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MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) STAKEHOLDERS COUNCIL ENVIRONMENT SYSTEMS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD TUESDAY, JUNE 11, 2024, AT 3:00 P.M. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED BOTH IN-PERSON AND VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM. THE ANCHOR LOCATION WAS CWC OFFICES LOCATED IN THE BRIGHTON BANK BUILDING. 311 SOUTH STATE STREET, SUITE, 330, SALT LAKE CITY UTAH.

Committee Members: Kelly Boardman, Chair
Dan Zalles, Co-Chair
Maura Hahnenberger
Adam Lenkowski
Spencer Shaver
Joanna Wheelton
Brenden Catt
Patrick Shea
John Knoblock

Staff: Lindsey Nielsen, Executive Director
Samantha Killpack, Director of Operations

OPENING

- Chair Kelly Boardman will Open the Public Meeting as Chair of the Environment Systems Committee of the Central Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council.**

Chair Kelly Boardman called the Central Wasatch Commission (“CWC”) Stakeholders Council Environment Systems Committee Meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. and welcomed those present.

- Review and Approval of the Minutes from the May 14, 2024, Meeting.**

MOTION: Kelly Boardman moved to APPROVE the May 14, 2024, Meeting Minutes. Joanna Wheelton seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.

STAFF UPDATE

- Staff will Discuss the New Stakeholders Council Newsletter.**

Director of Operations, Samantha Kilpack, reported that the Stakeholders Council Retreat took place recently. One outcome of the retreat is that there will now be a Stakeholders Council newsletter. Rather than spend time during each Stakeholders Council Meeting focused on subcommittee updates,

1 a newsletter will be released monthly for Council Member review. The Chair or Co-Chair of each
2 subcommittee will write out a few bullet points or a short paragraph outlining the current work of the
3 subcommittee. This ensures that Stakeholders Council Meetings can be devoted to more in-depth
4 discussions and breakout sessions. It is believed that this will increase engagement. Chair Boardman
5 likes the idea of the newsletter and pointed out that it will be easier than listening to the recordings.

6
7 Executive Director, Lindsey Nielsen, reported that in addition to the newsletter, there was discussion
8 at some of the breakout tables about a Slack channel. This is something that might also be beneficial
9 to the Stakeholders Council as another form of communication. However, that has not been finalized.

10
11 As for the newsletter, it was noted that the subcommittees tend to meet in the middle of the month.
12 By the third or fourth week of the month, all of the subcommittees will have met and the newsletter
13 can be distributed. Ms. Kilpack shared information about the meeting schedule for the different
14 subcommittees. The Recreation Systems Committee meets every other month, but most other
15 subcommittees meet monthly. Not every subcommittee will have a new update each month. Ms.
16 Nielsen reported that the newsletter will likely be released on the last Friday of each month.

17 **STAKEHOLDERS COUNCIL RETREAT RECAP**

18 **1. Committee Members will Debrief the May 16, 2024 Stakeholders Council Retreat and** 19 **Discuss Ideas and Insights Gleaned from the Retreat.**

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21
22
23 Chair Boardman asked for Committee Member feedback about the Stakeholders Council Retreat.
24 John Knoblock likes the idea of the newsletter because it will make it easier for Council Members to
25 understand what is happening at all of the subcommittee meetings. He stressed the importance of
26 each subcommittee having specific goals and objectives so work can be done to move those forward.

27
28 Co-Chair, Dan Zalles, noted that during the retreat, there were discussions about the Environmental
29 Dashboard. One takeaway is that there is a desire to obtain more information about user needs. For
30 instance, there could be a focus group or survey conducted to receive input from Council Members.
31 Additionally, there were breakout session discussions about the Environmental Dashboard being
32 something used by the public at large. It is important to think about the different audiences.

33
34 Co-Chair Zalles shared information that came out of the meeting with the CWC Youth Council. There
35 is a group at that level focused on the environment. Some of those Council Members have expressed
36 an interest in sharing comments about the Environmental Dashboard and other environmental issues.
37 It might be worth holding a joint meeting with them or inviting interested members to a future
38 Environment Systems Committee Meeting. CWC Staff expressed support for that suggestion.

