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MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) STAKEHOLDERS COUNCIL TRAILS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD, THURSDAY, MARCH 10, 2022, AT 2:00 P.M. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED ELECTRONICALLY VIA ZOOM

Present: John Knoblock, Chair
Sarah Bennett
Patrick Shea
Barbara Cameron
Dennis Goreham
Roger Borgenicht

Staff: Ralph Becker, Executive Director
Blake Perez, Deputy Director
Lindsey Nielsen, Communications Director
Kaye Mickelson, Office Administrator

Others: Joanna Wheelton

OPEN TRAILS COMMITTEE MEETING

1. Introductions and Agenda Review.

Chair John Knoblock called the meeting to order at approximately 2:00 p.m.

The Legislature, pursuant to Section 52-4-207(4), required the Committee to make a determination, which was as follows:

‘I, as the Chair of the Trails Committee of the Stakeholders Council of the Central Wasatch Commission (“CWC”), hereby determine that conducting Committee Meetings at any time during the next 30 days at an anchor location presents a substantial risk to the health and safety of those who may be present at the anchor location. Although the number of new cases of COVID-19 may be diminishing, the pandemic remains in effect, with hospitals near capacity, and continued vigilance for at least the next 30 days seems warranted to avoid another surge in cases, which could again threaten to overwhelm Utah’s healthcare system.’

Chair Knoblock welcomed those present to the Central Wasatch Commission (“CWC”) Stakeholders Council Trails Committee. He asked all participants to introduce themselves. The agenda items were reviewed.

1
2 **2. Last Meeting Minutes Review and Approval.**
3

4 **MOTION:** Sarah Bennett moved to APPROVE the Meeting Minutes from the February 11, 2022,
5 Trails Committee Meeting. Barbara Cameron seconded the motion. The motion passed with the
6 unanimous consent of the Committee.
7

8 **3. CCF Trails Leader Cody Ross Moving On.**
9

10 Joanna Wheelton, from the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation, reported that Cody Ross had moved
11 on and the foundation was actively looking for a replacement. There were a few good candidates
12 that were being considered. She explained that the trail season would begin in approximately eight
13 weeks and the intention was to move forward with everything that was planned. Chair Knoblock
14 asked if a trail crew had been hired already, which Ms. Wheelton confirmed.
15

16 Chair Knoblock referenced an email related to trailhead restrooms and amenities. He wondered if
17 the intention was to expand the Adopt-A-Trail program so there could be two trail crews in 2023.
18 Ms. Wheelton clarified that the two were not necessarily linked together. The Adopt-A-Trail
19 program could help with funding but another \$150,000 was needed to sponsor the second trail
20 crew. The Cottonwood Canyons Foundation was still working on that.
21

22 Patrick Shea asked what the cost was for one trail crew. Ms. Wheelton reported that adding a
23 second crew would cost approximately \$60,000 just for salary but that did not account for benefits
24 and everything else that needed to be taken care of. Chair Knoblock noted that the previous
25 numbers he had heard were approximately \$80,000 and with benefits and workers' compensation,
26 that number could increase to \$100,000. Mr. Shea asked if the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation
27 sought any Federal funds, as there was quite a bit of money coming out of HHS and the Department
28 of Education. Ms. Wheelton explained that a number of the grants the foundation was funding
29 were Federally funded grants. Additionally, there was a Cost Share Agreement with the U.S.
30 Forest Service. Ms. Wheelton noted that any funding amounts mentioned were only estimates.
31

32 **4. Status of U.S. Forest Service (“USFS”) Central Wasatch Trail Planning and Timeline**
33 **For More Public Input – Zinnia/Chelsea.**
34

35 Chair Knoblock reported that he had spoken with Chelsea Phillippe from the U.S. Forest Service
36 about Central Wasatch trail planning. Marshall Alford was on special assignment as the fill-in
37 District Ranger for the Ashley National Forest. As a result, everyone in the Salt Lake Ranger
38 District was busy and unable to attend the Trails Committee Meeting. However, according to
39 Ms. Phillippe, the Forest Service was working with a GIS Specialist to meld together all of the
40 work that had been done on the user-created trails with the work that had been done on the existing
41 trail system. That information would be combined, and by the end of July 2022, there would be
42 documents ready to share with the public as part of the public comment period.
43

