

1 **MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) LEGISLATIVE/**  
2 **LAND TENURE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD REMOTELY ON THURSDAY,**  
3 **JUNE 4, 2020, AT 1:00 P.M.**  
4

5 **Present:** Mayor Jenny Wilson, Commissioner Chris Robinson, Mayor Jeff  
6 Silvestrini, Mayor Harris Sondak, Mayor Erin Mendenhall, Mike Reberg,  
7 Dave Fields, Carl Fisher, Randy Doyle, Mike Maughan  
8

9 **Staff:** CWC Executive Director Ralph Becker, Communications Director Lindsey  
10 Nielsen  
11

12 **1. Introductions – Jenny Wilson, Chair, Legislative/Land Tenure Committee.**  
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14 Chair Wilson called the meeting to order at approximately 1:00 p.m. and welcomed those present.  
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16 **2. Review Objectives of Meeting – Chair Wilson.**  
17

18 Chair Wilson reported that this committee and its objectives are complex. There is also uncertainty  
19 about the future. She hoped to give staff direction to create a decision point document. She  
20 suggested the need to narrow the process to reach a resolution. There are numerous available  
21 options that she hoped to flesh out today. She would like to long-term opportunities off the table  
22 and further consider those that are probable or need further discussion. The hope was to give staff  
23 direction on work to be done between now and the next meeting.  
24

25 **3. Further Review of Options for Addressing Replacement for Land Exchange Proposal**  
26 **in Prior Legislation and Mountain Accord.**  
27

28 **a. Recap of 3-20-2020 Meeting.**  
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30 Mike Reberg reported that at the last meeting they began to layout alternatives to the land  
31 exchange. At that time, they discussed in detail the option of a directed land exchange. He recalled  
32 that that was something they should spend more time on.  
33

34 Executive Director, Ralph Becker stated that the first item discussed was whether to pursue other  
35 alternatives than were in the legislation that came out in Mountain Accord. There was also  
36 discussion of a directed exchange where some had reservations about whether that was viable.  
37 While there were reservations, they decided not to take it off the table. Mr. Becker pointed out  
38 that the idea of a directed land exchange came from congressional delegation staff.  
39

40 **b. Directed Land Exchange.**  
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42 Chris Robinson agreed with Mr. Becker’s characterization that there were substantial reservations  
43 but he sensed that the initial directed exchange carries baggage from past examples of abuse of  
44 process where there was no transparency. In this case, there would be a collaborative and  
45 consensus-based process. To date, the directed exchange seemed to be the best option.  
46

1 Dave Fields commented that the resorts have reservations. It was noted that they spent the last  
2 five years stating that any land exchange would be based on fair market value. It was also made  
3 very clear by the U.S. Forest Service that they do not want these lands. It was suggested that  
4 avenues be pursued to achieve the same goals. Mr. Fields stressed that he was speaking on behalf  
5 of Snowbird only concerning the conservation easement. They would like to see transportation  
6 improved in the canyon and make that a trigger for preparing a conservation easement.

7  
8 Randy Doyle stated that pursuing other avenues would be wiser than continuing to chase a directed  
9 exchange. He felt that the optics to the public for a directed exchange would make the road  
10 insurmountable.

11  
12 Carl Fisher did not think that the land use patterns and projects taking place are working to the  
13 benefit of the place. While the U.S. Forest Service is one landlord, there are several others as well.  
14 With regard to a directed exchange, he questioned whether the public understands the nuances.  
15 He was open to pursuing a directed land exchange and considered it to be worth exploring.

16  
17 Dave Fields commented that the four ski areas have serious reservations. There were concerns  
18 with the optics, the relationship with the U.S. Forest Service, and the expense.

19  
20 Chair Wilson suggested they enter into a more focused conversation with a facilitator. She  
21 questioned whether this forum will get them where they need to be. It seemed to her that working  
22 toward more focused conversations was a worthy goal.

