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2 **MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) STAKEHOLDERS**
3 **COUNCIL MEETING HELD WEDNESDAY, JULY 15, 2020 AT 3:00 P.M. THE**
4 **MEETING WAS CONDUCTED ELECTRONICALLY VIA ZOOM WITH NO ANCHOR**
5 **LOCATION.**
6

7 **Present:** Chair Greg Summerhays, Co-Chair Dr. Kelly Bricker, Carolyn Wawra, Del
8 Draper, Don Despain, Ed Marshall, Carl Fisher, Barbara Cameron, Jan
9 Striefel, John Knoblock, Michael Braun, Mike Maughan, Mike Marker,
10 Nate Furman, Nathan Rafferty, Ned Hacker, Paul Diegel, Ryan Doyle,
11 Tamara Prue, Kurt Hegeman, Brian Hutchinson, Will McCarvill, Kirk
12 Nichols, Megan Nelson
13

14 **CWC Staff:** Executive Director Ralph Becker, Deputy Director Blake Perez,
15 Communications Director Lindsey Nielsen, Office Administrator Kaye
16 Mickelson
17

18 **1. OPENING**
19

20 **a. Greg Summerhays will Conduct the Meeting as Chair of the Stakeholders**
21 **Council (“SHC”).**
22

23 Stakeholders Council Chair, Greg Summerhays called the meeting to order at approximately
24 3:00 p.m.
25

26 **b. Chair Greg Summerhays will Read the Determination Letter Referencing**
27 **Electronic Meetings as Per the Legislative Requirements.**
28

29 Chair Summerhays read the following statement:
30

31 Pursuant to Utah Code §52-4-207-4, the Mountain Accord Stakeholders Council of the Central
32 Wasatch Commission (“CWC”) hereby determined that conducting Council Meetings at any time
33 during the next 30 days at an anchor location presents substantial risks to the health and safety of
34 those who may be present at the anchor location. The World Health Organization, the President
35 of the United States, the Governor of the State of Utah, the Salt Lake County Mayor, and the Salt
36 Lake County Health Department have all recognized that a global pandemic exists related to a new
37 strain of Coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2). Due to the state of emergency caused by this global
38 pandemic, we find that conducting a meeting at an anchor location under the current state of public
39 health emergency constitutes a substantial risk to the health and safety of those who may be present
40 at the location. According to the information of State Epidemiology experts, Utah is currently in
41 an accelerated phase which has the potential to overwhelm the State’s health care system.

1
2 **c. The Stakeholders Council Will Consider Approving the Meeting Minutes of**
3 **Wednesday, April 15, 2020.**
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5 **MOTION:** Ed Marshall moved to approve the minutes of Wednesday, April 15, 2020. Barbara
6 Cameron seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.
7

8 **2. MILLCREEK CANYON COMMITTEE UPDATE**
9

10 **a. Ed Marshall, Chair of the Millcreek Canyon Committee will Provide an Update**
11 **on the Work of the Committee to Date. Minutes of the Committee are Posted**
12 **on the Utah Public Notice Website.**
13

14 Millcreek Canyon Committee Chair, Ed Marshall, reported that the Millcreek Canyon Committee
15 has had regular monthly meetings for the past three months. During that time, they have gathered
16 and evaluated information from several sources on a variety of subjects. These include the
17 following:
18