44 Chair Knoblock believed there would be descriptions of the system trails and user-created trails
45 (width, grade, and condition). With public input, the Forest Service could determine which user-
46 created trails would be adopted into the Forest Service as official system trails. It would also

1 determine which of the user-created trails would be left as they were and which would be
2 decommissioned and revegetated. Chair Knoblock noted that by Spring 2023, there may be a
3 completed trails plan from the Forest Service.
4

5 Barbara Cameron reported that at a Brighton Town Council Meeting, Bekee Hotze stated that the
6 Forest Service plans to put in one-half of the boardwalk at Silver Lake over the summer. The other
7 half would be completed in 2023. Additionally, the trail for Cardiff would go in over the summer
8 as well. Chair Knoblock commented that those projects had been a long time coming. He felt it
9 would be good to see the different trails projects move forward.
10

11 **5. Ski Resort Recreation Node Trail System Improvement Planning – Nate Lee.**
12

13 Chair Knoblock explained that one of the items in the “Restatement and Recommitment of the
14 Values and Principles of the Mountain Accord” document, which the CWC would consider, talked
15 about recreation focused at the existing developed ski resort nodes. He felt it would be beneficial
16 to start discussions with the ski resorts now so that when it is time to share input with the Forest
17 Service about trail system improvements, the recreation nodes could be part of that. He reported
18 that Randy Doyle wanted to improve the trail system at Brighton. Amber Broadaway was also
19 interested in improving the trail system at Solitude. Mike Maughan from Alta Ski Area had done
20 some improvements over the last few years and there were more planned. For instance, the Snake
21 Pit Trail construction. Chair Knoblock was not sure what Snowbird had planned, but he would
22 like to see the trail system improved there as well.
23

24 Dennis Goreham believed the ski resorts will likely be busy for the next few months. However,
25 the Trails Committee could reach out to the ski resorts in the future, ask them to attend a meeting,
26 and discuss future plans for trails. Sarah Bennett liked the suggestion. Chair Knoblock felt that a
27 presentation to the Trails Committee could be beneficial for all involved. He made note of an
28 action item that would invite ski resort representatives to present to the Committee. Either the
29 May 2022 or June 2022 Trails Committee Meeting would be the most appropriate time to meet.
30 There was discussion regarding who to reach out to in order to invite the representatives to the
31 meeting.
32

33 **6. Salt Lake County (“SLCo”) Trails Master Plan Funding and Plan Development**
34 **Timeline – Walt Gilmore.**
35

36 Chair Knoblock reported that Salt Lake County was still trying to finalize funding to move forward
37 with the Salt Lake County Natural Surface Trails Master Plan. He had not heard back from Walt
38 Gilmore, but Zinnia Wilson with the Forest Service explained that Mr. Gilmore was waiting on
39 information from her. The Forest Service and Salt Lake County were trying to work together on
40 the plan. That meant a new Cost Share Agreement and Partnership Agreement was needed. The
41 last he heard was that there was still an intention to move the Salt Lake County Natural Surface
42 Trails Master Plan forward in concert with the Forest Service work.
43

1 **7. SLC Watershed Management Plan 2022 Timeline for Draft and Public Comments.**

2
3 Laura Briefer stated that at the last CWC Board Meeting, the Salt Lake City Watershed
4 Management Plan would be released for public comment over the summer. Chair Knoblock
5 wondered if that information had been confirmed. CWC Deputy Director, Blake Perez was not
6 certain about the timeline. Mr. Shea reported that Ms. Briefer made a Zoom presentation to the
7 Alta Club earlier in the day and indicated that the plan would be released over the summer.

8
9 CWC Deputy Director, Ralph Becker reported that he recently spoke to Ms. Briefer and Patrick
10 Nelson. The Salt Lake City Department of Public Utilities seemed to be committed to working on
11 the Watershed Management Plan and completing that work in the next few months. There were
12 now two advisory councils. One was more agency-oriented and the other was more public and
13 stakeholder-oriented. He believed the work would move forward fairly quickly. Trails were part
14 of the discussion, in addition to fuels, fire risk, watershed, and climate change. Ms. Bennett noted
15 that she had been asked to sit on one of the advisory councils and would be able to report progress
16 to the Trails Committee over the next several months. Chair Knoblock stated that it was possible
17 for the Watershed Management Plan, Forest Service Trails Plan, and Salt Lake County Natural
18 Surface Trails Master Plan to move forward in unison.

