

# MINUTES

## STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

October 9, 2013

Brian Head, Utah

### MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Commissioner Jim Matson, Chair  
Commissioner Mike Dalton  
Carolyn White  
Commissioner Clare Ramsay  
Ken Platt  
Commissioner Dale Brinkerhoff  
Mayor Dutch Deutschlander for  
Mayor Connie Robinson  
Shane Adams  
Mayor Dan McGuire  
Larry Bergeson for LuAnne Forrest

### REPRESENTING

Kane County Commissioner Representative  
Beaver County Commissioner Representative  
Beaver County Schools Representative  
Garfield County Commissioner Representative  
Garfield County Schools Representative  
Iron County Commissioner Representative  
Iron County Mayor Representative  
  
Iron County Schools Representative  
Washington County Mayor Representative  
Washington County Schools Representative

### OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Representative Rebecca Lockhart  
Representative Jon Stanard  
Representative John Westwood  
Representative Brad Last  
William Swadley  
Gary Webster  
Stephen Lisonbee  
Zachary Bolick  
Bryan Thiriot  
Scott Leavitt  
Gary Zabriskie  
Curt Hutchings  
Diane Lamoreaux

Utah House of Representatives  
Utah House of Representatives  
Utah House of Representatives  
Utah House of Representatives  
Senator Hatch's Office  
Congressman Stewart's Office  
Department of Workforce Services  
National Parks Conservation Association  
Five County Association of Governments  
Five County Association of Governments

### MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE

Mayor Nolan Davis, Excused  
Mayor Jerry Taylor, Excused  
Mayor Nina Laycook, Vice-Chair  
Wendy Allan  
Commissioner Denny Drake, Excused  
Frank Lojko  
Wes Curtis, Excused

Beaver County Mayor Representative  
Garfield County Mayor Representative  
Kane County Mayor Representative  
Kane County Schools Representative  
Washington Co. Commissioner Representative  
Dixie State University  
Southern Utah University

Commissioner Jim Matson, Chair, welcomed everyone in attendance and introductions were provided. Those asking to be excused include: Mayor Nolan Davis, Beaver County Mayor Representative; Mayor Jerry Taylor, Garfield County Mayor Representative; Commissioner Denny Drake, Washington County Commission Representative; and Mr. Wes Curtis, Southern Utah University. Superintendent Larry Bergeson was in attendance for LuAnne Forrest representing the Washington County Schools and Mayor Dutch Deutschlander was in attendance representing Mayor Connie Robinson, Iron County Mayor Representative.

Chairman Matson acknowledged Mr. Bill Swadley, Senator Hatch's Office and Mr. Gary Webster, Congressman Stewart's office and asked that they provide a brief update regarding the federal government closure and impasse on the FY 2014 budget. Introductions will then be provided for those in attendance and agenda items will proceed with Speaker of the House, Rebecca Lockhart, speaking at the end of the meeting. Bryan Thiriot will provide that introduction.

Mr. Bill Swadley, Senator Hatch's Office, indicated that there is really no definitive news to provide. At this point, Senator Harry Reid and President Obama are not willing to negotiate on spending or the budget. The debt ceiling is looming with a hearing scheduled tomorrow to discuss the debt limit. The hearing will be held in Washington, D.C. beginning at 8:00 a.m. Mr. Swadley indicated that he would be happy to forward questions and/or concerns to Senator Hatch.

Mr. Gary Webster, Congressman Stewart's Office, indicated that he has been deemed essential this week and has been involved in a number of conference calls with Congressman Stewart and his chief of staff. The Congressman is very concerned regarding the impacts that are being felt from the national park closures. There have been nine resolutions passed by the House of Representatives but the Senate will not take up any of the resolutions. A hearing is tentatively scheduled for October 16<sup>th</sup> to address the pain of national park closures. He encouraged local elected officials to relate stories that may be utilized in the hearing detailing the economic impacts being felt by businesses, communities adjacent to the national parks and counties. It has been reported that Ruby's Inn has already lost approximately \$1 million and the loss will become more significant next week. The message coming out of Washington, D.C. is that no one is talking. It is difficult to speculate on how long the impasse will continue. The longest government shutdown occurred during the Carter Administration which lasted for 57 days. It is hoped that this shutdown will be much shorter in duration.

#### **I. MINUTES SEPTEMBER 18, 2013 - REVIEW AND APPROVE**

Chairman Matson indicated that a quorum was present for conduct of business and presented minutes of the September 18, 2013 for discussion and consideration of approval.

**MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER DALE BRINKERHOFF, SECONDED BY MR. KEN PLATT, TO APPROVE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 18, 2013 MEETING AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED.**

#### **II. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ACTIONS - OCTOBER 9, 2013**

Chairman Matson reported that the Executive Committee met earlier in the day to discuss and review agenda items. There were no official actions taken.

#### **IV. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM (CDBG) - 1<sup>ST</sup> PUBLIC HEARING**

Chairman Matson entertained a motion to enter into the CDBG program public hearing.

**MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. CAROLYN WHITE, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MIKE DALTON, TO ENTER INTO THE CDBG 1<sup>ST</sup> PUBLIC HEARING. MOTION CARRIED.**

Ms. Diane Lamoreaux reviewed information regarding the Community Development Block Grant Program and indicated that the Five County region participates in the Utah Small Cities Program. As cities reach a threshold population of 50,000, they are designated as entitlement programs and receive funding directly from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). St. George City is an entitlement community that receives direct funding from HUD. Monies are passed from the federal government to the state of Utah for administration and distribution. Funding in the amount of \$704,332 was available for allocation in the Five County Region in FY 2013. It is anticipated that approximately \$700,000 +/- will be available for allocation in FY 2014. However, things are very tentative in light of the government shutdown and impasse on the federal budget. In addition, a percentage will be taken for sequestration, and there could be other funding cuts applied through a Continuing Resolution (CR).

The range of eligible activities is broad and includes projects such as the construction of public works and facilities including water and sewer lines; fire stations; acquisition of real property; provision of public services such as food banks or homeless shelters; and housing projects. She shared some examples of successful projects completed in the Five County region including housing projects in Cedar City for elderly and handicapped individuals, procurement of the meals on wheels trucks for the Five County region, fire trucks, fire stations and ambulance garages, etc. A list of other eligible activities is identified in the CDBG Application Guide and is available on the DWS website for the State of Utah Housing and Community Development Division. The Five County Association of Governments has received funding in the past for planning and technical assistance; funding to establish and recapitalize the Revolving Loan Fund program, the first time home buyer program, construction of the Five County Association of Government office building in St. George, and procurement of the meals on wheels trucks. Proposed activities that may result in displacement of low-moderate income individuals are discouraged.

The Five County Regional Planning and Technical Assistance application has previously included the following elements: 1) Capitalize and administer the Revolving Loan Fund; 2) Provide planning assistance to LMI eligible communities; 3) Program delivery for housing programs; 4) Prepare and update the regional Consolidated Plan; and 5) Workforce and affordable housing planning assistance. AOG projects have historically been primarily of a "regional" nature.

Set-aside funding of \$90,000 for the regional program administration and economic development technical assistance grant for FY 2014 was approved for a one year period on August 14, 2013 by the Steering Committee, which serves as the Regional Review Committee (RRC), in conjunction with adoption of the Rating and Ranking criteria.

Comments were solicited for potential projects and/or suggestions from the audience or Steering Committee members for projects of regional significance and scope. Chairman Matson noted no comments and entertained a motion to close the public hearing.

**MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER CLARE RAMSAY, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER DALE BRINKERHOFF, TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING. MOTION CARRIED.**

Board consensus was for staff to proceed with an application and scope of work including the same elements as previous applications.

V. **STATE AGENCY UPDATES**

A. **GOVERNOR'S OFFICE**

No representative was in attendance.

B. **DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

Mr. Monte Aldredge reported that Rick Torgerson, the new Region Four Director, was unable to attend today's meeting because of other obligations. Carlos Baceras was recently appointed to serve as the Director of the Utah Department of Transportation, and the new Deputy Director is Shane Marshall. These individuals will guide the Department in efforts to follow UDOT's strategic direction or "Final Four." These strategic goals include: 1) preserve infrastructure; 2) optimize mobility; 3) reach zero fatalities; and 4) strengthen the economy. The main objective is to provide a safe and efficient transportation system.

UDOT has become very involved in promoting the Zero Fatalities Initiative that was introduced in 2000. There were approximately 286 fatalities in 2000 and that number has decreased to under 200 this year. The highest number of fatalities in one year's period of time was 373. There has also been a big emphasis throughout Region Four on safety with the installation of rumble strips, cable barriers, and new signs. Signs are placed to warn motorists when passing lanes are ending. Employees at UDOT take the Zero Fatalities program very seriously and personally. This is not just data collection, but something that has true meaning. The UDOT website provides a large amount of information about the hazards associated with those who text while driving. There are videos and other information available to help educate everyone and to spread the message.

