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9 **MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) STAKEHOLDERS**
10 **COUNCIL RECREATION SYSTEMS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD THURSDAY,**
11 **MARCH 14, 2024, AT 2:00 P.M. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED BOTH IN-PERSON**
12 **AND VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM. THE ANCHOR LOCATION WAS CWC OFFICES**
13 **LOCATED AT 41 NORTH RIO GRANDE STREET, SUITE, 102, SALT LAKE CITY UTAH.**

14
15 **Committee Members:** Sarah Bennett, Chair
16 Dennis Goreham
17 Joanna Wheelton
18 Ed Marshall
19 Hilary Lambert
20 Caitlin Curry

21
22 **Staff:** Lindsey Nielsen, Executive Director
23 Samantha Kilpack, Director of Operations

24
25 **Others:** Emily Salle, Cottonwood Canyons Foundation
26 Crystal Chen, Save Our Canyons Foundation
27 Samuel Werstak, Save Our Canyons

28
29 **OPENING**

30
31 **1. Chair Sarah Bennett will Open the Public Meeting as Chair of the Recreation Systems**
32 **Committee of the Central Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council.**

33
34 Chair Sarah Bennett called the Central Wasatch Commission (“CWC”) Stakeholders Council
35 Recreation Systems Committee Meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. and welcomed those present.

36
37 **2. Review and Approval of the February 8, 2024, Meeting Minutes.**

38
39 **MOTION:** Dennis Goreham moved to APPROVE the Minutes from February 8, 2024. Sarah
40 Bennett seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.

41
42 **COMMITTEE VISION AND GOALS**

43
44 **1. Committee Members will Hear and Discuss a Proposition to Include Dining in the**
45 **Definition of Recreation and Discuss Possible Overlap Between Recreation and**
46 **Economic Interests.**

47
48 Chair Bennett introduced Ed Marshall, who is on the Stakeholders Council and the Economy Systems

1 Committee. She explained that he has a proposal for Committee consideration. Mr. Marshall
2 explained that the Economy Systems Committee decided to update its visioning statement to slightly
3 broaden the definition of recreation. Since that decision involves recreation, he had volunteered to
4 present the broadened definition to the Recreation Systems Committee. In the past, all discussions of
5 recreation have been limited to active, athletic types of pursuits, such as hiking, mountain bicycling,
6 rock climbing, skiing, and so on. However, recreation does not have to be defined that narrowly.

7
8 Mr. Marshall shared information about recreation in Europe. Outdoor dining at cafes and small
9 restaurants is one of the primary forms of recreation. In urban areas, people recreate that way before
10 or after their evening walks, and in the mountains, hikers go from one small restaurant to another. In
11 the United States, outdoor dining has expanded, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic pushed so
12 many restaurants outdoors. Despite that, it is still not generally recognized as a legitimate form of
13 recreation in the mountains. He found that odd because picnicking is included in the Forest Service's
14 definition of recreation, even though it is rarely discussed. Mr. Marshall believed outdoor dining
15 should be considered recreational. It is open to people of all ages and abilities. Unlike more athletic
16 recreation experiences, it is not limited to a specific level of athleticism.

17
18 Recognizing the recreational contribution of outdoor dining has a practical importance to the
19 Economy Systems Committee. Mr. Marshall explained that it will impact relations with local
20 governments. A few years ago, the Zoning Director completely redefined the meaning of the
21 Commercial Zone in which Silver Fork Lodge was located. It created a lot of issues for the business.
22 Mr. Marshall wanted to see dining recognized as recreation, as it will benefit the economy and local
23 businesses, but also benefit people who visit and recreate in the canyons. He asked for support from
24 the Recreation Systems Committee to broaden the concept of recreation beyond physical pursuits.

25
26 Chair Bennett had not considered dining a recreational activity in the past but believes there is some
27 merit there. The question, "What is the definition of recreation?" is something worthwhile for the
28 Recreation Systems Committee to consider. She informed Mr. Marshall that it might not be possible
29 to provide a clear answer during the current meeting, but it is something that the Committee will start
30 to discuss. Mr. Marshall clarified that there is no urgency for an answer, but hoped to receive their
31 support. Discussions were had about other ways that a broader definition could be applied.

