

**MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) BOARD MEETING HELD MONDAY, MARCH 6, 2023, AT 3:30 P.M. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED BOTH IN-PERSON AND VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM. THE ANCHOR LOCATION WAS MILLCREEK CITY HALL**

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

Mayor Jeff Silvestrini

Mayor Monica Zoltanski

Mayor Erin Mendenhall

Mayor Roger Bourke

Mayor Dan Knopp

Dave Whittekiend, Ex Officio

Annalee Munsey, Ex Officio

**Staff:** Blake Perez, Executive Director of Administration

Lindsey Nielsen, Executive Director of Policy

Ella Warnick, Community Engagement Intern

Shane Topham, CWC Legal Counsel

**Others:**  Will McCarvill

Barbara Cameron

Kurt Hansen

Patrick Shea

Carl Fisher

**OPENING**

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

Chair Chris Robinson called the Central Wasatch Commission Meeting to order at 3:32 p.m.

1. **(Action) The Board will Consider Approving the Minutes of the CWC Board Meeting from January 9, 2023.**

**MOTION:** Mayor Silvestrini moved to APPROVE the CWC Board Meeting Minutes from January 9, 2023. Mayor Knopp seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.

**ACTION ITEMS**

1. **Consideration of Resolution 2023-05 - Approving and Ratifying Entry into an Employment Agreement with Ella Warnick.**

Community Engagement Intern, Ella Warnick, introduced herself to the CWC Board and state that she is a student at the University of Utah. Chair Robinson reported that Resolution 2023-05 will approve and ratify her position. The start date, according to the contract line, was February 1, 2023. She would be with the organization for at least five months and work on outreach.

**MOTION:** Mayor Silvestrini moved to APPROVE Resolution 2023-05 – Approving and Ratifying Entry into an Employment Agreement with Ella Warnick. Mayor Knopp seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.

1. **Consideration of Resolution 2023-06 - A Resolution Amending the CWC By-Laws.**

Chair Robinson reported that Resolution 2023-06 pertained to an amendment to the CWC Bylaws. Based on the redline information included in the packet, the amendment related to voting. If there was a virtual vote that was not unanimous, there needed to be a roll call vote. CWC Legal Counsel, Shane Topham confirmed the proposed amendment. It is based on House Bill (“H.B.”) 22 from the 2022 Utah Legislative Session. That bill made amendments to the Open and Public Meetings Act. Those amendments largely related to electronic meetings. It is now required that all non-unanimous votes during an electronic meeting be done by roll call.

**MOTION:** Mayor Silvestrini moved to APPROVE Resolution 2023-06 – A Resolution Amending the CWC By-Laws. Mayor Mendenhall seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.

**FUELS MITIGATION FUNDING**

1. **United States Forest Service will Provide a Briefing to the CWC Board Regarding Recent Federal Funding for Fuels Mitigation in the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache.**

Ex Officio Member, Dave Whittekiend shared information related to fuels mitigation funding. A few months ago, Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack, and the U.S. Forest Service Chief, Randy Moore, announced that efforts and funding would be dedicated to new landscapes as part of the Wildfire Crisis Strategy. Uinta-Wasatch-Cache was one of the selected landscapes. The funding was coming from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act. Funding would also be provided to the Dixie National Forest for work in the Pine Valley Mountains. However, the information shared at the CWC Board Meeting would be focused on the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache.

Mr. Whittekiend reported that for Fiscal Year 2023, approximately $18.2 million was received to handle fuel reduction work in the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache. It was anticipated that there would be $21 million in Fiscal Year 2024 to handle that work. The Uinta-Wasatch-Cache landscape had 1.1 million acres identified. The goal was to reduce the risk of wildfire to communities and natural resources by restoring and maintaining healthy and resilient fire-adapted forests.

Approximately 382,000 acres of the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache landscape were classified as a high or very high fire hazard, which poses a considerable risk to the function of watersheds, plant and wildlife habitat, recreation opportunities, and private property. Within the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache project area, there are 92 communities identified to be at risk. Those communities are either within or adjacent to the project area. There were critical watersheds to consider as well. Mr. Whittekiend informed the CWC Board that the watersheds provided water for over two million people in the Central Wasatch and the State of Utah. The watershed is also critical for the Great Salt Lake. Much of the water that flows off the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache flowed into the Great Salt Lake. It was important to protect those watersheds to make sure there is a continuous and stable water supply.

