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MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) STAKEHOLDERS COUNCIL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD MONDAY, APRIL 8, 2024, AT 3:30 P.M. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED BOTH IN-PERSON AND VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM. THE ANCHOR LOCATION WAS AT THE CWC OFFICES LOCATED AT THE GATEWAY, 41 NORTH RIO GRANDE STREET, SUITE 102, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.

Present: Danny Richardson, Chair
Amber Broadway
Patrick Shea
Stuart Derman
Mike Marker
Crystal Chen, CWC Youth Council
Lance Kovel, US Forest Service

Staff: Lindsey Nielsen, Executive Director

OPENING

1. Chair Danny Richardson will Open the Public Meeting as Chair of the Transportation Systems Committee of the CWC Stakeholders Council.

Chair Danny Richardson called the Central Wasatch Commission (“CWC”) Stakeholders Council Transportation Systems Committee Meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. and welcomed those present.

2. Review and Approval of the Minutes from the March 11, 2024, Meeting.

Chair Richardson reviewed the Meeting Minutes from March 11, 2024, and explained that during the meeting, there were discussions about the phases for the Utah Department of Transportation (“UDOT”) Little Cottonwood Canyon Environment Impact Statement (“EIS”). It was noted that there is litigation, so it is not possible for the phases to officially proceed at this time. The Committee also discussed the Priorities Survey and the possibility of a Special Transit District.

The current meeting agenda was reviewed. Chair Richardson reported that there will be a discussion with the U.S. Forest Service. As for the Priorities Survey, there was a suggestion that each Council Member reach out to their contacts to let them know about the survey results.

Once a quorum was present, a vote was taken on the Meeting Minutes from March 11, 2024.

1 **MOTION:** Stuart Derman moved to APPROVE the Transportation Systems Committee Meeting
2 Minutes from March 11, 2024. Mike Marker seconded the motion. The motion passed with the
3 unanimous consent of the Committee.

4
5 **3. Announcements:**

6
7 **a. Election of New Co-Chair.**

8
9 Executive Director, Lindsey Nielsen, reported that Amber Broadaway has elected to step down
10 from her position as Co-Chair of the Transportation Systems Committee. As a result, a new Co-
11 Chair is needed for the Committee. The main responsibility is to work with the Chair and CWC
12 Staff to create agendas for each Transportation Systems Committee Meeting. In the event the
13 Chair is absent, the Co-Chair will fill in and lead the meeting. She asked interested Committee
14 Members to reach out to CWC Staff so a decision can be made about the Co-Chair position.

15
16 **b. Stakeholders Council Retreat on May 16.**

17
18 Ms. Nielsen reported that the Stakeholders Council Retreat is scheduled for May 16, 2024.

19
20 **US FOREST SERVICE DISCUSSION**

21
22 **1. The US Forest Service will Discuss with the Committee Winter and Summer**
23 **Recreation Access and Transportation Issues and the Potential for Trailhead**
24 **Improvements to Facilitate Transit Access.**

25
26 Lance Kovel from the US Forest Service introduced himself and explained that he is a Special
27 Projects Coordinator and the UDOT Liaison for the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest. He
28 works out of the Supervisor’s Office and assists each of the districts in the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache
29 National Forest. A significant portion of the projects are transportation-related, which is why the
30 Forest Supervisor asked him to speak to the Committee.

31
32 Mr. Kovel clarified that he does not have a formal presentation prepared, but CWC Staff forwarded
33 some general questions Committee Members had. He offered to answer those questions first and
34 then answer any additional Committee Member questions. The first question was: “How does the
35 Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest, UDOT, and other transit/transportation agencies in the
36 State work together?” Mr. Kovel explained that the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest works
37 extensively with UDOT. There is also work done with the Utah Transit Authority (“UTA”). The
38 next major holder of roads in the forest is the County. Typically, there is engagement with those
39 entities on road easements across Forest Service lands as well as any proposed projects. Even if a
40 project is strictly within an easement, the Forest Service still reviews it to ensure there are no
41 impacts or there are at least mitigation plans that consider the adjacent Forest Service lands.
42 Generally speaking, easements are non-exclusive and the Forest Service retains the rights.

