

# Five County Association of Governments

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## MINUTES

### FIVE COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

#### STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2021

1:00 P.M.

IRON COUNTY COURTHOUSE BUILDING; 2<sup>nd</sup> FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM  
68 S. 100 E. ; PAROWAN, UTAH

#### MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE IN-PERSON

Commissioner Wade Hollingshead, Chair  
Commissioner Jerry Taylor, Vice Chair  
Commissioner Paul Cozzens  
Commissioner Andy Gant  
Commissioner Gil Almquist  
Dale Brinkerhoff  
Tyler Fails  
LaRene Cox

#### OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE IN-PERSON

David Busk  
Bryan Thiriot  
Gary Zabriskie  
Alyssa Gamble

#### OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE BY TELEPHONE

Michel Day  
Kent Page  
Henrie Walton

#### REPRESENTING

Beaver County Commission Representative  
Garfield County Commission Representative  
Iron County Commission Representative  
Kane County Commission Representative  
Washington County Commission Representative  
Iron County School Board Representative  
Beaver County School Board Representative  
Washington Co. School Board Representative

#### REPRESENTING

Utah Department of Workforce Services  
Five County AOG Executive Director  
Five County AOG Deputy Director/CED Director  
Five County AOG Community Planner

#### REPRESENTING

Five County AOG/Director of Community Action  
Toquerville City  
Dixie State University/Assistant to the President  
for government and community relations

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BEAVER

GARFIELD

IRON

KANE

WASHINGTON

**I. WELCOME BY CHAIR.**

Beaver County Commissioner Wade Hollingshead, as Chair, welcomed everyone to the Steering Committee meeting. He opened the meeting at 1:42 p.m. after having confirmed that a quorum of the Steering Committee was present in person.

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIENCE.**

The Chair asked Five County AOG Executive Director Bryan Thiriot to lead the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**III. MEETING MINUTES FROM THE AUGUST 18, 2021 MEETING – REVIEW AND APPROVE.**

Following the reciting of the Pledge, the Chair presented Agenda Item #III. which is considering the approval of the draft minutes from the previous (August 18, 2021) Steering Committee meeting, which took place in Panguitch City at the Garfield County Courthouse building. The Chair asked if anyone had anything to bring up relative to the minutes, and seeing that there were none, called for a motion to approve.

**Commissioner Gil Almquist made a motion to approve the August 18, 2021 Steering Committee meeting minutes, as presented. Commissioner Jerry Taylor seconded the motion.**

**The Chair called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously with all Committee members in attendance voting in favor.**

**IV. CIB APPLICATIONS REVIEW AND VETTING BY THE STEERING COMMITTEE.**

Mr. Zabriskie said he put all the projects that were applied to CIB this trimester in the packet. This is the second trimester of the CIB's FY2022 and we have a range of applications. Some are fire trucks; some are for water systems. When you look at the amounts that are being asked for, that is the ask by the applicant and a few of those are likely going to drastically change when it comes to the actual presentation in front of the CIB board. He brought the Board's attention of the Hildale application. They are looking at a comprehensive water project to the tune of \$18.7 million, and their ask is all as a grant. Just so you know that this will be thoroughly reviewed by the Utah Department of Environmental Quality who has a staff person who works with the CIB board to vet the project from a financial standpoint, from the ability to pay for the project, such as through a loan. So, this is going to be vetted between now and when they go in front of the actual CIB Board that Commissioner Taylor sits on. This will be in front of the Board in January when water and sewer projects will be heard at a project review meeting. He said that is one is likely to be different than what is presented here, as far as either the scope or the finance portion of it. The CIB board may determine that they want them to maybe phase the project into multiple years, or something like that on the project.

The next is a project application for Rockville. They are asking for funding for a building on their property by the town park, adjacent to where the old church is now that is their Community Center. This new building would be used to store their maintenance equipment in the town. Right now, all of the equipment

is farmed out to various properties within the community, and they want to get it all consolidated and store inside so they can ensure it is in a safe place there.

