



**GRAND COUNTY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING**

**Grand County Commission Chambers
Hybrid virtual participation on Zoom
Moab, Utah**

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**MINUTES
6 September 2022**

The Grand County Commission met in a regular meeting on September 6th, 2022. The meeting was held in-person in the Grand County Commission Chambers, with hybrid virtual participation also available via Zoom. It was also broadcast and saved on YouTube. Attending the meeting in-person was Commission Chair Jacques Hadler, Commission Vice-Chair Mary McGann, Trisha Hedin, Sarah Stock, and Josie Kovash. Also attending in-person were Commission Administrator Mallory Nassau, Associate Commission Administrator Quinn Hall, Strategic Development Director Chris Baird and Clerk/Auditor Gabriel Woytek. Commissioner Evan Clapper was absent. Kevin Walker entered the meeting virtually at 3:08 p.m. Grand County Attorney Christina Sloan entered the meeting virtually at 4:18 p.m.

3:02 pm Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance

Department Reports

Weeds Department (Elizabeth Weimholt, Grand County Weeds Department Director) (8:15)

Director Weimholt gave an overview of noxious weed definition, Grand County Weeds Department activity including treatment methods, overview of projects, interagency partnerships and upcoming events and efforts.

Presentation on San Juan County's Mud Springs Trail Project (Madeline Logowitz, Active Trails and Transportation Director) (28:35)

Director Logowitz gave an overview of the proposed project, which has been earmarked for the area as well as being a part of the Grand County Trails Master Plan. Map of location demonstrated. San Juan County Commission voted to move forward with the development of the project. Current partnership between Grand County, San Juan County, and the Bureau of Land Management working on its potential development. Proposed trail system would be accessible for three-wheeled hand cyclists, as well as middle and high school competitions. Considerations include plans for a potential future shooting range as well as existing motorized use (Jeep Safari 'Strike Ravine' route). Clarification offered that Grand County's role would be as consultant, which is already setup through an existing interlocal agreement. San Juan County potentially seeking grant opportunities in Spring of 2023. 2019 GCATT survey revealed that there was substantial demand for a trail system south of Moab.

Presentations Regarding Ongoing Financial Needs and Obligation for Purposes of Later Determining Funding Allocations

Transportation Special Service District (38:00)

Commissioner Walker clarified that allocations to the TSSD are critical in funding drainage projects and stormwater control without drawing from the general fund, which is critical given increasing intensity of rain events. Ashley Wareham, Chair of the TSSD, confirmed the information given by Commissioner Walker regarding contributions to drainage projects.

Canyonlands Health Care Special Service District (Tim McGinty, CHC SSD Vice-Chair) (40:45)

Tim McGinty gave an overview of the role of CHC SSD. Canyonlands Care Center, owned and operated by the CHC SSD, is the only long-term elder care facility in the Moab, built in response to community demand, high quality five-star facility, strongly staffed in licensed nursing care, 2 of 97 long term care facilities in the State of Utah without a death caused by complications from COVID-19. McGinty gave an overview of annual debt obligations and explanation of monthly subsidization by the CHC SSD, importance of DSH seed money provided by CHC SSD to the Moab Regional Hospital in providing uncompensated care, CIB debt payment, summary of Health Care Sales Tax split and most recent agreement with Grand County EMS on that distribution.

4 p.m. Citizens to Be Heard (none at this time)

Grand County Emergency Medical Services Special Service District (EMS Board Chair Liz Tubbs and GCEMS Director Andy Smith) (1:03:45)

District Chair Liz Tubbs referenced the joint letter with the Canyonlands Health Care Special Service District, as shown in the packet, regarding the current agreement of 53/47, and an effort to eventually reach an even 50/50 split of the Healthcare Sales Tax between the two entities. Costs for EMS continue to rise, which appears to be in direct correlation with economic trends. An increase in calls does not necessarily correspond with an increase in revenues. Reserves created by 2021 boom in sales tax collections will quickly be depleted by current trends in operating expenses.

