

**MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) BOARD MEETING HELD MONDAY, JUNE 6, 2022, AT 4:00 P.M. AT MILLCREEK CITY HALL, 3330 SOUTH 1300 EAST, MILLCREEK, UTAH. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED BOTH IN-PERSON AND VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM.**

**Board Members:** Chair Christopher F. Robinson

Mayor Jeff Silvestrini

Mayor Monica Zoltanski

Mayor Mike Weichers

Mayor Nann Worel

Mayor Roger Bourke

Mayor Dan Knopp

Commissioner Carlton Christensen, Ex-Officio Member

Commissioner Annalee Munsey, Ex-Officio Member

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

Blake Perez, CWC Deputy Director

Lindsey Nielsen, CWC Communications Director

Kaye Mickelson, CWC Office Administrator

**Excused:** Mayor Erin Mendenhall

**Others:** Laura Briefer

Steve Van Maren

Abi Holt

Alex Schmidt

Barbara Cameron

Carl Fisher

Dave Fields

Jory Johner

Joshua Van Jura

Kara John

Lance Kovel

Laura Hanson

Will McCarvill

Mary Pendergast

801-597-9576

Evelyn Everton

Tom Ward

Megan Nelson

Ned Hacker

Patrick Nelson

Pat Shea

**OPENING**

1. **Chair of the Board Christopher F. Robinson will Open the CWC Board Meeting.**

Chair Chris Robinson called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. He reported that the Central Wasatch Commission (“CWC”) Board Meeting was being held at Millcreek City Hall. The public hearing on the budget was held prior to the start of the CWC Board Meeting.

1. **(Action) The Board will Consider Approving the Minutes of the May 2, 2022, CWC Board Meeting.**

**MOTION:** Mayor Zoltanski moved to APPROVE the Minutes of the May 2, 2022 Board Meeting. Mayor Knopp seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.

**UNITED STATES FOREST SERVICE PRESENTATION**

1. **Uintah-Wasatch-Cache National Forest Supervisor Dave Whittekiend will Provide an Update to the Board on the Forest Service’s Recent Activities and the Intersection with the CWC’s Work.**

Uintah-Wasatch-Cache National Forest Supervisor, Dave Whittekiend was present to share updates related to the Forest Service. He discussed visitor use monitoring and explained that in 2021, the estimated visitation in Big Cottonwood Canyon and Little Cottonwood Canyon was approximately 5.5 million. That was more than most large National Parks. It was a very busy area and there were municipal watersheds to consider as well. The Forest Service was working nationally on visitor use monitoring for the entire Uintah-Wasatch-Cache National Forest. The preliminary data was expected in 2023 and the final data would be ready by either late 2023 or early 2024.

The Forest Service was working with the CWC and Utah State University to accommodate additional and focused monitoring that was consistent with the National Visitor Use Monitoring Program standards. Updates had been provided to the CWC by the Utah State University team. One of the tools the Forest Service was considering to manage use in the area was to manage certain sites under the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (“FLREA”). That would do the following:

* Enhance recreation opportunities for the public;
* Provide day use, multiple day use, and annual fees across the forest; and
* Allow the Forest Service to maintain sites to a certain standard by generating funding.

Mr. Whittekiend explained that there would be a public engagement process as soon as there was approval from the Washington Office to implement this management strategy. If the proposal was approved, implementation could begin as early as the summer of 2023. The Forest Service was also considering implementing a reservation system in some of the higher-use areas.

Additionally, the Forest Service was moving forward with shared stewardship. There were some specific focus areas in the Central Wasatch. Mr. Whittekiend clarified that shared stewardship was about jointly identifying priorities and combining resources to achieve cross-boundary outcomes. It would use every available authority and tool to improve overall forest health. Mr. Whittekiend stated that a new shared stewardship agreement had been signed recently by the Governor and the Secretary of Agriculture. It renewed the work that had been done between the Forest Service and the State.

The Parleys Watershed Restoration Project was a good example of shared stewardship. Mr. Whittekiend reported that it was one of the most at-risk areas in the State of Utah for catastrophic wildfire that could threaten human life, infrastructure, and wildlife habitat. After national modeling had been done, many areas on the Wasatch Front were considered areas under threat from wildfire. The Forest Service had been working on appropriately addressing those risks. For the Parleys Watershed Restoration Project, there were 18 partners from local and State government agencies as well as special interest groups. He appreciated that the CWC expressed support for the project. The intention was to restore wildfire resilience to the landscape, maintain water quality and quantity in the watershed, and protect terrestrial and aquatic wildlife species diversity.