A handout was provided outlining UDOT's emphasis areas as follows: **1) Integrated Transportation**-- Consideration of how to best meet the needs of cars, bikes, pedestrians, mass transit and freight; **2) Collaboration**- Continue to partner with local and regional entities in creating transportation solutions; **3) Education**-- UDOT supports science, technology, engineering, math courses at Utah colleges and high schools; **4) Transparency**-- The Department will strive to be the most transparent department of transportation in the country; **5) Quality**-- Continue work to become a national leader in quality; and **6) Operational Excellence**-- Strive to set gold standard of government best practices and to optimize resources. These emphasis areas are directly related to UDOT's core values of innovation, public responsibility, dedication, passion, integrity, and fiscal responsibility.

Mr. Aldredge provided a handout outlining the UDOT traffic app that is available for public use. The app can be downloaded from the UDOT website as well. This provides access to road condition information and UDOT traffic cameras. He cautioned that users should look at the date and time stamp when utilizing traffic cameras to make sure that the information is current.

Board members questioned the purpose of installing cable barriers and their effectiveness. Mr. Aldredge indicated that the barriers are anchored into the ground

and have proven very successful in catching cars that may have otherwise crossed into other lanes of traffic. The barriers have been installed as a safety measure throughout the state. Commissioner Dale Brinkerhoff asked that an update be given regarding the South Cedar City Interchange. Mr. Aldredge indicated that the interchange is under design and construction is anticipated in 2014. Mayor Burgess, Cedar City, was very helpful in developing a funding strategy with other partners to acquire funding and address right-of-way issues that brought this interchange to a higher priority level. This helped to accelerate timing for this project. Ms. Carolyn White asked about the increased speed limits throughout the state and reasoning behind the change. Mr. Aldredge explained that highway speed limits are determined through the use of a speed study that determines the average speed of traffic. The study results indicated that increasing the speed limit to 80 miles per hour did not cause a significant increase in speeds above that limit and it did not increase fatal accidents.

Mayor Dutch Deutschlander requested Brian Head law enforcement (public safety) be allowed remote access to program the sign located in Parowan at the bottom of the canyon to reflect current conditions. For example, road conditions resulting from accidents, high winds, lift closures, etc. This would enable information to be relayed to people and eliminate their driving up the canyon when certain conditions would prevent them from access to the ski lifts. This would save a lot of grief for customers and business owners. Mr. Aldredge indicated that he would relay the message and determine if this would be a possibility.

**C. DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE SERVICES**

Mr. Stephen Lisonbee, DWS, indicated that he is working to fine tune information that will be presented to the Steering Committee. His goal is to provide a single page document that will include information for each county. At last month's meeting a question was asked in regard to the 22 new employees hired in Cedar City and whether funding was tied to the Affordable Care Act (ACA) or ongoing funding. He explained that DWS employs approximately 600-700 eligibility workers and generally about 15 new hires occur each month as a result of attrition. Cedar City benefitted from the need to hire additional workers who will also provide support for the ACA. The employment of these individuals is sustainable without the ACA because their focus is for ongoing case management activities in Utah. The Eligibility Services Division manages food stamps, Medicaid, child care, etc. DWS has started to receive applications for Obamacare and eligibility will begin January 1, 2014. The use of technology, specialization, and education of staff has allowed DWS to streamline their services to become much more efficient. The DWS workforce has decreased from approximately 800 to 400 workers over the course of the past several years. Even though the legislature has authorized 42 new hires, it is likely that the Department will not have to hire all of those additional workers. DWS has also implemented the largest software system in the state of Utah that will be able to sustain growth with decreased funding levels.

Mr. Lisonbee announced that this week is National Customer Service Week and several activities are underway at their employment centers. Board members are invited to visit any of the employment centers at any time. The Cedar City Employment Center staff had the opportunity to host Representative John

Westwood during a recent visit. Commissioner Dale Brinkerhoff stressed the importance of engaging with clients all of the time and not just during a special event weeks.

A handout provided outlines the four cornerstones of DWS as follows: 1) Operational Excellence; 2) Exceptional Customer Service; 3) Employee Success; and 4) Community Connection. Jon Pierpont, DWS Executive Director, indicates that "DWS will be the best-managed state agency in Utah." The second page of the handout contains an organizational chart for the Workforce Development Division Central and Southwest Counties. Managers have been hired for Iron & Beaver counties, Kane & Garfield counties and Washington County. Those individuals were introduced at last month's meeting in Beaver.