Grand County School District (GCSD Superintendent Taryn Kay, Special Education Director Sherry Buckingham) (1:18:30)

Superintendent Kay offered a funding proposal for preschool services. Funding for preschool units only comes from Federal funding sources, which is only \$30,000 to account for approximately \$250,000 in staff expenses alone. Recent wage increases in Moab have disqualified many families, who still have great need, from free and reduced lunch, from 47 to 31 percent. The GCSD still continues to fund free breakfast for all. GCSD needs to help to be able to offer affordable preschool to families who need it. Data presented that supports the power of preschool programming in closing the achievement gap for underprivileged children. Enrollment at the preschool was 63 children pre-COVID, and due to current staffing constraints is 30, which will increase throughout the school year as more children become eligible on the day that they turn 3.

Solid Waste Special Service District #1 (Co-Interim Directors LJ Blackburn and Chris Scoville, Accountant Nick Lundberg) (1:32:00)

Director Blackburn brought attention to the development of a new commercial drivers license program through USU-Eastern. District revenues currently under budget, amid efforts to control costs as much as can be controlled. \$500K request consistent with 2021.

Grand County Recreation Special Service District (GCRSSD Board Chair Jim Lewis) (2:00:00)

Chair Lewis explained that Recreation District funds in 2022 have gone to electric scoreboards, extended backstops, pitching mounds and help fund 4th of July fireworks. Increased funding would help with maintenance and operations and also ongoing capital project needs at the Old Spanish Trail Arena. OSTA

facilities getting increasingly consistent use. Planned playground construction at OSTA will be handicap accessible, which will be the first of its kind in Grand County.

Ratification of Payment of Bills

Motion by Commissioner Hedin to approve and ratify payment of bills in the amount of \$868,616.33 and payroll in the amount of \$312,195.75 for a combined total of \$1,180,812.08.

Motion Seconded by Commissioner Stock

Discussion (none at this time)

Motion passes 5-0, Walker absent

Commission Member Disclosures (none at this time)

General Commission Reports and Future Considerations

Jacques Hadler

- Thompson Springs SSD meeting, took a tour of Thompson, water main break from flash flood event, talk of reopening overflow pond
- Flood communications brief
- Meeting with Sheriff Steve White, Emergency Manager will now be a full-time position that has been posted, proposed board to be formed to advise the emergency manager
- Trails Committee meeting, Trail Ambassador program thriving, now with 8 certified volunteers, Colin Topper organizing cleanup efforts at the Bike Skills Park as well as follow-up volunteer cleanup days along Mill Creek

Trisha Hedin

- Emergency meetings regarding Mill Creek flood event and emergency response
- GWSSA meeting, discussion regarding Accessory Dwelling Overlay, Ken's Lake level at 253% compared to 2021, soil moisture at 9500ft at 56%
- Planning Commission Meeting, heavy discussion regarding Alternative Dwelling Overlay

Sarah Stock

- Internal Audit Committee meeting
- Meeting with EDD regarding Love Communications creative brief
- National Groundwater Monitoring Network meeting, effort to get more monitoring wells on the web

Kevin Walker

- No reports at this time

Mary McGann

- 8/18 Canyon County Partnership meeting at Range Creek, spoke with head of State Natural History Association regarding a potential trip to Range Creek for a delegation from Grand County
- Grant Evaluation Committee meeting
- Economic Development Advisory Board meeting, Housing Authority made funding request for educational workshops for the public

- Solid Waste Special Service District meeting, new office building moving forward, as well as software upgrade
- New exhibit at Moab Museum regarding William Grandstaff, Grand County Hospice 'Night of Grief and Mystery' event on September 17th, upcoming observation of International Day of Peace

Josie Kovash

- 8/18 Housing Authority Meeting, demoing software for managing High Density Housing Overlay administration
- 8/18 Special Events Committee, attempts to edify County philosophy in grading and choosing special events

Elected Official Reports

Grand County Clerk/Auditor Gabriel Woytek

- First round of ballot proofs for November General Election close to review stage
- Friday September 9th deadline for Candidate Profile submission to Lt. Governor's Office
- Lunch Meeting with Lt. Governor Henderson

