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**MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) BUDGET/FINANCE/AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD WEDNESDAY, MAY 26, 2021 AT 9:00 A.M. VIA ZOOM**

**Committee Members Present:** Chair Jeff Silvestrini, Mayor Harris Sondak, Councilor Jim Bradley

**Others:** Pat Shea

**CWC Staff:** Executive Director Ralph Becker, Deputy Director Blake Perez, Associate Director Lindsey Nielsen, Office Administrator Kaye Mickelson

1. **Opening**
2. **Meeting will be Called to Order by Chair Jeff Silvestrini. Chair Silvestrini will Read the Letter of Determination Regarding Electronic Meetings.**

Chair Jeff Silvestrini called the meeting to order at approximately 9:00 a.m. Discussion occurred about future meetings. Mayor Silvestrini felt the Zoom meetings were convenient however, future meetings could take place at an anchor location or through a hybrid method. Mayor Sondak noted that the electronic meetings were more convenient however he was flexible, and it depends on what the Central Wasatch Commission (“CWC”) Budget/Finance/Audit Committee Members want.

Mayor Sondak believed that the technology would likely need to be upgraded in the anchor location. Chair Silvestrini noted the remote meetings were well set up. He attended some hybrid meetings, and they were less successful due to sound issues. He commented that Committee Members could see what the Commission wanted to do about future meetings.

1. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting will be Reviewed for Approval.**

**MOTION:** Mayor Sondak moved to approve the previous Budget/Finance/Audit Committee Meeting Minutes. Councilor Bradley seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.

1. **Update: Environmental Dashboard**
2. **University of Utah: Scope of Work Changes – Cost Increase.**
3. **ESRI Donation Reflected on Financials/Quote Signed by Chair Robinson.**
4. **Resolutions for U of U and ESRI will be on the June 7, 2021, Board Agenda.**

Associate Director, Lindsey Nielsen reported that the Budget/Finance/Audit Committee Members were given an updated scope of work and budget outline. She explained the reason for the updates. CWC Staff is now under the impression that ESRI could no longer perform the professional services they had previously offered to provide. As a result, the project team at the University of Utah needed to rescope the project to include those additional components. However, Ms. Nielsen and Executive Director, Ralph Becker have spoken to a different senior team member at ESRI the previous afternoon. It seems it may be possible to get back on track with what originally was going to be provided by ESRI. For instance, training, data population, and storyboarding for the Environmental Dashboard. Staff is anticipating further conversations with ESRI to iron out the details. Staff noted the University of Utah was not responsible for the additional time necessary to complete the dashboard, ESRI’s action necessitated the change.

Chair Silvestrini wondered if the Budget/Finance/Audit Committee should consider recommending an expenditure of $62,311 from reserves to cover the updated scope of work. Ms. Nielsen confirmed this. She believed that approach would likely be the safest. While she felt optimistic after the recent discussions with ESRI, there was nothing currently set in stone.

Chair Silvestrini believed the Committee should make a recommendation to the CWC Board. Then at the June 7, 2021, CWC Board Meeting, there is scheduled to be a public hearing on the budget as well as an explanation about the Environmental Dashboard. An amendment could be made to the budget before it is adopted by the full CWC Board. Office Administrator, Kaye Mickelson noted that Chair Silvestrini outlined the process correctly. However, another option was to move some funds by line item to cover the $62,311 and do a budget amendment after the first quarter or in the middle of the second quarter. Chair Silvestrini commented that both were good options. He felt it may be more transparent to reserve and budget the $62,311 for the Environmental Dashboard. If that were not needed, there could be a budget amendment to reduce the amount.

Mayor Sondak asked about the numbers on the updated scope of work document. He believed there was a $47,000 difference and not a $62,311 difference. Ms. Mickelson clarified that the University of Utah increase was $47,311 and the extra $15,000 was for ESRI, payable in May 2022 the fiscal year currently having budget approval. Mayor Sondak wondered why the ESRI costs had increased. Ms. Mickelson reported that ESRI was providing one year of free software. After that, they would bill the CWC (in May 2022) for the software as well as the maintenance and training that went along with it.

