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2 **MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”)**  
3 **BUDGET/FINANCE/AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD FRIDAY, JANUARY 22,**  
4 **2021 AT 11:00 A.M. VIA ZOOM**  
5

6 **Present:** Chair Jeff Silvestrini, Mayor Harris Sondak, Councilman Jim Bradley  
7

8 **CWC Staff:** Executive Director Ralph Becker, Deputy Director Blake Perez,  
9 Communications Director Lindsey Nielsen, Office Administrator Manager  
10 Kaye Mickelson  
11

12 **Others:** Robert Sampson, Colby Hartman  
13

14 • **OPENING**  
15

16 1. **Mayor Jeff Silvestrini, as Chair of the Budget/Finance Committee, will Call the**  
17 **Meeting to Order.**  
18

19 Mayor Jeff Silvestrini called the meeting to order at approximately 11:05 a.m.  
20

21 2. **Mayor Silvestrini will Read the Letter of Determination.**  
22

23 The Legislature, pursuant to Section 52-4-207(4), required the Committee to make a  
24 determination, which was as follows:  
25

26 ‘I, as the Chair of the Budget/Finance/Audit Committee hereby determine that  
27 conducting council meetings at any time during the next 30 days at an anchor  
28 location presents a substantial risk to the health and safety of those who may be  
29 present at the anchor location. The World Health Organization, the President of  
30 the United States, the Governor of Utah, the Salt Lake County Mayor, and the  
31 Health Department have all recognized that a global pandemic exists related to  
32 the new strain of the Coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2. Due to the state of emergency  
33 caused by the global pandemic, I find that conducting a meeting at an anchor  
34 location under the current state of public health emergency constitutes a  
35 substantial risk to the health and safety of those who may be present at the  
36 location. According to the information and from State epidemiology experts,  
37 Utah is currently in an acceleration phase, which has the potential to overwhelm  
38 the State’s health care system.’  
39

1 • **FINANCIALS AND STAFF REPORT UPDATE**

2  
3 **1. Second Quarter Documents were Previously Emailed to Committee Members.**  
4 **Member Contribution Update: Sandy City 2020-2021 Member Contribution**  
5 **(\$90,000) Received January 14, 2021.**  
6

7 CWC Office Administrator, Kaye Mickelson reported that the \$90,000 Sandy City member  
8 contributions had been received. Chair Silvestrini noted that all of the second quarter documents  
9 seemed to be in order. He mentioned the suggested member contribution formula and asked staff  
10 to explain further. CWC Deputy Director, Blake Perez explained that during the Sandy City  
11 budget discussions, the City agreed to provide their membership contribution. However, they were  
12 curious about the amount of money the City was contributing and wanted to learn more about their  
13 return on investment. Mr. Perez reported that there had been an inquiry from a Council Member  
14 about developing a formula to determine membership contributions. The Sandy City Council  
15 asked the Central Wasatch Commission (“CWC”) staff to come back in February for further  
16 discussions.

17  
18 CWC Executive Director, Ralph Becker added that the Sandy City Mayor vetoed the CWC budget.  
19 The Council overrode that veto, but concerns were raised by the Council Members about whether  
20 the CWC was a good investment for Sandy City. Mr. Becker reported that Chair Silvestrini and  
21 CWC Chair Chris Robinson previously attended a Sandy City Council Meeting to address some  
22 of those concerns. Moving forward, the Sandy City Council wanted to review the CWC, what it  
23 does, and how CWC work creates direct and indirect benefits for the City.

24  
25 Mr. Becker discussed the concept of a membership contribution formula. He reported that the  
26 Committee tried to come up with a formula in the past but had been unable to arrive at anything  
27 concrete. He noted that there were many factors to consider. Chair Silvestrini stated that the CWC  
28 needs to generate enough revenue to keep the organization running with an appropriate level of  
29 staffing. There also needed to be revenue to contribute to various projects. Chair Silvestrini  
30 commented that a community like Brighton or Alta could not be asked to pay as much as Salt Lake  
31 City or Millcreek. They do not have the same population or revenue levels. He commented that  
32 membership contributions are based on several different factors.

33  
34 Chair Silvestrini shared that when he and CWC Chair Robinson spoke to the Sandy City Council,  
35 they discussed the value of the CWC. The CWC brought different towns and cities together in an  
36 effort to find a solution for transportation in the canyons as well as addressing other issues. He  
37 noted that Sandy City is directly impacted by CWC decisions. The City also benefits economically  
38 by being at the mouth of Little Cottonwood Canyon. Chair Silvestrini believed in the work of the  
39 CWC and discussed the importance of working together to solve transportation issues within the  
40 canyons. He added that the Sandy City membership contribution was in line with what other  
41 members are contributing.