Grand County Attorney Christina Sloan

- 55 hours of work thus far committed to flood response, concerns and potential insurance claims, various plans, updates and policies including updated notification policy, flood emergency plan update, general emergency response plans and stormwater master plan
- Offered clarification that most drainage plans in new developments across the county are private, contingent on HOAs and individual property owners maintaining them, committee set up to examine that dynamic across the county
- Emergency Flood Relief Grant Program, authorized use of Transient Room Taxes

Commission Administrator Report

Commission Administrator Mallory Nassau

- Lots of effort towards Flood Emergency Response Management and Special Events

15 Minute Recess

Approval of Minutes (Gabriel Woytek, Clerk/Auditor) (2:29:20)

August 16th, 2022 (Regular County Commission Meeting)

August 30th, 2022 (Emergency County Commission Meeting)

Motion by Commissioner Stock to approve the minutes from August 16th, 2022 and August 30th, 2022.

Motion Seconded by Commissioner Hedin

Discussion (none at this time)

Motion Passes 5-0, Walker absent

General Business - Action Items, Discussion and Consideration of:

A. Approving Cooperative Agreement with the Utah Department of Public Safety for the 24/7 Sobriety Program (Captain Shan Hackwell, Grand County Sheriff's Office)

Presentation

Program designed to assist individuals with DUIs in keeping their jobs, staying sober, and be productive citizens through a probation period that requires blood alcohol level monitoring. Overview of program given by Captain Hackwell, as shown in the packet. 6 participants would initially be the maximum in the program. No direct fiscal impact with the program other than increased staff time at the Jail in response to testing demand and increased risk associated with comings and goings at the jail. Program model has been very successful in other counties across the state.

Motion by Commissioner McGann to approve the cooperative agreement with the Utah Department of Public Safety for the 24/7 Sobriety Program.

Motion Seconded by Commissioner Hedin

Discussion

Commissioner Stock sought confirmation that there were no additional comments from the County Attorney, who reviewed the contract and is very supportive of the program.

Motion passes 6-0

B. Approving The 2023 Insurance Renewal Rate Increases (Renee Baker, Personnel Services Director) (2:44:00)

Presentation

Staff presented renewal rates for county employee medical benefit package, as shown in the packet.

Motion by Commissioner Hedin to approve the Grand County Medical Insurance renewal with Cigna at the increase of 8.00% and retain the bundle of vision and dental services with Cigna. I also move to approve an increase of 8.00% applied to the employee paid premiums for 2023 Cigna Healthcare Traditional Medical Insurance Plan, monthly cost to the employee of \$127.05 (Single) \$162.29 (2- Party) \$313.58 (Family)

Motion Seconded by Commissioner McGann

Discussion (none at this time)

Motion passes 6-0

C. Consideration of Property Tax Relief for Victims of the Pack Creek Fire (Debbie Swasey, Grand County Assessor) (2:46:25)

Presentation

Assessor Swasey discussed damage and ongoing displacement suffered as a result of fire along Murphy Lane. Similar abatement action was taken after Cinema Court fire.

Motion by Commissioner McGann to approve property tax abatements and refunds to residents affected by the Pack Creek Fire, totaling \$600.59.

Motion Seconded by Commissioner Hedin

Discussion (none at this time)

Motion passes 6-0

D. Approving Bid For 2023 Commercial Appraisal Services (Debbie Swasey, Grand County Assessor) (2:48:30)

Presentation

Assessor Swasey described bid as shown in packet. One bid received by contractor who has completed Grand County's assessment since 2007.

Motion by Commissioner McGann to approve the contract for 2023 commercial appraisal services with The Appraisers, Inc. for \$188,980.

Motion Seconded by Commissioner Kovash

Discussion (none at this time)

Motion passes 6-0

E. Adopting Resolution Approving the Final Plat of Davis Minor Subdivision Affecting Parcel Nos. 02-0020-0054 And 02-0020-0036 (Elissa Martin, Planning and Zoning Director) (2:50:26)

Presentation

Staff presented the proposed resolution, as shown in the packet.