19
20 **8. Short-Term Trail Project Ideas.**

21
22 Chair Knoblock reported that he discussed short-term project ideas with Ms. Wilson. She would
23 consider how the Trails Committee could best help the Forest Service with some of their plans.
24 One project that he had encouraged was the lowest Butler Fork Trail Bridge, which would be a
25 much more significant project than originally anticipated. According to the engineers who
26 evaluated the area, a \$50,000 steel bridge would likely be required. However, Ms. Wilson
27 suggested that the CWC may be able to help with some other projects. For instance, a section of
28 the Bonneville Shoreline Trail going into Ferguson Canyon was unfinished. She asked if Trails
29 Utah could have their contractor, who was working on another section of the Bonneville Shoreline
30 Trail, help finish that and also work on a section of the Wasatch Crest Trail coming down into
31 Millcreek Canyon. When the Forest Service asked a partner organization to assist with a project,
32 the Forest Service needed to do a cost-share agreement and could only fund half of the project.
33 That was one area where additional funding could be used to benefit the Forest Service.

34
35 Mr. Shea explained that he was a member of the Girl Scouts of Utah and there were 6,000 girls
36 and 2,700 adult members. There was a summer camp where they were looking for activity on the
37 ridge between Big Cottonwood Canyon and Park City. The Girl Scouts of Utah had participated
38 in getting a conservation easement in that area that was approximately 60-acres. It was not part of
39 the Utah Lands project, but they had maintained it and monitored it. He offered to speak to the
40 Girl Scouts of Utah to see if a trail in that area could be considered. Mr. Shea also noted that
41 someone from the Forest Service or Trails Committee could speak to the Girl Scouts of Utah about
42 the importance of trails. There was discussion about the Girl Scouts of Utah program. Chair
43 Knoblock noted that anything in Wasatch County is not within the CWC boundary. As a result,
44 the area would not be eligible for CWC short-term projects funding. He believed that talking to
45 the Girl Scouts of Utah about trails or trail construction could be beneficial.

1 Ms. Wheelton reported that the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation would apply for short-term
2 funding for the trail crew. Last year, they applied for the program with the idea that 70 miles of
3 restoration would be completed, but 108 miles were completed. Communications Director,
4 Lindsey Nielsen noted that the short-term projects deadline was April 4, 2022. Ms. Cameron
5 reported that the Big Cottonwood Canyon Community Council planned to support a geological
6 sign project. Last year, three signs were made, but some signs were needed elsewhere. The
7 Council was working with a professor at the University of Utah on that.

8
9 Chair Knoblock asked if the Spruces Campground cross country trail signs were from the Forest
10 Service. Ms. Cameron reported that Matt Hales had made those signs with laminated paper.
11 Ms. Wilson liked them so much that she wanted to put them in permanently over the summer.
12 Chair Knoblock wondered if funding was needed for the signs. Ms. Cameron believed the funding
13 was already taken care of but encouraged the Committee to find out for certain.

14 15 **9. Trail Projects to be Completed in 2022.**

16
17 Ms. Wheelton shared updates related to trail projects. She reported that the Cottonwood Canyons
18 Foundation would focus on the last of the Red Pine switchbacks over the summer. Work would
19 also take place on Donut Falls and Terraces Trail in Millcreek. Ms. Wheelton offered to prepare
20 a comprehensive list of trail projects for 2022 ahead of the April 2022 Trails Committee Meeting.

21
22 Chair Knoblock reported that the Forest Service wanted to complete the Bonneville Shoreline Trail
23 between Big Cottonwood Canyon and Ferguson Canyon. He hoped that would be done over the
24 summer. In addition, he noted that Trails Utah wanted to complete two miles of trail from the end
25 of the Pipeline Trail across the flank of Grandeur Peak, so the Bonneville Shoreline Trail would
26 be complete from Parley’s Canyon to Millcreek Canyon. Another trail project was the Snake Pit
27 Trail, which went from the base of Alta up into Albion Basin. The trail went through the permanent
28 winter closure area. Chair Knoblock explained that the idea was to make that more of a multi-use
29 bicycle inclusive section to the west, so there would be less pressure on trails towards the east.

