 **MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) BOARD MEETING HELD MONDAY, JUNE 7, 2021, AT 4:00 P.M. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED ELECTRONICALLY WITHOUT A PHYSICAL LOCATION**

**Board Members:** Chair Chris Robinson, Mayor Harris Sondak, Mayor Dan Knopp, Mayor Jenny Wilson, Mayor Erin Mendenhall, Mayor Mike Peterson, Councilor Marci Houseman, Councilor Jim Bradley, Councilor Max Doilney, Ex Officio Member Carlton Christensen

**Excused:** Mayor Jeff Silvestrini

**Staff:** Executive Director Ralph Becker, Deputy Director Blake Perez, Communications Director Lindsey Nielsen, Office Administrator Kaye Mickelson, CWC Legal Counsel Shane Topham

**Others:**  Catherine Kanter, Laura Briefer, Robert Sampson, Dave Fields, Carl Fisher, Carolyn Keigley, Chase Lamborn, Chris Adams, Dennis Goreham, Helen Peters, John Guldner, Jordan Smith, Kara Trevino, Kody Fox, Lance Kovel, Megan Nelson, Mike Marker, Michael Maughan, Ed Marshall, Ned Hacker, Pat Shea, Steve Van Maren, Will McCarvill, Lisa Hartman, Marian Rice, Chris McCandless, Bekee Hotze

**OPEN CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) BOARD MEETING**

1. **Commissioner Christopher F. Robinson will Conduct the Meeting as Chair of the Board of the Central Wasatch Commission.**

Chair Chris Robinson called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

1. **The Board will Consider Approving the Minutes of the May 3, 2021, Board Meeting.**

**MOTION:** Councilor Houseman moved to approve the minutes of the May 3, 2021, Board Meeting. Mayor Peterson seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chair Robinson opened the public comment session. There were no comments. The public comment session was closed.

**MOUNTAIN TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM PILLARS DOCUMENT DICUSSION**

1. **(Action) Resolution 2021-11 Approving the Mountain Transportation System Pillars Document: For Collective Commissioners’ Signature.**

Chair Robinson reported that the Central Wasatch Commission (“CWC”) had been working on a Mountain Transportation System (“MTS”) Pillars Document. The document had gone through the Transportation Committee and the Executive Committee for discussion and review. He noted that Catherine Kanter from Salt Lake County and CWC Staff invested a lot of time and energy into the document. It was included in the packet. Chair Robinson explained that the purpose of the MTS Pillars Document was to inform the Utah Department of Transportation (“UDOT”) and State Leaders about areas of consensus. He hoped that Resolution 2021-11 would be approved so the document could be forwarded to UDOT.

Carl Fisher believed it was a good document. He expressed frustration that the CWC had not reached a consensus on the MTS. However, he appreciated that the Pillars Document would share areas where consensus had been reached. Councilor Houseman noted that Sandy City reviewed the document. She had a suggestion for the section, “Traffic Demand Management, Parking and Bus (or other Transit) Strategies” on Page 2 of the MTS Pillars Document. She felt that an addition should be made to the following line:

* “The Commissioners also favor appropriate roadway improvements along Wasatch Boulevard.”

Councilor Houseman explained that it was important to remind UDOT and decision-makers that the CWC felt strongly that 9400 South needs to be considered as well. She suggested that 9400 South be added to that sentence in the MTS Pillars Document to read:

* “The Commissioners also favor appropriate roadway improvements along Wasatch Boulevard and 9400 South.”

Mayor Peterson was supportive of the MTS Pillars Document. He commented that the timing of the document was critical. He understood that UDOT would likely announce their position on a preferred alternative within the next few weeks. Mayor Peterson complimented Ms. Kanter and all those who had worked on the document. Mayor Knopp agreed with the suggestion made by Councilor Houseman to add 9400 South to the document.

Councilor Bradley felt that the MTS Pillars Document was strong and agreed that the timing was extremely important. He noted that the document did not include specific roads or landmarks by name, with the exception of Wasatch Boulevard. Adding in 9400 South would break the style of the letter. Ms. Kanter explained the reason Wasatch Boulevard was included in the MTS Pillars Document. She reported that Wasatch Boulevard was contemplated in the UDOT Little Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Impact Statement (“EIS”).

Mayor Wilson noted that there had been previous conversations about what to include in the MTS Pillars Document. It was determined that the document would only include items that had been debated and discussed. It made sense to include Wasatch Boulevard due to the references in the UDOT Little Cottonwood Canyon EIS. She agreed that 9400 South was a challenge area but preferred to keep the document as it was. Mayor Sondak commented that the document mentioned traffic impacts on roads accessing the canyons. That contemplated both 9400 South and Danish Road.

