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9 **MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) SPECIAL BOARD**
10 **MEETING HELD MONDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2022, AT APPROXIMATELY 3:00 P.M.**
11 **THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED BOTH IN-PERSON AND VIRTUALLY VIA**
12 **ZOOM. THE ANCHOR LOCATION WAS THE CWC OFFICES, LOCATED AT THE**
13 **GATEWAY AT 41 NORTH RIO GRANDE STREET, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.**

14
15 **Board Members:** Chair Christopher F. Robinson
16 Mayor Jeff Silvestrini
17 Mayor Monica Zoltanski
18 Mayor Michael Weichers
19 Mayor Dan Knopp
20 Mayor Nann Worel
21 Mayor Roger Bourke

22
23 **Staff:** Blake Perez, Executive Director of Administration
24 Lindsey Nielsen, Executive Director of Policy

25
26 **Others:** Laura Briefer
27 Chris Cawley
28 Annalee Munsey
29 Amber Broadway
30 Barbara Cameron
31 Carl Fisher
32 Jacob Scholl
33 John Adams
34 Kaye Mickelson
35 Ralph Becker
36 Patrick Nelson
37 Patrick Shea
38 Steve Van Maren
39 William McCarvill

40
41 **OPENING**

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

44
45 Chair Chris Robinson called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.
46

1 **2. (Action) The Board will Consider Approving the Minutes of the October 3, 2022,**
2 **Board Meeting and the October 3, 2022, Budget Hearing.**
3

4 **MOTION:** Mayor Knopp moved to APPROVE the October 3, 2022, Board Meeting Minutes.
5 Mayor Bourke seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.
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7 **MOTION:** Mayor Silvestrini moved to APPROVE the October 3, 2022, Budget Hearing Minutes.
8 Mayor Weichers seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the
9 Board.

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11 **LINCOLN HILL DEBRIEF**
12

13 **1. Casey Hill will Provide a Briefing on Legislative Priorities for the 2023 Season.**
14

15 National Federation of Independent Business (“NFIB”) State Director, Casey Hill, reported that
16 he; Executive Director of Administration, Blake Perez; and Executive Director of Policy, Lindsey
17 Nielsen, met the previous month to discuss goals and the upcoming Legislative Session. They
18 were looking at a Joint Resolution on the Federal Lands Bill. It was last attempted three years ago
19 with Senator Kirk Cullimore being the sponsor. Politics were involved in the reasons it did not
20 pass. It was very close to passing but unfinished business remained. The dynamic in the
21 Legislature had not shifted significantly in terms of support or lack of support. He reported that
22 in the past, Casey Snider was the most active opponent to the resolution and felt strongly about his
23 position on it. Mr. Hill stated that he planned to meet with Senator Cullimore the following day
24 to discuss his willingness to sponsor the Joint Resolution. Senator Cullimore was largely
25 responsible for the appropriations received over the last few years. Mr. Hill stated that one of the
26 major challenges was drafting the resolution. They planned to use the original resolution as a basis
27 and make changes to what had been drafted, which was determined to be the easiest way to
28 proceed.
29

30 Mr. Hill stated that they had been successful over the past few years in getting funding for the Bus
31 Bypass Program. Some unused funds remained from the prior year. There would be a dual effort
32 to put more money into that effort and have the funding already allocated to be transitioned into
33 funds that will not lapse. The intent was to prevent funds from being taken away at the end of the
34 budget year if they are unused. He explained that the funds are used when there is a need for them,
35 such as on a heavy snow day or if the canyon back up and buses need to be escorted past the heavy
36 traffic. It had been a fairly successful program so far but had been underutilized based on the
37 budget. He estimated that \$25,000 remained from a prior appropriation. That was still unused and
38 could be allocated as long as it does not lapse.
39

40 In terms of appropriation requests, Mr. Hill stated that ongoing maintenance of the Environmental
41 Dashboard, funding, and completion of the Visitor Use Study was expected to cost around
42 \$50,000. Currently, they have approximately \$100,000 in appropriation requests, which was what
43 they had been for the past few years. The Legislature had a significant amount of one-time funding
44 in the current year. The challenge was that an ongoing request versus a one-time request was much
45 more difficult to come by. The request with Senator Cullimore would be for one-time monies and
46 to look for strategic opportunities as the Legislative Session progressed. They would seek to

1 transition some funding for programs such as the Bus Bypass Program, which was ongoing. Mr.
2 Perez explained that they were seeking a balance and were looking for one-time appropriations
3 and ongoing funding.

