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**MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) SHORT-TERM PROJECTS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD THURSDAY, APRIL 14, 2022, AT 3:00 P.M. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED ELECTRONICALLY WITHOUT A PHYSICAL ANCHOR LOCATION**

**Board Members:** Chair Nann Worel

Mayor Mike Weichers

Mayor Roger Bourke

Max Doilney, Ex Officio Member

**Staff:** Ralph Becker, CWC Executive Director

Blake Perez, CWC Deputy Director

Lindsey Nielsen, CWC Communications Director

Kaye Mickelson, CWC Office Administrator

**Others:** John Knoblock

Aaron London

Steve Van Maren

Chris Cawley

Bekee Hotze

Lise Brunhart

Alex Schmidt

Pat Shea

**OPENING**

1. **Commissioner Nann Worel will Conduct the Meeting as Chair of the Short-Term Projects Committee.**

Chair Nann Worel called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

The Legislature, pursuant to Section 52-4-207(4), required the Committee to make a determination, which was as follows:

‘I, as the Chair of the Short-Term Projects Committee of the Central Wasatch Commission (“CWC”), hereby determine that conducting Board or Committee Meetings at any time during the next 30 days at an anchor location presents a substantial risk to the health and safety of those who may be present at the anchor location. The COVID-19 pandemic remains and the recent rise of more infectious variants of the virus merits continued vigilance to avoid another surge in cases, which could again threaten to overwhelm Utah’s healthcare system.’

1. **The Committee Will Deliberate Over Project Proposals with the Goal of Arriving at a Consensus and Recommendation for the Commission to be Made During the May 2, 2022, CWC Board Meeting.**

CWC Communications Director, Lindsey Nielsen welcomed those present and noted that Ex Officio Member, Max Doilney, was previously a member of the Short-Term Projects Committee. Chair Worel, Mayor Mike Weichers, and Mayor Roger Bourke were new to the Committee. Ms. Nielsen reported that at a CWC Board Retreat in 2019, the organization decided to seek out short-term projects that need monetary assistance. The result was the Short-Term Projects Call For Ideas. Ms. Nielsen reported that the first-year ideas were accepted was in 2020. Since then, the organization has opened the Short-Term Projects Call For Ideas on an annual basis. During the current Short-Term Projects Committee Meeting, the Committee would consider the latest project proposals.

Ms. Nielsen informed the Committee that there were 17 project proposals submitted in 2022. 15 of the proposals became finalists. CWC Staff determined the finalists by reviewing all of the submitted projects and weighing them against specific criteria. The criteria included the amount of money requested, whether it was actually a short-term project, whether there were community partners involved if the project falls within the CWC project area, and whether the project satisfied one of the four tenants included in the Mountain Accord. Ms. Nielsen reported that $50,000 was allocated for short-term projects in the fiscal year budget. In the past, the Short-Term Projects Committee elected to ask for additional funds from unspecified funding or reserve funding to fund additional projects, when appropriate. That was not required, but it was something the Committee could consider.

Mayor Weichers wondered if the Short-Term Projects Committee was required or expected to fund the entire amount that a proposal asked for. Ms. Nielsen clarified that the Committee is not required to fund the full request. The amount could be determined by Committee Members. She shared the grading matrix that would be used throughout the meeting. Ms. Nielsen would fill out the matrix based on the comments shared. Ex-Officio Doilney noted that in previous years, the Short-Term Projects Committee discussed whether an applicant could find additional monies to fund the project. He explained that the Committee considered whether the project would still be able to move forward if less than the requested amount was awarded.

Chris Cawley asked about the total amount requested. Ms. Nielsen reported that the 15 finalist projects totaled approximately $170,000. Mayor Weichers wondered if the Committee could request additional information or if the Short-Term Projects Committee would make a final decision at the current meeting. Ms. Nielsen explained that recommendations would be made during the current meeting. The recommendations would be shared with the Executive/Budget/Audit Committee on April 18, 2022, and with the CWC Board at the May 2, 2022, CWC Board Meeting. Final approval would come from the CWC Board. She noted that in addition to CWC Staff review, the finalist projects were reviewed by the U.S. Forest Service and Salt Lake City Public Utilities. The finalist projects had already been greenlit by those management agencies.