39
40 Ms. Nielsen explained that CWC Staff is considering how to bring the retreat format to future
41 Stakeholders Council Meetings. The meetings are currently more formal. What she liked about the
42 Stakeholders Council Retreat was that there were breakout sessions. This is something that can be
43 incorporated into the regular Stakeholders Council Meetings so there are more informal discussions.
44

1 **ENVIRONMENTAL DASHBOARD REVIEW AND DISCUSSION**

- 2
- 3 1. **Committee Members will Discuss How to Fill in Data Gaps in the Human Element**
- 4 **Section of the Environmental Dashboard Based on the Members’ Review of the Forest**
- 5 **Service Map, Environmental Dashboard, and Visitor Use Report.**
- 6
- 7 2. **Committee Members will Prioritize Environmental Dashboard Improvement Ideas**
- 8 **from the Shared Google Doc and Create a Preliminary List of Recommendations to**
- 9 **Bring to the Central Wasatch Commission for Feedback.**
- 10

11 Chair Boardman explained that the next item on the Environment Systems Committee Meeting

12 agenda relates to the Environmental Dashboard. Some of the potential improvements to the

13 Environmental Dashboard are more minor, such as fixing links. However, there are also broad ideas

14 to consider, such as determining whether the Environmental Dashboard supports an understanding of

15 the current environmental conditions and if it makes it possible to monitor conditions over time.

16

17 Chair Boardman believes the Environmental Dashboard should include some history. This will

18 provide context and highlight both the past and present. She asked for ideas about how the

19 Environmental Dashboard can better present that information. Chair Boardman shared an example

20 of riparian conditions over time and how transit, road building, and trails have impacted that element.

21

22 Co-Chair Zalles noted that he read the report released by the Visitor Use Study consultants.

23 Something that struck him about the findings is that people are generally fairly satisfied with the user

24 experience. However, some elements were more satisfactory than others. The problematic areas

25 were identified in one section of the report and included signage and restroom cleanliness. That

26 information and the heat map could be useful as a frame of reference when determining data needs.

27

28 When it comes to changes in conditions, Co-Chair Zalles noted that information that illustrates

29 changes over time can be included. There can be status information from when the data first started

30 to be collected. Updates can be added over time. Co-Chair Zalles believes it is necessary to monitor

31 the study area and ensure that the conditions do not degrade. Continuing to track data is essential.

32

33 Discussions were had about the heat map. Co-Chair Zalles pointed out that it can be used as a frame

34 of reference. Chair Boardman mentioned the traffic trends. There were previous discussions with

35 Phoebe McNeally and she said it can be difficult to identify the number of visitors entering the

36 canyons for specific uses, but it might be useful to have more general data shown in a graph form.

37

38 Chair Boardman noted that she has spoken to Mr. Knoblock about the Human Impacts Workshop. It

39 might be worthwhile to include all of the viable user groups, including mountain bikers, climbers,

40 fishers, hunters, hikers, leisure users, and resorts. Looking at the numbers of people and revenue

41 trends could also be beneficial. It is important to look at how to solve some of the problems created

42 by use. A lot of user groups are not generating money, but some are, which is necessary to consider.

43

1 **HUMAN IMPACTS WORKSHOP**

2
3 **1. Staff will Discuss with the Committee a Framework for a Human Impacts Workshop.**

4
5 CWC Staff shared a framework for the Human Impacts Workshop. Ms. Nielsen offered to distribute
6 it to Committee Members following the Environment Systems Committee Meeting. She explained
7 that this is a working document. It is a starting point and has not been finalized. The idea behind the
8 Human Impacts Workshop is to bring people together to brainstorm what should be included in the
9 Human Element of the Environmental Dashboard. The intention is to have an interactive meeting.
10 She asked Committee Members to start thinking about who should be included in the workshop.

11
12 Ms. Nielsen explained that the Human Element portion of the workshop would largely consist of
13 asking questions to participants. The intention is to establish a starting point based on expert and user
14 feedback. She reviewed one of the possible questions. “What are the human impacts across the CWC
15 study area and where do those impacts originate?” Ms. Nielsen reported that there are several areas
16 of impact listed already. Additional areas of impact can be added to the list. The goal of the question
17 is to name the impacts and set the stage for all of the participants at the workshop.

18
19 The second question is: “Does data exist for cataloging and measuring the impacts across the study
20 area?” Ms. Nielsen explained that the goal of that question is to name the existing data and start the
21 catalog. This will make it clear where there are existing data gaps. The third question is: “What data
22 needs to be collected? Which entity would be appropriate to contract with to collect the new data?”
23 She stated that the goal of that question is to brainstorm the needed data and build a plan for data
24 collection. The CWC could then move forward with that plan based on the feedback received.

