

Five County Association of Governments

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MINUTES

FIVE COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

**STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2020
1:30 P.M.**

IN PERSON ATTENDED AT:

KANE COUNTY WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT OFFICE BUILDING
LOCATED AT 725 EAST KANEPLEX DRIVE; KANAB, UTAH

**ELECTRONIC PARTICIPATION IN THE MEETING WAS PROVIDED
VIA A GOTOMEETING VIDEO CONFERENCE**

NOTE: WHILE THIS WAS AN IN-PERSON MEETING, DUE TO COVID-19, ALL INTERESTED PARTIES AND THE PUBLIC WERE ESPECIALLY INVITED TO PARTICIPATE VIA THE AVAILABLE VIDEO CONFERENCE.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE IN-PERSON

Commissioner Wade Hollingshead, Chair
Commissioner Jerry Taylor, Vice Chair
Commissioner Andy Gant
Commissioner Gil Almquist
Mayor Robert Houston
Mayor Nolan Davis
Mayor John Bramall
Dale Brinkerhoff
Tyler Fails

REPRESENTING

Beaver County Commission Representative
Garfield County Commission Representative
Kane County Commission Representative
Washington County Commission Representative
Kane County Mayoral Representative
Beaver County Mayoral Representative
Washington County Mayoral Representative
Iron County School Board Representative
Beaver County School Board Representative

MEMBERS ATTENDING VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE

Mayor Melanie Torgerson
LaRene Cox

REPRESENTING

Garfield County Mayoral Representative
Washington Co. School Board Representative

BEAVER	GARFIELD	IRON	KANE	WASHINGTON
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MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE

Commissioner Paul Cozzens (excused)
Mayor Todd Robinson
Frank Houston
Lisa Livingston

REPRESENTING

Iron County Commission Representative
Iron County Mayoral Representative
Garfield County School Board Representative
Kane County School Board Representative

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE IN-PERSON

Heath Hansen
Scott Albrecht
Adam Snow
Kelly Stowell
Mike Noel
Hal Johnson
Bryan Thiriot
Gary Zabriskie
Nathaniel Martinez

REPRESENTING

U.S. Senator Mike Lee
U.S. Senator Mitt Romney
Congressman Chris Stewart
Kane County Economic Development
Kane County Water Conservancy District
Kane County Resource Planner
Five County A.O.G. Executive Director
Five County A.O.G. Deputy Director
Five County A.O.G. Econ. Development Planner

OTHERS ATTENDING VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE

Allison McCoy
Nate Wiberg
Alyssa Gamble
David Busk
Brock Jacobsen

REPRESENTING

Five County A.O.G. Chief Financial Officer
Five County A.O.G. Senior Planner
Five County A.O.G. Community Planner
Utah Department of Workforce Services
Santa Clara City Manager

I. WELCOME BY OUTGOING CHAIR.

Beaver County Commissioner Wade Hollingshead, as the current acting Vice-Chair, noted that Iron County Commissioner Paul Cozzens, who would have called this meeting open as the current Chair, asked to be excused from this meeting. Commissioner Hollingshead noted that there were nine (9) voting members attending in-person and two (2) members participating via the video conference. He acknowledged that a quorum was present to begin and thus called open the meeting at 1:32 p.m.

II. FORMAL ROTATION OF THE CHAIR.

Mr. Gary Zabriskie, FCAOG Deputy Director explained that traditionally at this point during the February Steering Committee meetings the current Chair who served during the previous year, would “ceremoniously” pass the position of Chair to a commissioner from the next county, in a clockwise rotation. He then explained that, because of the absence of Commissioner Cozzens to pass the “gavel”, Commissioner Hollingshead would now be the Chair. Mr. Zabriskie also stated that the position of Vice-Chair also similarly rotates and goes to the county ahead in clockwise rotation to the new Chair. He indicated that Commissioner Jerry Taylor, of Garfield County will serve as Vice-Chair for the coming year.

III. DETERMINATION BY THE CHAIR THAT A QUORUM WAS PRESENT.

Commissioner Hollingshead, now serving as Chair, had previously confirmed that a quorum was present at the beginning, as Vice-Chair, and started the meeting, making this item moot.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

Those in attendance stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

V. INTRODUCTION OF NEW COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STAFF.

Prior to the introductions of the recent additions to the Community Development staff at the Association, Commissioner Hollingshead took a moment to quote Abraham Lincoln: *“Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four hours sharpening the axe.”* Commissioner Hollingshead told the Steering Committee members that this was his first meeting, and said he is likely going to spend the first two or three meetings sharpening his axe. He asked them to take it a little easy on him at this meeting and stated that he was glad to be here.

