

# Five County Association of Governments

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## MINUTES FIVE COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2022 1:30 P.M.

KANAB CENTER BUILDING; BOARD ROOM  
20 N. 100 E.; KANAB, UTAH

### MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE IN-PERSON

Commissioner Wade Hollingshead  
Commissioner Jerry Taylor, Chair  
Commissioner Paul Cozzens  
Commissioner Andy Gant, Vice-Chair  
Commissioner Gil Almquist  
Dale Brinkerhoff  
Melani Torgersen  
Mayor Nanette Billings  
LaRene Cox

### REPRESENTING

Beaver County Commission  
Garfield County Commission  
Iron County Commission  
Kane County Commission  
Washington County Commission  
Iron County School Board  
Garfield County Mayor's Representative  
Washington Co. Mayor's Representative  
Washington County School Board and  
Congressman Chris Stewart (Wash. Co.)

### MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE VIA PHONE

Tyler Fails  
Ralph Perkins

### REPRESENTING

Beaver County School Board  
Garfield County School Board

### OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE IN-PERSON

Bryan Thiriot  
Gary Zabriskie  
Alyssa Gamble  
Allison McCoy  
Cindy Bulloch

### REPRESENTING

Five County AOG Executive Director  
Five County AOG Deputy Director  
Five County AOG Associate Planner  
Five County Chief Financial Officer  
Congressman Chris Stewart

### **AGENDA ITEMS I & II. WELCOME & ROTATION OF CHAIR**

Commissioner Wade Hollingshead, in his final action, as Steering Committee Chair for the past year, welcomed everyone to the Five County AOG Steering Committee meeting and then turned the position of Chair over to Garfield County Commissioner Jerry Taylor. As Chair, Commissioner Taylor told those assembled he appreciated everyone's attendance either in person or on the telephone conference call. He recognized Tyler Fails, Beaver County School Board representative and Ralph Perkins, Garfield County School Board representative who were both participating via the telephone conference call. The Chair recognized that this year, 2022, is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Five County Association of Governments in 1972. He said that is quite an accomplishment. He said that we have done a lot of good over the 50 years that we have been in existence and, hopefully, we will be around for many more to do additional good things for the Five County area.

### **AGENDA ITEM III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Chair then asked Kane County Commissioner Andy Gant to lead in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **AGENDA ITEM IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JANUARY 12, 2022 MEETING**

The Chair asked if all the members had a chance to review the minutes and then called for approval of the minutes for the previous January 12, 2022 meeting.

**Commissioner Hollingshead moved to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Almquist.**

The Chair after asking for any discussion and seeing none, called for a vote.

**The vote of the members in-person and on the telephone was unanimous in the affirmative to approve the minutes as presented.**

### **AGENDA ITEM V. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS WITH INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT - REVIEW AND ACCEPT**

The Chair turned the time over to Allison McCoy who is the Chief Financial Officer at the Five County Association of Governments. She explained that the CPA firm of Hafen|Buckner

has been working on our agency's audit report for quite some time and has just completed that process for the previous fiscal year that ended June 30, 2021. She said that Mr. Steve Quinn, a CPA with Hafen|Buckner, is here to present the audited financial statements to the Board. Ms. McCoy turned the time over to Mr. Quinn. Mr. Quinn explained the format of the document. He referred to the first page of the financial statements which is the Independent Auditors Report which he read from: *"It is our opinion the financial statements referred to [above] present fairly in all material respects the respective financial position of the governmental activities and major funds of Five County Association of Governments as of June 30, 2021, and the respective changes of financial position for the year, with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America"*. Mr. Quinn said that is what an agency like ours wants to see. He said it was a good opinion and you cannot get any better than that. Mr. Quinn went through the various pages of the report highlighting some key changes in programs from previous years. He mentioned the one-time large increases in several budgets because of Covid-related funding that was passed through various programs at the AOG. After going through the various programs Mr. Quinn referred to the internal controls section. He said that during the audit, they did not identify any deficiency of internal controls. If they had, it would be considered a material weakness. He said that the results of their tests disclosed no instances of non-compliance, or other matters that are required to be reported under government auditing standards. The Chair was informed that acceptance of the Audit Report would require a motion and a vote, and he called for a motion.

**Commissioner Almquist moved that the Steering Committee accept the Financial Statements with Independent Auditor's Report and to thank Steve Quinn individually, and the firm of Hafen|Buckner CPAs, for their work on the report.**

**The motion was seconded by Commissioner Paul Cozzens.**

The Chair after asking for any discussion and seeing none, called for a vote.

**The vote of the members in-person and on the phone was unanimous in the affirmative.**

Mr. Dale Brinkerhoff commented after the vote that he thinks [the Audit Report] speaks extremely well of the management and accountability of the Five County Association of Governments.