Mr. Whittekiend reported that there are over 300 miles of regionally significant energy infrastructure in the project area. Recreational values and infrastructure supported over 13 million visitors per year. The strategies to reduce long-term wildfire risk included cross-boundary mechanical treatments to reduce the risk to private property and infrastructure, strengthening strategic fuel breaks, restoration treatments to reduce hazardous fuel loading and increase the resiliency of the forest and protect the critical watershed. Work would be done across boundaries with several different partners as the projects were implemented. Mr. Whittekiend shared notable projects with the CWC Board such as Parleys Watershed Restoration. The Forest Service had been working in Parleys Canyon for several years. A diverse group of stakeholders collaborated on that work. He noted that the work had been done across boundaries and there had been collaboration with Utah Forestry, Fire, and State Lands as well as the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, Summit County, and a number of other non-governmental organizations. Work would continue to be done in the Parleys watershed and that work would keep the environment in mind.

Mr. Whittekiend shared information about Millcreek Canyon. The National Environmental Policy Act (“NEPA”) was completed for projects there. As a result, risk reduction work would be done in the canyon moving forward. The lop and scatter of conifers would be done for approximately 522 acres. There would be some cutting, piling, and burning for approximately 1,000 acres. He noted that there would also be invasive species management for noxious weeds and watershed work. Mr. Whittekiend reported that work would also move into Big Cottonwood Canyon. The planning process was underway for that. He explained that work was being done with partners to determine how to analyze Big Cottonwood Canyon under NEPA. The Forest Service drafted proposed actions.

Information was shared about prescribed fire. Mr. Whittekiend explained that more was being learned about this approach. It is possible to do a lot of mechanical work, treat forests, and somewhat reduce the risks but there is also a need to do prescribed fire to make the treatments truly effective. That was challenging in the Wasatch Front due to air quality issues and the population. He hoped it would be possible to successfully implement a more aggressive prescribed fire program. That program would need to take air quality into account. Mr. Whittekiend reported that the Fiscal Year 2023 program was set but in this instance, the Forest Service received all of the necessary funding for the mitigation work. He expected the same to be true next year.

Mayor Silvestrini felt it was commendable that one of the first projects related to Parleys Canyon. He referenced H.B. 527 from the recent Legislative Session. That bill did not advance but would have essentially usurped the County’s zoning authority with respect to mining claims. It would have expanded the definition of an existing claim. The sponsor of the bill also offered another bill that would have authorized the preparation of a Resource Management Plan for Provo Canyon. Mayor Silvestrini reported that he sent an email to Mayors Mendenhall and Wilson about that. He felt Parleys Canyon is a resource that had been neglected. There are incredible wildlife resources in that canyon. It is important to focus more on Parleys Canyon and publicize what is available there. There is a climbing area and an important watershed and wildlife habitat area. Mr. Whittekiend shared additional comments regarding Parleys Canyon. The proximity to the interstate meant that if a wildfire broke out, there would be immediate impacts.

Chair Robinson wondered how much of the funding would be spent in the Central Wasatch. Mr. Whittekiend did not have a complete breakdown. He explained that there would be implementation in Parleys Canyon and Millcreek Canyon. Some of the funding would be spent on planning in Big Cottonwood Canyon. The money received ensured that the planned projects would be fully funded. He was not sure exactly how much would be allocated to each project.

Executive Director of Policy, Lindsey Nielsen noted that there was a question left in the chat box from Carl Fisher. Chair Robinson read the question aloud. Mr. Whittekiend believed Mr. Fisher wanted to understand how to be engaged in the process. He assumed work would continue with the same collaborative groups and organizations. Mr. Fisher could reach out to the district and express interest. He clarified that the projects for Big Cottonwood Canyon were still in the planning stage and no formal NEPA process had taken place to date.

**CGI REPORT AND 2022 STRATEGIC PLAN**

1. **CWC Staff and Chair Robinson will Provide an Update to the 2022 CGI Report and 2022 Strategic Plan.**
2. **Chair Robinson will Recommend Consolidating, Closing Out, and Carrying Over Any Outstanding Action Items.**

Chair Robinson reminded the Board Members that the CWC worked with the Common Ground Institute (“CGI”) in 2022. A Situational Assessment was created at that time that included several action items. The majority of tasks outlined in the 2022 CGI Report had been completed. For instance, appointing an Ex Officio Member from the Forest Service, having Stakeholders Council leadership participate in the Executive/Budget/Audit Committee Meetings, transitioning to the new CWC Staff structure with the Executive Directors, as well as improving time management and expectations for members. There were a few outstanding items, which were included in the memo.

