

**MINUTES OF THE MILLCREEK CANYON COMMITTEE MEETING HELD MONDAY, MAY 18, 2020, AT 3:00 P.M. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED ELECTRONICALLY WITHOUT A PHYSICAL LOCATION, AS AUTHORIZED BY THE GOVERNOR'S EXECUTIVE ORDER DATED MARCH 18, 2020.**

**Present:** Chair Ed Marshall, Danny [REDACTED] (present on behalf of Tom Diegel), Paul Diegel, John Knoblock, Del Draper

**Staff:** Central Wasatch Commission ("CWC") Executive Director Ralph Becker, CWC Deputy Director Blake Perez, Chip Smith, Porter Fork Homeowners Association President Zach Lund, Salt Lake County Transportation Program Manager Helen Peters, CWC Intern Quinn Graves, Communications Director Lindsey Nielsen

Chair Ed Marshall called the meeting to order at approximately 3:00 p.m.

**1. Review and Approval of the Minutes from the April 14, 2020, Meeting.**

**MOTION:** Paul Diegel moved to approve the minutes of April 14, 2020. John Knoblock seconded the motion.

The minutes were reviewed and modified.

The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.

**2. Updates from Committee Members who have Worked on Issues.**

John Knoblock commented on an email sent to Bart Barker regarding trailheads in Millcreek Canyon. It was noted that the Forest Service owns the road and is responsible for repairs. Mr. Knoblock's understanding was that the unincorporated areas of the County are funded through the Municipal Services District ("MSD"). He questioned whether MSD is responsible for maintaining the trailhead parking lots within the right-of-way. He asked for a breakdown of what is paid for by the fee booth and MSD and who will serve as an advocate to ensure that Millcreek receives sufficient funding from the MSD. They are competing with other townships that have members who serve on the MSD Board. It was determined that additional research needed to be conducted on the matter.

Chair Marshall's recollection was that the road extends to 60 feet on either side of the median line over Forest Service land for a total of 120 feet. Mr. Knoblock commented that some of the parking areas on the side of the road are clearly on Forest Service. It was noted that the New Rattlesnake Trailhead parking lot extends beyond 60 feet. He asked how that would be addressed. Mr. Knoblock indicated that he would continue to seek clarification on the matter.

Mr. Knoblock, who also serves as the Trails Committee Chair, updated the committee on the trails in Millcreek Canyon. Last year, Trails Utah received a grant that paid for U.S. Forest crews to redo the Bowman Trail from Alexander Basin across the face of Gobblers Nob. The hope this

year was to have funds released that are temporarily on hold due to COVID-19. The intent was to obtain \$80,000 to complete the Upper Millcreek Trail to connect Elbow Fork to Big Water Trail. On Rattlesnake Gulch, Sarah Bennett from Trails Utah received \$40,000 in TRCC (Tourism, Recreation, Culture, and Convention) funding as well as a \$40,000 matching grant that will fund a new trail parallel to the Rattlesnake Gulch Trail on an 8% grade that will serve as a segregated mountain bike trail.

Del Draper spoke to three individuals who were previously involved with the Boy Scouts of America. Two of the three were certain that the youth program of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will continue to utilize Camp Tracy for Cub Scout-aged children. It was anticipated that an agreement will be reached between Camp Tracy and the LDS church, which would provide a revenue stream to the Greater Salt Lake Council of the Boy Scouts of America regarding usage and perhaps alleviate a crisis. Mr. Draper doubted that will alleviate the need to put a conservation easement on the property. He suggested they continue to move forward in that regard.

Mr. Knoblock reported that while at the Recorder's Office recently, he looked at the Boy Scout parcels that are on record and found no evidence of any existing conservation easements. He noted that the bottom portion of the canyon between Camp Tracy and the toll booth was previously owned by the Boy Scouts. About 15 years ago it was sold to an independent company, which shows there is a precedent.

Mr. Draper reported on communications with Utah Open Lands and stated that Wendy Fisher was going to prepare some proposals and report back to him. Chair Marshall suggested he proceed with caution since the CWC and the County are committed to dealing only with willing sellers. To advocate for it, they should get the approval of CWC staff. It was noted that it is the policy of the County to not pursue real estate transactions like the one described unless a willing seller comes forward. The disadvantage is that it is unlikely they will bring a proposal forward.

Chair Marshall stated that the Federal Land Access Program ("FLAP") grant application from the County and the Forest Service made the shortlist. Salt Lake County Transportation Program Manager, Helen Peters reported that they are in the process of meeting with the Forest Service and the County to better understand the financial impacts. Chair Marshall commented that given the reduction in tax revenues he suspected they could continue to expect what was reported by the Public Works Department prior to the last meeting that includes a low level of maintenance on Millcreek Road until FLAP grant funds become available.

Chair Marshall also spoke with Bekee Hotze from the U.S. Forest Service who indicated that the District Office has no intention of restricting public access to Millcreek Road at this time. She asked that one representative from the Committee serve as a Liaison with her. Chair Marshall recommended John Knoblock serve in that capacity. He reported that Ms. Hotze will soon be leaving her current position to become the Acting Forest Supervisor for the Ashley National Forest for four months. In the interim, Lance Kovel will fill in for her.

Chair Marshall indicated that he followed up with Bart Barker via email regarding providing more detail on the three-line summary on expenditures in Millcreek Canyon for 2017 through 2019. He was awaiting a response.