**AGENDA ITEM VI. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) ANNUAL ACTION PLAN**

The Chair invited Ms. Alyssa Gamble, Associate Planner at the Five County Association of Governments, to make a presentation on the draft Annual Action Plan. Ms. Gamble told the Board that there is a draft and an executive summary in their packets. She said that Five County AOG staff recently updated our draft of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Annual Action Plan and explained that this plan is an opportunity to identify local housing and community development needs through community dialogue, and then align those needs with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) CDBG program, and the Utah Small Cities CDBG program that operates the CDBG program in our state. The data in this Plan goes to the state and the state compiles it into their Statewide Annual Action Plan, which is reported to HUD. Five County is responsible for reporting on housing and community development priorities, how we develop rating and ranking of applications to fund projects, capital improvement needs, homelessness, and other special needs, which go into this plan. She said we coordinate with multiple agencies, Continuum of Care, housing authorities, nonprofits, communities and counties in our region, and other organizations. She said she was here today to tell the Board that we have gone into a 30-day public comment period for the plan as part of the process. She said that we will answer any comments we receive. She said that the public comment period began on January 28<sup>th</sup> and the comment period will close on February 27<sup>th</sup>. She said that the AOG staff will hold a public hearing on Monday, February 28, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. at the Five County St. George office to address any comments that are submitted. She said that the hearing will also be available online, and she will send everyone the link. She said that if anyone has any questions for them to feel free to contact her. She said her contact information is on the draft plan in their agenda packets. Ms. Gamble also said that the draft plan is also available on the Five County AOG website for review. She said that after any necessary updates or changes have been made, the final document will be presented at the next steering committee meeting for approval. Mr. Gary Zabriskie mentioned that one of the requirements we have to do is consult with service agencies in the region to assist in developing the plan and identifying gaps and needs. We report that consultation in the Annual Action Plan with consultation forms. He referred to page 29 of the plan. He said that

this is where we put the consultation forms for different agencies like Cedar City Housing Authority, Beaver Housing Authority, Habitat for Humanity, and special service districts, etc. These agencies all provide information to us which we compile and get their opinions on what priorities ought to be. Ms. Gamble explained that this is really a year-long planning process, and it is not something we just engage in right before the due date. She said we are constantly working with providers in our region. Ms. Gamble said that traditionally this plan does not normally receive a lot of comments. Mr. Zabriskie said that we have received more comments in the last two or three years than were received in the 25 years of the program and throughout all those years we did a lot of outreach, so that is a positive thing. He mentioned that this is like anything one does, if those things that we are doing are not bothering somebody immediately, and they are doing good things, most people do not comment, especially when they are fixing things in their community. Many only make comments when something they are opposed to is proposed. Ms. Gamble said we would love to receive comments and if this is something that the board members think is helpful to share in your community, to please do so. The Chair thanked Ms. Gamble for her presentation.

#### **AGENDA ITEM VII. CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING UPDATE**

The Chair turned the time over to Mr. Bryan Thiriot, Executive Director at the Five County Association of Governments for a Congressional Briefing update. Mr. Thiriot explained that the Five and Six County Congressional Briefing activity will be the fourth year that we have been combined with Six County. He said that the purpose is to get Congressional staffers from Washington DC out as boots on the ground here in Utah. He said that there was a conflict of the original dates that we had scheduled this, so we are going to have to switch to the 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, and 17<sup>th</sup> of August for the Congressional Briefing. He said because of that we will switch back to the 10<sup>th</sup> for the Five County Steering Committee meeting. Mr. Thiriot said the main reason for this is last year we had only one Senate staffer come and attend with us. He said we were informed that, on the Senate side, if we could delay it just one week and move it to the 15<sup>th</sup> through the 17<sup>th</sup> we will be able to get both House and hopefully more Senate staffers. He said we are relying on counties, cities and towns, and state agencies giving money or scholarships to bring these people out, and so far, we have about twenty on the list. Mr. Thiriot said this is so important because we not only talk

about public lands, but we actually show them. He said, unfortunately, people in DC have no idea what public lands mean until they stand out on Powell Point and look out over the country, and as far as they can see, it is public lands. He also said that they really do not understand what wildfires mean that get out of control until they actually stand there and can see that. We know what has happened with our forest being burned and then flooded with rain. He said it is a big difference to bring them out here so that when they go back to DC they can relate to and know what it means when talking about, and legislating, public lands. He said we can show them major items we are concerned about like forest fires and the wild horse problems. He said with these briefings we can take them out and show them what we do with the wild horses, so it is a big deal. Mr. Thiriot said if the Board knows of any entities and government agencies that would like to contribute along with the counties, please have them contact him. The Chair said that it is one thing to see this area on the screen, but it is another thing to actually get out there. He said we put them on horseback, we put them on ATVs, we put them on hikes. He said we put them right out on Powell Point. He said they get a lot in those few days.