The Forest Service was also looking at a Millcreek Canyon shared stewardship project. Fuels reduction would start in 2024. It was separate from the upper Millcreek Canyon road improvements, but there would be some coordination. The idea was to continue to move across the Central Wasatch to address the threat of wildfire and manage the area through fuels reduction projects.

Mr. Whittekiend discussed the Environmental Dashboard. He noted that the Forest Service worked with the Mountain Accord and CWC throughout the development of the Environmental Dashboard. One of the benefits was that the Environmental Dashboard would provide a watershed scale-focused view of the Cottonwood Canyons. The Forest Service managed a portion of that area. Using the Environmental Dashboard to look across the entire watershed would be incredibly valuable since watershed health did not stop and start at the boundaries. There were some challenges to consider, though, which included data overload. Too much data could become overwhelming. It was important to use the data to find solutions to watershed issues that faced the area. The Forest Service welcomed the Environmental Dashboard and would continue to support it moving forward.

The Forest Service continued to work with the Utah Department of Transportation (“UDOT”) on the Little Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Impact Statement (“EIS”). UDOT was the lead agency and the Forest Service was a cooperating agency. Mr. Whittekiend assumed that UDOT would continue to share updates with the CWC about that project and the process.

The Upper Millcreek Canyon Road Improvements Project was part of the Federal Land Access Program (“FLAP”). Mr. Whittekiend explained that they continued to work with the Federal Highway Administration (“FHWA”) and Salt Lake County on that project. It would address needed road improvements and would also enhance safety, access, and sustainability. He stated that it was important to have a sustainable road system that also benefited the environment. There needed to be a balance between access and maintaining water quality in Millcreek. One of the opportunities related to that project had to do with parking and trailhead improvements. Mr. Whittekiend noted that those improvements were not fully funded yet. The goal was to overmatch the required match for the project so that work could take place at the same time as the road improvements. There was currently a public comment period related to the FLAP grant. It will end on June 19, 2022.

Mr. Whittekiend reported that there was a desire to improve some of the sites in Big Cottonwood Canyon and Little Cottonwood Canyon. The Great American Outdoors Act enabled the Forest Service to deliver higher quality customer service and enhance the visitor experience by decreasing deferred maintenance and improving trailheads and recreation sites across the National Forest System. The Uintah-Wasatch-Cache National Forest had been a recipient of some of the Great American Outdoors Act funds. There would be work in Big Cottonwood Canyon and Little Cottonwood Canyon and they were on Phase 3 of looking at developed site reconstruction. In the near future, there would be site surveys and design plans. Those would allow the Forest Service to leverage partnerships and tackle an estimated $18 million in deferred maintenance. For instance, restroom facilities, wastewater systems, bridges, parking lots, trailheads, and signs. The Forest Service would work on National Environmental Policy Act (“NEPA”), permitting, and implementation during a later phase. The current focus was on the design work. There were several partnerships associated with the project, such as the Salt Lake City Department of Public Utilities. Surveys would start in the current year and construction funds would be pursued at a later date.

The Silver Lake Boardwalk Replacement Project was currently being moved into contract. Mr. Whittekiend explained that it included reconstruction of the boardwalk at Silver Lake. The partners included Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, and the Big Cottonwood Community Council. He reported that the design had been completed and there were prospective bidders. Portions of the boardwalk could be retained during construction. The estimated costs were $3.5 million.

Mr. Whittekiend shared some staff-related updates with the CWC Board. He reported that District Ranger, Bekee Hotze had assumed the role of Acting Forest Supervisor of the Sawtooth National Forest in Twin Falls. This was a temporary position, and she would return. There was not an Acting District Ranger currently, but the search process was underway. Mr. Whittekiend noted that Deputy Forest Supervisor, Chad Hudson had been selected earlier in the year to be the new Forest Supervisor of the Bridger-Teton National Forest. That was a permanent position, and he would not be back. As a result, there was a search for an Acting Deputy Forest Supervisor as well. The permanent role would be advertised fairly shortly to hire a permanent Deputy Forest Supervisor.

Mayor Jeff Silvestrini was appreciative of the collaboration between the CWC and the Forest Service. Laura Briefer praised Mr. Whittekiend and his team. She stated they were great to work with. Ms. Briefer explained that the Salt Lake City Department of Public Utilities had hired an employee to work on the deferred maintenance design plans that were referenced earlier by Mr. Whittekiend.

