern and shuttles increase the use of those same
30 facilities beyond what they were designed for. She stated that the use was based on the number of
31 parking stalls. Parking spaces are no longer limited to parking areas and visitors people park up
32 and down the highway and walk, which doubles the capacity on the Donut Falls restroom.

33
34 The U.S. Forest Service worked with Salt Lake Public Utilities and the Salt Lake County Health
35 Department to identify a list of priority bathrooms that they would like to replace. Sixteen
36 restrooms were prioritized and in cooperation with the County and the City, they had replaced four
37 bathrooms since last year. The capacity of each of the four restrooms doubled the capacity. As a
38 result of their success, they wanted to apply the concept to other areas. They began holding
39 quarterly stakeholder sessions that have been pivotal in changing how they operate and get things
40 done on the ground.

41
42 Pat Shea asked if they would accept donations to complete the work. Ms. Hotze responded that in
43 the case of the Silver Lake bathroom, the County gave Salt Lake County Public Utilities the
44 funding to install the bathroom. The cost was \$340,000 including water and sewer. Many of the
45 other bathrooms being discussed do not have that.

1 A determination was made that a conceptual plan was needed for what they want the bathrooms
2 to look like at the Mouth of the Canyons. Ms. Hotze approached her Regional Office and spoke
3 to their engineers who agreed to prepare a conceptual plan, which was distributed to the group.
4 Ms. Hotze reported that it is a 75% conceptual design and asked that three options be provided.
5 The first was for vault toilets, which are cheaper, easier to maintain, and can be open year-round
6 if they have the staff available to clean them during the winter. Option 3 was all water.
7 Unfortunately, neither is what is needed in the canyon.

8
9 UDOT offered to fund the layout, design, and engineering drawings for the Cardiff bathroom,
10 which is one of their highest priorities. They also agreed to prepare engineer drawings for the S-
11 turn bathroom that will include parking and potential crosswalks. The 2017 plan also included
12 four bathrooms that are to be connected to one water source. Unfortunately, the water line to the
13 area is no longer available.

14
15 Option 2, consisting of a hybrid alternative was next discussed. The hope was that it would include
16 flush toilets as well as vault toilets that can be used in the winter months. Doing so would allow
17 the parking lot to remain open and be plowed. Ms. Hotze commended Snowbird and others for
18 taking over the cleaning of bathrooms. Such an effort could possibly result in a cost savings that
19 would enable them to extend the length of the bathroom usage. In terms of utilizing vault and
20 flush toilets, Ms. Hotze did not consider that to be an option as there is not much room there. It
21 would also be costly to provide both. When UDOT prepares the engineered drawings, they are
22 planning to hold charettes and open houses in an effort to reach out to the public regarding desired
23 design features and the requirements that must be met with the designs.

24
25 Lance **Pekus (?)** from the U.S. Forest Service commented that there are two spot improvements
26 that UDOT identified in the canyons. Their focus was not the restrooms but safety improvements
27 based on a traffic study and a pedestrian count. They are combining the concerns of the Forest
28 Service with their safety concerns and traffic in the area. The design would be for the entire area.
29 Early next year UDOT plans to form a design team consisting of members of the public. They
30 will go through each area and identify what people want to see there.

31
32 Pat Shea suggested a toll booth be added to generate additional funds. He was concerned that the
33 canyons and the watershed will be sacrificed as a result of jurisdictional disputes. It seemed to
34 him that the CWC was seen as helping resolve those conflicts in exchange for successful master
35 planning. Ms. Hotze stated that they cannot speak to that as it is outside of the control of the Forest
36 Service. The estimate from their engineers for Option 2 was \$8.7 million. Option 3 was
37 underestimated because it only includes the bathroom. The needed infrastructure was estimated
38 to cost over \$31 million.

39
40 Linda Johnson was present on behalf of Barbara Cameron and stated that the Forest Service cannot
41 ask for money. Cities, towns, counties, and interested parties need to be able to contribute
42 financially. Canyon visitors are a huge source of revenue for the State and the County and they
43 need to be supported. Otherwise, the County will have to provide a place in the valley for parks
44 in the event the canyons become unusable. Ms. Johnson explained that the funding for the Forest
45 Service is not like funding for the National Parks and something needs to be done about it.