4
5 Mr. Hill reported that the Speaker held his Great Salt Lake Summit the previous Thursday with
6 environmental issues being at the forefront with the Legislature. Water specifically was a major
7 point of emphasis. The Speaker was not only trying to draw attention to the challenges they were
8 facing with the Great Salt Lake and the drought as a whole but was also committing his focus and
9 a significant amount of funding to the effort. As they found ways to connect what they were doing
10 to those issues, funding opportunities could follow. The Legislature had someone they trusted as
11 the head of the Division of Natural Resources (“DNR”). Looking at history, some funding
12 opportunities resulted in areas where there was a certain level of trust. Mr. Hill expected funds to
13 available for water-focused items. It was possible to frame issues, arguments, and efforts in a way
14 that will help the organization be successful, particularly with respect to appropriations, grant
15 opportunities, and funding.

16
17 Mayor Zoltanski commented that the Great Salt Lake tied into what they would be discussing next,
18 which were recommendations for the Environmental Impact Statement (“EIS”). *The Deseret News*
19 poll came from a September survey that questioned the attitudes of Utahans relative to the Great
20 Salt Lake. The overwhelming majority of Utah residents were very concerned about the declining
21 water levels in the lake. When asked if they approved the funding of more resources for the
22 protection and support of the Great Salt Lake ecosystem, an overwhelming majority expressed
23 support. When talking about investment in what was best for the longevity of the snow levels and
24 water source for the Wasatch Front and the Central Wasatch, that was where she would put the
25 money over the gondola. The same support has not been expressed for the gondola and future
26 transportation up Little Cottonwood Canyon.

27
28 Chair Robinson commented that to the extent they can tie the work of the CWC to the theme of
29 resource protection, the better. There was a strong bias toward taking care of the environment,
30 especially water. Mr. Hill agreed and stated that if there were two competing environmental issues
31 and interests, they would struggle. If they plan to talk about an environmental issue, it was going
32 to be water and the Great Salt Lake. He suggested that their conversations and efforts be framed
33 with that in mind. Laura Briefer offered to help Mr. Hill and his group as she was involved in
34 many of the discussions taking place at the State level surrounding water and the Great Salt Lake.
35 She also had a unique perspective in terms of water management and hoped to be of assistance.

36 **FEIS COMMENT DISCUSSION**

37 **1. The Commissioners will Deliberate Over a Draft Comment that the CWC will** 38 **Provide to UDOT on its FEIS.**

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41
42 Chair Robinson reported that there would be a discussion on the draft comment document the
43 CWC intended to submit to the Utah Department of Transportation (“UDOT”) as part of the UDOT
44 Little Cottonwood Canyon Final Environmental Impact Statement (“FEIS”) public comment
45 period. The Transportation Committee had already deliberated on the draft comment document.
46 Transportation Committee Chair, Mayor Knopp reported that there had been two Transportation

1 Committee Meetings related to the document in the last month. He believed it made sense to use
2 the previous Pillars for Transportation Solutions in the Central Wasatch Mountains document as
3 the basis for the evaluation and comment. The Transportation Committee recently recommended
4 that the proposed outline move forward to the full CWC Board for discussion and consideration.
5

6 Mayor Bourke shared an image of Little Cottonwood Canyon with those present. He also
7 discussed the gondola alternative and identified where the terminal would be located between the
8 Alta Lodge and Rustler Lodge. Down canyon from that, there would be a 10-story tower just
9 below the Alta Lodge. Between the Wildcat Base and the residential area to the west, there would
10 be a 20-story tower. On the ridge, there would be a 15-story tower. The UDOT Little Cottonwood
11 Canyon FEIS stated that the visual impacts in Alta would be high. However, that language did not
12 convey the magnitude of the impacts. The Town of Alta opposed the gondola because it would
13 create a scar on the mountain valley. Additionally, the gondola would not solve the existing traffic
14 problems. It would move more people into the canyon at a faster rate but would not necessarily
15 reduce the number of vehicles. Mayor Bourke noted that the gondola was also inflexible and
16 expensive. It was possible to adjust bus routes, bus types, and stop locations, but was harder to
17 make changes to something like a gondola.
18

