

MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION'S VISITOR MANAGEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING HELD THURSDAY, JUNE 25, 2020, AT 12:30 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 Annalee Munsee, Kirk Nichols, Dr. Kelly Bricker, Will McCarvill, Carl Fisher, Mike Maughan, Chip Smith

Staff: CWC Executive Director Ralph Becker, CWC Deputy Director Blake Perez

1. WELCOME

a. Meeting will be Called to Order by Chair Annalee Munsee.

Chair Annalee Munsee called the meeting to order at approximately 12:30 p.m.

2. DISCUSS JULY 13 CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION ("CWC") MEETING

a. Explain Visitor Management Prospectus.

i. Phase 1 and Estimated Cost.

ii. Phase 2 and Estimated Cost.

Chair Munsee reported that at the last Central Wasatch Commission Board Meeting they asked for a presentation on the Visitor Management Study and with additional information sought. She thought it was timely to reeducate the board on the purpose, what they want to accomplish, and ask for their commitment to funding it. The budget is limited but they have reserves that could potentially be made available for fund Phase1. Their goal is to make a presentation at the July 13 CWC Meeting detailing why they would like to pursue the Visitor Management Study, explain the prospectus, and request the board's support.

b. Strategy for Funding.

i. Request for Funding for Phase 1 from CWC during July Meeting.

CWC Deputy Director, Blake Perez described the process and stated that depending on the outcome, they will likely want to have Greg Summerhays discuss with the CWC's Budget Finance Committee a request for Phase 1. It is unbudgeted and the board has not yet decided to use reserves and if so, for what purpose. Potential options were discussed.

Will McCarville recommended that Dr. Bricker reduce Phases 1 and 2 to no more than one page for Phase 1 and 1 ½ pages for Phase 2. Dr. Bricker was happy to do that but wondered if there was a potential to have a speak with a representative of the U.S. Forest Service before the meeting

since their support will be needed. Mr. McCarvill's impression was that visitor satisfaction is declining and suggested they come up with an incentive for the U.S. Forest Service.

CWC Executive Director, Ralph Becker reported that a significant part of Phase 1 is to refine and define the scope of work for Phase 2. He reported that Lance Kovel is serving as the Acting Salt Lake District Ranger as well as the CWC Liaison. He has been very accessible. It was suggested that perhaps they could speak with Mr. Kovel about what the report could do in terms of their ability to manage. There are also aspects of the Great American Outdoors Act that may support the U.S. Forest Service in being in a better position to deal with their management responsibilities.

Carl Fisher mentioned that Mountain Accord recommended doing the work. In addition, Save Our Canyons, in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service, Salt Lake City, and the ski areas, conducted a Visitor Analysis Report that recommended pursuing this type of effort. He agreed to pass these materials on to the committee members.

Mr. Becker reported that COVID-19 is changing the world but he observed that the number of people who are flooding the canyons in the offseason is unlike anything he has seen before. He considered there to be another dimension to be taken into account. He considered communicating with the U.S. Forest Service to be particularly valuable before the discussion with the overall board.

Dr. Bricker thought it would be useful to work with the U.S. Forest Service. Mr. Becker stated that currently, their policy as it relates to the ski areas is that the ski areas manage visitors and monitor impacts. Mr. McCarvill was concerned that the U.S. Forest Service has not managed or kept track of things in the Wasatch. The trails are degraded, there are large volumes of trash pickup, the restroom facilities are in poor condition, and many other organizations have had to step in because the area was not managed properly in terms of recreation. He hoped to get to a point that they are predictive rather than reactive.

Chair Munsee suggested that a phone call or meeting be scheduled with the U.S. Forest Service before July 8. In terms of funding, she and Chip Smith had a conversation with Dustin Cedarholm who is the Executive Director for the Utah Outdoor Association. She did not anticipate funding being a problem if they can show the benefit to those who are contributing. Mr. Cedarholm had some great ideas that he shared but, in the end, they have to know that the study is going to be of benefit. The U.S. Forest Service was considered to be an important part of that.

Mr. Perez explained that ultimately the request being made to the Budget and Finance Committee is to outside of the budget. Currently, they are developing plans for Phases 1 and 2 and preparing a request to fund Phase 1 using reserved funds. Chip Smith commented that if they do it right, a Go Fund Me campaign could fund all of Phase 1 and part of Phase 2. He expected a substantial amount of funding to be obtained from private sources if they feel they have a say in the canyons and how they are used. Mr. Perez stated that that idea would have to be explored further.

Mr. Becker reported that the CWC was able to obtain bus service improvement funding and asked others to provide reimbursement. The ski areas, conservation groups, and a few jurisdictions

backfilled some of the money that the CWC fronted. He stated that something similar could perhaps be done in this case.

Dr. Bricker reported that the Utah Outdoor Recreation Summit sessions are scheduled for August 26. She, Will McCarvill, and Chair Munsee would work together to schedule a meeting with the U.S. Forest Service and to prepare a presentation to be made to the full board.

3. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

4. ADJOURNMENT

The Visitor Management Subcommittee Meeting adjourned at approximately 1:00 p.m.

I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the CWC's Visitor Management Subcommittee Meeting held Thursday, June 25, 2020.

Teri Forbes

Teri Forbes
T Forbes Group
Minutes Secretary

Minutes Approved: _____