- 19 • Helen Peters and Jared Stewart from the Salt Lake County Regional Planning Department
20 have been working on the Federal Lands Access Program (“FLAP”). In June, the grant
21 was approved. It is a federal grant for transportation improvements in the amount of \$12
22 million. The Federal Highway Works Administration will scope out the work this summer
23 but funds will not be received until 2024 or 2025.
- 24 • The Committee evaluated how the U.S. Forest Service intends to allocate the \$300,000 of
25 anticipated additional revenue that will be received annually due to the \$2 toll increase
26 implemented this year.
- 27 • Progress has been monitored on trails in Millcreek Canyon, especially the connector from
28 Elbow Fork to the Dog Lake parking lots. Appreciation was expressed to John Knoblock
29 and Sarah Bennett for making this and the Rattlesnake Trail possible.
- 30 • The relationship of the Metropolitan Services District (“MSD”) to the Millcreek County
31 Road was determined. It was clarified and the amounts spent on Millcreek Road over the
32 past three years were determined.
- 33 • Del Draper obtained the status of the Boy Scout Camps now that the LDS Church has
34 separated from The Boy Scouts of America and the Great Salt Lake Boy Scout Council.
- 35 • The Committee has been actively involved in the Chipper Day Project to reduce fuels in
36 Millcreek Canyon. They also examined the U.S. Forest Services’ plans for fuel reduction
37 in the Canyons. CWC Communications Director, Lindsey Nielsen was acknowledged for
38 the work she has done on the Chipper Days Project.
- 39 • The Committee discussed the need for Committee Members to distinguish their personal
40 views from those considered and adopted by the Committee itself.
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- 1
- 2 • The Committee looked at a variety of public safety issues in Millcreek Canyon including
- 3 possible methods to slow the speed of downhill cyclists around sharp curves.
- 4
- 5 • The Committee’s focus on public safety has resulted in the County improving the situation
- 6 at the first Boy Scout gate. They have widened the downhill lane, reduced the speed limit
- 7 to 25 MPH, and installed 25 MPH signs that are typically seen on mountain roads.
- 8
- 9 • The Committee continues to pursue safety improvements at Church Fork where they are
- 10 badly needed.
- 11
- 12 • The Committee has embarked on a large project led by Paul Diegel who has worked with
- 13 Polly Hart and Hilary Jacobs who are the leaders of FIDOS, a local dog advocacy group.
- 14 They are evaluating solutions to conflicts between the various recreational users in
- 15 Millcreek Canyon.
- 16

17 Mr. Marshall stated that their goal is to come up with clear and concise recommendations that they
18 feel comfortable advocating for the CWC, Salt Lake County, and the U.S. Forest Service. They
19 should include proposed compromises and solutions and suggestions on signage. Paul Diegel took
20 photos of signs from other national forests that make them more palatable.

21

22 **3. TRAILS COMMITTEE UPDATE**

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24 **a. John Knoblock, Chair of the Trails Committee, will Provide an Update on the**
25 **Committee Work Completed to Date.**

26

27 Trails Committee Chair, John Knoblock reported that the Trails Committee has not met regularly
28 but intend to do so once they can get their schedules to align. He reported that the Millcreek Trail
29 is under construction. They would like to assist the U.S. Forest Service with respect to conducting
30 a Trails Master Plan. The U.S. Forest Service feels strongly that they need to utilize a third-party
31 consultant to incorporate the U.S. Forest Service lands and non-U.S. Forest Service lands within
32 the study area.

33

34 Mr. Knoblock expressed frustration at what took place at the most recent CWC Meeting.
35 Comments were made that he felt were inaccurate concerning the funding of the Visitor
36 Management Study versus a Trails Master Plan. Greg Summerhays and Carl Fisher reported that
37 a vote was taken by the Stakeholders Council in which a majority voted to move forward with a
38 Visitor Management Study and fund it. He did not recall that taking place and reviewed the
39 meeting minutes and saw no such vote. He asked for clarification.

40

41 Chair Summerhays recalled that at their December and January meetings they discussed the Visitor
42 Management Study in great detail. He recalled that a vote took place during the January meeting
43 to move the matter forward to the CWC Board for review. As stated at the meeting on Monday,
44 it was not a unanimous vote but it was a majority vote. Mr. Knoblock was also frustrated by a
45 fellow Board Member who stated that the Federal Legislation included a comprehensive Trails
46 and Management Plan, which he did not see. The Trails Committee plans to move forward and

1 hopefully put together the criteria, objectives, and deliverables that they would like to see come
2 out of a Trails Master Plan.