19 Chair Robinson believed the question was whether the organization should focus on reaching a
20 consensus or whether a minority/majority report should be created. He acknowledged that it may
21 be difficult to reach a consensus on a comment document that opposed the gondola. As a result,
22 the draft comment document, which used the framework of the pillars may be the best path
23 forward. Mayor Zoltanski wondered if anyone had an objection to the phased approach. It might
24 be best to focus on what everyone agreed on before discussing the gondola specifically. Within
25 the Pillars for Transportation Solutions in the Central Wasatch Mountains document, the phased
26 approach was recommended. There were some foundational areas of agreement. Chair Robinson
27 noted that the comment needed to be submitted to UDOT that day and there were certain time
28 limitations. However, the draft comment document had been well thought out. Some tweaks or
29 additions could be made.
30

31 Mr. Perez shared the draft comment document with the CWC Board. There was an introduction
32 section and two paragraphs related to the process of creating the Pillars for Transportation
33 Solutions in the Central Wasatch Mountains document. The pillars that followed included a
34 description as well as bullet point recommendations, questions, or suggestions. The first pillar was
35 related to visitor use and capacity and referenced the Visitor Use Study that would be rolled out
36 later in the year. It asked UDOT to delay a Record of Decision (“ROD”) until ample time had
37 been given to incorporate the Visitor Use Study information. The next pillar had to do with
38 watershed protection. Mr. Perez reported that he had added information from the Salt Lake City
39 Department of Public Utilities. The comments from Sandy City would also be integrated. The
40 third pillar related to transportation demand management, parking, and transit strategies. It
41 referenced the phased approach, increased bus service, tolling, and parking strategies. There were
42 recommendations and questions listed as well.
43

44 The fourth pillar pertained to integration into the larger regional transit system. This portion of
45 the draft comment noted that the UDOT Little Cottonwood Canyon FEIS failed to address
46 integration into the broader transportation system. Member jurisdiction comments had been

1 incorporated from Cottonwood Heights. Comments from Sandy, Salt Lake City, and Alta would
2 also be added. The fifth pillar related to year-round transit service, which the UDOT Little
3 Cottonwood Canyon FEIS did not suggest. The final pillar pertained to the long-term protection
4 of critical areas through Federal Legislation. That section suggested the Environmental Dashboard
5 as a way to monitor the metrics and successes moving forward with the phased bus alternative.
6 After the pillars, there were some outstanding recommendations and questions that had been raised
7 during previous discussions.

8
9 Chair Robinson noted that at the bottom of the draft comment document, there were paragraphs
10 about what different member jurisdictions had done. He wondered if the document adequately
11 represented what Salt Lake City, Cottonwood Heights, and Sandy believed. This was confirmed.
12 Mayor Weichers suggested that there be clarification added in the last paragraph. He asked Josh
13 Van Jura for updated funding amounts. UDOT was still using 2019 numbers and an updated cost
14 analysis of the gondola project ahead of the ROD would be appropriate. The proposed language
15 was as “Please provide an updated cost estimate in current year dollars.”

16
17 Mayor Silvestrini was prepared to sign the comment document but did not want to restate the
18 recommendations of Salt Lake City, Cottonwood Heights, and Sandy. Their comments would
19 speak for themselves. He explained that Millcreek had not filed a comment opposing the gondola.
20 He believed the CWC statement should reinforce the pillars and the phased approach. Mayor
21 Silvestrini did not want to support something that discounts the gondola alternative. While he
22 appreciated that the gondola was not the first choice for many, there were advantages to consider.
23 He did not want to rule out the gondola, because there was no way to know if the phased approach
24 would work. While buses and tolling could alleviate problems, he did not know that it would be
25 the solution.