Executive Director of Administration, Blake Perez shared the items that were either tabled or not completed. The first was The Central Wasatch Compact. He explained that the intention was to carry that over, but have the item remain tabled for the time being. There could be further discussion about that in the future. The next item listed on the memo related to the Mountain Accord action items. Those would be carried over and pursued as appropriate. The development of an updated vision, mission and purpose statement for the CWC was also listed. Chair Robinson suggested that the Executive/Budget/Audit Committee and CWC Staff work on that over the summer and present something to the CWC Board in late summer or early fall. In terms of engagement with the State of Utah and Salt Lake County, several scenarios were discussed. This included potential Ex Officio Members and sharing organizational updates with the Salt Lake County Council.

Mr. Perez referenced the Development Plan. He explained that it was an ongoing initiative for CWC Staff. There was also an item related to CWC Staff and Board Members participating in relevant Boards and Commissions. As opportunities arise, it would be possible for members to serve. Chair Robinson reported that there was a desire to close out the 2022 CGI Report and move forward. He reiterated that some action items had been completed and some would be carried over.

**STAKEHOLDERS COUNCIL UPDATE AND REPORT**

1. **William McCarvill and Barbara Cameron will Provide an Update on the Activities of the Stakeholders Council.**

Stakeholders Council leadership, William McCarvill, and Barbara Cameron were present to share updates with the CWC Board. Ms. Cameron reported that several Stakeholders Council Members have terms expiring on June 30, 2023. There are 14 Stakeholders Council Members in total with expiring terms. Stakeholders Council leadership would reach out to those members in April 2023. After that, there would be a call for new applications to replace any members who did not choose to stay on. She asked that a CWC Board Member assist with that review process. In May 2023, member recommendations would be presented to the CWC Board.

Ms. Cameron shared information related to the Cardiff area conflict. An update was shared at the latest Stakeholders Council Meeting. She reported that the Forest Service would conduct a mapping study over the summer to clarify private property and public property in the area. That was something that had been difficult to do in the past but new mapping technology would allow there to be better fact-based discussions about the continued conflict in the area.

Mr. McCarvill shared information related to the Big Cottonwood Canyon Mobility Action Plan (“BCC MAP”). He explained that at the last Stakeholders Council Meeting, there was a BCC MAP update. Two breakout sessions were held during the meeting. One focused on the idea of mobility hubs and the other on mobility improvement strategies. Information from the breakout sessions would be incorporated into the AECOM report. Mr. McCarvill noted that the breakout room he was in had a lot of interesting discussions. When discussing mobility improvement strategies, someone pointed out that it was impossible to get ahead of demand. With all of the growth happening in Utah, it simply was not possible to buy a solution to the congestion issues. As a result, limiting vehicles in the canyon was essential. This could be done through fees, tolling, and reservation systems. It was important to consider the carrying capacity for vehicles in the canyon and find different ways to manage access. Mayor Bourke was pleased to hear the observation about limiting vehicles in the canyon. He hoped that message would become more widely accepted.

Mayor Zoltanski shared information about Sandy as it related to closure days. She reported that a Traffic Summit was held approximately three weeks ago. Many representatives from Sandy, Cottonwood Heights, Unified Police Department (“UPD”), Utah Highway Patrol (“UHP”), Utah Department of Transportation (“UDOT”), and Utah Transit Authority (“UTA”) participated. The meeting was well attended. Mayor Zoltanski reported that traffic backs up on Little Cottonwood Road and prevents emergency vehicles and school buses from turning into neighborhoods. The snowfall had been beneficial for recreationists this year but imposed another level of pressure on the neighborhoods adjacent to the canyon. As a result, a plan was created to divert traffic down Wasatch Boulevard and no longer permit traffic queuing on Little Cottonwood Road. She explained that Little Cottonwood Road does not have a shoulder like Wasatch Boulevard. In addition, Little Cottonwood Road has more neighborhood access points.

Mayor Zoltanski reported that the plan had been successful so far. She spoke to Resort Managers at Snowbird and Alta who indicated that there had been positive responses about the new queuing system. She felt that a notable difference had been made. Mayor Zoltanski shared information about the queuing system. On a moderate day, there are 600 to 700 vehicles queued. Once the canyon opens, the first vehicles are the ski buses that are escorted to the mouth of the canyon. They are followed by the Salt Lake shuttles and employee shuttles for the resorts.