3
4 **4. VISITOR MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE UPDATE**

5
6 **a. Annalee Munsey and Will McCarvill, Chair and Co-Chair of the Visitor
7 Management Committee Will Provide Updated Information.**
8

9 Will McCarvill led a discussion on visitor management and actions being taken by the Committee.
10 He stated that there was a lot of spirited discussion at Monday's CWC Board Meeting. The pros
11 and cons of a Visitor Management Study were discussed in light of the uncertainty surrounding
12 the budget. There was discussion about how much money is available to support the various
13 actions that are proposed or underway. No formal action was taken. There was general support
14 for Phase 1. It was also felt that even if the CWC could come up with some funding, there would
15 need to be fundraising to pay for the University of Utah proposal. Mr. McCarvill's takeaway was
16 what is needed from the University of Utah is a specific proposal with a specific cost. It was noted
17 that they typically do not fund ranges and need a specific dollar amount. He suggested that
18 fundraising be discussed at the next Visitor Management Sub-Committee Meeting.
19

20 Dr. Kelly Bricker commented that there were several questions raised about who will conduct the
21 study. That was still an open question. She could put a draft concept together, however, the
22 proposal needs to be fleshed out with exact costs. Representatives from the U.S. Forest Service
23 were also present and identified the fact that they feel there is more capacity in the Central Wasatch
24 and are not necessarily supportive of additional studies at this time. They would continue to use
25 their own monitoring system. There had been discussion about using the opportunity to use this
26 is something supportive of the human dimensions of the Environmental Dashboard and other
27 initiatives that are underway including the Trails Plan and water quality management in the Central
28 Wasatch. She stated that Phase 1 will be a compilation and meta-analysis of the information that
29 is currently available and finding gaps.
30

31 Executive Director, Ralph Becker commented that there was clear direction from staff to move
32 forward with getting a Visitor Use Study underway. Staff has done preliminary work and has
33 begun to pursue private fundraising.
34

35 Barbara Cameron commented that at the CWC Board Meeting held on Monday, she was not sure
36 if they felt that the Visitor Use Study could be integrated with the Environmental Dashboard. She
37 hoped that it could. Mr. Becker explained that there is a natural integration and tie between
38 completing the Environmental Dashboard and gathering additional information about visitor use
39 as well as the impacts. He stated that there is a natural tie. The Environmental Dashboard focuses
40 on the natural setting of the Wasatch while the study involves the human dimension.
41

42 Dr. Bricker stated that the Forest Service does not have the resources to do continuous monitoring,
43 which should be done at certain intervals. She considered this to be an opportunity to consider the
44 vision for the future and use data to plan visits to the canyon.
45

1 Jan Striefel asked if a decision had been made on whether it can be a single source or needs to go
2 out to a public bidding process. Mr. Becker stated that that was discussed but no decision was
3 made by the Board.

4
5 Kurt Hegeman reported that he serves on the Environmental Dashboard Committee and there are
6 an amazing number of parallel structures. The dashboard is organized over issues, locations,
7 standards, thresholds, and limits of acceptable change, which is the same structure that a Visitor
8 Management Plan would follow.

9
10 Ms. Nielsen stated that the CWC has found two incredible Managers at the University of Utah who
11 were identified as Dr. Jim Ehrlinger and Dr. Phoebe McNealy, who will bring the Environmental
12 Dashboard to completion. Phase 1 of the project began in July of 2019 and closed in December
13 of 2019. It included looking at all of the work that had been done and the data amassed to that
14 point under the original contract with the Brendle Group. Phase 2 involves building out the
15 templates for each of the pages for the Environmental Dashboard and getting it online. Completion
16 was expected by mid-2022. The current scope does not include a human component and may be
17 something to consider in future phases. A Visitor Use Study could be part of a human component
18 of the Environmental Dashboard.