32
33 Chair Bennett reported that she and Laura Anthony made a presentation to the Outdoor Adventure
34 Commission. She explained that they are seeking funds to do a Feasibility Study for a continuous
35 trail from Logan down to Nephi through the Wasatch range. Part of that effort is looking at whether
36 users can have multi-day trips and stay in either yurts or communities. From that multi-day
37 standpoint, dining becomes a consideration. One of the warnings from Zinnia Wilson with the Forest
38 Service is that the Forest Service is not interested in creating more overnight options within the
39 Central Wasatch range. That is something that needs to be considered with a yurt system, but not if
40 visitors come out of the Wasatch and go into communities for the evening.

41
42 Dennis Goreham believed outdoor dining was in the same category as picnicking. He pointed out
43 that picnicking is a recreational activity. Chair Bennett agreed with that statement. Joanna Wheelton
44 also agreed. She felt that dining is part of the holistic experience, especially for visitors with families.

45
46 Hilary Lambert asked a clarifying question. She wondered where the definition was proposed to
47 appear. Mr. Marshall clarified that the CWC Board has the final word and reminded those present
48 that the Stakeholders Council is an advisory group. Within the Economy Systems Committee, the

1 broader definition would be included in an update to the Idealized Economy System document.

2
3 Chair Bennett wanted to know what benefit there was to including dining in the definition of
4 recreation. Mr. Marshall explained that the businesses in the canyons face a lot of challenges due to
5 various aspects of local government. If dining is recognized as a legitimate form of recreation, there
6 may be more consideration in terms of what is demanded. He added that there is a desire for the
7 CWC to acknowledge that dining is a form of recreation as are more physical pursuits.

8
9 **2. Committee Members will Review, Discuss, and Refine the Vision and Goals of the**
10 **Committee and Define Recreation.**

11
12 Chair Bennett discussed an email received from Barbara Cameron. It had to do with the proposal
13 from Mr. Marshall and the Tri-Canyon Trails Master Plan. Executive Director, Lindsey Nielsen,
14 encouraged Committee Members to communicate with one another but asked that CWC Staff be
15 CC'd on the communication. Mr. Goreham asked for information about the Executive Director
16 position versus the Director of Operations position. Ms. Nielsen explained that for the most part, the
17 Director of Operations focuses on the daily work of the CWC. For instance, working with
18 Committees. The Director of Operations is primarily the point for communication with the
19 Stakeholders Council subcommittees, but at the end of the day, there are only three members of CWC
20 Staff, so it is appropriate to CC all of them in the communications between Committee Members.

21
22 Chair Bennett noted that the Recreation Systems Committee has previously discussed the vision and
23 goals of the Committee. She shared the Recreation Roadmap with those present and explained that
24 it is necessary to look at different definitions of recreation. Ms. Lambert stressed the importance of
25 separating leisure and recreation. Chair Bennett pointed out that there are activities taking place in
26 the Central Wasatch that fall more into the leisure category but have not been addressed. Recreation
27 often triggers an idea of an athletic pursuit, but there may be some items that are being overlooked.

28
29 Ms. Lambert referenced one of the definitions of recreation, which discussed activities done for
30 enjoyment. That is a core way to understand what recreation means on a broad level. Recreation,
31 broadly defined, can be any activity that has a goal or outcome in mind. Often, there is some sort of
32 activity that directs someone toward that goal. Playing basketball is recreation, in that the goal might
33 be to get some exercise and have a social experience. That is not different than a picnicking recreation
34 experience, where the goal is to look at a beautiful view and have a nice meal. To the point made
35 earlier by Mr. Marshall, if picnicking is considered recreation, then so is outdoor dining.

36
37 Additional discussions were had about what is considered recreation. Ms. Lambert thought the
38 conversation fit in well with the agenda item to refine the vision and goals of the Recreation Systems
39 Committee. If the Committee wanted to focus on the policies around hiking, skiing, mountain biking,
40 and other outdoor sports recreation, that is appropriate, but the scope needs to be defined. That being
41 said, how the Committee defines recreation for the actual Committee work needs to be clarified.