Motion by Commissioner Hedin to approve the Findings of Fact set forth in the staff report dated June 16, 2022 and the proposed Resolution approving the Final Plat of Davis Minor Subdivision.

Motion Seconded by Commissioner Kovash

Discussion (none at this time)

Motion passes 6-0

F. Approving Janssen Opioid Settlement Agreement (Christina Sloan, Grand County Attorney)

Presentation

Attorney Sloan provided clarification that Janssen was not a distributor but a manufacturer. Same legal rules apply to manufacturers and distributors in such a settlement. Details of agreement shown in the packet. This manufacturer has ceased producing opioids. No other similar settlements expected to be coming down the pipeline.

Motion by Commissioner McGann to approve the Janssen Settlement Agreement, authorize the Chair of the Grand County Commission to execute the Janssen Settlement Participation Form, and dismiss Grand County's claims against Defendant Janssen in the Third Judicial District Court, Summit County Case No. 18050019, Grand County v. Teva Pharmaceuticals, Inc., et al.

Motion Seconded by Commissioner Walker

Discussion (none at this time)

Motion passes 6-0

G. Approving Utah Subdivision Agreement to Establish Utah Attorney Fee and Expenses Fund (Christina Sloan, Grand County Attorney)

Presentation

Attorney Sloan explained that this fee agreement is capped at 20% in contrast to fee agreement by previous attorney of 35%. Appears that county attorneys and state attorney general had been misled.

Motion by Commissioner McGann to deny the Utah Subdivision Agreement to Establish Utah Attorney Fee and Expense Fund.

Motion Seconded by Commissioner Hedin

Discussion

Attorney Sloan explained that a motion to postpone might be appropriate given previous 35% fee agreement. Commissioner Walker clarified that since other counties have signed this agreement, joining at this time would be prudent.

Motion by Commissioner Walker to amend the motion to approve rather than deny the agreement.

Motion Seconded by Commissioner Kovash

Motion to amend passes 5-1, McGann opposed

Amended motion passes 5-1, McGann opposed

6 p.m. Citizens to be Heard

Janie Walker spoke with regards to the rental trailer on her property condemned by flood damage. Resident asked whether individuals rather than just businesses and non-profits would be eligible to apply for Flood Relief Grant program. Staff and County attorney offered clarification regarding the design of the program and constraints associated with the use of TRT funds.

Craig Smith spoke on behalf of the Kane Springs Improvement District (Item H), referenced a comment letter offered to the Commission in support of a board of directors made up of resident applicants and county commissioners to make good use of expertise and work done already by the resident developers and available capacity of the Commission to manage the district.

H. Adopting Resolution Certifying the Petition to Create an Improvement District, Creating the Kane Springs Improvement District, and Establishing the Board of Directors (Gabriel Woytek, Grand County Clerk/Auditor and Christina Sloan, Grand County Attorney) (3:18:45)

Presentation

Clerk/Auditor Woytek offered a timeline of the process bringing the current resolution to the table. County Attorney clarified that it was county policy to include one commissioner on district boards, in contrast to developer proposal for a three-member board comprised solely of the developer-residents. County Commission can only be appointed now and not later. Pros and cons discussed regarding board composition. Proposal qualifies as a seasonal development, so that owner-agents can qualify as board members. Commissioner Walker clarified that the County Commission would only have final say over this district as the controlling board. Commissioner Stock asked whether three commissioners and two owner developers could be appointed as the board. Strategic Development Director Baird explained that there was a significant difference between Arches Special Service District and this proposed action, and that this would represent a significant demand of time and energy by the Commission, without support from County staff or resources.