Ms. Nielsen reported that in previous years, the cap for funding requests was $20,000, but this year, the cap was $15,000. That was adjusted to reflect the lower amount of money budgeted for projects. She overviewed the finalist proposals and started with the 2022 Tri-Canyon Trail Deferred Maintenance and Invasive Weed Control Project. It was submitted by Joanna Wheelton from the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation. Ms. Nielsen noted that it was a large-scale project and there were many community partners. The total project cost was $244,343 and the request was for $15,000 from the CWC. She pointed out that the CWC previously funded the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation and awarded them $20,000 for a project last year.

Chair Worel noted that a large number of volunteers would be used to maximize the funds. Mayor Bourke stated that the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation proposal had environmental benefits and would encourage members of the public to maintain, preserve, and protect the environment. Mayor Weichers agreed with the comments shared. However, he pointed out that $20,000 had been awarded to the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation last year and the request was for almost one-third of the short-term project's budget for the current year. He was in favor of funding a partial amount instead because there were enough projects partners to ensure the work was completed. Chair Worel agreed that a lower amount of funding may be best. Mayor Weichers suggested $5,000 or $10,000.

Ex-Officio Doilney explained that last year he reviewed the projects and ranked them based on what he felt should be fully funded, partially funded, or not funded. Once the Committee Members determined which projects should be fully funded, there could be discussions about the remainder.

The second finalist project was for Fixed Anchor Maintenance Wasatch Rock Climbing Routes. Ms. Nielsen reported that the applicant was Julia Geisler from the Salt Lake Climbers Alliance. She noted the Salt Lake Climbers Alliance's representation on the CWC Stakeholders Council. Additionally, the CWC had worked with the Salt Lake Climbers Alliance on many projects in the past and had previously funded project proposals through the short-term projects grant. She noted that the previous projects were not related to anchor maintenance. Ms. Nielsen explained that for sports climbing, metal anchors were installed to ensure safety. The Salt Lake Climbers Alliance proposal was related to that need. While the total project cost was $105,000, the amount requested was $10,000. There were many public and private partners contributing as well.

Mayor Weichers felt that the project related to safety and should be prioritized. He pointed out that while there was an ability to fundraise for the project, he believed it was important for the CWC to contribute some amount to the proposal. Mayor Bourke pointed out that the fixed anchor maintenance would benefit a narrow segment of the population. He would be more inclined to fund projects that had a wider reach. Chair Worel agreed and it was determined that the project would be discussed further once the other proposals had been outlined and reviewed.

Ms. Nielsen shared the second application from the Salt Lake Climbers Alliance, which was the Jacob's Ladder Trail Reroute to Lone Peak Cirque. It was a trail maintenance and rerouting project. She stated that the CWC directed short-term project funding to the project in 2021. The project had been delayed because it was difficult to access the area and because there were additional budget needs. As a result, the application was back before the Short-Term Projects Committee. The updated timeline for completion was fall 2022. The estimated cost of the project was $195,000 and $10,000 had been requested. Mayor Bourke asked whether the funding from 2021 had been spent. Ms. Nielsen confirmed this. A lot of work had been done, but the project was not yet completed. Mayor Weichers felt it would be appropriate to step back from the project as funding had been given in 2021. Ex-Officio Doilney commented that Salt Lake Climbers Alliance did a lot of volunteer work on the trails in Big Cottonwood Canyon, Little Cottonwood Canyon, and Millcreek Canyon. There as discussions regarding the trail and erosion issues that would be resolved through the project.

The next proposal was for the Big Cottonwood Geosigns Replacement Initiative. It was submitted by Greg Gavin from the Utah Geological Association. Ms. Nielsen reported that the project was funded for $3,000 last year, and with that $3,000, three different signs were installed. The current application was for the same project, but more signs would be installed throughout popular trailheads in Big Cottonwood Canyon. There was a partnership with the Big Cottonwood Canyon Association, which has representation on the CWC Stakeholders Council, the Utah Geological Survey, and the Forest Service. She explained that the installation of the signs was fairly quick, and the requested amount was $6,000. Mayor Bourke felt that the cost of the signs was high. Mayor Weichers agreed. Since the organization contributed in 2021, the Committee was uncertain about further funding.