42
43 Chair Bennett suggested that a statement be crafted by the Recreation Systems Committee to explain
44 that recreation is traditionally something thought to involve active, outdoor activities in the Central
45 Wasatch. The statement could include an acknowledgment that there is recreation that has more to
46 do with enjoying the natural space, having a meal, and spending time with family and friends.

47
48 Mr. Goreham mostly participated in active types of recreation, but he liked to see families picnicking

1 in Big Cottonwood Canyon and Millcreek Canyon. Some of the issues the Recreation Systems
2 Committee has talked about, such as access, restrooms, and safety, are just as applicable for those
3 picnicking as for those backcountry skiing or hiking. It is necessary to address the broader picture.
4 Chair Bennett agreed with the comments shared. Transportation is similarly an issue for visitors,
5 whether the intention is to have a picnic by the creek or reach a trailhead and hike for the day. Access
6 and the quality of the experience also broadly apply to recreation. She thought it made sense to think
7 about areas that can host more passive recreational experiences. The Recreation Systems Committee
8 can state that there is a desire to have a broadened and more mindful definition of recreation for the
9 canyons, which considers both access and diversity.

10
11 Mr. Goreham noted that for the last several years, Salt Lake County and others have talked about
12 restricting roadside parking. However, a lot of picnickers use roadside parking for recreation. Those
13 kinds of access and equity issues need to be addressed. Chair Bennett agreed that this more passive
14 recreation use often results in roadside parking because people want to park along the road, walk
15 down to the river, and enjoy a meal in that area. There are impacts to that kind of passive use. It is
16 important to remember that those passive types of recreation are valid, but not free of impacts.

17
18 Chair Bennett explained that recreation can be a lot of different things. Some of the more passive
19 types of recreation, such as dining, are equally as valid as the more physical types of recreation. She
20 referenced a definition from the Forest Service about the structure of recreation behavior. Ms.
21 Lambert explained that the optional subsystems mentioned essentially mean adapting the activity to
22 serve multiple goals. She stated that the intention was to organize and explain recreation behavior.

23
24 Emily Salle noted that recreation itself is broad and it is always changing based on the priorities of
25 the community at a given time. If the Recreation Systems Committee wants to be relevant moving
26 forward, it is not necessarily best for the Committee to define the specific types of recreation that
27 there is a desire to prioritize. However, it would be appropriate to state that the Committee wants to
28 address the needs and impacts of recreators. Recreators could include those picnicking, hiking,
29 fishing, backcountry skiing, resort skiing, and so on. Addressing the impacts of the recreation
30 community as a whole, and the needs of that community, might be an appropriate area of focus. Chair
31 Bennett believed there is a need to confront the impacts seen in the Central Wasatch and to consider
32 how different needs can be addressed. She liked the idea of the Recreation Systems Committee
33 looking at recreation needs and impacts, whether that recreation is more passive or more active.

34
35 The Committee continued to discuss the vision and goals of the Recreation Systems Committee.
36 Chair Bennett noted that the Committee previously identified the vision, goals, and objectives. For
37 instance, people connect to the landscape sustainably and enjoyably. With the idea of passive
38 recreation now considered, that statement is still applicable. The language does not weigh active or
39 passive recreation types differently. As for environmental protections, she believed watershed health
40 should be added to the drafted language. There was an agreement to add that to the document. Chair
41 Bennett stated that it is possible to create a stronger focus when it comes to the goals of the Committee.

42
43 Discussions were had about communication. Chair Bennett believed the Committee needed to be
44 committed to communicating various issues through signage and whatever other realistic means were
45 identified. Chair Bennett noted that the vision and goals document can continue to be refined. It
46 might also be something that can be shared with the Forest Service and other involved entities.
47 Sharing it with relevant parties will ensure that all involved know what the Committee is considering.
48 Ms. Nielsen suggested that this be in a Google document that all Committee Members have access

1 to. It is also possible to add the document information to the CWC website in the future.