Councilor Houseman believed that 9400 South had been part of the MTS discussions. It was an issue she had raised many times. She appreciated the context shared by Ms. Kanter about the reason Wasatch Boulevard was included in the document. However, it was important to emphasize to decision-makers that the CWC wanted a broader scope than what was currently included in the UDOT Little Cottonwood Canyon EIS. Chair Robinson pointed out that one of the proposed options in the UDOT Little Cottonwood Canyon EIS included a new parking lot on 9400 South and Highland Drive. That meant 9400 South was referenced in the UDOT Little Cottonwood Canyon EIS as well.

Chair Robinson explained that the goal was to have every Commissioner vote in favor of the MTS Pillars Document and sign it. Discussions were had about whether it made sense to amend the document and include a reference to 9400 South.

**MOTION:** Councilor Houseman moved to amend Resolution 2021-11 and insert a reference to 9400 South in the previously discussed location. Mayor Knopp seconded the motion. Vote on motion: Chair Robinson-Aye; Mayor Wilson-Nay; Mayor Peterson-Aye; Mayor Mendenhall-Aye; Councilor Bradley-Aye; Councilor Doilney-Aye; Mayor Knopp-Aye; Mayor Sondak-Aye; Councilor Houseman-Aye. The motion passed 8-to-1.

**MOTION:** Mayor Wilson moved to adopt Resolution 2021-11 approving the Mountain Transportation System Pillars Document, as amended. Mayor Peterson seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.

**COMMITTEE AND PROJECT REPORTS**

1. **Budget/Finance/Audit Committee: Minutes of the May 26, 2021, Budget/Finance/Audit Committee Meeting Included in the Board Packet with Resolution 2021-08.**

The Budget/Finance/Audit Committee Meeting minutes were included in the Meeting Materials Packet for Board Member review.

1. **Visitor Use Study Information: Discussion/Direction.**
2. **Phase I Update: USU Report.**
3. **Phase II Proposals (in Board Packet: Expedited/Long-Term Option).**
4. **Memo to Commissioners Visitor Use Study.**
5. **Two Proposal Comparison: Dr. Jordan Smith Will Be Available.**

CWC Executive Director, Ralph Becker, discussed the history of the Visitor Use Study. He explained that the Visitor Use Study Working Group was established, a scope of work was developed, and a Request for Proposals (“RFP”) was issued. A team from Utah State University had been awarded the study. Mr. Becker reported that the CWC expressed a desire to expedite the study. As a result, there had been discussions with the Utah State University team about how quickly the Visitor Use Study could be completed. Additional work had been done by the Visitor Use Study Working Group to determine two options for the Commission to consider as follows:

* Choose a Visitor Use Study that expands the scope and includes Little Cottonwood Canyon, Big Cottonwood Canyon, and Millcreek Canyon, to be completed in August 2022 for an estimated cost of $288,212.64; and
* Choose to expedite the Visitor Use Study and focus only on Little Cottonwood Canyon, to be completed in November 2021 for an estimated cost of $254,603.87.

CWC Office Administrator, Kaye Mickelson, reported that the majority of the conversations within the Visitor Use Study Working Group pertained to whether the study should be expedited. She added that several questions had come up with regard to the study. For instance, the indicators that were being looked at, the timeframe, and whether it was a comprehensive review of all of the canyons. Dr. Jordan Smith from the Utah State University team had come up with a summary document to show a comparison of the two options: the expedited study and the elongated study.

Mayor Sondak noted that there had been an informative discussion with Dr. Smith. However, there were still some outstanding areas of concern. One area of concern was that Phase 1 would identify the data that was already available and phase two proposed to collect certain kinds of additional data. He felt it would not make sense to collect additional data until the current data was understood. He hoped the CWC Board would agree to elongate the study. Mayor Sondak did not believe it would be beneficial expedite the Visitor Use Study until the results of the first phase had been reviewed.

Dr. Smith discussed the difference between the expedited study that focused on Little Cottonwood Canyon and the broader study. The expedited study would project recreation use levels for each of the transportation scenarios that were being considered in the UDOT Little Cottonwood Canyon EIS. However, there had been discussions in the Visitor Use Study Working Group about whether the expedited study might be short-sighted. The Utah State University team had been tasked with developing a broader study that would look at the three canyons.

Dr. Smith reported that a study related to visitor use required existing data. That data would be collected in a temporally consistent manner across recreation use (how much recreation was happening in an area) and ecological or physical impacts (what was happening to a particular setting or the capacity that a particular setting had). Putting off the broader study to a later date would still require the same data to be collected. There was no data available to the Utah State University team on the current recreation uses within the canyons. Obtaining that data would allow the team to better understand the relationship between current recreation use and the ecological impacts of that use. Whether an expedited study or a broader study was done, the scope of the project would be the same.