23  
24 It was noted that Mountain Accord worked well for the ski resorts in theory. It also preserved  
25 properties that were important to other constituencies. A question was raised as to whether a  
26 solution outside of the federal legislation would encourage the ski resorts to come back to the table  
27 and advocate for it without the land exchange. Chair Wilson considered the complication of the  
28 legislation to be a barrier in many ways. She suggested they simplify it and identify key priorities.  
29 Possible options were discussed.

30  
31 It was suggested that options outside of a federally designated exchange be pursued before  
32 deciding whether to move forward. Mr. Becker commented that the land exchange pieces were of  
33 value at the time of Mountain Accord. The focus here is on the conservation community for the  
34 tradeoff of the ski areas getting more control through private land ownership. With the land  
35 exchange in the legislation falling apart, the intent is to find another option. He suggested they  
36 meet as a group of ski areas to identify potential options. He noted, however, that the transportation  
37 solutions have to be moved along.

38  
39 Mr. Fields stated that their approach has always been engagement and exploring options. Mike  
40 Maughan commented stated that Alta owns land on the north side of Little Cottonwood Canyon  
41 outside of the ski area that is currently being used by backcountry skiers and others. They are also  
42 interested in preserving lands in Grizzly Gulch for ski area use. He stated that they have lands that  
43 could be included in an exchange. The challenge is that there is no infrastructure for the users of  
44 those lands within the Town of Alta. They were interested in a solution to protect those lands and  
45 allow them to continue to be used. As part of the solution, they would want to have the appropriate  
46 infrastructure in place.

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2 Commissioner Robinson remarked that the trigger will be to solve transportation. He suggested  
3 that the committee identify tools and work with other committees. They should be prepared to  
4 have another mechanism in place that assuages the concerns of those who supported the  
5 transportation component.  
6

7 Mr. Becker referenced the timing element, which has always been a moving target for the land and  
8 resources side as well as transportation. The CWC is on a schedule to complete its work by the  
9 end of 2020. Timing issues were discussed. Mr. Becker pointed out that there is a timeline  
10 meshing issue. It was suggested that the next step be to find a way to combine the individual needs  
11 into a collective package to move forward.  
12

13 Chair Wilson stated that the sense of urgency at the federal level for this year can only be realized  
14 with a realistic plan. She hoped to find some commonality with which to build a bill off of.  
15 Possible next steps were discussed. Mr. Becker suggested they explore specifics with each of the  
16 ski areas and see if there is a collective path forward that may or may not require a legislative  
17 piece. There are also changes in the overall legislation. The urgency in his mind was for early  
18 2021.  
19

20 The suggestion was made that they have more than the perspective of the ski resorts and identify  
21 all of the options.  
22

23 **c. Land Acquisition Options.**

24 **i. Local Funding – Private and Public Sources.**

25 **1. Bonding – Salt Lake County Bonding Initiative.**

26 **2. Salt Lake City Watershed Protection Fund.**

27 **3. Land Trusts Funding Campaign.**

28 **ii. Congressional Authorization for Ski Area Base Lands Purchase and**  
29 **Dedication of Revenues for Private Lands Acquisition.**

30 **iii. Acquiring Non-Ski Area Lands.**  
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32

33 **4. Next Steps for Committee.**

34 Chair Wilson felt that the discussions were productive and suggested they have individual  
35 conversations before the next meeting. Commissioner Robinson suggested holding an Executive  
36 Committee Meeting to identify next steps. Mr. Becker offered to prepare a plan to move forward  
37 between now and the next meeting.  
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39 **5. Other Business.**  
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1 **6. Adjournment.**

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3 The Central Wasatch Commission Legislative/Land Tenure Committee Meeting adjourned at  
4 approximately 2:00 p.m.

1 *I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate and complete record of the Central*  
2 *Wasatch Commission Legislative/Land Tenure Committee Meeting held Thursday, June 4, 2020.*  
3

4 *Teri Forbes*

5 Teri Forbes

6 T Forbes Group

7 Minutes Secretary

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