The Sandy City Police Department has been monitoring southbound and eastbound traffic off Little Cottonwood Road. So far, the new queuing system has made the neighborhoods much safer. Mayor Zoltanski noted that single-occupancy vehicles are the bulk of the vehicles waiting in line. There is an opportunity for the CWC to conduct a traffic study on the ratio of single occupancy versus multiple-occupancy vehicles. She felt it would be worthwhile to collect that kind of information. There would be an additional Traffic Summit on March 15, 2023, at 2:00 p.m. Mayor Zoltanski invited CWC Board Members to attend. She could send the relevant information to those interested.

Ms. Cameron noted that the Visitor Use Study included georeferencing of hiking patterns. She wondered if UDOT might have some information about vehicle occupancy. It might be possible to track the number of cell phones in each vehicle. Mayor Zoltanski liked the suggestion and offered to look into that further. She acknowledged that the CWC assisted Sandy in funding the extra enforcement. The diversion of traffic requires a lot of overtime hours. She expressed support for the organization. Mayor Zoltanski reported that last year there were two closures, however, this year there had been more than 20. The Board further discussed the closure numbers, weather conditions, and traffic issues in Little Cottonwood Canyon.

Mayor Bourke believed there might be technological approaches that could address traffic problems. He liked the suggestion shared by Ms. Cameron and wondered if it would be possible to look into similar alternatives. Mayor Zoltanski noted that there was demand for ride-share apps and reservations. Unfortunately, there was no collection point or an endorsed process. If there was some leadership and funding, it might be possible to look into those solutions further. For instance, a Working Group could discuss and select a few different options. It was noted that Patrick Shea left a comment in the chat box. He felt there should be a reservation system with a fee. The money from the fee could be used exclusively for the benefit of the Central Wasatch.

Mayor Silvestrini thanked CWC Staff, Lobbyist Casey Hill, and Senator Kirk Cullimore. The Legislature appropriated $193,000 to the CWC, which would assist the organization. During the last session, the Legislature also appropriated $150 million to implement enhanced busing and tolling in Little Cottonwood Canyon. He was not sure how much flexibility there would be with the funds, so he did not know whether that would address the concerns expressed by Mayor Zoltanski. However, he hoped the funding would tackle some of the short-term traffic issues in Little Cottonwood Canyon.

**COMMITTEE UPDATES AND REPORTS**

1. **The EBAC Met on February 13, 2023. Meeting Minutes Included in Meeting Materials.**

* **Mayor Silvestrini will Brief the Board on Recommended Budget Adjustments for Fiscal Year 2023/2024.**

Mayor Silvestrini shared information related to budget adjustments for Fiscal Year 2023/2024. He reported that the CWC budgeted $20,000 for the bus bypass service to cover approximately 12 days of service. However, the CWC recently received the first invoice from the Sandy City Police Department for services between December 11, 2022, and the end of January 2023. There were 13 days of service listed and the total invoice was approximately $22,000. It was recommended that $25,000 be dedicated to the bus bypass service, which would bring the total budget for the ski bus bypass to $45,000. After paying the $22,000 invoice there would be $23,000 remaining for the rest of the season. Mayor Silvestrini explained that there had been some savings in other elements of the budget, so it was possible to shift funds around in order to cover the shortfall. As a result, this was a budget adjustment rather than a budget amendment. He explained that no vote was necessary.

In addition to the $25,000 for the Sandy City Police Department, there was a desire to continue to fund the sixth element of the Environmental Dashboard. The total cost was $32,000, which could be spread out over two fiscal years. There is currently $28,480 budgeted and another $18,480 dedicated to annual upkeep for the Environmental Dashboard. There was $10,000 remaining that could be used for the implementation of the human element. The remaining $6,000 could be adjusted from line item 52-4345, Grants Disbursed. Some budget adjustments could be made to fund that need. The CWC Board had already authorized the expenditure for the sixth element.

* **Mayor Silvestrini will Brief the Board on Work Done to Date and Upcoming Work for Fiscal Year 2024/2025.**

Mayor Silvestrini reported that work was being done on the budget for the next fiscal year. Mayor Silvestrini and CWC Staff visited with each Board Member to discuss individual contributions. There was some commitment for the next two to three years, which offered additional stability. The Tentative Budget would be brought forward for discussion during the April 2023 meeting. The intention was to have the Tentative Budget approved in May 2023. He reported that the Final Budget needs to be passed during the June 2023 CWC Board Meeting.

1. **The Transportation Committee Met on February 16th, 2023. Transportation Committee Meeting Minutes Included in Meeting Materials.**

* **Commissioner Knopp and CWC Staff will Brief Board on the Results from the Recent BCC MAP Survey and Stakeholders Council BCC MAP Engagement.**

Mayor Knopp shared information related to the BCC MAP. At the last Transportation Committee Meeting, the mobility hub concepts were reviewed. He believed the BCC MAP work was on the right path. A survey had been conducted and AECOM reviewed the responses and included them in a report. Mayor Knopp noted that there had also been discussions about the Federal Lands Access Program (“FLAP”) grant for Millcreek Canyon during the last meeting.