2
3 **DRAFT TRI-CANYONS TRAIL PLAN DISCUSSION**

4
5 **1. The Committee will Discuss the New Draft of the Tri-Canyons Trails Plan.**

6
7 Chair Bennett shared the Draft Tri-Canyon Trails Master Plan and asked Committee Members for
8 feedback. Mr. Goreham thought the plan was good, but did not believe there was enough detail in
9 certain sections. Ms. Lambert agreed and stated that she wanted to see more. Chair Bennett felt the
10 same way. She was not surprised, as the default with planning efforts is often to focus on a high-
11 level viewpoint, but believed additional details were needed. During the last Recreation Systems
12 Committee Meeting, there was a discussion about the benefit of providing input as a Committee
13 versus individually. According to CWC Staff, it is likely best to provide input individually due to the
14 timeline. Comments shared by the Committee would need to be approved by the Stakeholders
15 Council and CWC Board before something could be submitted officially as approvals are needed.

16
17 Ms. Nielsen reported that the Forest Service will be in attendance at the next Stakeholders Council
18 Meeting to review the Draft Tri-Canyon Trails Master Plan and answer Council Member questions.
19 Caitlin Curry added that the Forest Service is hosting information sessions. Those sessions are
20 intended to educate the public, but she believed that public comments will also be received. It was
21 noted that Ms. Curry will be officially added to the Recreation Systems Committee next week. She
22 was asked to introduce herself to Committee Members. Ms. Curry explained that she is the Vice-
23 Chair of the Utah Chapter of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, an organization that is comprised of
24 hunters and anglers of all different disciplines, who mostly recreate on public lands and public waters.
25 Chair Bennett believed that she would bring a different perspective to the Committee.

26
27 Crystal Chen explained that she is with the Save Our Canyons Foundation and is also on the Youth
28 Council. She noted that the framework for the Tri-Canyon Trails Master Plan is broad because the
29 document talks about the guiding principles. However, the actual draft plan is 52 pages long and
30 includes specific tables with specific recommendations based on exact trailheads. For example, on
31 Page 40, there is a table for proposed user-created trails that might be formalized. There is a similar
32 table for proposed e-bike areas. The more detailed, location-specific information is included in the
33 draft plan rather than the story map provided. Chair Bennett took a moment to review one of the
34 tables. She asked that Committee Members review the Draft Tri-Canyon Trails Master Plan and
35 create a list of questions ahead of the presentation at the next Stakeholders Council Meeting.

36
37 **SHORT-TERM PROJECTS DISCUSSION**

38
39 **1. The Committee will Discuss the Central Wasatch Commission Short-Term Projects**
40 **Grant and Potential Projects to Submit for Funding.**

41
42 Ms. Nielsen reported that all Short-Term Projects Grant proposals must be submitted before the
43 deadline on March 25, 2024. All of the information to apply for the grant was submitted to
44 Stakeholders Council Members via email. That information is also available on the CWC website.
45 She explained that the information included the criteria for submission. The short-term project has
46 to fulfill one of the four focus areas of the CWC: economy, transportation, recreation, or environment.
47 It also has to occur within the CWC study area. Applicants can request a maximum of \$20,000. The
48 total amount of funds to disperse is \$95,000. Previously funded projects are listed on the website.

1
2 Chair Bennett noted that in the past, there were discussions about potential items that could be
3 candidates for funding. She wondered whether Committee Members had given those items additional
4 thought or if there were other suggestions for short-term projects. She stated that a bicycle plan was
5 something that could be considered, but it might be difficult to flesh out an idea with only 11 days
6 until the application deadline. It was noted that the application process is fairly straightforward.

7
8 Ms. Lambert pointed out that the Recreation Systems Committee is not a body that can take in funds
9 and handle a project. The Committee would need to partner with a non-profit or someone who could
10 make sure the work was completed. Ms. Nielsen shared some examples with the Committee. John
11 Knoblock has submitted many short-term project proposals through Trails Utah. The focus of the
12 grant is to assist community groups with projects where monetary support is needed. It was clarified
13 that the full project does not need to be funded by the CWC. The funding can be partial.