Chair Robinson noted that Laura Briefer from Salt Lake City Public Utilities shared a comment in the Zoom chat box. She wondered if Dr. Smith could discuss how the Visitor Use Study would interface with the Environmental Dashboard. Dr. Smith reported that all of the collected data could be utilized directly as part of the Environmental Dashboard.

Annalee Munsey explained that the Visitor Use Study Working Group wanted the study to look at an entire year. They also wanted it to look at all three of the canyons. Will McCarvill agreed and stressed the importance that the Visitor Use Study be a year-round study. Chair Robinson wondered whether they recommended the broader study rather than the expedited study. Mr. McCarvill and Ms. Munsey confirmed this. Chair Robinson opened the discussion to Commissioners.

Mayor Knopp agreed with the idea of a broader study. He felt that the Visitor Use Study would be more for CWC use and believed the study should include all three canyons. Mayor Wilson understood the importance of the Visitor Use Study but asked about practical application of the data. Chair Robinson noted that even with an expedited timeline, the CWC would not have much information before UDOT made their transportation decision. However, he felt the information gathered from the study would be beneficial even after UDOT made a decision. That decision would take time to implement and would require a management plan. He hoped the Visitor Use Study would be able to provide useful information.

Councilor Houseman asked about the data collection. Dr. Smith explained that the scope of work would be very similar whether there was an expedited timeline. Councilor Houseman referenced the MTS Pillars Document. It stated that the CWC was still working toward a consensus on a transportation alternative. She felt that the goal of the Visitor Use Study was to provide additional information to CWC Board Members. This could help them reach consensus. A more comprehensive study would be needed for the CWC Board Members to have all of the necessary information and to potentially influence next steps. Councilor Houseman believed a broader study made sense.

Mayor Sondak noted that during the Visitor Use Study Working Group Meeting, Helen Peters explained that there would be no way to impact the UDOT Little Cottonwood Canyon EIS before the initial draft was released. Given that, it made sense for the Visitor Use Study to have a broader scope that included all of the canyons. He felt that the MTS Pillars Document was the best thing that the CWC could release ahead of the UDOT Little Cottonwood Canyon EIS.

Ms. Briefer commented that it was important to move forward with a broader study. She felt that the information gained from the Visitor Use Study would be useful in terms of the implementation of transportation or recreation changes. It would also be useful to agencies that managed the impacts of increased recreation. Ms. Briefer believed the Visitor Use Study would be especially valuable as the population in Utah continues to grow. Mayor Wilson wondered if it would be possible for there to be progress reports from Utah State University. She also wondered if there were areas that should be prioritized by the Utah State University team. Mayor Sondak suggested that the environmental and physical aspects be prioritized. He felt those were the most important pieces.

Mayor Peterson liked the idea of a broader study with progress reports from the Utah State University team. Mayor Knopp wondered if progress reports would be possible. Dr. Smith explained that they could provide interim reports on a seasonal basis. Chair Robinson asked whether it would be possible for those reports to evaluate the different transportation scenarios. Dr. Smith stated that it could be done. That particular approach would be a compromise between the two previously outlined options. It would focus on all three canyons but there would be a handful of questions that were specific to Little Cottonwood Canyon and the different transportation modes.

Chair Robinson wondered if the compromised approach to the Visitor Use Study would alter the budget. Dr. Smith explained that it would be consistent with the proposed budget for the broader study. Chair Robinson liked the idea of a hybrid approach with seasonal deliverables. There was no opposition from CWC Board Members. Ms. Mickelson explained that this was a directional item rather than an action item. Funding strategies would still need to be discussed with the Budget/Finance/Audit Committee.

1. **Executive Committee: Minutes of May 17, 2021, Executive Committee Meeting Included in Packet: Chair Robinson will Review and Answer Questions.**

The Executive Committee Meeting Minutes were included in the packet for Board Member review.

1. **Legislative/Land Tenure Committee: No Meeting in May 2021.**

Chair Robinson noted that there was no Legislative/Land Tenure Committee Meeting in May 2021.

1. **Transportation Committee: Minutes of May 10 Transportation Committee Included in Packet.**

The Transportation Committee Meeting Minutes were included in the packet for Board Member review.

**ADJOURN BOARD MEETING IN ORDER TO OPEN CLOSED SESSION**

**MOTION:** Mayor Knopp moved to adjourn the CWC Board Meeting and reconvene in a Closed Session to discuss the character, professional competence, physical, or mental health of individuals. Mayor Wilson seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.

The meeting adjourned at 5:06 p.m.

***I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Central Wasatch Commission Board Meeting held Monday, June 7, 2021.***

**Teri Forbes**

Teri Forbes

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Minutes Secretary

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