**COMMITTEE UPDATES AND REPORTS**

1. **Minutes of the EBAC’s May 16th Meeting are Included in this Meeting’s Materials.**

* **Commissioner Erin Mendenhall was Asked to Chair the Legislative and Land Tenure Committee Moving Forward. Commissioner Mendenhall will Speak to this Matter and Ask for New Committee Membership.**

Chair Robinson noted that Mayor Erin Mendenhall was not present. He explained that there had been discussions about the Legislative/Land Tenure Committee and Mayor Mendenhall had agreed to become the Chair of that Committee. He wondered if other CWC Board Members were interested in serving on that Committee in the future.

The Organizational Chart was shared and overviewed with the CWC Board. Chair Robinson explained that the Legislative/Land Tenure Committee had to do with the Federal Land Designation Legislation, which was formally known as the Central Wasatch National Conservation and Recreation Area Act (“CWNCRA”) but also involved working with the State Legislature. The land tenure part of the Committee referenced ownership boundaries. Mayor Mike Weichers, Mayor Nann Worel, and Mayor Silvestrini offered to become members of the Legislative/Land Tenure Committee.

1. **Minutes of the Transportation Committee’s May 18th Meeting are Included in this Meeting’s Materials.**

* **Commissioner Dan Knopp will provide an update to the Board as Chair of the Transportation Committee.**

Mayor Dan Knopp shared updates related to the Transportation Committee. There was a meeting held on May 18, 2022. The Committee wanted to focus on an action plan and determine what was needed in Big Cottonwood Canyon. Some requests for proposals (“RFP”) were being put together to identify some alternatives and funding solutions. The Town of Brighton had committed a substantial amount of money to pay for that. Mayor Knopp explained that this was the recommended path from UDOT. Cottonwood Heights and Sandy had also expressed interest in participation through funding.

**STAKEHOLDERS COUNCIL UPDATE AND REPORT**

1. **Will McCarvill and Barbara Cameron will provide an update on the activities of the Stakeholders Council.**

* **The Stakeholders Council met for a special meeting on May 18th.**

Chair of the Stakeholders Council, Will McCarvill shared updates related to the Stakeholders Council. Mr. McCarvill explained that there had been a Special Meeting of the Stakeholders Council held on May 18, 2022. It had been a busy first half of the year. There was some uncertainty about whether there would be subcommittees related to the Environmental Dashboard or the Visitor Use Study.

Vice-Chair of the Stakeholders Council, Barbara Cameron reported that at the Special Meeting of the Stakeholders Council, Dr. Jordan Smith briefed the Stakeholders about the beginning of Phase II of the Visitor Use Study. His team was using trail counters and some personal interviews to evaluate trail conditions, water quality, satisfaction levels, parking, and restroom facilities. The team was ranking trails from 1 to 5, with 1 being very good and 5 meaning that a trail had a lot of erosion. Visitation numbers for trails would be presented, especially at high-elevation lakes. The work would be focused on Big Cottonwood Canyon, Little Cottonwood Canyon, and Millcreek Canyon. Dr. Smith noted that the data would be integrated with the Environmental Dashboard.

Ms. Cameron shared an update on the Trails Committee. At the recent meeting, it was reported that Salt Lake County would not move forward with a County-Wide Trails Master Plan. Instead, Salt Lake County would assist the Forest Service with their Tri-Canyon Master Plan by providing GIS assistance and hosting the open house events. The Trails Committee also looked forward to seeing how the Watershed Master Plan would incorporate trails. Ms. Cameron noted that the Watershed Master Plan open houses were currently taking place.

**ACTION ITEMS**

1. **Consideration of Resolution 2022-29 Approving an Amended and Restated Employment Agreement with Blake Perez.**

Chair Robinson explained that Resolution 2022-29 was an amended and restated employment agreement for CWC Deputy Director, Blake Perez. The agreement proposed a structure of two Executive Directors. One would focus on policy and one would focus on administration. He noted that there was an Organizational Chart referenced, which would be beneficial to review as it related to the division of labor. Mr. Perez would be the Executive Director of Administration and CWC Communications Director, Lindsey Nielsen would be the Executive Director of Policy. The Executive Directors would work closely with the Executive/Budget/Audit Committee.

Chair Robinson explained that one of the key duties under the Executive Director of Administration was the Budget Officer. One of the key duties under the Executive Director of Policy was Records Officer. The compensation for each Executive Director was $100,000 per year, plus benefits. There would be a six-month review and the agreement would become effective on July 1, 2022. Mayor Silvestrini expressed his support for Mr. Perez and Ms. Nielsen in their new roles as Executive Directors.