The Chair asked if this is the first vetting of these projects at this point. Mr. Zabriskie said that they have not been vetted other than when they were working with the regional planner with the applicant, giving them some suggestions, recommendations, and sage advice. He said that sometimes they take it, and sometimes they don't take the advice. Mr. Zabriskie said that the CIB policies and procedures requires that the association of governments in each of the regions, where an application comes in from, to discuss it and determine if you as our governing body want to support that project. It is up to you to determine if you think it is something that is good for that community, based on their stated need. If you feel that it is something that is not needed, or it is duplicating something already provided, you certainly could vote to not support something. Mr. Zabriskie said that the other determination the board can make is the one in the middle of which we always had on our form, which was to remain neutral. He explained a case where you had one project that an organization in Iron County wanted to do something in Beaver County and the Beaver County Commission did not want that Iron County entity to do that up there. This Board felt it was better for them not to make a decision one way or the other and voted to remain neutral and let the CIB board deal with that. He said another recent one was the golf course in Kane County. The concern there was not necessarily that this Board doesn't support all golf courses and economic activities in general in communities and counties. He said most always they do, but in this case, it was just maybe the logistics right now, in the middle of a severe or extreme drought that the timing for something like that was not optimum as residents were being asked by the governor to let their lawns go brown. So, in that case, you voted to remain neutral.

Commissioner Almquist asked if the \$17.8 million for Hildale was partly to address the huge arsenic problem that was identified about two years ago. Mr. Zabriskie said yes, it is as they will be drilling a new source of water. Mr. Zabriskie said that his concern as a planner is that they are going to the CIB and are asking for the whole enchilada from CIB. He said that there are also other funding sources, like the Utah Division of Drinking Water that does not appear to have been investigated. Commissioner Taylor commented about this wondering out loud where is the community's "skin in the game"?

Mr. Zabriskie said that it is the same with Big Water Town requesting \$750,000 for a new fire truck. He said he was not discounting the fact that this truck is likely needed. We have a lot of communities that need new fire trucks, because the ones are very old and the one's they are using, in most cases have been hand-me-downs. They are asking for a \$75,000 grant with no loan, and no skin in the game. So basically, they are asking the CIB to buy them a fire truck for the community. Mr. Zabriskie said that every Community would line up to the CIB to have them buy them a fire truck, too. He said he does not know how you would deal with those, but maybe not into the financial so to speak that this board should maybe look at the overall value or need of a particular project. Is it something that is really needed? Is it something that you would want your communities project supported by the board? If it was duplicating a similar project?

Commissioner Taylor said that the biggest problem with grants is once that money is given, the CIB never gets anything back. He said that oil and gas leasing right now, where we used to get a hundred million a year, now we are getting less than \$12 million. Mr. Zabriskie said that a good portion of the funds coming into the fund right now are from repayments from previous loans.

The Chair asked the board member is they want to talk about the applications individually or as a group and whether we support them? He also wanted the board to decide if it wanted to look at the details of

the ratio of grant versus loan and whether we want to get into that mix, or just say it is a good project or not. The 2nd CIB Trimester project applications are the Hildale City, Rockville town, and Big Water town applications previously discussed, as well as the applications from Apple Valley town, Central Iron County Water Conservancy District, Henrieville town, and Kanarraville town which were described in detail in the board's packet.

Mr. Zabriskie noted to the Chair that the Steering Committee can vote to either support, remain neutral, or not support a particular project, but it will take a vote on this matter. The Chair called for a motion.

**Commissioner Almquist made a motion to support all seven projects. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cozzens.**

**The Chair called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously with all Committee members in attendance voting in favor.**

**V. UPDATE ON VITA (VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE) PROGRAM .**

Mr. Michael Day, CAP Director, said that we are part of a coalition of all the regional VITA coordinators. He explained that he is the regional VITA coordinator for the five counties area and there are nine different agencies across the state that are part of that coalition, and they all work together. He said that they helped each other throughout the past season, and they have a state lead who is over all of them, and they are basically in charge of doing trainings every year. He said the statewide lead is in charge of being a liaison between the IRS if we have any issues with our folks, or anything like that. And that state leader has been with CAP Utah. This year they wanted to remove that responsibility and move it somewhere else, or just end the Coalition. As we have all the parts, we all decided that it would be better if we kept everybody together, but we can give a different agency to take it on. Michael said that he talked to Bryan [Thiriot] and Gary [Zabriskie], and talked to his board, and they reached a consensus that Five County would take this on, especially since Michael had 12 years' experience with the VITA program. He said that we decided to volunteer to take that on. All the other agencies are all for this and they were very appreciative that we are going to take that. Michael said that fast forwarding a few months, as part of the new responsibilities for Five County is to right for a grant to help supplement all the different agencies in the coalition to help run the VITA program throughout the year. He said that this is the first time we have ever written for it, and it was actually just announced that we were awarded our grant.