Ms. Nielsen reported that there was also a proposal for SR 65 Winter Multi-Use Trail Grooming. The application was from Chris Magerl from the Utah Nordic Alliance. The project was submitted last year and was not funded at any level. She noted that the requested amount was $14,804. The project would provide grooming of a multi-use winter trail off of Parleys Canyon. Few projects were funded in that area. 7,500 people were recorded using the trail. Chair Worel noted that the application specified that funds were being sought to replace the work snowmobile. She believed that made this a capital request and wondered if that was traditionally handled within short-term projects. Ms. Nielsen explained that in the past, funds allocated to the Wasatch Graffiti Busters went toward the purchase of a power washer. Mayor Weichers asked about Salt Lake City Public Utilities being a partner. He wondered if this was a trail that benefited them in some way. Ms. Nielsen believed the trail abutted some water that was owned by the Salt Lake City Public Utilities. She clarified that there had been communication with Salt Lake City Public Utilities to ensure that the application was appropriate, but there had likely not been any financial contribution.

The next proposal was for the Wasatch Backcountry Alliance Shuttle. It was submitted by Aaron London from the Wasatch Backcountry Alliance. The request was for $15,000 and the total cost was $45,000. The funds would go toward a shuttle program. Ms. Nielsen reported that the intention was to expand the shuttle program into Big Cottonwood Canyon. She had asked Mr. London if he had the necessary permits to deliver riders to Forest Service managed and owned trailheads. He stated that he did not have those permits. Since those permits were not in hand, the funding would go toward maintaining the existing program instead. The existing program involved a shuttle to non-Forest Service areas in Little Cottonwood Canyon.

Salt Lake District Ranger, Bekee Hotze clarified that a permit is required if there is an impact on National Forest System Lands. For instance, all of the shuttles that were dropping people off at Guardsman Pass needed a permit. There was one shuttle company currently under permit. If the Wasatch Backcountry Alliance shuttle made an impact on National Forest System Lands, a permit was needed. Ms. Nielsen noted that the project operated in previous years. She wondered if permits had been issued in the past. Ms. Hotze stated that they had not. The only place the shuttle was able to drop off was at Alta Ski Lifts. That had been permitted because it was connected to the ski area, but if the intention was to drop off visitors at trailheads, a permit was needed.

Mr. London clarified the drop-off location and stated that there was also a trail counter program in place, which could be used to demonstrate the impact of backcountry users on National Forest Service Lands. Mayor Bourke felt that the shuttle program was beneficial because the intention was to remove people from vehicles and encourage them to use transit. Mr. London added that there was an intention to reach out to Solitude as well about an additional drop-off point. There was discussion regarding potential drop-off locations and permitting. Mr. London stated that the goal was to use the shuttle to distribute wag bags to backcountry users in the future. He reported that there was no charge to ride the shuttle but there was a recommended donation amount to the 501(3)(c) organization. Chair Worel was in support of projects that would remove vehicles from the road but was concerned about the impacts on Forest Service Lands. Ms. Hotze asked Mr. London to contact her following the Short-Term Projects Meeting to discuss permits. Mayor Bourke and Mayor Weichers expressed support for the project but were not certain about the level of funding that would be appropriate.

Ms. Nielsen reported that two finalist projects were submitted by John Knoblock from Trails Utah. She explained that Trails Utah has representation on the CWC Stakeholders Council, and two projects were funded in 2020 through the short-term projects grant program. The first project was for Upper Millcreek Wasatch Crest Trail Maintenance. The request was for $13,000 and it was currently 50% funded. She noted that the proposal was consistent with the Forest Service program of work and did not need any additional permitting. If funded at the $13,000 level, the work could be completed by October 2022. The trail was eroded in parts and soil needed to be transplanted. It was the last mile of the trail that required heavy maintenance.