**MOTION:** Mayor Silvestrini moved to APPROVE Resolution 2022-29 – Approving an Amended and Restated Employment Agreement with Blake Perez. Mayor Weichers seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.

1. **Consideration of Resolution 2022-30 Approving an Amended and Restated Employment Agreement with Lindsey Nielsen.**

Chair Robinson explained that Resolution 2022-30 was an amended and restated employment agreement for Ms. Nielsen. She would become the Executive Director of Policy.

**MOTION:** Mayor Silvestrini moved to APPROVE Resolution 2022-30 – Approving an Amended and Restated Employment Agreement with Lindsey Nielsen. Mayor Zoltanski seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.

1. **Consideration of Resolution 2022-31 Approving the CWC’s Final Budget for FY 2022-2023.**

Chair Robinson reported that the public hearing for the CWC Final Budget for FY 2022-2023 had taken place ahead of the current CWC Board Meeting.

**MOTION:** Mayor Silvestrini moved to APPROVE Resolution 2022-31 – Approving the CWC’s Final Budget for FY 2022-2023. Mayor Weichers seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.

1. **Consideration of Resolution 2022-32 Releasing and Appointing Stakeholders Council Members.**

Mr. Perez reported that one of the former Stakeholders Council Members, Don Despain, indicated that he was no longer able to fulfill his commitment to the Stakeholders Council. He had resigned and his position would be filled by Stuart Derman, who was part of the last application process. Additionally, Randy Doyle was retiring, and Brighton Ski Resort named Mike Doyle as the New General Manager. He would come onto the Stakeholders Council as a representative for the resort.

**MOTION:** Mayor Knopp moved to APPROVE Resolution 2022-32 – Releasing and Appointing Stakeholders Council Members. Mayor Silvestrini seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.

1. **Consideration of Resolution 2022-33 Expressing Appreciation to Ralph Becker.**

Resolution 2022-33 – Expressing Appreciation to Ralph Becker was shared. Chair Robinson read the document, which explained that CWC Executive Director, Ralph Becker was the former Mayor of Salt Lake City and had worked tirelessly to promote wise stewardship of the Wasatch Mountain Range in Salt Lake, Summit, and Wasatch counties. Mr. Becker had been part of the Mountain Accord process and was later named the first Executive Director of the CWC. Mr. Becker worked to further the purposes of the organization and in doing so, had richly benefitted the CWC and the future inhabitants of the Wasatch Front and Wasatch Back. Mr. Becker would retire as the Executive Director and the Resolution was intended to honor his dedication and hard work. Chair Robinson thanked Mr. Becker for his diligence, work, vision, and leadership skills.

**MOTION:** Mayor Zoltanski moved to APPROVE Resolution 2022-33 – Expressing Appreciation to Ralph Becker. Mayor Silvestrini seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.

Mayor Silvestrini stated that he had known Mr. Becker for a long time and he had always been an advocate for natural spaces. He thanked him for all of the contributions he had made to Utah, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, and the Central Wasatch. Ms. Briefer believed that the Wasatch mountains were in a wonderful place now due to the long-time leadership of Mr. Becker. She was grateful for his years of support and his mentorship. Ex-Officio Member, Carlton Christensen commented that it had been a privilege to serve alongside Mr. Becker as an elected official in the past. He always had the interests of the community at heart and had a deep love for the environment. Ex-Officio Christensen wished him the best as he moved forward.

Mr. Perez explained that it had been incredibly meaningful to work with Mr. Becker over the last three years. He looked up to Mr. Becker and considered him to be one of his heroes. Mr. Becker was an example of what a public servant was. He never gave up, always tried to build consensus, and looked at things differently than others. Chair Robinson stated that he first met Mr. Becker while appearing before the Salt Lake City Planning Commission almost 30 years ago. He had done a fantastic job over the years and within the CWC. Chair Robinson thanked him for his work.

The CWC Board gave Mr. Becker a standing ovation. Mr. Becker stated that he had enjoyed working at the CWC because of the mission itself and the ability to work with excellent people. He appreciated the many wonderful individuals he had worked with over the years. Mr. Becker also praised his fellow CWC Staff Members and thanked those present.

1. **Consideration of Resolution 2022-34 Approving using PayPal as a Donation Platform for Maintenance of the Environmental Dashboard and Authorizing a Separate Bank Account Designated for Such Donations.**

Chair Robinson reported that Resolution 2022-34 would be tabled and placed on hold.