25
26 Ms. Nielsen noted that the economy is also included in the framework document. This is because
27 there is not an economy element in the Environmental Dashboard currently. Over the last few months,
28 several Stakeholders have asked why there is not an economy-specific section. If it is determined
29 that this addition is feasible, it may be possible to replicate the Human Element process for an
30 Economic Impacts Element. Some questions to consider for a future Economic Impacts Element are
31 as follows:

- 32
33
 - What can be included in an Economic Impact Elements Element?
 - What are the sources of economic impact across the study area?
 - Does data exist for these economic hubs? If not, how can the necessary data be gathered?

34
35
36
37 Ms. Nielsen asked for comments related to the framework document and the questions. Co-Chair
38 Zalles likes what has been proposed so far. He wants to make sure that economics is considered, but
39 rather than being treated as a separate component, this could be a subset of each of the categories.
40 Ms. Nielsen liked the suggestion and referenced the interconnectedness of all of the systems. She
41 reiterated that the existing document will be distributed to Committee Members after the meeting.

42
43 Instead of having a Human Impacts Element and an Economic Impacts Element, the Committee was
44 asked about merging those. Co-Chair Zalles noted that there can be a breakdown according to the
45 sections shown in the document. Ms. Nielsen suggested that the element be renamed the Human and
46 Economic Impacts Element instead. This is not something that needs to be finalized now but could
47 be posed to participants during the storyboarding session. Co-Chair Zalles stated that industry,
48 transportation, development, and recreation are four categories that belong within the umbrella of the

1 Human Impacts Element. Each of those categories can be assessed from the perspective of the
2 environmental and economic impacts. He wrote out the idea on a whiteboard for clarity.

3
4 Brenden Catt was having difficulty understanding the economic impacts as it relates to the purpose
5 of the Environmental Dashboard contemplated in the Mountain Accord. Some sort of analytical
6 bridge might be necessary to understand why this type of information would be displayed on the
7 Environmental Dashboard. Chair Boardman explained that the viability of any economic undertaking
8 is directly related to the environment. Mr. Catt recognized that, but it is his understanding that the
9 focus of the Environmental Dashboard should be on the impacts on the environment from those types
10 of actions rather than focusing on economic actions specifically. It is possible to think about the
11 economic impacts of mining, for instance. On the other side of things, it is possible to consider what
12 that does to the immediate and surrounding area. As far as he understands it, that is where the
13 Environmental Dashboard comes in. It looks at the impacts on the environment from that kind of
14 use.

15
16 Co-Chair Zalles stated that there is no desire for the economic side of things to trump the
17 environmental concerns. That being said, in order to discuss with decision-makers, it is meaningful
18 to have all of the necessary information available. This doesn't mean the CWC believes economics
19 should be the main concern, but it is worthwhile to be prepared and have relevant information ahead
20 of speaking with decision-makers. Co-Chair Zalles pointed out that during discussions with
21 environmentalists and big businesses, the businesses are often more focused on the short-term gains
22 while the environmentalists are often more focused on the long-term issues.

23
24 Mr. Catt agreed with the comments shared and believed this conversation should involve both the
25 Economy Systems Committee and the Environment Systems Committee. There may be an
26 opportunity for collaboration between the two subcommittees. Ms. Nielsen thought the earlier
27 question posed by Mr. Catt was important, which related to the intention of the Environmental
28 Dashboard. In 2013, the goal of the Environmental Dashboard was to provide a one-time static report
29 card of the functioning health of the mountains for various elements, such as air quality, water quality,
30 and soil health. Over time, the technology changed as did opinions around what should be displayed.
31 There is now an online interactive tool that can be updated whenever there is new data.

32
33 Ms. Nielsen informed Committee Members that there was movement away from the report card
34 concept and making commentary on the health of the mountains. The idea shifted to the presentation
35 of data in a neutral manner. She explained that the data has been made accessible by the experts who
36 built the Environmental Dashboard. Those who are not trained to interpret raw data can still use the
37 Environmental Dashboard. It is largely intended to be an educational tool. Chair Boardman stated
38 that one of the main purposes of the Environmental Dashboard during the Mountain Accord process
39 was to support a better understanding of the current conditions and monitor changes over time. Since
40 2013, there have been a lot of changes. This includes population growth along the Wasatch Front,
41 changes in dynamics following the pandemic, and different individuals now involved with some
42 resorts. Having the Environmental Dashboard be more dynamic makes sense given these changes.
43 She likes the idea presented by Co-Chair Zalles about links between the environment and the
44 economy.