42  
43 Mayor Harris Sondak commented that the Budget/Finance/Audit Committee may not be able to  
44 show Sandy City a return on investment as easily in financial terms. He felt that the way Chair  
45 Silvestrini described the CWC work would make for a much better argument. Mayor Sondak  
46 pointed out that Sandy City paid half as much as Salt Lake City in membership contributions and

1 they have half the population. Sandy City was paying six times the amount of Alta but Sandy City  
2 has a significantly higher population. The membership contributions are more than just a  
3 breakdown of population numbers. Mayor Sondak noted that being a member of a community  
4 costs something but a lot was also given in return.

5  
6 Councilman Jim Bradley agreed with Chair Silvestrini and Mayor Sondak. He did not believe it  
7 was possible to create a formula that would take into account all of the various factors, such as  
8 population and geographic distance to the canyons. Councilman Bradley suggested approaching  
9 Sandy City and explaining why a formula would be difficult.

10  
11 Chair Silvestrini discussed the importance of finding solutions for the congestion in the canyons.  
12 He noted that visitors from other areas may not want to return to the ski resorts in Big or Little  
13 Cottonwood Canyons if traffic is a serious issue. Councilman Bradley believed that the link to  
14 tourism was a solid argument for the Legislature to begin funding the CWC. Chair Silvestrini  
15 responded that the impact on tourism would be an excellent argument to the Legislature about  
16 funding either the CWC or a transportation solution. He commented that no other group was  
17 engaged in the same kind of process as the CWC. The Commission was taking the time to do the  
18 work and listen to many different opinions. As a result, Chair Silvestrini believed that all future  
19 recommendations will have a high level of legitimacy.

20  
21 Chair Silvestrini commented that he would be open to hearing suggestions from Sandy City about  
22 a membership contribution formula. He wondered whether the City wanted to know how the  
23 amounts were determined or whether they felt the amounts should be changed. Mr. Becker  
24 reported that some people on the Sandy City Council were initially skeptical about the work of the  
25 CWC but changed their views. Monica Zoltanski was opposed to the CWC budget. Mr. Becker  
26 spoke to Ms. Zoltanski and explained that the work she had done to preserve Dimple Dell was  
27 similar to the work the CWC was attempting to do in the canyons. Ms. Zoltanski ultimately ended  
28 up voting for the CWC budget but asked that the CWC return to the City Council for further  
29 discussions. Chair Silvestrini noted that he had spoken to Ms. Zoltanski in another context but  
30 would make an effort to reach out to her again. He felt it was critical that Sandy City participate  
31 in the CWC.

32  
33 Mayor Sondak discussed the CWC website. He suggested that there could be a paragraph that  
34 relates to the value proposition for members. Chair Silvestrini thought that was a good idea. CWC  
35 Communications Director, Lindsey Nielsen indicated that she could work on this.

36  
37 The Committee Members discussed businesses near the canyons. Mr. Becker reported that from  
38 a State perspective, the mountains are seen as more of an economic asset than a recreational asset.  
39 The direct impacts of lodging, restaurants, and retail businesses have value but there is also value  
40 to making sure that the mountains are accessible. Chair Silvestrini pointed out that the mountains  
41 attract businesses to Utah. They are a huge economic driver but there are also watersheds to  
42 consider. He noted that the Legislature was looking into water conservation and whether it is fair  
43 to charge people with larger lots more for water.

44  
45 Mr. Becker suggested that Ms. Nielsen add information about the economic benefits to the CWC  
46 website. Ms. Nielsen reported that she would add the points made during the meeting to the Q&A

1 section of the website. Ms. Mickelson liked Mayor Sondak’s earlier suggestion to add a value  
2 statement to the website as well. Ms. Nielsen commented that she would work with the  
3 communications contacts at each of the jurisdictions and report back.  
4

5 • **FY 21/22 BUDGET BUILDING TIMEFRAME**  
6

7 Chair Silvestrini opened up a discussion related to the Fiscal Year 2021/2022 budget timeline.  
8 Mayor Sondak noted that there was a CWC Board Meeting scheduled for June 7, 2021. The final  
9 budget would be passed at that time.  
10