Chair Marshall reported that Log Haven was closed from March 16 to May 7 and reopened just before Mother's Day at a much lower capacity to allow for social distancing and spacing in the kitchen.

Ms. Peters was asked to clarify the relationship between Salt Lake County and the MSD. She explained that MSD is a service provider who contracts with the County to provide various services. They are not over regional planning so they provide service to the unincorporated communities. The MSD Board sets service levels and allocates funding. Bart Barker is responsible for carrying out the direction of the Board. Ms. Peters' understanding was that because it is a contractual relationship, it can be changed.

Paul Diegel reported that he previously committed to speaking with Salt Lake County about bike lanes in Millcreek. He contacted the Project Manager on last year's Bike Lane Restriping Project and was informed that there are no specific plans. There are, however, general plans to increase the amount of roadway with bike lanes between the bottom of the canyon and the winter gate by doing more restriping and shoulder widening where feasible. That work is dependent on the FLAP grant. Above the gate, there was concern about the width and safety of the road but no plans to take action. The long-term goal is to roto mill and overlay the pavement but it is unlikely to be done without funding in place. Ms. Peters did not expect to receive funding until 2025. A decision on the funding was expected later in the year.

**3. Discussion of Forest Service's Projected Uses of Funds from Toll Increases (pages 9-10 of the Communication Plan sent by John Knoblock on April 14).**

Chair Marshall explained that the plan pertains to increased toll funds and has nothing to do with the FLAP grant. The increase from the tolls was projected to be \$300,000. That figure, however, was expected to be closer to \$200,000 due to the weeks of toll collection that were lost. The County provided a wish list of items to be included. They consisted of a Project Manager to help with planning and ultimately transition to implementation. They were also looking for personnel to provide interpretive services and enforcement of Forest Service rules. The wish list was extensive and the \$300,000 will not be nearly enough to satisfy it. The priorities were identified and included the creation of the Project Manager position, the hiring of two Interpretive Enforcement Officers for \$70,000 each, increase Unified Police Department ("UPD") funding for enforcement, and provide an information board at the booth.

Chair Marshall reported that \$300,000 will not allow for a Trails Master Plan, upgrades to trails for four years, and will take 8½ years to complete. Given the cost of restroom upgrades of \$65,000 per unit, only one can be done every three years. At that rate, it will take 60 years to update all 20 restrooms. Other projects and capital improvements would have to be prioritized as funding allows. Chair Marshall was concerned that there was no mention of fuel reductions or fire prevention. He hoped funds will be allocated to clean up the woody debris along Millcreek Road.

He invited feedback from the Committee on whether to advocate for some of the priorities being reordered.

Del Draper was disappointed that so little money seems to fall to these types of projects. He recommended that they as individuals, advocate for things they would like to see happen there. With respect to tolls, Chair Marshall pointed out that initially, Jim Bradley was interested in a \$6 toll. The communication plan takes a serious look at what other parks are charging and in nearly every case they are charging more than Millcreek even with the increase.

Ms. Peters was excused from the remainder of the meeting.

Mr. Diegel found the report to be discouraging and not on pace to provide sustainability for Millcreek Canyon. To meet the public demand, they will have to look elsewhere for funding unless there is a drastic change.

#### **4. Chipper Days Project Headed by Lindsey Nielsen.**

Communications Director, Lindsey Nielsen reported that the CWC Board created three committees including the Short-Term Projects Committee. One of the outcomes of the committee was that the CWC allocated funds for projects throughout the CWC project area. One included a partnership wherein the CWC will enter into an agreement with the Division of Forestry Fire and State Lands through the Department of Natural Resources to co-sponsor Chipper Days. It will take place throughout Little and Big Cottonwood Canyons, Millcreek Canyon, and Parleys Corridor. The agreement had not yet been finalized so the locations had not yet been determined. One or two Chipper Days events were likely to take place in Millcreek Canyon. It was noted that all of the work was to be done this season. Ms. Nielsen stated that recreational residences work for the Forest Service because an additional environmental analysis is not required to do chipping and perform material removal at the location.

#### **5. Safe and Effective Ways to Slow Downhill Bikers Around Sharp Curves.**

Chair Marshall reported that some cyclists tend to go very fast around sharp curves, which is dangerous. The UPD posted a sign earlier in the week that is intended to slow down the speed of cyclists. He questioned whether paint on the road would be more effective. Other options included posting signs to direct pedestrians and low-level rumble strips. It was suggested that the issue first be dealt with through signage reminding people of the speed limit and sharp and blind corners. Potential dangers to cyclists from rumble strips were described. Ways to get the word out among the cycling community was discussed.

#### **6. Our Authority on Behalf of this Committee and the CWC.**

Chair Marshall reminded the committee members to be mindful of keeping their personal views and actions separate from those of the committee and the CWC unless they have been authorized.

7. **Other Business Relating Directly to Millcreek Canyon.**

Members of the public were thanked for their participation in the meeting.

8. **Adjournment.**

**MOTION:** [REDACTED] moved to adjourn. [REDACTED] seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.

The Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting adjourned at approximately 4:15 p.m.

*I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate and complete record of the Millcreek Canyon Committee held Monday, May 18, 2020.*

Teri Forbes

Teri Forbes  
T Forbes Group  
Minutes Secretary

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