

Bear Lake Regional Commission

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Minutes Bear Lake Regional Commission Garden City, UT March 27, 2024

Those in attendance:

Sim Weston - Board Chairman, Rich County Commissioner
Bradley Jensen - Board Vice Chairman, Bear Lake County Commissioner
Burdette Weston - Board Secretary Mayor of Laketown
Mike Leonhardt - Mayor of Garden City
Roy Bunderson- Mayor of Bloomington
Ken Brown - Rich County at Large
Mitch Poulsen - Executive Director- Bear Lake Regional Commission
Christy Jensen - Bear Lake Regional Commission
Tami Leonhardt – Director Bear Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau

Excused:

Dan Fisher, City Council of Montpelier
Albert Johnson - Bear Lake County at Large
Ron Jensen - Recreation

Also in attendance:

Brady Long-Bear Lake Watch Executive Director
Claudia Cottle-Bear Lake Watch
Kathy Izatt-citizen

Chairman Sim Weston conducted the March 27, 2024, meeting of the Bear Lake Regional Commission, the meeting started at 7:02 pm.

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Sim Weston asked for an approval of the agenda, The agenda was reviewed and approved.

- **Ken Brown motioned to approve the agenda.**
Burdette Weston seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Commissioner Brad Jensen/ Review of Bear Lake-Lakebed ordinance

Commissioner Jensen presented the board members a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Board of Commissioners of Bear Lake County and Idaho State Board of Land Commissioners, acting by and through the Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) regarding the public lands between the ordinary high-water mark and the water's edge. He also provided them with a copy

of the Order, which is a document regarding prohibition of certain activities on the bed and banks of Bear Lake below the ordinary high-water mark. The Order is connected to the MOU.

Part of the reason for this agreement is the fact that the IDL doesn't have a law enforcement arm in their department, they make rules but have no way of enforcing them. The idea is to have a mutual agreement with the county so that the sheriff has the authority to enforce the IDL rules.

If the county takes on this MOU, they also take on the Order, which are the rules set out by the IDL.

If the County signs this MOU, and the Order of rules set up by this state entity, then those rules become county ordinances.

As a commissioner, Jensen feels it is his responsibility to make ordinances that benefit the citizens and the communities of Bear Lake County and not solely for the benefit of other organizations.

The cost of enforcement of these lakebed rules is also an issue, and no monetary compensation for the county sheriff department's enforcement services is included in this agreement. Along with the fact that the Idaho Parks and Recreation Department is immune from any of this MOU.

Idaho State Parks also depend on the county for law enforcement and emergency medical services without any reimbursement costs. These county law enforcement and emergency medical services are and will be provided, regardless of the MOU agreement. If the Sheriff's Department receives a call, they will always respond. However, those services do put extreme pressure on the counties limited resources (law enforcement and EMS) during the busy summer season.

The Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation has recently purchased a 28-acre parcel of land on the west side of Bear Lake with the future intent of creating additional park and beach access, which will further increase the need for Bear Lake County law and EMS services.

Roy Bunderson added that this MOU agreement has not been initiated and has a sunset clause in it that ends at the end of April unless some agreement between the parties can be reached.

Mitch Poulsen/ Status of Bike Path

Rich County has received about \$3.2 million in grant funding for bike paths through the help of the Regional Commission, as Mitch has written those grants on behalf of Rich County. Engineering and design for the future pathway should be completed by fall. This will be from Gus Rich Point to the UDOT rest area. It was hoped that the path would go all the way to Rendezvous Beach, however construction costs are going to limit the trail to the UDOT rest area.

The unofficial ridership of the current pathway is approximately 110,000 people in the summer.

The Department of Transportation has invested \$300,000 in a planning study to continue the pathway east from the rest area along Willis Lane and, also into Laketown.

Pathway challenges to the north of the marina also exist, such as steep mountainside, narrow right of way, crossing Swan Creek and several driveway access points.

The Summit Trail system, a 5-to-8-mile packed trail system, from the Overlook looping around through the Sunrise Campground with an additional loop to the west that goes up by the Limber Pine trail, has been in the works for almost five years. Once available funding has been turned back. The Forest Service is now interested in this project and wishes to complete it in-house. It is now in design and going through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process.

Mike Leonhardt/ Marina expansion

Mayor Leonhardt met with UDOT yesterday concerning the bike path going north past the marina expansion. UDOT will be widening highway 89 to the north of the existing marina and making it possible to move and build the bike trail around the mountain during this process. UDOT is willing to help with the funding of this path.

During the highway expansion process, State Parks will be using some of the fill taken from the hill on the west side of us 89 and use a conveyor belt system to move it across the highway for construction of the new portion of the marina. This two-year marina expansion construction project is planned to start this fall, at an estimated cost of 70 million dollars.

Legislative Retreat planning

Mitch presented the board with a list of attendees, including local legislators, senators, and representatives from the governor's office, along with some others from specific organizations to invite to a June 13th gathering.

Mitch threw out a couple options of what to include in the itinerary and the board gave their preferences. A \$750 dollar budget for this meeting that will be divided between the two counties and the city of Garden City was discussed, without a final commitment.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes were reviewed and approved.

- **Mike Leonhardt made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 28, 2024 meeting, Burdette Weston seconded the motion, motion carried, with Roy obtaining.**

Bills & Payroll

The bills and payroll for the Bear Lake Regional Commission were reviewed, a motion was made to approve them.

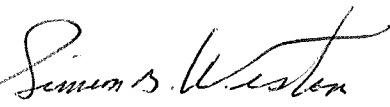
- **Mike Leonhardt made a motion to accept and approve payment of the March 2024 bills and payroll for the Bear Lake Regional Commission, Roy Bunderson seconded the motion, motion carried.**

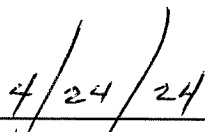
Adjourn

With no further business, the meeting ended at 8:13 p.m.

- **Ken Brown motioned to adjourn the meeting of the Bear Lake Regional Commission Roy Bunderson seconded the motion, motion carried.**

Minutes Approved:


Chairman


Date