



Utah County Tourism and Tax Advisory Board Meeting
Monday, April 18, 2022 @ 11:30am
Sundance

Board Members Present:

John Garfield, Marriott
Rita Wright, Springville Museum of Art
Kurt Christensen, Hyatt House PG/Provo
Chad Linebaugh, Sundance
Graydon Pearson, Hyatt Place Provo
Danny Wheeler, Utah Valley Convention Center

County Representatives Present:

Laurel Price, Utah County Commission Liaison
Bill Lee, Utah County Commissioner
Amelia Powers Gardner, Utah County Commissioner
Tom Sakievich, Utah County Commissioner
Lisa Shepherd, Utah County Commission Office

Others Present:

Kathy Lewis, Orem City

11:40 a.m. Welcome and working lunch

11:45 a.m. John welcomed everyone and turned the time over to Chad Linebaugh who provided an update on Sundance. John turned the time over to Danny Wheeler for a financial update on TRCC/TRT funds.

11:50 a.m. Funding Review Update- Danny Wheeler

Danny gave an update of the December 2021 and January 2022 revenue numbers. The Trajectory for 2021 has continued to increase month over month and this update is not different. Danny used a 5% growth rate which is very conservative.

Commissioner Gardner pointed out that the sales tax projections for the county have risen by double digits and these numbers are likely tracking similarly.

Danny pointed out that the car rental portion of the TRCC tax has been consistently 11%, bringing in \$1.4 million in 2021. With the opening of the Provo airport and new airlines coming in, that number is expected to grow.

Danny provided an update on TRCC projects that have been recommended by the TTAB board. The fund balance is \$32 million, with \$13 million in 2022 revenue. Current year obligations are \$25 million and \$2 million in projects recommended by the board as of April 2022.

Danny updated TRT funds which are the more restricted funds which include a percentage of tourism and promotion and a portion of brick and mortar. This includes the debt service for the Utah County Convention Center and Danny pointed out that this will be the first year that all of the funding for the convention center debt service will come only from TRT funds and not have to dip into the TRCC.

Commissioner Lee pointed out that the Utah Lake Commission will be transitioning to the Utah Lake Authority after this year and the State of Utah will fund that at \$1.5 million so for now the Utah Lake Commission will continue to be funded by the county but that funding will phase out once the transition is complete. The first year (2022) will have funding for both the county and state but that will only be for 2022.

John Garfield mentioned that the board should look at an increase in the City Grants which has been at \$300,000 for quite a while, and John stated this may be a discussion that the board should have another time.

Kurt Christensen asked what portion of the freedom festival qualified under TRT funds. Danny said historically the county has given the festival \$113,000 to go towards marketing of the festival.

Commissioner Lee mentioned that the county also gives in kind donations to the Freedom Festival for the use of the county grounds and Provo City gives extensive in kind donations to the Freedom Festival.

John Garfield said that the Freedom Festival is a very important event for the hotels in the county. The hotels rely heavily on the booked hotels for July 4 because of the freedom festival.

Graydon Pearson asked about what rainy day balance requirements had been discussed in the past. John Garfield said that the board had discussed having enough for obligations. Commissioner Gardner and Commissioner Lee pointed out the TRCC/TRT revenue projections are very conservative. Danny pointed out that the rainy day balance will end up in the TRCC fund because the commission tries to pay down the TRT fund first as the more restricted fund.

The board had a discussion on the philosophy and discussion on the rainy day funds. Commissioner Lee mentioned that the current board does a much better job of tracking the project numbers and knowing where the money is being spent. John Garfield said that as a recommending board, the board recognizes the responsibility with the funding.

John Garfield informed the board that we need to move the location for the next meeting on June 6. It was determined that the June meeting will be held at Hyatt House in Pleasant Grove.

12:15 p.m. Saratoga Springs/Utah Lake Commission- Saratoga Springs North Marina
Project Funding Request: \$5,000,000
Project Reviewer: Kurt Christensen
Project Presenter: Jeremy Lappen| Lars Anderson|Eric Ellis

Lars Anderson said that Saratoga Springs has embraced the lake as the crown jewel of the city and developed a series of trails and parks around the lake. The North Marina is expected to be the prime spot of the trail system and parks. The North Marina is 20 acres owned by the city. The North Marina will draw residents from all over the county with a lot of dense development and housing going on all around the area.

Both Saratoga Springs and Utah County as well as other entities have made significant investment in the lake area. Commissioner Lee asked if the 25% match is for the full region from the north to the south marina. Jeremy Lappen pointed out that the \$900,000 in TRCC funds that was given by the commission to Saratoga Springs for the south marina beach is not included in this project.

Commissioner Lee asked what the total amount of money is needed to get the project done. Lars said that \$8.6 million is for the first phase. This committee is being asked to recommend \$5 million of that. The city wants to use funds to get started on the jetty and dredging which takes a long time. The city looks at this as seed money to build on. Jeremy said they could get something open to the public and then continue to build from there.

Commissioner Lee confirmed that if this project is being done in phases, will this ask will be a one time ask from this group? Jeremy said that was accurate and their goal is take any dollars from TRCC add that to city dollars and then find other funding sources to add to the total project based on the regional appeal of this project.

John reconfirmed that these funds would be used for dredging for launching more boats and Lars confirmed for jetty use as well. On average during the week, the city reaches capacity of boats launched by 10am. Commissioner Lee asked some questions about protecting the beaches from the open water and addressing ways to protect the beaches.