1 Ms. Hotze stated that they cannot support the shuttle up the canyon because they do not have the
2 needed infrastructure. Mr. Pekus (?) reported that they are working with the County to consider
3 submitting an application for a grant program for transportation infrastructure improvements.
4

5 **D. MILLCREEK CANYON SHUTTLE COMMITTEE UPDATE**

6
7 **i. Subcommittee Lead Brian Hutchinson will Provide and Update on Progress**
8 **the Subcommittee Made in September.**
9

10 Brian Hutchison reported on the Millcreek Canyon Shuttle Project that was started to create an
11 engineered transportation solution that improves upon the auto-based visitor delivery option they
12 currently have. Their next meeting was scheduled for Monday, October 21 at 4:00 p.m. in
13 Millcreek. At their last meeting, they all agreed that they need to concentrate their efforts on
14 identifying issues. That could include working with the U.S. Forest Service to identify where they
15 can add value to the design process. They need to first determine where they can contribute the
16 most and add value.
17

18 Brian Hutchinson reported that in Millcreek Canyon, 91% of the land is managed by the Forest
19 Service. The road is controlled by the County. He stressed that it is critically important that they
20 find a way to work with the U.S. Forest Service and the County so that it is meaningful. Both have
21 information, insights, and perspectives that others do not.
22

23 **ii. Helen Peters, Salt Lake County, Discuss FLAP Grant.**
24

25 Salt Lake County Transportation Program Manager Helen Peters indicated that the Forest Service
26 invited them to consider an application for the Federal Lands Access Program (“FLAP”) through
27 the U.S. Department of Transportation. This is an opportunity where the County can partner with
28 the Forest Service and be the lead applicant for the application. Ms. Peters described where they
29 are in the process. They have reviewed the FLAP grant and worked with the Forest Service to
30 identify proposed improvements along the 10-mile roadway. It was clarified that the FLAP grant
31 does not include restrooms.
32

33 Ms. Peters reported that there is approximately \$11.79 million available for the fiscal year through
34 2024 that comes with a match of \$6.77 million. The County would have to decide whether to
35 apply for the grant, which is due by January 14, 2020. To date, they have prepared a story map
36 that identifies the improvements the Forest Service identified as areas they would like to improve.
37 The intent of the FLAP grant is to improve transportation and infrastructure so that there is better
38 access to federal lands.
39

40 Ms. Peters provided information on the Wasatch Canyons General Plan Update Open Houses. One
41 will be held on Thursday, October 24, and the second on Tuesday, October 29, 2019. This is an
42 opportunity to get input on the canyons. The CWC is a partner and is part of the stakeholder
43 committee. The County is creating the vision for the plan with various stakeholders. Ms. Peters
44 explained that funding is not part of the study. She hoped to do some implementation and bring
45 funding forward in order to proceed to implementation.
46

1 John Knoblock commented that it provides an overview of what is desired. Ms. Peters explained
2 that a General Plan consists of a community gathering of information to guide future decisions that
3 often do not include implementation or a budget. She clarified that the \$11 million is what is
4 available. Will McCarvill reported that he read the entire draft plan and with each canyon, specific
5 actions will be taken.

6
7 **E. CAPACITY COMMITTEE**

8
9 **i. Dr. Kelly Bricker will Provide Update on Capacity Committee.**

10
11 In the absence of Dr. Bricker, Mr. Perez reported on what took place at the last meeting.
12 Dr. Bricker provided a Visitor Capacity Proposal that the group had an opportunity to review.
13 They discussed issues raised by some on the committee about how they were proceeding, potential
14 costs, and the reasoning behind it. With regard to the process moving forward, they did not want
15 there to be a conflict of interest between Dr. Bricker and the Capacity Committee going forward.
16 It was determined that at this point because there is no attached funding, there is no conflict. If
17 there is funding, one option would be for Dr. Bricker to remove herself from the Capacity
18 Committee but continue to serve as Vice-Chair of the Stakeholders Council.

19
20 **ii. Stakeholders Council to Consider and Discuss Capacity Committee**
21 **Recommendation.**

22
23 If the CWC decides to move forward and funding is available, they can put a proposal out to bid
24 or make a case to the Commission to single-source it. At the meeting, a motion was made that the
25 Capacity Committee request that the Stakeholders Council move forward with a Capacity Study
26 and seek funding. The motion passed unanimously. At this point, the Stakeholders Council could
27 make a recommendation to the CWC about pursuing a Visitor Capacity Study.

28
29 Cost issues were discussed that would include two phases. The first would take a few months and
30 involve data collection and finding gaps. The anticipated cost was \$30,000. The second phase
31 would be more detailed and identify thresholds. The estimated cost was \$150,000 per canyon.
32 The entire project was expected to cost approximately \$350,000. The funding source was
33 unknown.

34
35 Nathan Rafferty asked if there were examples of where capacity studies have been done elsewhere
36 that have worked well. Mr. Perez stated that Dr. Bricker has worked on Solitude. Mr. Rafferty
37 was interested in learning more about the results of those studies. Will McCarvill stated that there
38 is actionable data available that can be used to make management decisions. Dave Fields
39 commented that the Forest Service has clearly stated that they want no part of a Capacity Study
40 and will not participate. UDOT has also pulled out and will not be participating. He asked how
41 much weight can be placed on the data if the two primary agencies involved in the canyons are not
42 participating. Mr. Perez explained that he raised the same question. The response from UDOT
43 was that they will follow the lead of the Forest Service. The Forest Service agreed to provide
44 answers or data available to them but will not participate in the committee or the study.