#### **AGENDA ITEM VIII. DEVELOP A LIST OF UTAH LEGISLATURE ATV TRAIL RIDES**

The Chair again recognized Mr. Bryan Thiriot for this agenda item to develop a list of Utah Legislature ATV trail ride. Mr. Thiriot explained that last year was the first year that Five and Six county has worked directly with our Utah legislators and did an ATV event with them that looked at Forest Service issues. He said that last year we had the Speaker of the House out with us. Mr. Thiriot informed the Board that this year's ride is going to be July 13<sup>th</sup>, but we are still trying to identify the location of the ride. He said that is why he is reaching out right now. He said this is during the summer, but any ideas of a location that you would like to do a ride to look at various public lands issues, please get them to him. He said we will also use these as a working list for future rides, so we kind of can work through those throughout the years. Mr. Thiriot indicated this is one day and one location, so it is not likely going between both regions. He said in the future it can rotate around.

#### **AGENDA ITEM IX. OPEN DISCUSSION OF STATE LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

The Chair invited the Board to discuss any pending state legislation from the 2022 General Session and its potential to impact communities and counties, especially in rural Utah. It

was brought up the Legislature killed a bill that would have made for state-wide “ranked” voting. It was mentioned that some areas in the state were doing this “ranked” system of voting on a trial basis. Another discussion took place on open meetings and whether the public has to have an opportunity at every public meeting to get up and say something or discuss anything even those things that are not on that meeting’s agenda. The discussion was not regarding public hearings which by their design is when public comments and suggestions are solicited. This was more about meetings where the officials elected to represent the public are required to allow public participation beyond simply observing the conduct of government by those officials. There was discussion of the incentives bill that provides larger incentives to film and television producers to come into Utah and produce their products here, with financial benefits for them if they employ local residents of Utah in their productions. Well known producers are looking intently at this area of the state, including Bear Grylls, well known for his “Bear Grylls Gone Wild” television series. They recently had him and his people fly into the Cedar City airport, to look at filming sites in the area, and then fly out of the St. George airport. The Board discussed pending legislation that could restrict counties and municipalities from developing and enforcing ordinances or restrictions on CAPOs (Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations). It was mentioned that if they continue to pass these types of legislation, it is just a steppingstone towards when you will have no more planning zoning within your counties, or maybe even in your communities. It was consensus of the Board that this is another kind of an overreach of power. Another item discussed was a bill providing an additional source of funding for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) in rural Utah.

#### **AGENDA ITEM X. CONGRESSIONAL STAFF UPDATES**

The Chair turned the time over the Congressional staff for Utah’s 2<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District Congressman Chris Stewart. Ms. Cindy Bulloch introduced herself and explained that the Congressman decided in replacing Mr. Adam Snow, who is now a county commissioner in Washington County, to have one person on his staff work specifically in Washington County and have another staff person work with the other counties. She explained that LaRene Cox has just recently been hired to handle affairs for the Congressman in Washington County. She explained that their office had recently spent time at Lake Powell with the National Park Service and some of the private concessioners. She said concerns with the lake were

discussed but they all wanted to stress that the lake is not a dying lake, that it is still open, and there is still recreation and other uses there. She mentioned that there are several ramps that are not currently accessible, and it appears that Bullfrog and Stateline will be the only ramps accessible to boaters this year. Ms. Cox said that when the lake is full, there is 3,000 miles of shoreline, which is almost more shoreline than the entire U.S. East Coast. She said that right now there is about 1,500 miles of shoreline. She said that it will be interesting how much the water is going down compared to the year before, because it was her understanding, when they went and talked about it, the Bureau of Reclamation is just dumping the water out to fill Lake Mead. She said that the state and the Congressman want to revisit the Colorado River Compact. She said there is a need to renegotiate more water coming in and less water going out, but they have people on the other end saying they have a contract, and you must stay up with that and let so much water out. The Chair brought up that when Glen Canyon Dam forming Lake Powell was being built back in the 1960s, you could walk along the Escalante River from the top to the bottom where it empties into the Colorado River (now Lake Powell) and hardly see a tree. He said that now you cannot get through the river, partly because of all the trees that have grown up in there, especially the invasive non-native Russian olives trees. He said that they have tried to remove them, but they're still there, and the river drainage is just overgrown with trees. He said that it has got to be taking a lot of the water out from the system. Ms. Bulloch said they are continuing to work with Jeff Bradybaugh, Superintendent of Zion National Park to see can keep a reservation system out of the park. She said that is a work in progress and said she has attended meetings on this with Adam Snow. She said she has spoken directly with Superintendent Bradybaugh, and he is aware of what we all want. She finished by bringing up the upcoming "town hall" get-togethers that the Congressman will be holding and said on these, and a number of other issues, they will just keep plugging along.

#### **AGENDA ITEM XI. STATE AGENCY UPDATES**

There were no updates from state agencies.

#### **AGENDA ITEM XII. UNIVERSITY UPDATES**

There were no updates from the two universities in this region.

**AGENDA ITEM XIII. LOCAL AFFAIRS DISCUSSION**

The Chair asked if there were any other items of local affairs that anyone wanted to discuss.

Seeing that there were none, he moved on to the final agenda item.

**AGENDA ITEM XIV. ADJOURNMENT**

The Chair again thanked all for attending the meeting and seeing that there was no further business to discuss or act upon, using his non-debatable prerogative, adjourned the meeting at 3:30 p.m.

DRAFT