Danny Wheeler stated that this board has been willing to support significant investment around the lake and has supported projects in Saratoga, American Fork and Vineyard. Danny asked Eric Ellis how this project fits into the grand vision of Utah Lake? Eric pointed out that the recommendation by the TTAB board was a catalyst moment and since that time, the state appropriated 10 million for lake improvements last year. This year, the legislature appropriated \$30 million one time funds and changed the structure of the Utah Lake Commission to become the Utah Lake Authority approving a 1.5 million ongoing appropriation.

Danny Wheeler asked how long phase one will take? Jeremy said they are almost shovel ready and could potentially save some money using contractors that are already doing projects on the lake.

1:00 p.m. Provo City-Rock Canyon Trail Head Enhancements

Project Funding Request: \$2,658,144

Project Reviewer: John Garfield

Project Presenter: Doug Robins| John Bunderson| Tim Whipple

Doug Robins stated that the great thing about Utah County is that within a few minutes, you can be either at Utah Utah or into the Wasatch Mountains. This project is the entrance to Rock Canyon. Bonneville Shoreline Trail runs through this area and Provo City has been actively purchasing land to keep this area open to the public. In 2014, the city purchased 80 acres that had mining claims on them. This was a \$1.6 million dollar investment for the city of Provo.

Rock Canyon has access directly to Forest Service land with trails for hiking and biking throughout and world class rock climbing sites, campgrounds, year round access, even base jumping happens there.

The city has partnered with the Rock Canyon Preservation Alliance. They have spent thousands of volunteer hours in the canyon and fundraised in partnership with Provo City to purchase 18 acres at the entrance of the site. The current investment with land acquisitions is about \$3 million to date.

John Bunderson stated that there are about 200,000 trips into the canyon causing parking issues and cars often spilling out into the road ways. The city has developed a master plan for the site which includes expanding parking lot and interpretive trails. The US Forest Service has completed a NEPA study and this project is shovel ready. The amphitheater area will be enhanced as well.

Doug reiterated that the project has a completed design and is shovel ready. The project should take a year to complete, and the hope is that this project can be completed and have a public opening on Public Trails Day in June of 2023. Tim Whipple stated that the Rock Canyon Alliance has been very pleased with the process that has occurred in the planning of this project and pointed out that their citizens group has stepped up to help this area be successful.

1:25 p.m. TTAB Priority Listing & Additional Discussion

Kurt Christensen started the conversation on the Saratoga Springs request. Pointed out that there are a lot of rooftops in the area. Having a project like this could certainly provide patronage at local restaurants in the area. The price tag was eye popping though.

Commissioner Gardner commented that having an area for non motorized craft like paddle boards, canoes etc. would be very helpful since these are very popular sports in the county. She pointed to Tibble Fork and how busy that area is during the summertime. Rita commented that she wanted to see more investment from the city for a project like this.

John Garfield mentioned that there is a lot of interest in the lake and that this may be a little premature and this is a big ask but he also pointed out that water activities are

incredibly popular and get very heavy use. There was a discussion on the maintenance that would inevitably come with a project like this. Graydon brought up the long term plan for the lake as part of this discussion and that is something to consider as well.

John Garfield stated that the convention center does a great job providing tourism dollars for the county and sports travel is also helpful for hotels and restaurants in the county. Danny Wheeler pointed out that projects like this one keep residents here in the county spending money rather than leaving the county.

Commissioner Sakevich expressed concerns over the O&M costs and what the demand would actually be for the marina. There was a long discussion about what amount would be best for this project and how much investment was actually made by the city. Rita expressed that she would still like to see the city come back to answer some lingering questions about the funding, costs etc. John stated that TRCC funds shouldn't be the first money in any project.

Danny Wheeler made a motion to recommend \$2.58 million with the contingent on some estimated visitor numbers and showing the plan for the remainder of the funding for phase 1 prior to TRCC dollars going in. Rita seconded the motion. Linebaugh, Christensen, Wright, Wheeler voted in favor. Pearson, Garfield were opposed.

John Garfield led the discussion on the Rock Canyon project. He mentioned that he likes the preservation concept of this project. John also mentioned the aquaphor recharge which isn't part of this project but in the same area. Commissioner Lee stated that there could be significant investment into the aquaphor recharge from ARPA funding. It was reiterated that this project is separate from the aquaphor project. Rita likes the PR value in supporting a preservation project.

John pointed out that the ask for this project is a higher percentage than the board likes to recommend for the project. Danny mentioned that this money is coming in at the end of the project and Graydon mentioned that the RCPA had been out actively fundraising as part of this project in the past.

Commissioner Lee asked whether the board members have received criticism about Provo City receiving a lot of the TRCC funding. Commissioner Lee has received criticism on this. John Garfield mentioned that perhaps discussion on the MRG funds to the city might be appropriate because of this. Commissioner Gardner pointed out that Provo does a lot of projects like the airport, sports parks etc. There could be geographic realities with some cities having preservation, conservation areas in their boundaries. Graydon stated, sometimes cities need to make the ask.

John Garfield made a motion to recommend \$2,658,144 million to finish up the trailhead project. Chad Linebaugh seconded. Garfield, Wright, Linebaugh, Wheeler, Pearson voted in favor. Christensen abstained due to the dollar amount.

John Garfield also recommended that we review the Municipal Recreation Grant amounts at another meeting. Danny stated that he will review growth ahead of the discussion on the MRG.

Commissioner Lee mentioned that the commission funded Camp Floyd State Park at \$400,000.

Next Meetings: June 6, Hyatt House Pleasant Grove
August 1/October 3/December 5 11:30am-1:00 pm

Meeting adjourned at 2:05 p.m.