Motion by Commissioner Walker to approve the Resolution certifying the petition to create an improvement district, creating the Kane Springs Improvement District, and appointing the county legislative body as the board of trustees, and authorize the Clerk to sign all necessary certification documentation and transmit the same to the Lt. Governor's Office.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Stock

Discussion

Commissioner Hadler confirmed that the composition of the board can be changed at any time by resolution, expressed that it would be unrealistic to expect that the Commission could fill the role of board of trustees over the long term. Commissioner McGann described the challenge and workload associated with the Solid Waste Special Service District, expressed that the Commission owes it to the citizens of Grand County to have as much control and say as possible over potential developments in this area. County surveyor has to certify that the plat complies with statute. Commissioner Walker expressed that further discussion can take place but a decision has to be made now under a timeline, which can always be adjusted. Kovash described public outcry and sentiment regarding the potential development.

Motion passes 6-0

I. Adopting Resolution Appointing the Initial Board of Trustees of the Kane Springs Improvement District (Gabriel Woytek, Grand County Clerk/Auditor and Christina Sloan, Grand County Attorney)

Tabled without official action

J. Approval Of the Cooperative Marketing Program Expansion with Canuckiwi and The Utah Office of Tourism (August Granath, Economic Development Director, Melissa Stocks, Tourism Promotion Specialist, Ben Alter, Economic Development Specialist)

Presentation

Staff presented the marketing program, described its purpose, and offered details about its approach, as shown in the packet. Approach is closely aligned with the Forever Mighty program oriented towards sustainable tourism. Grand County Economic Development Office will have close oversight of the content. Focus on a balanced visitation calendar that could serve to balance huge visitation surges with slow periods.

Motion by Commissioner Walker to approve the opt-in form and expand Grand County's cooperative marketing program with Canuckiwi and the Utah Office of Tourism.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Walker

Discussion

Commissioner Walker expressed that this was a relatively modest spend that is aligned with the already stated priorities of the Commission. Commissioner Hadler expressed that a modest increase in a desirable type of visitor in the offseason would be very welcome by the business community. Commissioner Kovash expressed support for these very conscientious marketing efforts.

Motion passes 6-0

K. Approval Of Seven MOAB! Tourism Grant 2022 Awards (Ben Alter, Economic Development Specialist) (4:00:00)

Presentation

Staff discussed the learning opportunity associated with this grant, feedback from evaluators was very valuable. Award recipients show in packet.

Motion by Commissioner Stock to approve the following grant awards as part of the Marketing Our Awesome Businesses (MOAB!) Tourism Grant 2022 program: \$4,120.36 to Desert Power Yoga LLC, \$4981.00 to Clapper Adventures LLC, \$5,000.00 to Desert Wild Corp, \$4,500.00 to Moab Donuts LLC, \$4,500.00 to Simply Moab LLC, \$3,500 to Mind Pleasure LLC, \$4,350.00 to La Duena Mexican Kitchen LLC

Motion seconded by Commissioner Kovash

Discussion (none at this time)

Motion passes 6-0

L. Approval of the Contract with Hudson Printing for The Reprint of The Moab Outdoor Adventure Guide (Ben Alter, Economic Development Specialist) (4:02:55)

Presentation

Staff presented contract, as shown in packet. Demand for adventure guide has risen in recent years. This is a rerun of the current edition that is currently low in stock. A rebrand and refresh of content will be planned for 2023.

Motion by Commissioner Stock to approve the contract with Hudson Printing for the reprint of the Moab Outdoor Adventure Guide.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Hedin

Discussion

Commissioner Stock sought clarification that Transient Room Tax Promotion monies would be used for this expenditure, Granath confirmed that they would.

Motion passes 6-0

M. Approval Of Special Event Permit for the 2022 Hummer Club (August Granath, Economic Development Director)

Presentation

Director Granath presented the proposed event as shown in the packet. Small long-running event that previously has not pulled a special event permit, flagged due to having a permit with the Bureau of Land Management. Commissioner Stock sought clarification regarding the timeliness of the application. Commissioner Walker sought clarification as to whether this event previously required a special event permit, Attorney Sloan clarified that it always was. Clarification in special event permitting process regarding whether participant limits apply to the number of vehicles or individual people attending. Commissioner Walker expressed that he won't vote to approve any more events using a piecemeal approach.

