

**IRON COUNTY COMMISSION MEETING
December 7, 2015**

Minutes of the Iron County Commission meeting convened at 9:00 a.m. December 7, 2015 in Commission Chambers at the Iron County Courthouse, Parowan, Utah.

Officers in attendance included:

Dale M. Brinkerhoff	Commission Chair
David J. Miller	Commissioner
Alma L. Adams	Commissioner
G. Michael Edwards	Deputy County Attorney
Jonathan T. Whittaker	County Clerk

Also present:

Cindy W. Bulloch	County Assessor
Nicole B. Rosenberg	County Treasurer
Deborah Johnson	County Recorder
Gene Adams	County Auditor
Mark Gower	County Sheriff
Leslie Bishop	Human Resources Director

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PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Those assembled were led in the pledge of allegiance by Danny Stewart.

INVOCATION

An invocation was offered by Bryan Dangerfield.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Jared Wilson, Information Technology (IT) Director, reported that the IT budget was on track. The IT department was nearing completion on wiring the new scale house at the landfill. Geographical Information Systems (GIS) continued to stay busy. Jared also reported that IT was in the process of installing new software for the Attorneys office. He concluded by explaining that IT was developing a website for the OHV Color Country Trails.

Leslie Bishop, Human Resources (HR) Director, reported that she was elected President of the HR Directors group during the recent Utah Association of Counties (UAC) meetings. Leslie reported that a major concern is risk management. She explained that the Utah Government Immunity Act might change due to proposed legislation. Leslie noted that the GRAMA compliance training would be due by the end of the year. She reported that Workers Compensation Fund WCF claims were down from \$28,680 in 2014 to \$11,419 in 2015. Slips and falls contributed to 43% of the incidents in 2015. In terms of workers' compensation claims, Iron County was tied with Washington County for having the lowest in the State.

Leslie Bishop reported that the salary study was complete, that the Expenditure and Reimbursement Policy was updated in response to an IRS audit, and that benefit enrollment was ending. Leslie concluded by noting that the transition of the Public Defenders to be under the Justice Court Administrator, Lori Starr, was nearly complete.

Mark Gower, Iron County Sheriff, explained that the Sheriff budget looked good and was available through www.ironcounty.net for public inspection. Sheriff Gower explained that there was an active search in the Buckhorn flat area for a hunter who had been missing for two days. He concluded his report to return to the search.

Maria Twitchell, Executive Director of the Cedar City Brian Head Tourism Bureau, reported that tourism had spent 83% of its budget. Maria noted that the Transient Room Tax (TRT), collections were up 9.4%, that restaurant tax was up 10.4%, and that hotel occupancies were up 6.6%. She noted that Brian Head reported their best opening weekend ever. Visitor Center guests were up 200% from 2014. Maria stated Iron County would act as lead in a marketing campaign highlighting the National Park Service Centennial taking place throughout 2016. She had secured editorial space in all the park newspapers throughout the year. Maria reported that they had teamed up with six Utah partners on an advertorial spread in Delta Sky magazine. She noted that Proforma Communications had been selected to produce the new 88 page Iron County Visitor Guide. Maria explained that she and her staff were working on booking hotel rooms for the Tour of Utah in case the Tour returns to Cedar City in 2016. The Tour needs 1500 room nights during the period of the race.

Maria Twitchell reported that Outdoor Recreation was at 44.6% of its budget. Maria noted that Woods Ranch was closed for the season, and that she was moving forward with the purchase of pipe to repair the water system. She explained that improvements were continuing on the shooting range, and that dirt work had begun on two new pistol ranges. There continues to be vandalism at the shooting range, so a security camera was installed at the entrance. Maria requested permission to place a sign at the entrance that reads, "Unsupervised Range, Enter at Your Own Risk," to help with liability. The local 4H group agreed to file for a National Rifle Association (NRA) grant to help purchase an additional bathroom at the range for \$5,000. Maria noted that camping in Three Peaks was going well with user fees of \$2,800. Dale Brinkerhoff asked how the pavilion rentals at Woods Ranch were doing. Maria Explained that reservations were robust, and that reservations are made months in advance.

Danny Stewart, Economic Development Director, reported that Cedar City has been doing repairs on the billboards on I-15 near Cedar City. Danny noted that Cedar City had asked him to design new banners for the signs to promote tourism. He noted that the catchphrase on the banners will read, "Come Back for More Adventure."

Bryan Dangerfield, Events Coordinator, thanked Maria Twitchell for all the work she does. Bryan also expressed hope that the Tour of Utah would again come to Cedar City. He said the Shakespeare Festival wanted to be involved. They are presenting the play, "Much Ado About Nothing," and are thinking of incorporating the saying "Much Ado About Cycling."

Alma Adams, Iron County Commissioner, reported that he attended a meeting regarding recycling with Bruce Anderson. At the meeting, some commented that it would cost more for curbside pickup of recyclables. Alma agreed that recycling is a good idea, but questioned whether people would be willing to pay more for it.

