

COMMISSION WORKSESSION

June 12, 2023

Minutes of a regularly scheduled worksession of the Sevier County Commission held this twelfth day of June 2023. The meeting commenced at 10:30 a.m. with Commissioners Scott Johnson, Greg Jensen, and Ralph Brown in the Conference Room 116, of the Sevier County Administration Building, 250 North Main, Richfield, Utah. Executive Director Malcolm Nash, Clerk/Auditor Steven C. Wall, and Zoning Administrator Jason Mackelprang were also present. Others in attendance included: Snow College President Stacee McIff, Snow College Vice President Heidi Stringham, Monroe resident Dave Coe, Shea Owens from the Utah Public Lands Policy Coordinating Office, and Scott Chamberlain of the Utah State Institutional Trust Lands Administration.

Review of Draft Letter to the BLM regarding proposed rule on conservation:

Malcolm presented a draft version of a letter to the US Dept. of Interior, Bureau of Land Management with regards to their proposed rule on Conservation and Landscape Health. The commissioners reviewed the letter and did not suggest any changes. They directed Mr. Nash to prepare the final draft for signatures and then submit the letter to the Bureau of Land Management.

Update on goals and activities of Snow College:

Snow College President Stacee McIff and Vice President Heidi Stringham presented an outline of programs their administration is working on. Their programs involve enrollment targets at the Richfield Campus, housing for immediate and future needs, athletic and academic programs, partnerships with industry and clubs, and finally physical improvements to the Washburn Building. Malcolm Nash asked about the dates of the plans and funding for student housing on the campus. Ms. McIff outlined the continued challenges for funding and identifying a willing development to partner with the college. Further challenges include the requirement of state agencies. The College recently developed a working relationship with the owners of the apartments next to the campus for student housing for immediate needs.

Discussion on feasibility of development of rail line in Marysvale Canyon:

Dave Coe, Monroe, joined the Commission for a video conference call with Stone Consulting from Pennsylvania to discuss the concept of a scenic passenger train from Big Rock Candy Mountain to the mouth of the Marysvale Canyon near Sevier. The consultants outlined their credentials and interest in the project, noting they focus on a project's economic viability and the physical geography to operate a train. They mentioned that some operations across the country do well and others struggle, and they will not be hesitant to tell a community and/or developer that a proposal will not work financially. They requested information about the topography and asked if information was available. Discussion followed concerning the resources available and the possible ridership, building and storage requirement of the train cars, building the rail line along the bike path, possibilities of getting a feasibility study for the project, and that this would be under private ownership. Mr. Nash said he would research available information.

Discussion regarding ramifications of fence in/fence out ordinance:

Shea Owens, Utah Public Lands Policy Coordinating Office; Scott Chamberlain, Utah State Institutional Trust Lands Administration; Sheriff Nathan Curtis, County Attorney Casey Jewkes, and Deputy Sheriff Wasden then joined the Commission for a discussion regarding developing a policy of Fence In/Fence Out ordinance. Discussion focused on the advantages and disadvantages of requiring land owners,

ranchers, livestock operations, and the other users of public lands to erect fences to manage livestock operations and animal movement on public and private ground. Further discussion followed concerning utilizing ordinances from other Counties and State Code to develop a new ordinance, the issues surrounding building new fences and maintaining the fences, and who would be responsible for the fences, the landowners or the livestock owners in permit areas.

There being no further business to come before the Board, meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.