26
27 Chair Robinson explained that the positions of Salt Lake City, Cottonwood Heights, and Sandy
28 could be removed if that was desired by the CWC Board. UDOT would receive individual
29 comments from those jurisdictions as well as from the CWC. Ms. Briefer was not opposed to the
30 removal of that information. However, she noted that the document could recognize that CWC
31 Board Members may provide additional comments. Chair Robinson suggested language that
32 would state, “Our constituent jurisdictions may have submitted official pronouncements with their
33 opinions, which are outside of what the CWC has submitted.” Mayor Knopp agreed that the
34 member positions should be removed.

35
36 Mayor Zoltanski proposed that there be a reference to the Great Salt Lake discussion and the
37 current drought conditions. That would fit in well with the watershed and water quality pillar. She
38 discussed the 2,500 parking stall structure that was proposed. The placement of that was within
39 the most environmentally sensitive area of Sandy, which was at the mouth of the canyon. That
40 should be referenced as a priority for planning since air quality mitigation should be proposed with
41 any parking. She had a clear position as the Mayor of Sandy that would be filed separately and
42 asked that this be made clear within the comment document submitted by the CWC.

43
44 Mr. Perez noted that the Great Salt Lake protections could be referenced under the watershed
45 protection pillar. Additional language about air quality could also be added. He felt it was
46 important to highlight what each of the member jurisdictions did or did not do. For instance,

1 passing a Resolution or providing comments to UDOT. Chair Robinson suggested that the
2 information about other member jurisdictions be added as a footnote. It would be difficult to reach
3 a consensus if there was implied consent by mentioning that three of the member jurisdictions
4 were opposed to the gondola. He believed there would be unanimous approval of the basic
5 document if the pillars were the focus and the additional information about the member
6 jurisdictions was removed or clarified. Mayor Knopp explained that Brighton had not submitted
7 a comment to UDOT about the UDOT Little Cottonwood Canyon FEIS because there had not been
8 a consensus on the Brighton Town Council.

9
10 Chair Robinson asked if the CWC Board was comfortable with Mr. Perez drafting language related
11 to the Great Salt Lake and the air quality impacts linked to the 2,500-stall parking garage. Mayor
12 Silvestrini stated that he would need to see the drafted language before he could approve the
13 document. Chair Robinson suggested that the language be crafted during the current meeting. As
14 for whether the comment document should outline what other member jurisdictions had done, he
15 felt it would be cleaner to leave that information out. UDOT would have all of those comments
16 and the CWC comment did not necessarily need to reiterate what others had submitted.

17
18 Mayor Bourke did not think it was necessary to share a summary of the comments from other
19 member jurisdictions. He believed there was consensus about the phased approach. Edits were
20 made to the draft comment document. Chair Robinson suggested adding language that stated, “In
21 an era of shrinking water supplies, the Central Wasatch provides an invaluable water resource that
22 is important not only in providing drinking water to hundreds of thousands, but it is a tributary to
23 the Great Salt Lake.” Mayor Zoltanski suggested that the language instead state, “In a time of
24 record drought, and with the shrinking of the Great Salt Lake, priority investment should improve
25 water volume of the Great Salt Lake, which the Central Wasatch relies on for its clean drinking
26 water and snowpack for recreationists.” Mr. Perez referenced a letter that had been received from
27 Mayor Zoltanski and offered to pull some additional language from there. It was important to note
28 the survey results.

29
30 There was additional discussion regarding the best language to add to the comment document.
31 Ms. Briefer agreed with the suggestion from Mayor Zoltanski but believed the recommendation
32 language had more to do with the prioritization of funding resources. That seemed more like an
33 economic issue. Chair Robinson was not certain that the document should state that the money
34 spent on the gondola should be spent on Great Salt Lake instead. The comment could instead
35 express concern about the Great Salt Lake and protecting the Central Wasatch, as both were
36 connected. Ms. Briefer pointed out that the comment document stated that the watershed
37 recommendations were attributed to the Salt Lake City Department of Public Utilities. However,
38 the comment related to Great Salt Lake had not been made by Public Utilities, so that would need
39 to be amended. Mr. Perez read out some proposed language, which was as follows: "In addition,
40 the CWC has commented on the following topics, themes, and concerns regarding water." Mayor
41 Silvestrini believed the comments from the Salt Lake City Department of Public Utilities should
42 be attributed directly to them. The last bullet point would need to be moved to create the
43 appropriate separation.