Mr. Knoblock stated that the last mile coming down into Millcreek Canyon was originally the old Red Pine Road. It was never constructed as a trail. As a road, it was not built to have the proper out slope. As a result, the trail had a waist-deep ditch down the middle. It is heavily used and needed to be converted into a recreational trail. Mr. Knoblock explained that it would be very difficult for a hand crew to move the material and a mini excavator would allow the work to be done properly and efficiently. Ms. Nielsen shared some of the maps that were included with the application.

Ex-Officio Doilney left the meeting at approximately 4:00 p.m.

Ms. Nielsen shared the second application from Trails Utah. It was the Big Cottonwood Canyon to Ferguson Bonneville Shoreline Trail Completion project. The request was for $4,000 and the total project cost was $8,000. The other funds would come from the Forest Service. Ms. Nielsen added that the project could be completed without any additional permits during the current working season. Ms. Hotze stated that this was a project that the Forest Service would support. Committee Members were in support of the project and wanted to fund it fully.

The next proposal was a reapplication for a project that was submitted to the Short-Term Projects Committee last year. Ms. Nielsen explained that it was the Restoration of Riparian and Beaver Habitat to Willow Heights Pond and was submitted by Lise Brunhart. The requested amount was $2,000. Last year, the project was submitted without permits in hand, and the Committee was not comfortable funding the project. However, all of the Committee Members at that time were in support of the project itself. In the fall, Ms. Brunhart informed the CWC that the permits were in hand and asked the organization to reconsider funding the project. $1,500 was allocated to the project. Since it was a late allocation of funding, weather impacted the work, and they were unable to complete the project. The additional request now was due to increased costs for project materials in the new work season. Ms. Brunhart reported that $2,000 needed was to purchase hedge clippers and a few rolls of the biodegradable coconut matting, which would be put in the stream bed to trap silts. She added that if the pond was lost, it would be detrimental to the moose population.

Mayor Bourke asked if the project was intended to bring beavers back into the area or if the goal was to create a beaver-like environment. Ms. Brunhart explained that when beaver dam analogs were built, they attracted beavers because animals were attracted by the trapped water. Additionally, building the beaver dam analogs would help keep the riparian habitat intact and could help save the water that was already in the pond. Committee Members wanted to fund the project fully.

The next proposal was from Utah Open Lands and was a reapplication for the Bonanza Flat Trailhead Transit to Trails. The pilot program was very successful last year, and it was run in partnership with Utah Open Lands and Park City Municipal. The CWC funded the project last year at $13,000. Ms. Nielsen reported that the program ran a free shuttle from Park City to multiple trailheads, such as Guardsman Pass, Bonanza Flat, and Mid-Mountain. Usage was high and it ran through October. Chair Worel commented that Bonanza Flat was being loved to death. There were people parking everywhere and it was damaging the habitat there. The pilot program was very successful and was able to keep a lot of vehicles off the road. She was in support of the project.

Friends of Alta submitted an application for the Friends of Alta Junior Ranger Activity Book. The requested amount was $1,500 or less, with $1,150 towards printing and $300 towards badges. Ms. Nielsen explained that this was an educational item and was for children to use. Chair Worel noted that Friends of Alta had not asked the Forest Service or the Town of Alta for funding. Ms. Hotze noted that she had reviewed the applications in terms of whether they were consistent with the Forest Service program of work. Education was consistent and was one of the pillars of the Forest Service. In terms of monetary contributions, the Forest Service program of work was typically set at least a year out. It would be difficult to find additional monies at this late date. Mayor Bourke liked the idea of getting children involved in environmental protection and believed it should be funded. Mayor Weichers agreed that at least some level of funding should be awarded.

Ms. Nielsen noted that there was an application for funding from the Wasatch Graffiti Busters. Mary Young did the development work for that organization and $5,000 had been requested. It was important to note that Wasatch Graffiti Busters had been heavily funded by the CWC. In 2020, the short-term projects grant program funded $2,600 for a small power washer. In 2021, the CWC received a State appropriation and in that delineation of funding, graffiti abatement work had been earmarked. $4,700 was directed to the Wasatch Graffiti Busters as a result. The reason there was an additional request for $5,000 was due to the organization needing another high-power washer. Discussions were had about the graffiti issues in the area. Chair Worel noted that graffiti removal needed to happen. The Committee would determine the funding level later on in the meeting.