Motion by Commissioner McGann to approve the special event permit for the 2022 Hummer Club event pursuant to Ordinance No. 643.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Walker

Discussion

Commissioner Walker expressed that denial of this event would set a poor precedent for the Commission's process in special event approval. Administrator Nassau expressed that a Special Event approval process will be presented at the next Commission meeting.

Motion fails 3-3, Stock, Hedin, Kovash opposed

N. Approval Of Special Event Permit for the 2022 Blazer Bash (August Granath, Economic Development Director)

Presentation

Staff presented event details as shown in the packet. Event had been pulling a BLM event permit, but not Grand County. Commissioner Walker suggested that denial of events would invite unwanted scrutiny, especially immediately prior to a more satisfactory approval and denial process. Administrator Nassau described the current process which triggers Commissioner approval very close to event, which is set to be changed.

Motion by Commissioner Walker to approve the special event permit for the 2022 Blazer Bash pursuant to Ordinance No. 643.

Motion seconded by Commissioner McGann

Discussion

Commissioner Walker spoke in favor of approval in the interest of avoiding controversy and waiting for a more robust process before engaging in event denial. Commissioner McGann expressed eagerness for an improved approval process, expressed concern for individuals associated with these events who will suffer from a sudden cancellation without any part in the process, as well as concern for potential litigation. Attorney Sloan spoke to the Commission's legal authority in approving or denying events for the sake of the safety and welfare of its citizens. Commissioner Kovash pointed out the community's desire to reign in motorized events, and the need by events organizers to make good faith efforts to comply with Grand County's special events processes. Commissioner Hedin expressed discouragement at the unwillingness of the event organizers to comply.

Motion passes 4-2, Stock and Kovash opposed

O. Approval of Special Event Permit for the 2022 Mother of All Boogies (MOAB) (August Granath, Economic Development Director) (4:40:00)

Presentation

Staff presented an overview of the event as shown in the packet. Event has been in operation since 2013 and previously approved by Grand County. Event was denied in 2021 due to late submission. Attorney Sloan clarified that conditions requested by the County have not been included. Discussed conditions to landside parking behavior, airside parking conflict, FAA required pedestrian access, and alcohol use have not been addressed. Security would be included to ensure that the event organizers would enforce their own behavior.

Motion by Commissioner McGann to approve the special event permit for the 2022 Mother of All Boogies (MOAB) pursuant to Ordinance No. 643, subject to County Attorney approval given further conditions.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Kovash

Discussion

Commissioner Walker expressed disapproval of event due to disruption caused to the community by noise impacts of skydiving aircraft. Clarification sought by Commissioner Hadler that the event takes place over four days.

Motion passes 5-1, Walker opposed

P. Approving Economic Development Event Grant Awards (August Granath, Economic Development Director) (4:58:00)

Presentation

Staff presented process and awards, as shown in packet.

Motion by Commissioner McGann to approve the dispersal of funds to the Moab Canyons Endurance Ride and the Red Canyon Pow Wow as recommended by the Travel Council Advisory Board (TCAB).

Motion seconded by Commissioner Kovash

Discussion

Commissioners Kovash and Hadler expressed strong support for the continued establishment of an annual Pow Wow in Grand County.

Motion passes 6-0

Q. Repealing and Replacing the Budget Advisory Board Duties and Functions to Include the Treasurer as a Permanent Board Member (Chris Baird, Strategic Development Director)

Presentation

Staff presented the rationale for the proposed changes.

Motion by Commissioner Stock to approve the ordinance repealing and replacing Ordinance 572, The Grand County Budget Advisory Board Duties and Functions, to replace the term limited Elected Official position with the Grand County Treasurer as a permanent board member.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Hedin

Discussion (none at this time)

Motion passes 6-0

R. First Amendment to the Independent Contractor Agreement Between Grand County and Love Communications for the Purposes of Authorizing \$25,000 to be spent on the Development of Creative Assets and Marketing Materials (August Granath, Economic Development Director)

Presentation

Director Granath presented the agreement as presented in the packet. Materials already screened by a committee that included Commissioners.