44
45 Mayor Bourke agreed that the Great Salt Lake was a serious problem but did not necessarily
46 believe that it should be referenced in the comment document. He did not want the CWC to specify

1 where the money could be better spent. Chair Robinson clarified that the CWC would only state
2 that there was a connection. Waters from the Central Wasatch were a tributary to the Great Salt
3 Lake. There would be no mentions of funding within the comment document. Mayor Knopp
4 referenced the fourth bullet point under the watershed protection pillar. It mentioned diesel
5 generator backups. He had checked and there were no extra diesel generators at each tower. Mr.
6 Perez stated that they would be located at the angle stations. Mayor Knopp noted that there needed
7 to be further clarification.

8
9 Mr. Perez overviewed some of the changes made to the comment document. He had moved the
10 comment about the Great Salt Lake out of the section that had Salt Lake City Department of Public
11 Utilities attributed comments. It was now included in the section at the end of the document, which
12 included questions and recommendations that were outside of the pillars. The language
13 introducing the Salt Lake City Department of Public Utilities comments had been cleaned up as
14 well. CWC Board Members were supportive of the changes made. Chair Robinson suggested
15 adding language that stated, “The individual jurisdictions that comprise the CWC have provided
16 their comments on the UDOT Little Cottonwood Canyon FEIS.” This was added as a separate
17 paragraph.

18
19 Ms. Briefer noted that all comments would roll into the formal NEPA document. Those comments
20 and concerns would be formally documented. She was not sure whether posing questions was
21 effective. Mr. Perez noted that there were a lot of questions in the CWC draft comment document.
22 The questions in the document were reviewed. Ms. Briefer noted that she was not overly
23 concerned about the fact that there were questions in the document, but felt they would not be as
24 effective. Mr. Perez explained that the questions could be shifted to comments if desired by the
25 CWC Board.

26
27 Chair Robinson believed the CWC Board should decide whether there was general support for the
28 comment document. If so, there would need to be a vote to authorize Mr. Perez and Ms. Nielsen
29 to submit it before the public comment period deadline at the end of the day.

30
31 **MOTION:** Mayor Knopp moved to APPROVE the FEIS Comment Document and submit it to
32 UDOT as the CWC comment on the UDOT Little Cottonwood Canyon FEIS. Mayor Bourke
33 seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.

34 35 **SIXTH ELEMENT FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL DASHBOARD DISCUSSION**

36 37 **1. Commissioner Jeff Silvestrini will Propose Budget Amendment #2, Pertaining to the** 38 **Sixth “Human” Element of the Environmental Dashboard.**

39
40 Mayor Silvestrini reported that there had been previous discussions about adding a sixth element
41 to the Environmental Dashboard. This would incorporate the results of the Visitor Use Study.
42 That element had been deferred based on funding because there was no source available without
43 utilizing reserves. The cost was approximately \$32,000 and approximately \$5,000 to \$6,000 of
44 that would be paid to the University of Utah to upload the information into the Environmental
45 Dashboard. The remaining balance would be used to obtain the data for that part of the Visitor
46 Use Study.

1
2 The CWC has a policy not to let reserves dip below a year of operational costs. Mayor Silvestrini
3 explained that there was a bit of a cushion that would allow the Visitor Use Study costs to be
4 funded. The CWC Board needed to determine whether this should be done in one year or if the
5 costs should be spread over two fiscal years. If the organization delayed entering into the contract
6 until March, the cost could be spread over two fiscal years, which he thought was advisable in
7 terms of maintaining reserves. In either event, a budget amendment would need to be done. This
8 could be brought forward to the CWC Board in January 2023. He asked CWC Staff to verify the
9 cost estimates.