Michael said that the AOG was awarded the IRS grant and that part of his job is to subgrant out to the other agencies in the coalition. There are seven agencies that we subcontract, which has already been done, he said he will be going out and doing monitoring visits. Michael said each year he will be preparing all of the subgrants out to the other agencies, doing monitoring visits, and will be in charge of making sure that the performance measures are met.

He said so far as providing VITA services for five counties, it is not going to change as far as where clients will go to our sites. He said that we will have all our sites up and running as have been in the past. He said that Five County has a site, Red Rocks Center has a site in St. George, Dixie State University in St. George and in Hurricane has a site, and there is a Cedar City site. And then we also have coordinators doing taxes in Beaver, Milford, Panguitch, Escalante and Kanab. He said that we are capturing the majority of whom you need to capture. Michael said he would love to get another one in the Orderville area, because he feels like there is a gap between Panguitch and Kanab. Michael said that he went to Valley High School,

so does have some connections there. He said he is going to try and push hard to get a site coordinator over there to kind of fill in that gap.

The chair asked if there were any questions for Michael and seeing that there were none, he said that he appreciated all of Michael's work on this matter. Gary Zabriskie added that this is a really big deal, and Michael has put a lot of work into this. Gary said that we have already congratulated Michael at the staff level and that this is such a big deal he wanted to be sure that Michael could make this presentation to the Board to announce it.

#### **VI. REVIEW OF CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING SURVEY.**

The Chair turned the floor over to Executive Director Bryan Thiriot, who said that this survey is kind of a follow-up from our Five and Six County Congressional briefing. He said that, in the interest of time so the meeting could finish by two o'clock, referred the Board to go right to the back page, to the bottom sentence where it says: "No other advice. Thank you for a great event, Both in terms of learning and experience."

The only negative comments were some about the accommodations. They might have just hit it on a bad day, but there were multiple complaints about the cleanliness of the rooms and some of them still had guests leaving as they were coming in.

On a more positive note, Gary Zabriskie mentioned that one of the attendees indicated on the survey that they appreciated the sunrise they saw over Bryce Canyon. In jest, Gary thanked Commissioner Taylor for doing such a good job in arranging for that sunrise, as that attendee said in the survey that it was their favorite part. Commissioner Taylor, in reply, joked that they had just painted the hoodoos for them.

Bryan Thiriot said that one reason he brought this survey to the Commissioners and board members is that we'll be looking again for another contribution so that we can keep this event going for next year, too.

#### **VII. CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING COMMITTEE COMPOSITION.**

Bryan Thiriot said that next year the "briefing" will be the second week of August. The Chair asked who is on the organizing board for the briefing? Commissioner Taylor and Commissioner Cozzens said that they were on the committee, as is Beaver County Commissioner Tammy Pearson. Bryan brought up that the dates of the briefing in 2022 will be August 7<sup>th</sup> through the 11<sup>th</sup>. It was asked how many from other areas, not counting locals, who travelled in to attend the multi-day briefing? Bryan answered that there are around twenty from DC that came. Bryan said that the three have been serving on the committee and we need to have three for the coming year. Commissioner Taylor said that he was happy to stay on the committee. It was indicated that Commissioner Pearson would like to remain on the committee and that was the consensus of the Steering Committee. A final decision on the make up did not need to take place at this meeting.

#### **VIII. MEETING SCHEDULE AND LOCATIONS FOR 2022 – DISCUSSION ONLY.**

Bryan Thiriot asked the Board if the current arrangement works with the Steering Committee meeting at 1:30 P.M. on the second Wednesday of the months it is held. The consensus was that it worked. Bryan

indicated he would be working with the two other agencies to coordinate the various board meetings in a schedule for 2022 and will bring that combined schedule back to this Board.

**IX. CONGRESSIONAL STAFF UPDATES .**

There was no congressional staff in attendance, so this was deferred to the next meeting.

**X. STATE AGENCY UPDATES.**

State agency updates were deferred to the next meeting.

**XI. UNIVERSITY UPDATES.**

The Chair turned the time over to Henrie Walton who was participating via the telephone conference call. He apologized that he was not able to be there in person as he was in Salt Lake at legislative interim meetings. He said he just wanted to provide a quick update on two items. The first is Covid, and it was good news related to Covid on the campus. This past week, they only had eight new cases. He said that they were not seeing a resurgence as students come back for the fall. He said that the campus remains fully open with all classes in person, and they had no mask mandate, nor a vaccine mandate planned. He said that they were really excited about the direction the numbers are trending.