30
31 Chair Knoblock reported that he had spoken to Ms. Wilson about a possible trails project for 2023.
32 The Alexander Basin Trail was in desperate condition and had been for a long time. There had
33 been discussions about a complete reroute of several portions of the trail since much of the trail
34 was at a 30% grade and was in poor condition. Once the Forest Service trails plan was complete,
35 it may be possible to take action on several trails-related items.

36 37 **10. Trailhead and Toilet Funding Options to Consider.**

38
39 Chair Knoblock reported that there had been previous discussions about the need for trailhead and
40 toilet funding. He noted that the Forest Service and Salt Lake City Department of Public Utilities
41 had previously stressed the importance of adequate restrooms that were regularly maintained. This
42 was necessary in order to expand any trail or transportation systems. Chair Knoblock noted that a
43 draft document had been created to address the issue. Ms. Wheelton and Cameron had both
44 made comments on the draft. Chair Knoblock wondered whether the document would soon be
45 ready to present to the Stakeholders Council and if that was the appropriate direction to take.

1 Mr. Becker noted that there was a range of funding options to consider. It was important to look
2 into which were most applicable. Chair Knoblock reported that there were capital project needs
3 as well as ongoing operations and maintenance needs. Ms. Nielsen reported that the Short-Term
4 Projects Committee previously funded five trailhead toilets for one season. Those types of projects
5 could be submitted for consideration. Chair Knoblock appreciated all of the work that had been
6 done through short-term projects but felt there needed to be a mechanism in place where the funds
7 were received on a consistent basis. He hoped to push the conversation forward to determine the
8 exact needs for capital projects and maintenance.
9

10 Mr. Shea noted that there was an abundance of Federal funds currently, but as inflation continued,
11 those funds would likely not last long. He believed there was some one-time funding that the
12 Trails Committee could look into. Mr. Becker reported that in his discussions with the Forest
13 Service, he learned that the Forest Service was receiving an influx of funds for the first time in
14 decades. Those funds allowed them to hire full-time personnel. It may be worth having further
15 discussions with the Forest Service to determine what resources they may have in addition to what
16 they had previously. The Forest Service was very focused on fire and fuels reduction as well as
17 equity. It seemed that there could be new opportunities to make movement in this area as well.
18

19 Ms. Cameron wondered if it would be beneficial to submit short-term projects requests for
20 restroom maintenance or to submit a request to the Forest Service. Mr. Becker did not know how
21 the Forest Service funds would be allocated. However, he noted that the CWC had a broad reach
22 and if there was a special project that needed CWC funding, this would be an appropriate time to
23 look into that further. Chair Knoblock noted that he would like to see the Big Cottonwood Canyon
24 S-Turn, where the parking lot was closed off in the winter, remain open year-round. He explained
25 that Ms. Hotze previously said that there was no functioning toilet in the winter because the toilet
26 water system would freeze. Since there was no working toilet, the parking lot could not be plowed.
27 It was important to determine how to have those restrooms open year-round.
28

29 Chair Knoblock reported that the Brighton Mayor, Dan Knopp discussed the possible relocation
30 of the Willow Lake Trailhead. It was part of the conservation easement that Utah Open Lands had
31 and trailhead development was prohibited as a result. There had been discussions about potentially
32 moving the bottom of the trail up one-quarter mile so there could be off-street parking as well as
33 a restroom. Chair Knoblock pointed out that a project like that would require funding. Mr. Becker
34 informed the Committee that part of the Central Wasatch National Conservation Recreation Area
35 Act (“CWNCR”) bill had specific funding allocations and direction for the Forest Service. Chair
36 Knoblock noted that the brainstormed list of funding ideas included the bill.
37

38 **CLOSE TRAILS COMMITTEE MEETING**

39 40 **1. Chair John Knoblock will Close the Public Meeting as Chair of the Trails Committee** 41 **of the Central Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council.** 42

43 **MOTION:** Sarah Bennett moved to ADJOURN the Trails Committee Meeting. Barbara
44 Cameron seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.
45

46 The Central Wasatch Commission Trails Committee Meeting adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

1 *I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Central*
2 *Wasatch Commission Trails Committee Meeting held Thursday, March 10, 2022.*

3

4 Teri Forbes

5 Teri Forbes

6 T Forbes Group

7 Minutes Secretary

8

9 Minutes Approved: _____