Mayor Sondak expressed frustration with ESRI and the fact that many things are now unclear. Mr. Becker understood those frustrations. He explained that he had spoken to the person at ESRI that the original offer had been worked out with. Mr. Becker let him know what had been happening. That person set up the call that Mr. Becker and Ms. Nielsen participated in the previous afternoon. Additionally, his understanding of the services to be provided pro bono was consistent with that of the CWC. Further discussions with ESRI will take place. Mr. Becker believed those discussions could happen before the budget adoption but may take longer than that.

Chair Silvestrini posed several questions to the Budget/Finance/Audit Committee:

* Since there is some uncertainty, is it better to wait and then do a budget amendment?
* Is it better to anticipate the additional costs now?

Mayor Sondak believed it would be better to put the $62,311 into the budget. Chair Silvestrini made note of an earlier suggestion from Ms. Mickelson about moving funds to cover the $62,311. He preferred not to touch the $50,000 allocated for short-term projects. Mayor Sondak noted that short-term projects were the most visible achievement of the CWC. Councilor Bradley agreed with that statement. Chair Silvestrini believed there was consensus that the Budget/Finance Audit Committee make a recommendation to the CWC Board that the funds be taken from reserves. He noted that the public would be informed about the Environmental Dashboard before the public hearing, so they were able to comment.

**MOTION:** Chair Silvestrini moved that the Budget/Finance/Audit Committee recommend to the CWC Board that the sum of $62,311 be taken from reserves to budget for additional costs related to the Environmental Dashboard. Additionally, that the public will be notified of that action in advance of the public hearing, the public hearing will be conducted and then the tentative budget will be amended to reflect that change. Mayor Sondak seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.

1. **Update: Visitor Use Study Phase II Proposal**
2. **Recommendation from Visitor Use Work Group.**
3. **Discussion Regarding Funding Strategies.**
4. **Recommendation to Be Made to CWC Board on June 7, 2021.**

Chair Silvestrini reported that he and Mayor Sondak participated in the Visitor Use Study Working Group to further discuss the Visitor Use Study. Additionally, they attended a work group meeting and were able to speak with Utah State University. What came out of that meeting was the idea to extend the timeframe of the Visitor Use Study so it would cover a full year of use in the canyons and examine Little Cottonwood Canyon, Big Cottonwood Canyon, and Millcreek Canyon. This would decouple the Visitor Use Study from the Utah Department of Transportation (“UDOT”) Little Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Impact Statement (“EIS”).

Ms. Mickelson explained that what CWC Staff wished to hear from the CWC Board was whether to move in the direction of an expedited study or to focus on a study that would be a year in length and would include an expanded study area. Chair Silvestrini felt that would be an important discussion to have with the full CWC Board at the next meeting.

Deputy Director, Blake Perez, reported that per the Contract Agreement with Utah State University, staff had asked them to develop a proposal for Phase II. Based on feedback from Commissioners, there had been discussions about an expedited study that would be completed by November 2021. Utah State University compiled and put together a Phase II proposal with that timeline in mind and it has been shared with the Visitor Use Study Working Group. Dr. Jordan Smith from Utah State University shared an updated Phase II proposal based on more recent discussions.

Chair Silvestrini reported that the members of the Visitor Use Study Working Group include:

* Will McCarvill.
* Helen Peters.
* Carl Fisher.
* Patrick Nelson.
* Annalee Munsey.
* Jan Striefel.
* Harris Sondak; and
* Jeff Silvestrini.

Chair Silvestrini wondered if the CWC wanted the Visitor Use Study to be more comprehensive and look at the other canyons or if the CWC wanted the Visitor Use Study to be a tool that could be used to evaluate and analyze the UDOT Little Cottonwood Canyon EIS. He believed it would be better if the study were more comprehensive.