11 There was discussion regarding membership contributions. Chair Silvestrini wondered if  
12 jurisdictions other than Sandy City had questions about the fees. Mr. Becker reported that there  
13 may be issues in the future with Salt Lake County and the new Council. He mentioned that some  
14 of the new Council Members raised questions about the CWC. Mr. Becker believed there could  
15 be a similar situation to Sandy City with the Salt Lake County Council. Chair Silvestrini noted  
16 that last year, he and CWC Chair Robinson appeared before the Committee of the Whole. He felt  
17 it would be beneficial to do that again in the spring. Chair Silvestrini discussed some of his  
18 relationships with Salt Lake County Council Members.  
19

20 Chair Silvestrini believed that Council Member Dea Theodore might be supportive. He noted that  
21 she expressed support for the Town of Brighton. Councilman Bradley noted that she Council  
22 Member Theodore was supportive of giving the Town of Brighton planning jurisdiction. The  
23 Committee discussed the Town of Brighton. Chair Silvestrini believed the Town should have their  
24 own planning authority but retain the Mountainous Planning Commission (“MPC”) and  
25 compromise on the funding for canyon recreation. He noted that Brighton would be a focus of the  
26 Legislative Session. Chair Silvestrini suggested waiting until after the Legislative Session to talk  
27 to the Salt Lake County Council about the CWC. Councilman Bradley agreed.  
28

29 Mr. Becker reported that last year, the CWC appropriated a budget for a bus bypass service. That  
30 was pulled due to the pandemic budget. This year, the CWC was going back for appropriations.  
31 The list included projects that had not yet been funded, the bus bypass service, and the Visitor Use  
32 Study. It was reviewed by liaisons to the leadership in the Legislature. There was an interest in a  
33 number of the items on the list. Mr. Becker stated that the CWC may potentially be able to obtain  
34 funding for some of the items on the list or substitute some of the funding that was previously put  
35 in place.  
36

37 • **COMMITTEE MEMBER CONVERSATION**  
38

39 Mr. Perez outlined future dates for CWC meetings. He reported that there will be a CWC Board  
40 Meeting on February 1, 2021, and a Budget/Finance/Audit Committee Meeting on February 19,  
41 2021. Mr. Perez noted that the February 1, 2021 meeting will include Dave Whittekiend from the  
42 U.S. Forest Service as well as rail experts. He added that a Doodle poll would be sent out for the  
43 rest of the fiscal year. Mr. Perez anticipated that there would be monthly Budget/Finance/Audit  
44 Committee Meetings in March, April, and May. He believed there would be a finalized budget in  
45 June that would be open for a public hearing. Ms. Mickelson clarified that a tentative budget  
46 would be passed in May in order to have the public hearing take place in June with final approval.

1  
2 Chair Silvestrini reported that many of the jurisdictions in the State of Utah had not suffered the  
3 sales tax revenue shortfalls that were expected. He noted that the CWC cut back on membership  
4 fees due to the pandemic. Chair Silvestrini wondered whether it would be appropriate to ask  
5 member jurisdictions for the full amount moving forward. Mayor Sondak reported that the Town  
6 of Alta had not seen their December sales tax revenue numbers yet. However, hotels in the Town  
7 reported that occupancy was approximately 30% of the occupancy from last December. The ski  
8 area reported that their ticket sales were approximately 80% of the sales from last year. Mayor  
9 Sondak felt it was important to be as conservative as possible until more of the sales tax revenue  
10 numbers come in. He noted, however, that he would be willing to pay the full membership fee for  
11 the next budget.

12  
13 Ms. Mickelson reported that the discount provided to the member jurisdictions reduced the CWC  
14 funding by approximately \$50,000. Chair Silvestrini noted that the additional money would make  
15 a big difference and could fund a short-term project. He wondered whether it would be appropriate  
16 to see if member jurisdictions were willing to pay the full amount moving forward. He suggested  
17 that the Committee present an alternative with the same rate that was currently in place and an  
18 alternative that elevates the rate to where it had been in the past.

19  
20 Mayor Sondak wondered if the \$90,000 Sandy City member contribution was a discounted  
21 amount. Chair Silvestrini confirmed this. He reported that Sandy City had previously been paying  
22 \$100,000. Ms. Mickelson reported that Salt Lake County also took a discount. They normally  
23 contribute \$200,000 but paid \$192,000. It was noted that Salt Lake City did not take the discount.

24  
25 • **ADJOURNMENT**

26  
27 The Central Wasatch Commission Budget/Finance/Audit Committee Meeting adjourned at  
28 approximately 11:55 a.m.

1 *I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Central*  
2 *Wasatch Commission Budget/Finance/Audit Committee Meeting held Friday, January 22, 2021.*  
3

4 *Teri Forbes*

5 Teri Forbes

6 T Forbes Group

7 Minutes Secretary

8

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