45
46 Patrick Shea stated that policymakers often have a single view of some aspect of the ecosystem. The
47 idea of a retreat that invites various people to attend is beneficial, but he hopes there will be an update
48 done at least once a year. Since the origin of the Environmental Dashboard, there have been more

1 people expressing interest, but not necessarily providing clear pathways towards the specific data
2 desired. The Environment Systems Committee, in conjunction with the Economy Systems
3 Committee, could come up with a format that is updated at least once a year. There are grants
4 available through the Forest Service and others that could facilitate those kinds of updates. He hopes
5 the Environmental Dashboard will inform policymakers before various decisions are made.

6
7 Discussions were had about an annual review and update process for the Environmental Dashboard.
8 A static database will not be particularly helpful, except as a baseline. Mr. Shea stressed the
9 importance of an annual review process. There may be different elements that need to be updated
10 over time. Chair Boardman referenced some of the changes that are being proposed in the canyons,
11 such as the elimination of roadside parking. Monitoring what those changes actually do to the
12 environment could be interesting. For example, whether those changes result in fewer personal
13 vehicles in the canyons. At the Transportation Systems Committee Meeting that took place recently,
14 there were discussions about the Utah Department of Transportation (“UDOT”) potentially having
15 some money for buses that could then be managed by the Utah Transit Authority (“UTA”). There
16 were also discussions during that subcommittee meeting about the need for summer service. If those
17 transportation and parking solutions are implemented, it would be interesting to monitor how those
18 changes impact the environment over time. Keeping that data current would be beneficial.

19
20 Mr. Shea stated that the Environmental Dashboard has clarified what people at the university team,
21 CWC, and Stakeholders Council consider to be important markers. However, it is possible to extend
22 that to the visitor experience. A couple of years ago, Dave Fields and Mike Maughan stated that this
23 was too difficult and could not be done. He later found that the ski resorts file an annual report. That
24 would be an important piece of data to better understand the kind of impacts that might be expected
25 if there is a deterioration in water quality in the winter or in the summer months. This could pinpoint
26 matters of concern that should be taken to the CWC for consideration and further discussion.

27
28 Co-Chair Zalles believes it makes sense to be open to the idea of reevaluating the Environmental
29 Dashboard. There may be new variables that need to be collected. It is important to consider how
30 frequently an individual set of data can be collected. Some can be collected daily and some can be
31 collected once a year. It is necessary to be sensitive to that. The Committee discussed the last update
32 to the Environmental Dashboard. It was noted that there are many streams of data. Some are being
33 updated regularly and some updated last year. Timestamps can be added to clarify when each piece
34 of data on the dashboard was last updated. Ms. Nielsen discussed the team managing the data updates.
35 Largely, the team knows when the new data is available and makes updates when it is accessible. It
36 is possible to add information to the Environmental Dashboard to clarify when those updates occur.

37
38 Ms. Nielsen reminded Committee Members that there is a lot of data included on the Environmental
39 Dashboard. Some data is being updated in real-time. On the other hand, the soils data is slower to
40 update due to the nature of what is being measured. There is not a one-size-fits-all way to address
41 data updates on the Environmental Dashboard. Co-Chair Zalles explained that understanding when
42 the data is collected and where it is collected from is useful. That information can be included.

43
44 Ms. Nielsen stated that what is happening at the Environment Systems Committee level is an
45 assessment of the Environmental Dashboard. However, based on what she heard from Mr. Shea and
46 others, there is a desire to have a more formal event where the Environmental Dashboard is reviewed
47 in full. Co-Chair Zalles noted that users of the Environmental Dashboard are relying on professionals
48 to collect the data. He believes a series of focus groups or surveys might be ideal. There can be a

1 meeting held after that to discuss the outcomes. Chair Boardman asked whether CWC Board
2 Members refer to the Environmental Dashboard for decision-making. Ms. Nielsen confirmed this.

3
4 Ms. Nielsen shared information about the CWC outreach. As for whether policymakers and decision-
5 makers utilize the information available to them in the Environmental Dashboard, that is hard to
6 know. Chair Boardman wanted to know what policymakers think is useful and what might be
7 missing. It would be worthwhile to understand their needs. Ms. Nielsen suggested that pre-meetings
8 take place with specific user groups. Co-Chair Zalles felt the CWC Board should be included.