The Chair moved on to the introduction of new Community Development staff. Senior Planner Nate Wiberg, via video conference, introduced Nathaniel Martinez, who was present in-person at the meeting, as the newest member of our staff. Mr. Wiberg stated that we were able to get some funding through the EDA for an Economic Development planner for economic recovery and resiliency. Mr. Wiberg said that the Association hired Nathaniel a few months ago. Mr. Wiberg turned the time over to Mr. Nathaniel Martinez to introduce himself. Mr. Martinez explained that he just came on with the AOG in November and will be working for the next year or so to develop an economic recovery and resiliency plan. He explained that his position is funded by a grant from the CARES Act. He said that he will do his best to reach out to representatives from across the region and bring all voices together to the table. He said that this will be both a long range and broad plan. Because the AOG is a non-regulatory body the idea that we make the plan as dynamic as possible. He said we are getting a lot of sign on from various communities and one of the goals is to create a spending best practices to shape public policy and react to anything that would look like a pandemic in the future. Mr. Martinez said that he graduated earlier in 2020 with a degree in economics from Arizona State. He said he is new to the area and learning a lot and this was first time he has been out in this part of the region. He told the Steering Committee members that he lives and works in St. George.

Mr. Wiberg asked Ms. Alyssa Gamble, Community Planner at the Association, to introduce herself as we had several new members of the Steering Committee who may have not met her yet. He also asked her to discuss some of the projects she is working on. Ms. Gamble expressed regrets that she could not be at the meeting in person to meet the members there. She said that she graduated with a master's degree in Community and Regional Planning from the University of Oregon and moved out here to southwestern Utah. She said she started with the Association on July 1, 2020. She explained that she is managing the Community Development Block Grant program and is leading the effort to develop an updated Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan for the region, and other planning projects as well.

VI. NOVEMBER 18, 2020 MEETING MINUTES AND DECEMBER 30, 2020 MEETING MINUTES – REVIEW AND APPROVE.

Chairman Hollingshead presented this item, which is the approval of the Minutes from both the November 18, 2020 Steering Committee meeting and the December 30, 2020 meeting. He asked whether there was any discussion or corrections needed on the Minutes? Seeing none, he called for a motion to approve the minutes as presented.

Commissioner Gil Almquist made a motion to approve both the November 18, 2020 and the December 30, 2020 Steering Committee meeting minutes, as presented.

Mayor Bramall seconded the motion.

The Chair called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously with all nine Committee members in attendance voting in favor and the two members on the video conference also voting in favor of the motion.

VII. STEERING COMMITTEE REVIEW AND DETERMINATION OF SUPPORT FOR APPLICATIONS MADE IN THE THIRD TRIMESTER TO THE UTAH PERMANENT COMMUNITY IMPACT FUND BOARD (CIB).

Mr. Gary Zabriskie, Deputy Director at the Association, presented this item. Mr. Zabriskie explained that the Association has been notified of three eligible applications that were made to the Community Impact Board by the deadline of February 1st. Those applications are traditionally brought to the next Steering Committee meeting for review. He explained that according to the policies of the Community Impact Board, the AOG is to review and vet the projects that come in and vote as to whether they support, want to remain neutral, or not support an application made by an entity to the Community Impact Board. Mr. Zabriskie explained that there were three CIB applications this trimester.

Mr. Zabriskie said that the first one is a water project from the town of Antimony. He said they have a need for additional water sources, so they are looking at buying water rights and drilling a well. The project is a \$1.5 million dollar project. They are asking the CIB for a loan of a million dollars at 30 years at 1% and asking for a grant of \$490,000. He said they are putting in \$10,000 of Town cash. Mr. Zabriskie said that what they are asking is in part determined and modeled using a tool that the Community Impact Board staff has developed and was approved for use by the CIB Board, where they look at several factors including an applicant's ability to repay a loan. They look at what an applicant's economic situation is, such as the size of the Town, and what the ability to repay a loan is over the length of the expected life of the project, among other factors. He said that the CIB board will still ultimately make the decision on whether and what level of funding is provided. He explained that traditionally the Steering Committee reviews and votes on all the projects together unless any board members want to pull one off to the side of it and maybe support all but that one and have a discussion on it.