10
11 Having the Visitor Use Study information available on the Environmental Dashboard would be a
12 service to the public. It would also make the Environmental Dashboard more robust. Mayor
13 Silvestrini wanted to know how other CWC Board Members felt about this option. Chair Robinson
14 wanted to spread the cost over two fiscal years, as recommended by Mayor Silvestrini. Mr. Perez
15 explained that additional information would be ready to present in early 2023.

16 **FINAL RETREAT AGENDA BRIEFING**

17 **1. The Commissioners Will Review the Final Agenda for the November 10, 2022, CWC** 18 **Board Retreat.**

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21
22 Mr. Perez reported that the CWC Board Retreat was scheduled for Thursday, November 10, 2022,
23 from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. There was an optional hike that was scheduled for 11:00 a.m.
24 Additionally, there would be an optional dinner following the Retreat. The dinner would take
25 place at Silver Fork Lodge. Some foundational documents would be utilized during the 2023
26 Project Visioning section of the CWC Board Retreat. Mayor Silvestrini urged members of the
27 organization to give some thought to the budgeting section ahead of the retreat. He hoped there
28 could be agreement about a mechanism to determine what each of the members contributed
29 annually. For instance, there could be a population-based formula or some other rational basis.
30 This would make it easier to determine what the contributions from each of the member
31 jurisdictions would be. It would also ensure that there were no fluctuations in the contributions
32 because that made it difficult to budget.

33
34 Mayor Silvestrini suggested that CWC Staff and the CWC Attorney speak to the landlord about
35 terminating the lease. It would be possible to utilize a different space or use less space in the
36 future. Chair Robinson asked that CWC Staff continue to flesh out the CWC Board Retreat
37 agenda.

38 **PUBLIC COMMENT**

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41 *Carl Fisher* thanked CWC Staff and Board Members for working on the UDOT Little Cottonwood
42 Canyon FEIS comment. He understood the amount of work that went into drafting public
43 comments. Mr. Fisher had a suggested addition to the CWC comment document. During the
44 screening process, UDOT evaluated a lot of different gondolas. The only one that passed the
45 screening criteria was Gondola 3 because of the mobility hubs. In the absence of those mobility
46 hubs, with buses servicing the gondola, that alternative failed the UDOT screening criteria related

1 to the purpose and need of the project. He encouraged the CWC to make note of that in their
2 comment. It could be seen in Chapters 2-12 of the EIS documents. Mr. Fisher explained that this
3 issue would be referenced in the public comment submitted by Save Our Canyons.
4

5 *Patrick Shea* noted that the EIS process was paid for entirely by Utah taxpayers. No private money
6 was involved and the EIS process cost several million dollars. He expressed concerns that once
7 the gondola alternative is greenlit, there will be investors interested in public/private partnerships.
8 It was important to look at the whole picture and understand that certain people would benefit
9 financially from the proposed transportation system. He felt there needed to be a true NEPA
10 process that allowed for legitimate and transparent public input.
11

12 There were no further comments. Chair Robinson closed the public comment period.
13

14 **COMMISSIONER COMMENT**

15
16 Chair Robinson asked if CWC Board Members wanted to reopen the UDOT Little Cottonwood
17 Canyon FEIS comment discussions to include the suggestion made by Mr. Fisher. Ms. Briefer
18 believed that a good point had been raised. There needed to be consistency in how the different
19 alternatives were identified and reviewed. She did not know whether that was something that
20 needed to be included in the CWC comment or if it could be included in different member
21 jurisdiction comments. Mayor Silvestrini was not inclined to make any additions to the comment
22 document because some of the CWC Board Members had since left the CWC Board Meeting.
23

24 **ADJOURN SPECIAL BOARD MEETING**

25 26 **1. Chair of the Board Christopher F. Robinson will Close the CWC Board Meeting.**

27
28 **MOTION:** Mayor Silvestrini moved to ADJOURN. Mayor Bourke seconded the motion. The
29 motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.
30

31 The meeting adjourned at 4:32 p.m.

1 *I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Central*
2 *Wasatch Commission Special Board Meeting held Monday, October 17, 2022.*

3

4 Teri Forbes

5 Teri Forbes

6 T Forbes Group

7 Minutes Secretary

8

9 Minutes Approved: _____