The next proposal was from the Wasatch Mountain Institute for Mobile Education and Interpretation in the Wasatch. It was submitted by Hilary Lambert, a member of the CWC Stakeholders Council. The request was for $13,000, which was the full amount for the project. Wasatch Mountain Institute was a partner with other non-profits, such as Save Our Canyons and Summit Land Conservancy, and it would be a year-long project. Ms. Nielsen reported that the project would target three specific trails in the CWC project area, and it would be used as a visitor engagement and education tool. Mayor Weichers wondered if there was any redundancy between the proposal and what other organizations were doing in the area. Ms. Hotze did not believe there was. Ms. Nielsen stated that citizen science was a facet of the Environmental Dashboard. There would be ways for citizens to submit feedback there, but it was not the main focus of the Environmental Dashboard. Citizen science would be the main focus of the Wasatch Mountain Institute project.

Ms. Nielsen reported that the next application was from a private citizen, Keith Alleman, for Rattlesnake Trailhead Bicycle Parking. The request was for $1,000 for a physical bicycle parking structure. Mr. Alleman had been in conversation with Ms. Hotze and there was support for the project. This was the first short-term project application for bicycle parking. There were no permits needed and the work could be completed quickly. Ms. Hotze was not sure how many bicycles could be parked in the proposed parking structure, but the area is appropriate for that type of structure. The idea was that visitors could ride their bicycles to the trailhead instead of taking a vehicle. It would then be possible to hike the trail itself. The Committee expressed support.

The last project proposal was from Save Our Canyons. Grace Tyler submitted the application for a Wasatch Wilderness Stewardship and Education Project. The requested amount was $9,983, which was the full amount for the program. Ms. Nielsen explained that the project had to do with trail maintenance but included educational aspects as well. The funds would go towards trail crews and trail work but would also educate the public in the process. It was proposed to start in May 2022 and end in October 2022. She noted that the wag bag kiosk project that was proposed by Save Our Canyons at the base of the Jacobs Ladder Trailhead was funded in 2020. Chair Worel noted some inconsistencies on the application forms and asked Ms. Nielsen to reach out for clarification. Ms. Hotze asked if the applicant planned to have temporary signboards. Those would be preferable and tended to attract more attention. Ms. Nielsen promised to reach out to the applicant.

Ms. Tyler was present and able to address the inconsistencies. She clarified that it was a $1,000 ask. The overall budget for the wilderness stewardship project was $9,983. Save Our Canyons would partner with the Forest Service to assist with trail maintenance. The intention was to do 8 to 10 days with the Forest Service, averaging 50 to 70 miles with over 100 different volunteers. Committee Members were in support of the project at the $1,000 funding level. Ms. Tyler addressed the comments made by Ms. Hotze about signage. She explained that the signs were just to let volunteers know where they needed to go. There could be an a-frame sign placed, but nothing would be added to any existing Forest Service signs, as that could create confusion.

Mayor Bourke needed to leave the meeting to join another meeting. However, Mr. Cawley from the Town of Alta was present. He asked him to act as a proxy.

Chair Worel asked Ms. Nielsen to add up the total cost of the projects the Committee had already decided to fund. Ms. Nielsen reported that the projects would cost $54,500, assuming all of the projects were funded in full. Mayor Weichers wondered if either of the Salt Lake Climbers Alliance projects were included in that total. Ms. Nielsen denied this. He felt it would be worthwhile to put some funds toward one of those projects. Chair Worel agreed with the suggestion. It sounded like the Jacob's Ladder Trail Reroute to Lone Peak Cirque would have a wider reach.

Ms. Nielsen reported that if the Committee added the Jacob's Ladder Trail Reroute to the Lone Peak Cirque Project to the funding list, the total would be $64,500. Mayor Weichers suggested that the Committee look through the projects that they intended to fund and determine appropriate amounts. Some would not be funded at the full amount. Ms. Nielsen overviewed the projects and explained that the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation had requested $15,000. Chair Worel noted that Mayor Weichers had initially suggested between $5,000 and $10,000. She suggested that the Committee fund $7,500. Mayor Weichers agreed to the suggestion.