19
20 **5. CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION COMMITTEE UPDATES.**

21
22 **a. Short-Term Projects Committee.**

23
24 **i. CWC Staff to the Committee, Lindsey Nielsen will Provide an Update**
25 **on the Short-Term Projects Committee's Work.**

26
27 Ms. Nielsen reported that in the CWC 2019-2020 Fiscal Year Budget, \$60,000 was set aside for
28 projects. The Board directed the Short-Term Projects Committee to open up a call for ideas to the
29 larger public to learn where the needs exist in the project area. From that effort, they received 35
30 project ideas, all of which were reviewed by the Short-Term Projects Committee. To date, the
31 CWC has funded eight short-term projects identified as follows:

- 32
33
- 34 • Co-sponsored Chipper Days;
 - 35 • Contributed to land acquisition in Cottonwood Heights at the base of Little Cottonwood
36 Canyon;
 - 37 • Supported the construction of two significant bridges to allow the rerouted Dog Lake Trail
38 to cross a ravine on the east side of Rattles Peak;
 - 39 • Supported the ongoing maintenance of a Lone Peak Wilderness Wag Bag kiosk sponsored
40 by Save Our Canyons, The Climbers Alliance, and Gear Room;
 - 41 • Supported the work of Wasatch Graffiti Busters;
 - 42 • Supported stewardship at the Gate Buttress Trail in Little Cottonwood Canyon; and
 - 43 • Are paying to support the maintenance of three Forest Service bathrooms at trailheads
44 located at Donut Falls, Mill B, and Big Cottonwood Canyon.

45 Ms. Nielsen reported that each of the projects builds upon existing partnerships with community
46 organizations, non-profits, other government entities, or have built out new partnerships. She

1 explained that with the Chipper Day Project, they have teamed up with the Utah State Division of
2 Forestry Fire and State Lands to bolster outreach and communication regarding fire safety with
3 residents.

4
5 **b. Transportation Committee.**

6
7 **i. CWC Staff to the Committee, Blake Perez will Provide an Update on**
8 **its Work Done to Date on the Mountain Transit Study (“MTS”)**
9 **Initiative.**

10
11 CWC Deputy Director, Blake Perez provided an update of the Mountain Transit Study and
12 reported that the initial scoping process was released in January or February of 2020 and was
13 opened up for public comment. Public comment was received through February and the comments
14 were cataloged and categorized in terms of the geographic scope, attributes, and objectives. They
15 came back to the Stakeholders Council at its April meeting with prioritization exercises for the
16 attributes and objectives. The Transportation Committee used that input to make recommendations
17 to the CWC. Staff was currently working with a group of technical experts, vendors, and planners
18 on a regional approach that fulfills the attributes and objectives agreed upon earlier this year. They
19 hope to release them in early Fall 2020. Staff was currently looking at ways to receive comments,
20 increase public engagement, and see how that dynamic has shifted as a result of COVID-19.

21
22 **c. Legislative Land Tenure Committee.**

23
24 **i. CWC Executive Director, Ralph Becker will Provide an Update on the**
25 **Legislative Land Tenure Committee and Its Work to Date.**

26
27 Mr. Becker reported that the Legislative Land Tenure Committee has met once since the last
28 Stakeholders Council Meeting. This year the CWC reached a point that it felt the Congressional
29 Legislation had been brought as far as it could. Republicans in the Congressional delegation
30 decided not to move the legislation forward this Congress and determined that the transportation
31 issues were of higher priority. Last Fall, the CWC Board at its Retreat shifted the focus to the
32 work addressed by Mr. Perez. The intent was also to look at the remaining issues with the Federal
33 Legislation with the most prominent one dealing with land exchanges. The desire was to find a
34 way to bring the major public use areas outside of the ski areas that are used by the public into a
35 protective status to ensure that those lands are not developed.