However, he did appreciate the fact that the study could help the Commission reach some sort of decision about a Mountain Transportation System (“MTS”). Mayor Sondak noted that the CWC would not be able to get ahead of the UDOT Little Cottonwood Canyon EIS, even with an expedited process. It seemed unwise to try to expedite the Visitor Use Study and lose the opportunity to expand the focus.

Ms. Mickelson noted that the CWC Board would be provided with two proposals: one with an expedited timeline and one with an expanded timeline and scope. Mayor Sondak did not want to forward a recommendation about either proposal to the CWC Board. He noted he had some concerns about them. Chair Silvestrini commented that the Budget/Finance/Audit Committee could discuss how Phase II of the Visitor Use Study would be funded. He did not believe the Committee should make a recommendation related to the scope of the project. Ms. Mickelson clarified staff was not asking for a recommendation. Both proposals will be presented to the CWC Board for further discussion.

Committee Members talked about funding strategies. Mayor Sondak wondered whether the Budget/Finance/Audit Committee should weigh in on a potential funding strategy at the current time or discuss it in the future. Chair Silvestrini felt those discussions should wait until a decision had been made. Mr. Perez reported that there had been several potential funding strategies presented to the Visitor Use Study Working Group. Those could be discussed at the CWC Board Meeting. Ultimately, the Budget/Finance/Audit Committee would make a recommendation on funding. Ms. Mickelson suggested that after the June 7, 2021, CWC Board Meeting that there be a Budget/Finance/Audit Committee Meeting that would look at the different funding strategies.

Chair Silvestrini stated that Phase II may need to be a budget amendment. There could be a decision made at the June 7, 2021, CWC Board Meeting related to the Visitor Use Study proposal. Pricing would then need to be confirmed and funding strategies would need to be discussed. He felt it made sense to move forward with the tentative budget as written and then amend the budget if the Visitor Use Study proposal required an amendment. Mayor Sondak agreed.

Ms. Mickelson reiterated the fact that the next CWC Board Meeting would include the presentation of both Visitor Use Study Phase II proposals. Chair Silvestrini suggested that the Board Meeting Agenda state that there would be a discussion related to the Visitor Use Study options. The Commissioners would also provide additional direction to CWC Staff.

Mayor Sondak asked about Funding Strategy 3, which was outlined in the Visitor Use Study Working Group documents. The strategy was to approach the Legislature and potentially expand the dollar amount provided in the appropriation. Discussions were had about the special session. Mr. Becker reported that the special session revolved around how to spend the additional money that had come in. Part of that money had already been spent. He believed the rest of the money was reserved until later in the year. There could potentially be another special session to determine how to spend the remainder. Chair Silvestrini pointed out that there was still a lot of uncertainty.

For information, Ms. Mickelson added that CWC Staff was in the process of completing and preparing the payments for the approved short-term projects, to be completed by the end of the fiscal year 6.30.2021.

1. **Tentative Budget Approved for Fiscal Year 2021-2022.**
2. **Comment on Process and Public Hearing.**
3. **Changes to Budget**

Chair Silvestrini reported that the tentative budget would be presented during the public hearing on June 7, 2021. The Budget/Finance/Audit Committee would make an announcement that they were recommending that the CWC fund the Environmental Dashboard from the fund balance. There would then be a public hearing and a move to adopt the budget with that change.

1. **Current 2020-2021 Budget Information**

Ms. Mickelson reported current 2020-2021 budget information had been posted.

1. **Public Comment**

*Pat Shea* commented that it was a good idea to expand the scope of the Visitor Use Study. He had heard that UDOT would release the UDOT Little Cottonwood Canyon Draft EIS by mid-June.

1. **Adjournment**

The Central Wasatch Commission Budget/Finance/Audit Committee Meeting adjourned at approximately 9:45 a.m.

***I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Central Wasatch Commission Budget/Finance/Audit Committee Meeting held Wednesday, May 26, 2021.***

Teri Forbes

Teri Forbes

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Minutes Secretary

Minutes Approved: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_