Mr. Perez reviewed additional information about the BCC MAP. Since the last CWC Board Meeting, the AECOM team had been working on the BCC MAP and the mobility hubs. The public survey was released at the beginning of January 2023. In February, there was a Transportation Committee Meeting where the mobility hub concepts were reviewed. There was also a Stakeholders Council Meeting related to the BCC MAP. In March 2023, the Draft BCC MAP would be reviewed by the Transportation Committee. In May 2023, the AECOM team would present the Final BCC MAP to the CWC Board. A lot of work had been done but there was still a lot more to do.

The public survey was available on the CWC website from January 10, 2023, to February 10, 2023. There was a wide variety of questions for respondents to answer. The questions focused on winter bus service, year-round bus service, mobility hubs, bicycling, funding, and parking, as well as tolling, fees, and fares. There were over 960 responses received. Mr. Perez explained that the topic areas did not cover all of the recommendations that may be included in the BCC MAP.

The Draft BCC MAP Public Survey Summary was included in the packet. The survey provided a lot of insight into transit needs. For example, the type of transit that respondents were interested in as well as the length of time respondents are willing to wait for a bus. There was also feedback related to non-winter bus service and management. Mr. Perez asked the CWC Board Members to read the report as it reviews the survey responses. There were breakout sessions during the last Stakeholders Council Meeting and some responses were included in the report. During the breakout sessions, the importance of regional transit was stressed as was the desire to reduce the number of vehicles in the canyon. There were concerns about mobility hub considerations and there was support for the Gravel Pit. Mr. Perez noted that the Stakeholders Council discussed capacity, reservation systems, dynamic tolling, and financial incentives. That information was included in the report shared but would also be included in the final version of the BCC MAP.

Mr. Perez reviewed the timeline. He reported that there would be a Draft BCC MAP presentation during the March 22, 2023, Transportation Committee Meeting. On April 25, 2023, there would be a Final BCC MAP presentation to the Transportation Committee. On May 1, 2023, the Final BCC MAP would be presented to the CWC Board for discussion and consideration.

Mayor Bourke thought the survey results were interesting. He noted that the survey questions were exceptionally well done and looked forward to hearing more about the BCC MAP. Mr. Perez noted that there was some nuance in the survey results. One of the common mentalities was, “it depends.” He believed this indicated there needed to be more transportation choices available, including shuttles to buses, seasonal express service to the ski resorts, and year-round local service. Mayor Zoltanski pointed out that the survey results proved there was no single transit solution. The survey provided a baseline of information and she hoped there would be additional surveys conducted in the future.

Ms. Nielsen shared a short update related to short-term projects. The call for project proposals opened on March 6, 2023. It was shared across the CWC communication channels. The call for project proposals would remain open until April 3, 2023. CWC Staff would review all of the project submissions along with the Short-Term Projects Committee. She reported that the Short-Term Projects Committee Meeting was scheduled for April 14, 2023. During that meeting, the proposals would be reviewed and recommendations for funding would be made. Those recommendations would be considered by the CWC Board during the May 1, 2023, CWC Board Meeting.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

*Carl Fisher* thanked all involved in the Wasatch Front Regional Council (“WFRC”) Regional Transportation Plan (“RTP”) process. A lot of the comments from municipalities and partners were excellent. It was wonderful to have so many partners in local government who were engaged in these important issues. Mr. Fisher also thanked others for their partnership on a variety of bills during the recent Legislative Session. Collaboration was meaningful. He explained that during the Legislative Session, there was work with partners to urge the Governor to veto H.B. 469. It was a bill that established open season 365 days per year on hunting the mountain lion or cougar populations that inhabited the Wasatch Mountains. It was a poorly designed bill that was in need of study. It was not reinforced by good policy.

There were no further comments. The public comment period was closed.

**COMMISSIONER COMMENT**

There were no further comments.

**ADJOURN BOARD MEETING**

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

**MOTION:** Mayor Silvestrini moved to ADJOURN the CWC Board Meeting. Mayor Mendenhall seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.

The meeting adjourned at 4:52 p.m.

***I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Central Wasatch Commission Board Meeting held Monday, March 6, 2023.***

**Teri Forbes**

Teri Forbes

T Forbes Group

Minutes Secretary

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