43
44 Forest Service interactions with UTA have been enhanced in recent years due to the UDOT Little
45 Cottonwood EIS and other transportation projects. Most of the discussions with UTA have been
46 related to UDOT proposals. The other major transportation agency is the Wasatch Front Regional

1 Council. Mr. Kovel reported that there were significant dealings with the Wasatch Front Regional
2 Council during the Mountain Accord process. Since then, there has not often been direct dealings
3 with them, as most of their planning comes through the Transportation Commission. Those plans
4 come to the Forest Service in the form of a UDOT project, so UDOT is dealt with directly for
5 those.

6
7 Chair Richardson noted that during a previous Transportation Systems Committee Meeting, there
8 was a question about trailhead parking and backcountry access. He wondered whether Mr. Kovel
9 had a comment about trailheads in winter and summer for backcountry uses. Mr. Kovel explained
10 that the language for easements with UDOT is fairly similar to the easements with the County.
11 When the Forest Service issues an easement to these agencies, it is a non-exclusive easement for
12 highway purposes. The Forest Service retains all rights to other uses within that easement, as long
13 as those uses do not infringe on the operation and maintenance of the roadway. When it comes to
14 parking, unless the agency that was issued an easement specifically requests the management of
15 parking or stipulates that there should not be parking in a certain area, the Forest Service will
16 manage the parking. However, there is a lot of informal parking happening in the canyons.

17
18 Mr. Kovel reported that all of the informal parking is managed, as far as looking at looking at
19 resource impacts in those areas. There is also work done with the highway agent, whether that is
20 UDOT or the County, to restrict parking in areas where significant resource damage is seen or
21 where there are safety concerns. The Forest Service cooperatively manages those areas. There is
22 a solid relationship with UDOT and all of the counties across the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National
23 Forest. Close work is done with the agencies to address the various concerns in the canyons.

24
25 As for specific trailheads, something to keep in mind is that the Forest Service does not manage
26 trailheads for a specific user group. Trailheads are managed for multi-use. While there are
27 backcountry users, parking is not managed specifically for that user group. Backcountry use is a
28 consideration, but it is not the only consideration given to parking and access. Mr. Kovel explained
29 that a broader brush is used when evaluating parking areas and whether to create or remove them.

30
31 Chair Richardson asked about private shuttles in the winter and summer that access trailheads. He
32 wanted to know whether those private shuttles deal with the Forest Service or UDOT. Mr. Kovel
33 explained that in that scenario, there would need to be communication with UDOT if there was a
34 desire to drop off passengers on any UDOT right-of-way. There would also need to be
35 communication with the Forest Service. Any commercial use in the forest requires a permit. The
36 purpose of the permit is to mitigate the impact on the users. The shuttle doesn't necessarily need
37 to drop passengers off on forest lands to require a permit. If passengers will access forest lands, a
38 permit is likely needed. He shared additional information about the different permit requirements.

39
40 Ms. Broadaway reported that the Wasatch Backcountry Alliance has shuttles. In Big Cottonwood
41 Canyon, those shuttles drop off at Solitude Entry 2. That shuttle has been in place for two years.
42 The intention is to bring backcountry enthusiasts into the canyon without using private vehicles.

43
44 Ms. Broadaway noted that all dispersed recreation users have access to resort parking lots, as the
45 resort parking lots do not discriminate based on use. The parking policies simply need to be
46 followed at those resort lots. Chair Richardson noted that there were issues with parking on the

1 road in certain places. He asked whether there were spaces specifically designated for backcountry
2 use. Ms. Broadway confirmed that there are spaces for that use on the road. Mr. Kovel clarified
3 that parking is not designated for a specific use in the forest. Parking is managed for the general
4 public. It is possible for someone to park regardless of whether it is for backcountry use.
5

6 Chair Richardson referenced an article that stated the current Forest Plan was written in 2003. By
7 law, it has to be updated every 15 years. He wondered whether those statements were accurate.
8 Mr. Kovel confirmed this. The current Forest Plan was revised in 2003. The general rule is that
9 the plan should be revised every 15 years, but the revisions are done in order. There are several
10 forests nationwide that have Forest Plans much older than this one. The plan is up for revision,
11 but there is not an anticipated date that the revision will occur. He believed within the next 10
12 years. Mr. Kovel clarified that the Forest Plan is still kept up to date, as amendments can be made.
13 The plan encourages the consideration of public transit, specifically in the tri-canyon area. Various
14 proposals by partners allow that kind of public transportation work to move forward.
15

16 Chair Richardson noted that Committee Members with additional questions can reach out. He
17 thanked Mr. Kovel for attending the meeting and answering some transportation-related questions.
18 Mr. Kovel stated that the Forest Service values the partnership that exists with the CWC.
19

20 MILLCREEK CANYON ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

21

22 1. Committee Members will Review and Discuss the Millcreek Canyon Environmental 23 Assessment Regarding the FLAP Grant.