Mr. Zabriskie went on to describe the second project application which is by is Municipal Building Authority of Kane County. It is for a county road maintenance facility that will be located just south and before you get into the town of Glendale on U.S. 89. He said that the county has indicated that the north end of county has a great need for having the snowplows readily available and not parked outside in the cold and this would allow them to have maintenance convenient to the north end of town including maintaining the county road out to the coal mine that goes through the town of Alton. He said the county is looking at building a new facility under the total price is of the project is \$1.4 million with them looking at a CIB loan of \$1.3 million for 20 years at 0.5% interest and a \$100,000 CIB grant. As mentioned previously, the board will make the final decision on what the actual funding is.

Mr. Zabriskie explained that the final project is a road improvement project in LaVerkin. Mr. Zabriskie referred to a picture in the packet. He explained that this project is not the entire community but is some critical spots. He explained that he has been working with the City for quite several years and the City has done a lot of the road and water improvements on their own as their budget allowed, but these are some critical points in the community that need to be finished and they have pretty much used up all their available local funding. Because of that, they are proposing is a loan of \$606,000 loan from CIB 20 years at 2.5% percent and a CIB grant in the amount of \$950,000. LaVerkin City will provide \$89,200 and the Ash Creek Special Service District will provide \$82,100 to the project as that SSD is doing some improvements at the same time. The total project cost is \$1,730,300.

Mr. Zabriskie explained that all three these are the traditional types of projects that CIB funds. Normally, besides planning, it is either infrastructure or buildings. He explained that it is up to the board whether to support, or not support, or remain neutral on an application being reviewed. Mr. Zabriskie explained that in only a small number of cases has this Committee voted to remain neutral and those were typically when there was a project that was a point of contention between two counties, where one county is a proponent, and one county is opposed to it. He explained that in those cases, this Committee sort of punts on those and says that it is not this Committee's battle and they let it go to the CIB Board to make their decision. Mr. Zabriskie stated to the Committee that if any member wants to have comments relayed to the CIB those will go on the record and he will submit those. Mr. Zabriskie said, however, that traditionally it has been that either the Committee supports, remains neutral, or does not support a project application, and in most cases leaves it at that. The Chair then called for a motion.

Dale Brinkerhoff made a motion to have the Executive Director report to the Community Impact Fund Board that the Steering Committee supports each of the three applications presented for review by the Steering Committee: 1) Antimony Town Well Project, 2) Kane County MBA Road Maintenance Facility project, and 3) LaVerkin City Road Improvements Project.

Mayor Nolan Davis seconded the motion. The Chair, after asking for and seeing no members requesting any discussion on the motion, called for a vote.

All nine members attending in person and the two members on the video conference video conference voted unanimously in favor of the motion as made.

VIII. USDA DIXIE NATIONAL FOREST WILLIS FARM BILL PROJECT NEAR DUCK CREEK.

Mr. Zabriskie covered this agenda item. He explained that this is a fuels reduction project near Duck Creek that we received a notification letter dated January 29, 2021 from the ranger district inviting comments. He said that some of the individual counties may have also received this notice put it into the packet in case the Steering Committee board wanted to add any concerns and have Bryan Thiriot, as the executive director, draft a letter and then have the chair sign it, or have it sent under Bryan's signature. Mr. Zabriskie explained that this is a scoping letter for a fuel reduction project in Kane County just to the south of Duck Creek Village and it is called the Willis Farm Bill project. He said that while it is in Kane County proper, that whole mountain affects everyone in all the counties surrounding it. He said this is scoping for what the actual project will be and is not notification of the actual project. Mr. Zabriskie encouraged Kane County and any other affected counties to submit their own letters to the scoping to have any concerns they have for natural resources addressed in the project.

Mr. Zabriskie read from the letter the purposes of the proposed project being scoped. Those are: 1) reduce risks to public health and safety from wildfire; 2) increase forest wildfire resilience, and/or ability to recovery; and 3) design and implement practices that will re-establish desirable vegetative conditions.