36
37 Mr. Becker addressed other options and the potential to have a public agency and government
38 acquisition of some of the lands if there is an interest. Some of the ski areas indicated that that
39 was a possibility. The potential of putting conservation easements on some of the private lands of
40 particular public interest was also considered. Bonding and developing public funding to acquire
41 land were also an option. The alternatives were discussed at a second meeting and they are now
42 in the process of following up with the individual ski areas because their circumstances all differ.

43
44 Mr. Becker was asked to address whether the Legislation would authorize and trigger an updated
45 Land Management Plan and if it would include looking at all four of the primary values set forth
46 in the Legislation. Mr. Becker responded that the Legislation calls for the development of a New

1 Land Management Plan by the U.S. Forest Service for the Central Wasatch National Conservation
2 Recreation Area that would include a range of things the U.S. Forest Service is responsible for
3 managing. It was noted that the area will remain under U.S. Forest Service jurisdiction. There is
4 also a Travel Management Plan for the forest. Each element of the existing Forest Plan would be
5 revised for this area with guidance from the legislation creating the area.

6
7 **6. OPEN DISCUSSION ON LCC EIS SCREENING AND ALTERNATIVES REPORT**
8

9 Mr. Perez addressed the CWC’s approach to developing comments and the overall process. In
10 setting out to develop comments, they discussed major topics and themes at the June
11 Transportation Committee Meeting. From there staff further developed topics and themes and
12 spoke to member jurisdictions and partners from Wasatch Front Regional Council (“WFRC”), the
13 Utah Transit Authority (“UTA”), and technical experts. They then sent out a draft and worked
14 with member jurisdictions to finalize it.

15
16 The following six topics were identified:
17

- 18 • Alignment of the Utah Department of Transportation (“UDOT”) scope, purpose, need, and
19 screening criteria with the CWC’s Mountain Transportation System (“MTS”) initiative.
20 They agreed on the scope that UDOT set out in terms of the objectives pertaining to
21 reliability, safety, and mobility. They determined that a regional approach needed to be
22 taken to solve the year-round transportation issues.
- 23 • Protection of critical environment in the watershed. Staff consulted with member
24 jurisdictions from the Department of Public Utilities and support their comments regarding
25 going back to the screening criteria that the watershed should be the most important
26 screening criteria.
- 27 • Alternative screening process. Staff felt that some of the alternatives were not screened
28 properly and asked that the team reconsider the evaluation. Staff suggested the rail
29 alignments be reconsidered as well as a fair comparison of the alternatives.
- 30 • Aerial ability to function during avalanche control work and the ability of buses to deliver
31 the expected number of people projected by UDOT.
- 32 • The relationship between demand management strategies, modes, and equitable access.
- 33 • Broader regional transportation needs and system integration.

34
35 Barbara Cameron thanked Mr. Perez for including Big Cottonwood Canyon and stated that there
36 will be issues in the event tolling comes up or if there are changes to the Park and Ride at the
37 mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon. She asked about the monorail option and who the consultants
38 are for the CWC Transportation Technical Committee. Mr. Perez explained that a report was
39 submitted on the alternatives and monorail was likely included. He was not sure it made it beyond
40 the first level of screening. It was noted that the Transportation Technical Committee consists of
41 numerous individuals with enormous expertise and knowledge.

42
43 Will McCarvill reported that the Sierra Club felt that all three alternatives were incredibly
44 inadequate at the expense of one-third to one-half of \$1 billion to handle only 30% of the traffic.
45 They considered there to be a lack of foresight. Projections show that 25% of those going to the

1 canyon in 10 years will use mass transit, 50% in 20 years, and 75% by 2050. The bus options were
2 favored with the transit hubs. They were less comfortable with the Gondola option.

3
4 Kirk Nichols commented that this summer the latent demand has shown that has not been studied.
5 The projection through 2050 is what the study is focused on yet the latent demand is showing up
6 because of COVID-19. It will also show up if the roads are more open. He believed the numbers
7 are very low compared to the number of people that will show up if the traffic situation improves.
8 He stated that it would be problematic to have no stops throughout the canyons other than at the
9 ski resorts. In addition, he suggested that the capacity study be part of the EIS and funded by the
10 State.