9
10 Ms. Nielsen believed the Committee wants a survey sent out to specific user groups ahead of the
11 storyboarding workshop. In addition to the surveys, there might also be pre-meetings with specific
12 user groups to assess what is desired on the Environmental Dashboard. Mr. Catt wondered whether
13 this is intended for the Environmental Dashboard as a whole or only the Human Element. Discussions
14 were had about this matter and the name of the Environmental Dashboard. Ms. Nielsen noted that it
15 might not still be an accurate representation of the content. A broader name could make sense.

16
17 Ms. Nielsen asked about the user groups that should be represented at the Human Impacts Workshop.
18 Co-Chair Zalles believed CWC Board Members should be represented as well as the Environmental
19 Dashboard team. Other Stakeholders Council Members should also be included in this process. Chair
20 Boardman shared additional suggestions, including representatives from the major user groups. Co-
21 Chair Zalles also stressed the importance of involving the CWC Youth Council in these discussions.

22
23 Adam Lenkowski asked whether this process has expanded from developing the Human Element tab
24 to a full review of the entire Environmental Dashboard with different user groups. Ms. Nielsen
25 clarified that there are two different discussions taking place. The annual review that was suggested
26 by Mr. Shea is something that can be more inclusive and robust. On the other hand, there is the
27 Human Element conversation taking place. She shared additional information about the history of
28 the Environmental Dashboard. A large-scale assessment was conducted to determine what was
29 desired, what was available, what needed to be collected, and who should be involved in the process.

30
31 Chair Boardman reported that there is a desire to better understand what is important to the
32 Environment Systems Committee. She asked for additional Committee Member input. A question
33 about the Visitor Use Study was posed. It was noted that there is not a clear indication of what time
34 of year the surveys were conducted. Chair Boardman explained that trail use data was provided. The
35 question is what can be added to understand visitor impacts more broadly. She wondered whether a
36 supplementary winter report was worth pursuing. Mr. Shea agreed that the focus was on summer use
37 because that was the easiest time to conduct the surveys. He stressed the importance of examining
38 invasive species. It is crucial to understand the impacts caused by increased visitation. In his mind,
39 this is where the Environmental Dashboard should be as current as possible. Other areas can be
40 reviewed every two or three years. The frequency of the updates depends on the data.

41
42 Ms. Nielsen believed it makes the most sense for the Human Impacts Workshop to take place during
43 the Central Wasatch Symposium. That allows more than enough time to make sure everything is
44 prepared. She reviewed some of the next steps. Following the Environment Systems Committee
45 Meeting, the framework document will be emailed to Committee Members. She will separate the
46 original document from the suggestion made during the current meeting. There can also be a Google
47 document shared so any Committee Member edits can be seen in real-time. Additionally, some of

1 the suggestions shared during this meeting will be brought to the CWC Executive/Budget/Audit
2 Committee. She will check in with the Environmental Dashboard team.

3
4 It was reiterated that there is a desire for the CWC Youth Council to attend the next Environment
5 Systems Committee Meeting. Ms. Nielsen reported that the next meeting is scheduled to take place
6 on July 9, 2024. At a previous meeting, it was determined that time would be spent reviewing one
7 portion of the Environmental Dashboard as a Committee. She wondered whether that is something
8 there is still interest in doing. Committee Members confirmed this. Ms. Nielsen stated that the
9 collaborative review will be on the next meeting agenda. This is something that the CWC Youth
10 Council will be interested in as well. Discussions were had about the importance of safety data.

11
12 **OTHER ITEMS**

13
14 There were no additional discussions.

15
16 **CLOSING**

17
18 1. **Chair Boardman will Call for a Motion to Adjourn the Environment Systems Committee**
19 **Meeting.**

20
21 **MOTION:** Dan Zalles moved to ADJOURN the Environment Systems Committee Meeting. Adam
22 Lenkowski seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.

23
24 The meeting adjourned at 4:23 p.m.

1 *I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Central*
2 *Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council Environment Systems Committee Meeting held on*
3 *Tuesday, June 11, 2024.*

4

5 Teri Forbes

6 Teri Forbes

7 T Forbes Group

8 Minutes Secretary

9

10 Minutes Approved: _____