The Committee discussed that this is scoping for a proposed fuels reduction and not a clear-cut and mainly dead trees would be removed. It was also discussed that there was an immediate need to reduce fuel loads, but they should also use a methodology and process to preserve large ponderosas. The consensus of the committee was that the Forest Service needs to promote diversity in the vegetation. It was mentioned that in Kane County some areas treated 30 years ago are still standing because where they were thinned, even during the drought years they have survived perfectly. There was concern with the

unknown of what the new presidential administration is going to do either with forestry. The Chair entertained a motion to direct the Executive Director to write a letter in support of the proposed project.

Mayor Bramall made a motion to direct Executive Director Bryan Thiriot to send a letter in support of the DNF Willis Farm Bill Project.

Commissioner Almquist seconded the motion.

The Chair asked if there was any discussion needed, and seeing no one requesting any, he called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously with all nine Committee members in attendance voting in favor of the motion as well as the two participating via the video conference also voting in favor.

IX. PRESENTATION ON HUD REQUIRED CDBG ANNUAL ACTION PLAN AND PLAN REPORTING.

Alyssa Gamble, Community Planner at the Association explained that the annual action plan is updated by the State Housing and Community Development Department, and it reports to HUD on the four block grants administered in the state. She explained that Five County is responsible for reporting on our region's CDBG activities in funding, housing and community development activities, homelessness metrics, and other special needs to contribute to this plan. Ms. Gamble further stated that the AOG has drafted the Five County section for the State's Annual Action Plan by assessing the CDBG program in collaboration with Continuum of Care, housing authorities and other organizations administered by the Five County Association of Governments, or are regional agencies, non-profits and communities throughout this region. She said that as part of this planning process the Association is providing a 30 day public comment period for the Five County contribution of the plan that started on January 25th, and will end on February 25th. She said that the Association is holding a public hearing on Thursday, February, 18th, at 6:00 pm via GoToMeeting and she would send a link to the members of the Steering Committee and welcomed the members to join in the hearing. Ms. Gamble asked if there were any questions. There were none on the Action Plan and she thanked the Committee for their time.

X. KANE COUNTY WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT UPDATE.

Kane County Water Conservancy District Executive Director Mike Noel thanked the Steering Committee for choosing to meet at the District's office building and said he was happy to host them. Mr. Noel said that the Kane County Water Conservancy District was established in 1992 by vote of the people. A vote passed with ninety percent of landowners willing to tax themselves to put money into a tax base. The lower Basin rate is 0.001 mil. He said that is how it started out almost 30 years ago. He said he was appointed as the executive director in 1996 at that time and they did not have any projects but started working on projects like the system for Johnson Canyon. He explained that they needed a new water system out there because the StampinUp scrapbooking supplies company that was out there with several hundred employees that needed to have fire protection.

He explained that where the reservoir is now is where originally the old Jackson Ranch was located. They started plans for this reservoir many years ago and it was built around seven years ago. He said this is an off-site reservoir of just a little over 4,200 acre-feet built at a cost of around \$14 million dollars under a federal program through the Army Corps of Engineers and it has been tremendous for our area. He said it has been great for water conservation for the irrigation company. He said that this year the reservoir is down a little at around 70%. Mr. Noel talked about the number of connections they have and other projects they are working on. He explained that they need the Lake Powell Pipeline. He discussed the

water rights they have. He discussed the issues they have had with the Cove Reservoir. He discussed the significant recreational component of the Jackson Flat Reservoir project. He said that the trail around it is named after his late wife Sherry Mackelprang Noel and is called the Sherry Belle Trail and every year the District has a turkey trot on the trail. He said they have a lot of fishing events on the reservoir and recently finished a recreational park that has a regulation sand volleyball court and a kind of a CrossFit training area. He said they are going to add some other playing equipment and other things. He then discussed a big project that is in the works. This will be a destination golf course just behind the district offices. He said that the big mined out area and there has been a lot of trash and garbage on it and has turned into an OHV area and the district is excited to make something nice out of it.

Mr. Noel again thanked the Steering Committee for coming and offered the use of the conference room for anytime they would like to use it for this meeting.

XI. FIVE AND SIX COUNTY CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING IN AUGUST.

Garfield County Commissioner Jerry Taylor explained that Commissioner Pearson and Commissioner Ogden will be the Chair and Co-Chair of the Congressional Briefing Committee for 2021. They are going to ask that those involved in the 11- county area put up \$2,500 and announced the schedule for the briefing which will start on August 8, 2021. When asked who would be attending, Commissioner Taylor reported that they are targeting people on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, House Natural Resources Committee, House Appropriations Committee, Senate Appropriations Committee, and possibly individual staffers of members of these Committees.