1. **Consideration of Resolution 2022-35 Concerning CWC Credit Cards.**

Mayor Silvestrini reported that Resolution 2022-35 related to credit cards. The current program had individual names on cards and was cumbersome. The Resolution would allow there to be a company credit card that would be much easier for CWC Staff to use. The ability to monitor expenditures would not change. The process would simply be more efficient.

**MOTION:** Mayor Weichers moved to APPROVE Resolution 2022-35 – Approving Entry into a Commercial Card Program. Mayor Zoltanski seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.

1. **Consideration of Resolution 2022-36 Expressing Appreciation to Kaye Mickelson.**

Resolution 2022-26 – Expressing Appreciation to Kaye Mickelson was shared. Mayor Silvestrini read the document, which stated that Office Administrator, Kaye Mickelson began serving the CWC in 2019 and had worked diligently to assist the organization. She handled many day-to-day operations, performed administrative functions, oversaw the arrangements for the CWC Board Retreat and CWC meetings, and handled a number of other critical matters. Ms. Mickelson had given generously of her time, energy, and talents. The CWC thanked her for all of that hard work and wished her well in her retirement. Mayor Silvestrini stated that Ms. Mickelson was a special person. She had held numerous positions in the past and had developed a remarkable expertise in several areas. She had been particularly effective in assisting the CWC with finance and budgeting. It had been an honor and privilege to work with her at the CWC.

**MOTION:** Mayor Silvestrini moved to APPROVE Resolution 2022-36 – Expressing Appreciation to Kaye Mickelson. Mayor Knopp seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.

The CWC Board gave Ms. Mickelson a standing ovation. Ms. Mickelson commented that she appreciated the devotion, commitment, and engagement of all those who participated in the CWC. It was important to preserve a finite resource. She urged those present to continue to carry out that mission so that the mountains were always there for others. Ms. Mickelson appreciated that she had the opportunity to work with and for the CWC. She respected everyone in the organization.

Chair Robinson explained that his favorite thing about Ms. Mickelson was her being a “truth teller”. He thanked her for her many contributions to the organization over the years and wished her well. Mr. Perez stated that he had learned a lot from Ms. Mickelson, especially how to be a compassionate colleague, get work done, and maintain a positive attitude. She had been an incredible mentor to him.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

*Steve Van Maren* expressed his appreciation for the work done by Mr. Becker and Ms. Mickelson. He knew that Mr. Perez and Ms. Nielsen would do well as Executive Directors. As for the renewal of the Stakeholders Council memberships, he noted that both the Chair and Vice-Chair had the same expiration date listed in 2023. He felt that was something for the CWC Board to be aware of.

*Carl Fisher* stated that he had learned a lot from Ms. Mickelson. She had helped him grow on a professional level. He appreciated everything she had done for the CWC. Mr. Becker had been an amazing mentor, excellent friend, and an inspiration to many. He admired them both.

**COMMISSIONER COMMENT**

Mayor Silvestrini stated that Millcreek had been fortunate to work with partners from Salt Lake County and the Utah Office of Outdoor Recreation as it related to the purchase of open space on Grandeur Peak, in the area between Parleys Canyon and Millcreek Canyon. Millcreek had acquired the property and it was subject to conservation easements so it could be protected for generations. He explained that the property would be preserved and available for recreation.

Mayor Silvestrini reported that Millcreek was currently considering a slope waiver to permit the construction of the Bonneville Shoreline Trail and the upper alignment of the trail between Parleys Canyon and Millcreek Canyon. To construct that trail, a slope waiver would be required for portions of the land. Some of it exceeded 30% slope. The matter would be presented to the Mount Olympus Community Council later that night at 6:00 p.m. It would also go through the Millcreek Planning Commission. Mayor Silvestrini encouraged members of the public that were interested in seeing the Bonneville Shoreline Trail extended in this way to submit a public comment to the City of Millcreek. He wanted there to be robust public engagement about this issue.

**CLOSED SESSION OPENS**

1. **Upon Affirmative Vote of the Board, Chair Christopher F. Robinson will Open a Closed Session for the Purpose of Discussing the Character, Professional Competence, or Physical or Mental Health of One or More Individuals as Authorized by UTAH CODE ANN. 52-4-205(1)(a).**

There was no Closed Session.

**BOARD MEETING ADJOURNS**

1. **Upon Affirmative Vote of the Board, Chair Christopher F. Robinson will Close the CWC Board Meeting.**

**MOTION:** Mayor Knopp moved to ADJOURN the CWC Board Meeting. There was no second. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

***I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Central Wasatch Commission Board Meeting held Monday, June 6, 2022.***

**Teri Forbes**

Teri Forbes

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Minutes Secretary

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