1 Pat Shea stated that as government agencies, the Forest Service and UDOT will be obligated to
2 answer questions that fall within their jurisdiction. The population of the Valley will double and
3 specific management plans will be needed. A management plan cannot be implemented if the
4 carrying capacity is not known.

5
6 Mr. Becker stated that the Forest Service presented data on how they look at a capacity analysis
7 and how they have done it as part of prior planning efforts. They would not foster or conduct a
8 study but will provide guidance so that the outcomes are usable. Dave Fields had a different
9 recollection. Mr. Becker stated that the Stakeholders Council will determine whether it is
10 worthwhile to pursue and if funding will be available.

11
12 Will McCarvill found it incomprehensible that they can find \$70 million for Little Cottonwood
13 Canyon without knowing the ultimate capacity.

14
15 Randy Doyle considered it premature to vote on and suggested that the Council be given more
16 time to familiarize themselves with the studies that have been conducted.

17
18 Brian Hutchinson was at the meeting and the question about the value in the canyon can apply to
19 the health of the forest, the Forest Service, and their management plans.

20
21 **F. SURVEY INTRODUCTION**

22
23 **i. Chair Greg Summerhays and Blake Perez will Discuss the Intent of a**
24 **Stakeholders Council Survey and What the Data will be Used For.**

25
26 Chair Summerhays commented that there have been things that have worked well with the
27 Stakeholders Council and others that have not. He suggested they reevaluate the structure of
28 meetings and how things are progressing, especially in light of the fact that a retreat was to take
29 place the following month with the CWC. Mr. Perez prepared questions that would be distributed
30 to the Council Members. It was requested that the Council take time to provide thoughtful
31 feedback. Mr. Perez stated that the survey will be emailed out in the next few days. He asked that
32 it be completed within the next week. Staff was anxious to receive feedback on how to evolve and
33 move the body forward.

34
35 **G. CWC STAFF REPORT**

36
37 **i. CWC Executive Director Ralph Becker will Provide a Brief Overview of the**
38 **Work CWC Staff Accomplished or Made Progress on During September and**
39 **October.**

40
41 Mr. Becker reported that in June of 2019 the Forest Service provided a fairly detailed Q&A about
42 visitor capacity studies and how they are and have been used. At the last Stakeholders Council
43 Meeting, three public were forums were held on the fourth draft of the congressional legislation.
44 Nearly 400 comments were received that were summarized, responses were prepared, and were in
45 the process of being edited. Over the next 10 to 14 days, staff would be working on recommended
46 changes to the draft for the CWC consideration at its November meeting.

1
2 Mr. Becker indicated that the State Legislature is showing great interest in the work of the CWC.
3 A New Federalism Commission was to meet the following day and the work of the CWC was a
4 focus of their attention. They are also looking at developing local management plans for federal
5 public lands. In response to a question raised, Mr. Becker stated that the Legislature will benefit
6 from feedback, particularly from their own constituents.
7

8 Mr. Becker reported that the Environmental Dashboard is moving along. ESRI representatives
9 recently met with staff. He stated that the work they are doing is very promising. Communications
10 Director Lindsey Nielsen stated that will also be holding public open houses specific to the
11 Environmental Dashboard once they move into Phase 2 of the project in early 2020.
12

13 Mr. Becker stated that Ms. Nielsen has met with each of the jurisdictions on ways they can become
14 more proactive. Will McCarvill applauded staff on the progress of the Environmental Dashboard.
15 He was also was pleased to have a Recreation/Visitor Dashboard in place to complement the
16 Environmental Dashboard.
17

18 **H. OPEN DISCUSSION**

19
20 John Knoblock asked if there had been any further work done with respect to pursuing vehicle
21 checkpoints at the base of the canyons. Mr. Perez reported that that was being pursued on multiple
22 fronts. First, with the car rental agencies and making visitors aware of the traction laws. In
23 addition, they have had discussions with UPD who will be increasing enforcement this year.
24

25 **I. ADJOURNMENT**

26
27 **MOTION:** Will McCarvill moved to adjourn. The motion passed with the unanimous consent
28 of the Council.
29

30 The Central Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council meeting adjourned at approximately
31 5:00 p.m.

1 *I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate and complete record of the Central*
2 *Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council Meeting held Wednesday, October 16, 2019.*

3

4 Teri Forbes

5 Teri Forbes

6 T Forbes Group

7 Minutes Secretary

8

9 Minutes Approved: _____