The Jacob's Ladder Trail Reroute to Lone Peak Cirque project had a request of $10,000. Mayor Weichers and Chair Worel determined that $5,000 would be appropriate. The Wasatch Backcountry Alliance Shuttle had requested $15,000. Mayor Weichers understood that the intention was to expand to Solitude. He wondered whether that would be done with the requested funds. Ms. Nielsen reported that the aim of the short-term projects program was to fund projects that do not require permitting or have permits in hand. Any funding allocated to the shuttle program would be for areas that were approved by the Forest Service, but she did not know that this could be guaranteed. Mayor Weichers felt it was worthwhile to remove people from their personal vehicles and supported full funding. Ms. Hotze asked that there be language to state that the funding was for the Alta area and anything at Solitude would require a permit due to the impact on Forest Service lands.

The Big Cottonwood Canyon to Ferguson Bonneville Shoreline Trail Completion project had a requested amount of $4,000. Committee Members wanted to fund that fully. The Restoration of Riparian and Beaver Habitat to Willow Heights Pond had a request of $2,000. Committee Members also wanted to fund that project in full. The Bonanza Flat Trailhead Transit to Trails program had a request of $15,000. Chair Worel felt that removing cars from the area was essential and believed this would be money well spent. Mayor Weichers agreed. Mr. Cawley agreed that the area was busy and there was not a lot of room for vehicles. It sounded like a great project to reduce vehicle congestion. However, he wondered how the program would continue to receive funding in the future. Chair Worel asked if a reservation system would be beneficial. Ms. Hotze stated that she could have those discussions with the applicant following the Short-Term Projects Committee Meeting.

Ms. Nielsen noted that the Committee had allocated $48,500. She asked about the $1,500 request for the Friends of Alta Junior Ranger Activity Book. Mayor Weichers and Chair Worel suggested funding the project at $750. Ms. Nielsen noted that the Short-Term Projects Committee could recommend that reserves or unspecified funding be used to fund additional projects. However, that would need to be discussed at the May 2, 2022, CWC Board Meeting. There were two additional projects the Committee wanted to fund in full, which would result in a total of $51,250. Chair Worel believed the additional $1,250 could be requested from the CWC Board. Mayor Weichers agreed.

The Committee was comfortable with the decisions made about the short-term projects. Ms. Nielsen explained that the recommendations would be discussed by the Executive/Budget/Audit Committee on April 18, 2022, and would then be discussed by the CWC Board on May 2, 2022. If the recommendations were approved by the CWC Board, an announcement would be issued to the public, and she would make contact with the applicants to inform them of the decisions made. Ms. Nielsen read out the short-term project recommendations, which included the following:

* Save Our Canyons: Wasatch Wilderness Stewardship and Education Project;
* Private Citizen: Rattlesnake Trailhead Bicycle Parking;
* Friends of Alta: Friends of Alta Junior Ranger Activity Book;
* Utah Open Lands: Bonanza Flat Trailhead Transit to Trails;
* Private Citizen: Restoration of Riparian and Beaver Habitat to Willow Heights Pond;
* Trails Utah: Big Cottonwood Canyon to Ferguson Bonneville Shoreline Trail Completion;
* Wasatch Backcountry Alliance: Wasatch Backcountry Alliance Shuttle;
* Cottonwood Canyons Foundation: 2022 Tri-Canyon Trail Deferred Maintenance and Invasive Weed Control Project; and
* Salt Lake Climbers Alliance: Jacob's Ladder Trail Reroute to Lone Peak Cirque.

**ADJOURNMENT**

1. **Chair of the Short-Term Projects Committee Nann Worel will Close the CWC Short-Term Projects Committee Meeting.**

**MOTION:** Mayor Weichers moved to ADJOURN the Short-Term Projects Committee Meeting. Chair Worel seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.

The meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

***I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Central Wasatch Commission Short-Term Projects Committee Meeting held Thursday, April 14, 2022.***

**Teri Forbes**

Teri Forbes

T Forbes Group

Minutes Secretary

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