Programs offered by DWS focus on workforce development and making sure that employers have an adequate supply of trained workers to fill demands of job growth. The Department partners with Applied Technology Colleges and Universities to fill any training gaps that may exist. The BRIDGE program has been very popular and assistance has been provided to 39 employers throughout the region. There have been 177 jobs created as a result of this program with a total of \$643,500 in funds paid out. The program provides \$4,500 for each position for a one year period of time and is operated on a pay for performance basis. There are additional incentives provided to companies who hire Veterans or persons who are currently drawing unemployment benefits. A pilot program titled Work Success is offered in St. George. This engages the client as an unemployment insurance claim is filed. Clients participate in activities at the center over a two week period from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to enable them to enter back into the workforce. This program has experienced an 80% success rate.

Mayor Dan McGuire asked about outreach to smaller rural communities. Mr. Lisonbee explained that the addition of managers in each of the regions is mainly to engage with communities. Staff is making a concerted effort to get back into rural areas and engage with all communities.

Commissioner Jim Matson asked about underemployment and the need for many individuals to work several part time jobs in order to provide for their families. Mr. Lisonbee agreed that there is a lot of underemployment, and this may be impacted directly by the Affordable Care Act. Larger employers are not as likely to change their behaviors, but small business are making very tough decisions that could impact underemployment. It was pointed out that the individual penalty for not having insurance is \$2,000 but employers that do not provide health care are to be fined \$100 per day or \$36,500 annually. Mr. Lisonbee indicated that he would not be able to answer this particular question. Speaker Lockhart indicated that she would provide contact information for Representative Jim Dunnigan who would be able to provide the answer.

## **VI. UNIVERSITIES**

### **A. SOUTHERN UTAH UNIVERSITY**

Mr. Wes Curtis asked to be excused from today's meeting.

**B. DIXIE STATE UNIVERSITY**

A representative was not in attendance.

**VII. CONGRESSIONAL STAFF UPDATES**

Congressional updates were provided at the beginning of the meeting.

**VIII. LOCAL AFFAIRS**

**A. CORRESPONDENCE**

Commissioner Clare Ramsay asked for Board consideration of a letter to Governor Herbert in support of southern Utah counties in their efforts to open the national parks.

**MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER CLARE RAMSAY, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MIKE DALTON, INSTRUCTING STAFF TO COMPOSE A LETTER TO GOVERNOR HERBERT, WITH A CARBON COPY TO CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVES, IN SUPPORT OF THE SOUTHERN UTAH COUNTIES EFFORT IN DECLARING A STATE OF EMERGENCY RELATING TO THE ECONOMIC IMPACTS OCCURRING AS A RESULT OF THE NATIONAL PARK CLOSURES. MOTION CARRIED.**

Mr. Bryan Thiriot provided a handout that outlines current and potential impacts of the federal government shut down on programs administered at the Association of Governments. The Area Agency on Aging has funding available for distribution to counties in the short term. However, the longer the shut down continues, the more likely it is that cuts will have to be made. The Care About Child Care program will be facing furloughs at the end of this month. It is uncertain what the impacts will be in terms of funding received from the Economic Development Administration. A copy of the memo has been circulated for informational purposes. Mr. Scott Leavitt explained that most sub-grantees have already allocated funds and contracts coming into the AOG will carry forward with no impacts because of the funding cycles involved. Long term impacts will have to be addressed as appropriate moving forward.

**MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER DALE BRINKERHOFF, SECONDED BY MAYOR DUTCH DEUTSCHLANDER, AUTHORIZING STAFF TO DRAFT A RESOLUTION, TO BE SENT TO THE CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION AND GOVERNOR HERBERT, OUTLINING THE IMPACTS OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHUT DOWN ON THE ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS. MOTION CARRIED.**

**B. OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL**

One out-of-state travel is included for Board consideration. Even though the cost is being picked up by another agency, Five County AOG policies require approval

for staff out-of-state travel. Youth Service America is covering the cost for Kristen Clark to attend the Youth Services Institute in Baltimore, MD, November 11-13, 2013.

**MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. CAROLYN WHITE, SECONDED BY MR. SHANE ADAMS, AUTHORIZING OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL FOR KRISTEN CLARK AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED.**

**C. PERMANENT COMMUNITY IMPACT FUND BOARD (PCIFB) APPLICATIONS**

Mr. Gary Zabriskie, Five County AOG, provided a brief summary of CIB 101 Training that is provided to jurisdictions and the current interest rate of 1.5% for loans from CIB. Jurisdictions in the Five County region submitted 11 applications to CIB during the last trimester, of which nine were funded, including the park at Brian Head that is currently under construction. Two applications were submitted for consideration as follows: **1) Big Water**-- The town is requesting funding for a road rehabilitation and drainage project as a grant/loan combination; and **2) Ivins City**-- The city is requesting a grant for \$132,000 to purchase a new fire truck. This is a result of Gold Cross Ambulance moving into the area and the increased service area that Ivins now covers. The city currently has three ambulances, but one has excess mileage and needs to be replaced.

In addition, Mr. Zabriskie explained that Escalante City will be submitting an emergency application to CIB for consideration. The application request will be for approximately \$250,000 to address a water line that was damaged during recent flood events. This will be considered as an emergency application and will likely be presented during the November CIB meeting. This impacts one of the city's water sources and repairs need to be completed prior to inclement weather.

**MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER CLARE RAMSAY, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER DALE BRINKERHOFF, TO SUPPORT THE THREE APPLICATIONS TO CIB, INCLUDING THE EMERGENCY APPLICATION FOR ESCALANTE CITY. MOTION CARRIED.**

**D. PLANNING ASSISTANCE**

None.

**E. OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Bryan Thiriot introduced a topic that was discussed by director's of the Associations' of Government at a recent meeting regarding a gas tax local option that will be coming out of the next legislative session. Mr. Curt Hutchings explained that adequate funding directed toward transportation needs is a significant issue for Utah cities and towns. Projections indicate that the population in Utah will double within the next ten years. This legislation would provide opportunity for policy makers to take a balanced and multi-modal approach to transportation in Utah. The state of Utah Long Range Transportation has received national acclaim. The Dixie Metropolitan Planning Organization (DMPO) has been a partner in the process of

this plan development. The plan identifies capacity and transit projects that could be completed over the next 30 years. It is important to have a functional transportation system, but funding from the gas tax has not been tied to inflation and funding for transportation is losing ground in its buying capacity. Communities and counties throughout the state have had to take on a large share of the funding for transportation projects and this is not sustainable. He explained the proposal and option for counties to adopt the 3% user tax. This is closely related to the vehicle registration fee that has been adopted by various counties throughout the state. These are revenues that could be realized, provided that counties chose to take this approach to funding transportation. Funding under this proposal would go to the state of Utah with ½ of the allocation going back to counties and the other ½ allocated through the B & C road funding process. This proposal is coming out of the Joint Policy Advisory Committee (JPAC). A handout was provided outlining the local option fuel user fee distribution for each of the counties in the Five County region. This item is provided for informational purposes.

Commissioner Dale Brinkerhoff commented that the state legislature needs to consider equalizing the gas tax on all types of fuel. For example, natural gas for vehicles is not taxed at the same rate as gasoline, but those vehicles have the same impact on roads. This is a disservice to the motoring public as a whole.

Mr. Zachry Bolick, National Parks Conservation Association, introduced himself and explained their organization's status. He announced the Utah Gateways Community Forum scheduled for Thursday, November 7, 2013 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Sundance Resort, Sundance, Utah. The forum will be for public lands managers, business owners, public land partners, elected officials and tourism and economic development experts. Topics will include: enhancing visitor experience, nurturing local economies, facilitating community involvement, addressing seasonal challenges, encouraging public private partnerships, protecting natural and recreational park resources, etc. Flyers are available for those interested in attending this event.

## **IX. AREAWIDE CLEARINGHOUSE REVIEWS**

Mr. Gary Zabriskie reviewed three A-95 late arrival reviews as follows: **1) Utah State Trust Lands Administration, Range Improvement Project # 538**-- SITLA plans to cooperate with the Utah Watershed Restoration Initiative to seed and rehabilitate the 2013 Black Mountain/Rush Lake fires on trust lands in Iron and Beaver counties; and **2) Utah State Trust Lands Administration, Range Improvement Project # 539**-- The Division of Wildlife Resources is proposing to install a wildlife guzzler on trust lands in Beaver County west of Cove Fort; and **3) Utah State Trust Lands Administration, Minerals Permit No. 539**-- SITLA has received an application from Washington City for a materials permit for sand and gravel extraction on a section of trust lands for repair of a trail that was impacted during recent flood events. Staff has consulted with each county as applicable in determining supportive recommendations for these actions.

**MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER DALE BRINKERHOFF, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER CLARE RAMSAY, TO APPROVE TWO AREAWIDE CLEARINGHOUSE ACTIONS AS PER STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS. MOTION CARRIED.**

### **III. REBECCA LOCKHART, SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE**

Mr. Bryan Thiriot introduced and welcomed Speaker Rebecca Lockhart and her staff. He also recognized Representative John Westwood, Representative Jon Stanard, and Representative Brad Last who were in attendance.

Speaker Lockhart announced that she will be conducting a town hall meeting in Cedar City today and another in St. George tomorrow. She provided some background information about herself, and noted that it is interesting to learn of the many challenges for the area as a result of the federal government failure. Closure of the national parks has had a very dramatic impact on communities, tourists, and the state of Utah in general. The state of Utah may be confronted with providing funds to maintain services such as operation of food pantries, meals on wheels, and other programs that are so vital to low income and elderly individuals. Information provided regarding impacts of the shut down will be very helpful in this evaluation.

Ms. Lockhart indicated that this is the first time learning of the gas tax proposal that is circulating. However, there is also another proposal that could switch out funding received by the B & C road fund and with a sales tax as opposed to the gas tax. The legislature recognizes the importance of providing adequate funding to address transportation needs. She explained that it is a struggle to address the gas disparity. A portion of the legislative intent was to encourage natural gas and electric transportation modes because of environmental concerns. This created the disparity which does not make sense in terms of impact to our highways. The legislature also recognizes that the gas tax is a dying revenue stream, and that another funding source will be needed in the future to address roads. It is a delicate balance to encourage the use of alternative fuels but to also address the parity in the tax.

Ms. Lockhart addressed urbanized and smaller non-urbanized areas in terms of establishing districts throughout the state. Representatives endeavor to use a holistic view of the entire state of Utah to make decisions that are good for everyone and not just their particular district. Governor Herbert recently named Spencer Cox, who has a rural background, as the new Lieutenant Governor. Representatives from the rural portions of the state have established a rural caucus that meets every Friday to discuss issues of concern. A number of districts throughout the state have agriculture and water issues in common. Representative Jon Stanard explained that he views his district in Washington County as rural taking into account all of Washington County. He reported that rural legislators work well together to focus on all issues.

Commissioner Jim Matson mentioned HB 164, the amount of utility in dealing with the federal government, and indemnification issues that also come into play. The original bill had this content, but it was struck from the bill. This is a huge deal for counties, and the Utah Association of Counties (UAC) will be working to push this discussion during the upcoming legislative session. He noted that Governor Herbert has also been asked to get involved in this issue. Ms. Lockhart indicated that the influence of counties on the Governor will be very helpful. The legislature would like to help in doing the right thing, but the Executive Branch will need to be behind any legislation. It was mentioned that effects of the Affordable Care Act will come back on counties in terms of substance and mental health issues and those on Medicaid that are in poverty. Some individuals will not be eligible for

a government subsidy because they are above the poverty level. These are issues that the state will need to address in the future.

Ms. Carolyn White, Beaver County School District Representative, expressed the School District's displeasure with the legislative action to grade schools. This is very political and does not help the child at all in terms of what is happening in the classroom. It is demeaning to teachers and the school boards because it does not really tell the story of what is happening in the schools. Federal and state requirements take away so much time that could be spent in the classroom to better focus on the students. Ms. Lockhart expressed her appreciation for input in this regard and indicated that the Legislature will be working during the next session to address some of these issues. The 90% grading and curve issues will be readdressed. The main purpose of the grading is to determine where attention needs to be focused and what can be learned from schools that are doing a good job. Ms. White mentioned that the UCAT system will be coming out in the near future as well, and it is difficult to understand the need for additional grading of schools. All of the government regulations, as well as directives received through the State Office of Education, are resulting in the loss of focus on the classroom. There is a need to clarify the role of the legislature, State Office of Education, State School Board and local School Boards.

Ms. Lockhart thanked Mayor Deutschlander for hosting the luncheon and meeting at the new public safety facility. She also thanked the Steering Committee for allowing her to observe and provide comments.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 13, 2013 in St. George at the Five County Association of Governments office at 10:00 a.m.

**MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER MIKE DALTON, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER DALE BRINKERHOFF, TO ADJOURN.**

The meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m.