David Miller, Iron County Commissioner, attended the Catastrophic Wild Fire meeting with the regional Color Country Fire Fighters, Forest Service Teams, and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Teams. David reported that the discussion focused on a national effort to

make communities more resilient to potential catastrophic wild fire. There was also discussion regarding the declaration made by Iron County concerning watershed protection and heavy fuel loads on or near watershed areas. Of particular concern were the Parowan and Brian Head watershed areas. If a catastrophic wild fire occurred, not only would the direct costs of fighting the fire be a factor, but so to would be the risk to the watershed quality and viability. David noted that for every dollar spent on prevention of this type, it could save \$400 in fighting the fire and restoring the watershed. David noted that there was upcoming legislation that would help communities mitigate the cost of reducing the fuel load in watershed areas on public lands. Part of the strategy is to coordinate with the State of Utah and all parties so that, in the event of a wild land fire, all available agencies would move to fight the fire immediately. David concluded by saying that Iron County was fortunate in 2015 by not experiencing major fires, but the high risk will persist without intervention.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Bruce Washburn, a resident of Iron County, requested that the Commission completely comply with the Open Meetings Act. Mr. Washburn explained that Iron County Commission meetings happen in the morning when most citizens are unable to attend, that the newspapers are not reporting routinely on the activities due to the internet access. Whereas the meetings are posted on a timely manner, the recording, pending minutes and approved minutes are not in compliance. Recordings and minutes should be posted within three days. The November 23rd minutes and recording had not yet been posted. This is not the first time minutes and recordings have not been posted within the three days. Approved minutes are required to be posted within 30 days of the meeting. Request of pending minutes to Jon Whittaker have been answered with rough notes taken at the meeting. Mr. Washburn noted that approved minutes are to be posted within 3 days of approval, and said that had not happened. Minutes from the middle of May to October have not been posted. Dale Brinkerhoff stated that they are aware and are working on it. Jon Whittaker explained that he is well aware and agrees that Mr. Washburn is correct. Jon clarified that he had additional staff working to get the minutes up to date. He stated that his goal is to have them caught up by the end of the year.

PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING 2016 TENTATIVE BUDGET

Dale Brinkerhoff, Commission Chair, declared a public hearing open regarding the 2016 tentative budget for Iron County. Gene Adams, County Auditor, reported total expenditures are \$30,726,870 for 2016. Including transfers, it totals to \$37,832,658 compared to \$39,915,796 in 2015, a roughly \$2,000,000 reduction. The general fund budgeted a total of \$16,172,715 in expenditures for 2016. There was no comment from the public. Dale Brinkerhoff declared the public hearing closed.

CONSIDER & ADOPT THE 2016 TENTATIVE BUDGET

After some discussion, Alma Adams expressed that the tentative budget presented appeared to be accurate and made a motion to adopt the 2016 tentative budget. Second by David Miller. Voting: Alma Adams, Aye; Dale Brinkerhoff, Aye; David Miller, Aye.

APPROVAL OF 2016 IRON COUNTY COMMISSION MEETING SCHEDULE

Jon Whittaker, Iron County Clerk, presented the Iron County Commission meeting schedule for 2016. After discussing requirements for budgeting, the hearing for the 2017 tentative budget hearing and adoption was scheduled for November 14, 2016, the final budget hearing for 2017 was scheduled to be held November 28, 2016, and the adoption of the final 2017 budget was scheduled for December 12, 2016. David Miller made a motion to approve the 2016 Iron County Commission meeting schedule with the agreed upon changes. Second by Alma Adams. Voting: Alma Adams, Aye; Dale Brinkerhoff, Aye; David Miller, Aye.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON COUNTY WIDE VOTING BY MAIL

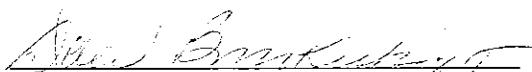
Jon Whittaker, Iron County Clerk, explained that vote by mail increases voter turnout, as well as possibly resulting in cost savings to administer an election. David Miller expressed concerns having to do with chain of custody of ballots. Jon Whittaker explained that safeguards are in place concerning the chain of custody as well as ballot security. Jon explained that each voter will receive their ballot and they will be required to sign the envelope to verify they are the person voting that ballot. The signature is matched when it returns to the Clerk’s office. Iron County will have three vote centers open, one in Cedar City, one in Enoch and one in Parowan. To vote at the vote center the voter would have to surrender the by mail ballot. David Miller stated that we need to make sure that safeguards are in place, and that the chain of custody is followed and secure. Jon explained when the ballot is mailed it goes to the address on record. There no forward request on the envelope and if the person has moved it is returned to the Iron County Clerk. When the ballot is returned voted, the signature is verified against the scanned voter registration. When it comes time to count the ballot the seal is broken and the ballot is taken out, address face down, and then the ballot is then separated from the envelope to be counted. Concerns were brought forth by David Miller and others regarding ballot secrecy. In particular, the concern was that the voter’s name is on the ballot when the ballot is removed, thus allowing election workers to see how a particular voter voted. Jon Whittaker replied that he would do more research to address the concerns raised and bring the issue forward to the commission at a later date. David Miller made a motion to table the decision regarding vote by mail. Second by Alma Adams. Voting: Alma Adams, Aye; Dale Brinkerhoff, Aye; David Miller, Aye.

NON-DELEGATED ITEMS

David Miller reported a year in review on the Utah Prairie Dog (UPD). The UPD has been a perennial topic in Iron County Commission meetings. David noted that since the State of Utah took over the management of the UPD on May 8th, private property owners have greatly benefited by easing the burden and cost of UPD mitigation. He also explained that conservation had made significant strides as well. David expressed that conservation efforts have ramped up exponentially. He noted significant improvements. David noted that the ability to conserve dogs that otherwise would have been lethally removed has resulted in the translocation of 2500 dogs. David concluded by explaining that next year the final ruling from the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals to verify whether the state will continue or whether it will revert back to Fish and Wildlife should be handed down.

ADJOURNMENT

Alma Adams made a motion to adjourn. Second by Dale Brinkerhoff. Voting: Alma Adams, Aye; Dale Brinkerhoff, Aye; David Miller, Aye.


Signed: Dale M. Brinkerhoff, Chairman


Attest: Jonathan T. Whittaker, County Clerk