11
12 Mike Marker stated that one of the observations his neighborhood had was with the Gondola
13 option. They found it questionable because the cost of the avalanche sheds was left out. Without
14 avalanche sheds, there will still be delays and problems with access. He also asked if the CWC
15 has taken a position on the preferred mode of transportation up Little Cottonwood Canyon. Mr.
16 Becker stated that the CWC has not taken a position, which was the reason they were going through
17 the Mountain Transportation System effort. They are doing their best to consider all reasonable
18 modes. The next step will be to bring forth regional system alternatives. He pointed out that each
19 mode has advantages and disadvantages and different abilities to provide transportation solutions
20 and impacts. Their experts feel that the rail alternative was not well analyzed.

21
22 John Knoblock asked about the mobility/reliability issue of stacked up skier traffic. It seemed to
23 him that they are focusing on hours-long backups that occur with ski traffic. The focus seemed to
24 be on solving that problem.

25
26 Carl Fisher stated that the legislative appropriation specifically singled out projects that facilitate
27 economic development.

28
29 Ryan Doyle commented on the presumption that they are trying to feed bi-modal capacity that is
30 a remnant of the old slow chair lift capacity at resorts. He questioned why they are supporting bi-
31 modal capacity since resorts would make more money by redistributing the visitor patterns. He
32 suggested that they instead consider metered visitation.

33
34 Michael Braun asked about the MTS and asked how their biases are being removed from the
35 equation. Mr. Becker stated that the developer of an aerial system will naturally reflect their bias.
36 They have tried to ask that the sources share their knowledge and expertise. There have also been
37 group discussions where they challenge each other where there is expertise that doesn't have the
38 same bias. Staff had not found much disagreement regarding how each mode would or would not
39 work. Mr. Perez stated that those involved have also been clear about the limitations of each of
40 the modes and there is a balance within the group.

41
42 A comment was made about the economy and concern that by 2030 it will be too expensive to ski
43 at Snowbird and Alta so visitorship will be lower than anticipated.

1 Mr. Braun stated that he spoke with Office Administrator, Kaye Mickelson about visitor capacity.
2 He stated that they surveyed extensively in Millcreek Canyon. He offered to provide that feedback
3 to Ed Marshall who chairs the committee.
4

5 **7. OPEN DISCUSSION**
6

7 Mr. Braun reported that by the week's end Congressman John Curtis will be introducing a bill that
8 takes elements from Mountain Accord and forwarding removal of wilderness areas in the Central
9 Wasatch. It is not something that Save our Canyons supports because they think that acting in a
10 comprehensive and holistic fashion is important to realizing shared goals for the Wasatch.
11 Additional details about the bill would be presented to the group when it is introduced. Mr. Braun
12 stated that the State of Utah's Office of Outdoor Recreation recently informed him that the
13 Cottonwood Canyons Coalition is a finalist for their outdoor recreation awards this year.
14

15 Mr. Knoblock commented that the adjustments to the wilderness boundary are primarily on trails
16 that have not been built or on a section of trail between Heughs Canyon and Mount Olympus,
17 which does not have through access. Concern was expressed about the impact of more wilderness
18 areas with respect to fighting fires.
19

20 **8. ADJOURNMENT**
21

22 **MOTION:** Carl Fisher moved to adjourn. Megan Nelson seconded the motion. There was no
23 vote on the motion.
24

25 The Central Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council meeting adjourned at approximately
26 4:30 p.m.

1 *I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Central*
2 *Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council Meeting held Wednesday, July 15, 2020.*

3

4 *Teri Forbes*

5 Teri Forbes

6 T Forbes Group

7 Minutes Secretary

8

9 Minutes Approved: _____