14
15 Ms. Nielsen reported that the grant application process is fairly simple. During the first phase,
16 applicants are asked to share the basic details of the project proposal. From there, if applicants are
17 selected to be finalists, that is when the full timeline and budget will be requested. Chair Bennett
18 noted that a lot of the previously brainstormed action items fall into planning and development.
19 Something like the Utah Outdoor Recreation Grant might be best to tackle existing signage needs.

20
21 Chair Bennett did not believe the Committee was currently in a place where a submission could be
22 made to the Short-Term Projects Grant Program. A question was asked about whether an application
23 could be submitted without having a partnership in place. Ms. Nielsen explained that the Short-Term
24 Projects Committee will make the final decisions. The grant was designed to fund projects that have
25 those details worked out. National Environmental Policy Act (“NEPA”) might be needed for some
26 of the project submissions, and if that is required, it then becomes a lengthier process.

27
28 Ms. Lambert asked about the Recreation Systems Committee's idea for a signage plan. She wondered
29 whether there is a particular area intended to be the focus or if a broad plan is contemplated. Chair
30 Bennett noted that it is possible to choose a specific topic for signage. For instance, Do Not Pick the
31 Flowers. There might be a way to develop talking points around preserving the flora and have that
32 made into a plan. The Forest Service would need to approve that and then it would be possible to
33 have signs made and installed in key locations. That is just one example of a potential approach.

34
35 It was noted that Friends of Alta did signage with a Short-Term Projects Grant on the trail to Albion
36 Meadows. There was praise for the quality of those interpretive signs. It might be worthwhile to ask
37 who Friends of Alta worked with on those signs and replicate that kind of design. Informative signs
38 about the watershed in a high-impact area would be worthwhile to look into. Chair Bennett liked
39 these ideas but did not believe the Committee could focus on this work at the current time.

40
41 Ms. Nielsen reported that the next cycle of the Short-Term Projects Grant Program will open in
42 January 2025 instead of March 2025. If the Recreation Systems Committee does not believe it is
43 possible to create a grant application in time for this grant cycle, it is possible to work towards
44 something for the next grant cycle. There was support for that kind of approach moving forward.

45
46 Additional discussions were had about signage and how to proceed with a proposal for the next grant
47 cycle. Mr. Goreham noted that there are a lot of different types of signs that can be looked at. Over
48 the next year, it is possible to determine which are the most urgent and practical. Ms. Chen liked the

1 idea of signage being available in multiple languages. The Forest Service is currently taking a look
2 at their signage options and there has been a mention of having a QR code on different trail signs.
3 That QR code could be scanned and the information on the signs would be translated into multiple
4 languages. Chair Bennett thought it made sense to take time to identify the preferred messaging and
5 the location of that messaging. She hoped the Committee would focus on signage moving forward.
6

7 Ms. Nielsen recommended that the Recreation Systems Committee speak to the Forest Service about
8 signage sooner rather than later if this is something that there is a desire to pursue. She suggested
9 that the Committee work through some of the details and then reach out to the Forest Service.
10

11 **FOREST PLAN REVIEW**

13 **1. The Committee will Review the 2003 Uinta-Wasatch-Cache Forest Plan.**

14
15 It was noted that the 2003 Uinta-Wasatch Cache Forest Plan will be reviewed by the Committee at a
16 later date. Chair Bennett asked all Committee Members to look at the plan ahead of those discussions.
17

18 **OTHER ITEMS**

19
20 There were no other items discussed.
21

22 **CLOSING**

24 **1. Chair Bennett will Call for a Motion to Adjourn the Recreation Systems Committee Meeting.**

25
26
27 **MOTION:** Sarah Bennett moved to ADJOURN the Recreation Systems Committee Meeting. Hilary
28 Lambert seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.
29

30 The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

1 *I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Central*
2 *Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council Recreation Systems Committee Meeting held Thursday,*
3 *March 14, 2024.*

4

5 Teri Forbes

6 Teri Forbes

7 T Forbes Group

8 Minutes Secretary

9

10 Minutes Approved: _____