The other thing Mr. Walton said he wanted to mention is the University's Strategic Plan. He said that one thing under President Williams, that has been quite effective at Dixie State University, since he has been there, is implementing the Strategic Plan. Mr. Walton said that at some institutions, strategic plans are something to stick together every five years and then sort of put on a shelf. He said that is not how they operate at Dixie State University. He said that they really take our strategic plan to heart and everything they do with the institution centers around that strategic plan. He said that President Williams gave a state of the University address a couple of weeks ago wherein he talked about their new strategic plan which is called: "Trailblazing Distinction". He said that the Plan has four major components. He said the first is that DSU is an open institution, meaning it is an open enrollment institution. He said that DSU offers quality education for all who want it. He said that DSU is not an institution to turn students away and they provide that open education as part of that open model. He said that they have what is called a four-year for award model. And what we have realized is that not every student needs the baccalaureate degree, and we should not be forcing or pigeonholing students in the baccalaureate degree path. Students can come to Dixie State University or Dixie Technical College and earn a certificate, which equates to their semester or year. And at that point, they have a certificate. It gets them into a specific field if they want to get out into the workforce. At that point, they are more than welcome to do so. If they want to stop out of education at that point and go get a job, they have an industry certificate that allows them to do that, but if they want to keep going, then can then get an associate degree. Again, they can drop out of that point. After the associate degree, there is an opportunity to receive an advanced industry certificate, then, finally, a baccalaureate degree. Mr. Walton said that what this allows for is for students to come and go from the University.

Mr. Walton said another element of the strategic plan is that they want to be a comprehensive University. He said that we have all heard a lot about that, the polytechnic focus that we have taken on. He said that he thinks there is some confusion around that, but what is important to remember is that they are going to remain a comprehensive institution, and we have been a mile wide and an inch deep, which means we have got one program in every area, but they don't go too deep. He said what they would like to do now

is go maybe a half a mile wide, but a mile deep in the STEM, Business, and Health Care because we know that is where the jobs are.

Mr. Walton said that, thirdly, you know the polytechnic institute. He said that he has received a lot of questions about that, and what the term polytechnic means. He said what it means is really positive and it means that they are a career-focused institution that wants to ensure that they are collaborating with business and industry for what they need. He said that DSU provides active and applied learning opportunities to our students so that when they graduate, there is a job waiting for them. He said that they want to ensure that their graduates are getting the academic experiences while in their degrees with industry that are career-focused so that they have a job waiting for them when they graduate. And that's really the basis of the strategic plan that President Williams rolled out.

He briefly discussed the name change being pushed forward and that it was currently in the hands of the State Board of Higher Education. He said that the Board of Trustees voted a couple of months ago to forward the name "Utah Tech University" to the State Board of Higher Education, so the issue has moved beyond our campus. He said that the State Board of Higher Education, per statute, will vote on whether to forward that name recommendation on to the State Legislature by November 1<sup>st</sup>.

Commissioner Almquist asked Mr. Walton what the difference was between a "tech" university and a vocational college/technical college? Mr. Walton said that vocational/technical colleges play a really important role in a community. They provide certificates and advanced certificates. He said DSU is a university that provides baccalaureate and masters' degrees, along with some certificates. He said that they both serve as pathways, and do not see it as a competition.

The Chair thanked Mr. Walton for participating in the meeting.

## **XII. LOCAL AFFAIRS DISCUSSION.**

Mr. Zabriskie brought up that an A-95 Areawide Clearinghouse review was received but because of the language in the letter accompanying the review notification, SITLA requested a response within 30 days of the date of the letter. There was no way to present the review to this Board within that time frame, so the affected county was notified by Mr. Zabriskie, and they responded directly to SITLA within the time frame that SITLA stipulated.

## **XIII. ADJOURN**

Commissioner Wade Hollingshead, as Chair, seeing that there was no further business to be conducted, thanked Commissioner Cozzens for use of their Conference Room at the Iron County Administration Building, and for their hospitality. At his discretion, and without debate, he adjourned the meeting at 1:55 p.m.

Draft minutes were transcribed and prepared by: *Gary O. Zabiskie*