24

25 There were no comments made about the Environmental Assessment. Chair Richardson requested
26 that the item be added to the next Transportation Systems Committee Meeting agenda as well.
27

28 TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS COMMITTEE PRIORITIES SURVEY

29

30 1. Committee Members will Review and Discuss the Results of the Transportation 31 Systems Committee Priorities Survey and Determine Priorities for the Committee.

32

33 2. Committee Members will Discuss Engaging Various Salt Lake County Municipalities 34 with the Priorities Survey.

35

36 Chair Richardson noted that there was a lengthy discussion about the Transportation Systems
37 Committee Priorities Survey at the last meeting. The idea is for Council Members to share some
38 of those priorities with their contacts in the future. There is a desire to receive input from others
39 about the priorities that have been established by the Transportation Systems Committee.
40

41 UDOT LITTLE COTTONWOOD CANYON EIS

42

43 1. The Committee will Hear Comments and Updates on the UDOT Little Cottonwood 44 Canyon EIS.

45

46 Chair Richardson explained that the next item on the meeting agenda has to do with the UDOT

1 Little Cottonwood Canyon EIS. He reported that there are three pending legal actions against
2 UDOT, so the phases have essentially been put on hold while those lawsuits are addressed. That
3 being said, several actions in Big Cottonwood Canyon are moving forward in the meantime. Chair
4 Richardson reiterated that a lot of the Little Cottonwood Canyon work is on hold.

5
6 \$150 million has been allocated by the Legislature. \$40 million of that is still useable, as it is not
7 part of the UDOT Little Cottonwood Canyon EIS. Chair Richardson noted that it was previously
8 mentioned that there is an additional \$40 million in a different UDOT account as well.
9 Technically, there is \$190 million that has been allocated by the Legislature for transit solutions
10 in the area. He encouraged all Committee Members to be engaged in this process.

11
12 Patrick Shea stated that UDOT is sharing false information, which is that they are unable to do
13 anything with Phase 1 of the UDOT Little Cottonwood EIS because of the lawsuits. There is no
14 desire from those who filed the lawsuits to prevent Phase 1 from moving ahead. Chair Richardson
15 thanked him for the clarification. He added that some actions will move forward in Big
16 Cottonwood Canyon and Millcreek. Discussions were had about the lawsuits that were filed.

17
18 Mr. Shea reported that a motion was made to consolidate the lawsuits. It was filed by Salt Lake
19 City, who is the lead plaintiff before Judge Campbell, an Article 2 Judge. There has been no
20 decision made on that, but since there was no opposition, the hope is that it will be in a single court
21 before a full Federal Judge. Mr. Shea feels it is important for the Transportation Systems
22 Committee to make a recommendation to the Stakeholders Council that the CWC Board reach out
23 to Carlos Braceras to determine who has the authority to purchase buses and when that will be
24 done. Chair Richardson agreed that it was an important question that needed to be answered.

25
26 **MOTION:** Patrick Shea moved that the Transportation Systems Committee RECOMMEND to
27 the Stakeholders Council that a request be made to the CWC Board. The request is for the CWC
28 Chair to write a letter to UDOT Executive Director, Carlos Braceras, asking who has authority to
29 purchase a bus and when that decision will be made. Stuart Derman seconded the motion. The
30 motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.

31
32 Ms. Nielsen explained that the recommendation from the Transportation Systems Committee will
33 be on the next Stakeholders Council Meeting agenda for discussion and possible action. She asked
34 for some clarification about the motion. Ms. Nielsen wanted to know if there is a desire for Mr.
35 Shea to write the letter or if the CWC Board is being asked to write the letter. It was clarified that
36 Mr. Shea would draft something and send it to CWC Staff for review and consideration. It would
37 be reviewed by the Stakeholders Council before it was moved forward to the CWC Board.