XII. CONGRESSIONAL STAFF UPDATES.

Senator Mike Lee – Heath Hansen reported on changes that have occurred since the election and noted that President Biden has started off by issuing a series of executive orders which have a lot of implications for the western states, with Utah in particular. He said that because of President Biden’s actions, Senator Lee has been rolling out a robust legislative agenda to counteract the Biden administration’s actions. HE said that one of the biggest orders so far is the indefinite pause on issuance of new leases for oil, gas, drilling and coal mining. Mr. Hansen explained that Senator Lee has co-sponsored the “Power Act”, which is the acronym for the “Protecting our Wealth of Energy and Resources Act”. He also said that Senator Lee re-introduced, and Senator Romney co-sponsored the “Protect Utah’s Rural Economy Act” which would require the President to get the consent of the Utah Legislature, Utah’s Governor and the U.S. Congress to create or expanded a proposed or existing national monument. He said that another executive order that has major implications for the State of Utah is President Biden’s goal of locking up 30% of our nation’s federal lands and waters by the year 2030. Mr. Hansen said in addition, another item of note is Senator Lee’s efforts in sponsoring and co-sponsoring several pro-life bills. He said that on the local level, Senator Lee has been working with Zion National Park on a \$33 million grant to replace their shuttle system. They are also watching closely the proposed “Visitor Use Management Plan” that could potentially severely restrict the number of people that could visit the park.

Senator Mitt Romney – Scott Albrecht reported that Senator Romney and Senator Lee are working together in opposing a lot of these newly issued executive orders. He said that Senator Romney has noted that the “pendulum swing” whenever we get a new administration, is not good for the nation or for any of us. He said that Senator Romney said that they do not have any answers yet, but it is something they are working on. He said that Senator Romney and his staff are also reviewing the Forest Service and their

mistreatment of leases on federal lands. He said the Senator believes that the primary issue seems to be in the valuation methods used to set the lease prices and then the turn-around price when asked for PILT (acronym for “Payment In Lieu of Taxes”). Mr. Albrecht also reported on Senator Romney’s committee assignments, one of which is the Budget committee. He said that the Senator has proposed the Trust Act which sets up rescue committees to identify solutions to the Social Security, Medicare Part A, and the federal highway finance – noting that (if nothing is done) all three of these funds will be insolvent in the next 10 years.

Congressman Chris Stewart – Adam Snow reported that the 52 presidential executive orders that President Biden has issued is over 300% more than Clinton, Bush, Obama, and Trump combined issued. Congressman Stewart continues to work on issues prior to the change in administration, noting that the changes in the House results in the need to establish relationships as a positive way to get anything done.

XIII. STATE AGENCY UPDATES.

David Busk, Economic Service Area Director at Utah Department of Workforce Services (DWS) reported that they have been holding monthly job fairs since February of 2020. He said that the last one had 2,249 job seekers registered to attend with an attendance of 884. He said that they feel that the employment area is still finding these virtual job fairs useful. Mr. Busk noted that all the counties in southwest Utah are experiencing positive job growth. He reported the following statistics: Beaver County is reported at 4% unemployment rate, Garfield County is at 8.4%, Iron County is 4.5% and Kane County is 4.7%. Washington County is currently at 5% and the overall Utah unemployment rate is 3.6%. He explained that DWS continues to work on initiatives for remote work in rural areas. He said that the first approach is the partnership that has been formed with the Salt Lake Chamber EDC Utah and the Utah State University extension office called the “Rural Online Initiative”. HE explained that the goal/strategy of that initiative is to engage companies on the Wasatch Front and challenge them to look at the positions they have and see if they can convert any of those into a remote position. He said that the second approach is to engage counties and economic development professionals to build out a remote work component in their economic development plans.

XIV. UNIVERSITY UPDATES.

No report this time.

XV. LOCAL AFFAIRS / OTHER ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS.

A short discussion was also held about the effects of the Brian Head Fire and the current condition present in Parowan Canyon as a result. The discussion was on the need to clean up the damage, both from a public safety standpoint as well as aesthetics. Mr. Gary Zabriskie asked members of the committee to send him an e-mail for any changes they would like to make to their contact information.

XIX. ADJOURN.

Commissioner Wade Hollingshead, Chair, seeing that there was no further business to be conducted, adjourned the meeting at 3:18 p.m.