38 39 **SELECTION OF CO-CHAIR**

40 41 **1. The Committee will Elect a New Co-Chair.**

42
43 Chair Richardson encouraged anyone interested in serving as Co-Chair to reach out to CWC Staff.
44 Ms. Nielsen suggested that the Co-Chair election be finalized during the current Transportation
45 Systems Committee Meeting. She asked if Mike Marker, Stuart Derman, or Patrick Shea were
46 interested in acting as the Co-Chair. Mr. Marker explained that he did not have the bandwidth to

1 take on the responsibility at the current time. Mr. Shea stated that his time was stretched thin due
2 to the lawsuit. Mr. Derman noted that his company is growing quickly and is demanding more of
3 his time. He is constantly traveling and is unable to take on that additional responsibility.
4 Ms. Nielsen offered to reach out to other Committee Members to see if there was interest. She
5 thanked Ms. Broadway for the time she served as Co-Chair on the Transportation Systems
6 Committee.

7
8 Additional transportation-related discussions took place. Ms. Nielsen shared information about
9 the Millcreek Canyon shuttle. Progress on the shuttle has slowed, as the main issues have still not
10 been resolved. She explained that the main issues are parking and funding. For that reason, the
11 Forest Service has not given the CWC its stamp of approval to move ahead with a National
12 Environmental Policy Act (“NEPA”) analysis or any other work. Mr. Kovel reported that one of
13 the main concerns from District Ranger, Bekee Hotze, is that the parking locations have not been
14 secured. Various areas have been proposed, but to date, none of them have been secured. None
15 of the work done in Millcreek Canyon under the Federal Lands Access Program (“FLAP”) grant
16 precludes a future shuttle service. Ms. Hotze has indicated that the district is looking at some other
17 potential management methods to address traffic in the canyon. That could include timed entry
18 and other similar strategies. Even those activities would not preclude future shuttle service.

19
20 Mr. Shea asked who had the authority to establish a park and ride to the satisfaction of the Forest
21 Service. Mr. Kovel explained that it could be a private land owner or UDOT, but a written
22 guarantee is needed to ensure that it is feasible. There needs to be some indication that the use is
23 authorized. Mr. Shea wanted to know if he would be willing to check with other forest districts to
24 see if a similar hub has been created to facilitate visitation to national forests. Mr. Kovel confirmed
25 that he could do this. He noted that the Forest Service has looked at other examples in the past.

26
27 Mr. Shea referenced the Skyline parking lot from May to September when school is out.
28 Ms. Nielsen confirmed that this has been explored. There is confirmation that the parking lot can
29 be used during that time, but when that option was presented to the Forest Service, she was told
30 that a more thorough parking analysis is needed to determine how many spaces are available there.
31 Additionally, it needs to be determined if the fee, based on the number of available parking spaces,
32 would make it financially feasible to operate the shuttle. Weekend use also needs to be considered.

33
34 Mr. Shea asked how many parking spaces the Forest Service requires during the summer months
35 when school is out. Ms. Nielsen reported that the number of parking spaces the Forest Service
36 says are available in the canyon is 400. In order to be comparable, that is the number needed out
37 of the canyon as well. There are not 400 parking spots in the Skyline parking area. Mr. Kovel
38 shared some clarifying information about the area that is being discussed. The Forest Service is
39 not dictating where the parking needs to be located, but the proposal needs to show that it is
40 feasible. There needs to be a clear plan that indicates the shuttle service can be successful with
41 that number of parking spots. Additional discussions were had about parking locations. Mr. Kovel
42 explained that the Forest Service has not seen a proposal that seems feasible to date.

43
44 Crystal Chen from the CWC Youth Council introduced herself to the Committee. She reported
45 that the FLAP grant comments were due last Friday and Save Our Canyons submitted a comment.
46 That will be posted online shortly. Additionally, an action alert was pushed out to increase

1 engagement. Spreading awareness about the FLAP grant work is important. As for the CWC
2 Youth Council, the Outdoor Access Committee and the Events and Outreach Committee both
3 prepared short-term grants and submitted those. There is a meeting next Monday to review the
4 proposals with the CWC project group. She hoped some positive progress will be made there.

5

6 **CLOSING**

7

8 **2. Chair Richardson will Call for a Motion to Adjourn the Transportation Systems**
9 **Committee Meeting.**

10

11 **MOTION:** Mike Marker moved to ADJOURN the Transportation Systems Committee Meeting.
12 Patrick Shea seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the
13 Committee.

14

15 The Central Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council Transportation Systems Committee
16 Meeting adjourned at 4:24 p.m.

1 *I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Central*
2 *Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council Transportation Systems Committee Meeting held*
3 *Monday, April 8, 2024.*

4

5 Teri Forbes

6 Teri Forbes

7 T Forbes Group

8 Minutes Secretary

9

10 Minutes Approved: _____