Motion by Commissioner McGann to approve the First Amendment to the Independent Contractor Agreement between Grand County and Love Communications for the purposes of authorizing \$25,000 to be spent on the development of creative assets and marketing materials. Motion seconded by Commissioner

Motion seconded by Commissioner Hedin

Discussion (none at this time)

Motion passes 6-0

Consent Agenda – Action Items (5:05:55)

- S.** Specialized Services Agreement Between Grand County (Weeds Department) and Utah State University (Utah Conservation Corps), for Fiscal Year 2023
- T.** Ratify Letter for MLSNF SZ Hydrologic Function and Rehabilitation and Restoration
- U.** Ratifying Request for Assistance for Resources for Disaster Relief Clean-Up
- V.** Ratifying Request for Assistance from Team Rubicon for Disaster Relief Clean-Up

Motion by Commissioner McGann to adopt the Consent Agenda as listed by the Chair.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Hedin

Discussion (none at this time)

Motion passes 6-0

Discussion Items

Discussion on Expanding Direct Marketing, Economic Diversification Programming, Related Financial Updates, Special Event Coordination Needs, and Associated Budget Amendment (Strategic Development Director Chris Baird, Economic Development Director August Granath)

Granath provided an overview of a spending plan in the amount of \$550,000 for tourism promotion and \$500,000 for economic diversification, as recommended by the Utah Office of Tourism, in response to reduced tax revenues and a slow 2022 business environment as described by local businesses.

Baird described the need to expend funds in order to avoid an excess fund balance, which could become non-compliant with limits described in statute. A cooling of the economy has been experienced relative to 2021. Very high inflation rate is the most concerning factor which serves to nullify the expression of average growth rates.

Commissioner Hadler expressed support for the approach and agreed that economic stimulation would be beneficial to the community. Baird offered continued explanation of the complicated dynamics that require a decrease in the budget to reflect a drop in revenues combined with an increased one-time expense in order to address cooling in the economy and the potential non-compliance caused by excess reserves.

Commissioner Kovash expressed reticence in approving large amounts of new promotion spending, but expressed trust and support for new methods of promotion that reflect the will and concerns of the Commission and the community, and break from promotion traditions of the past. Commissioner Walker sought clarification regarding a process for Commission approval of promotional materials, at an early enough juncture where revisions might still be made. Granath suggested that the Commission suggest a process whereby Commission approval and input can be introduced with full transparency and collaboration. Commissioner Kovash stressed the importance of utilizing local talent whenever possible in creating promotional content.

Director Baird discussed the complexity involved in interpreting statute and determining what the fund balance limits actually are, including reporting requirements being set to a particular fiscal cycle that will require more analysis to fully understand. Baird is forecasting an economic recession and downward trend and this action would look to keep Grand County competitive in an environment where other destinations are also responding in this way. Commissioner McGann expressed support for Love Communications and their understanding of Grand County's intentions to promote itself in a particular way, and expressed trust and support for staff's analysis.

Commissioner Stock sought clarification on the breakdown of the currently contemplated expenditure. Expansion of STAR grant allocations to applications already processed and approved but not yet funded. Stock also expressed concern about the nature of drive market promotion.

Commissioner Walker pointed out the lopsided proportion of 50K to international visitation promotion and 500K to domestic drive markets. Consideration could be given to augmenting the Utah Office of Tourism coop fly-in promotion already approved at 300K. Granath to call a meeting with Love to review these proportions and explore the options for redistributing the spend. Granath explained that a two-week lead time is needed to generate proofs of creative content, difficult to expect proofs to be reviewed before promotion is executed.

Baird assured the Commission that Love Communications is aware that the Commission desires to see promotional materials before being released and that responsible and sustainable tourism messaging is the existing policy.

Commissioner Walker discussed the constraints regarding TRT expenditure and the importance in exploring all avenues for expending these funds in creative ways outside of promotion. Commissioner Walker expressed skepticism that the current economic trends trigger the need for a response to rush to promote when growth trends and recent booms in tourism have become so uncomfortable to the community.

Walker and Baird agreed that TRT funds are squarely in line with the funding of a Special Events Coordinator position in Grand County.

Public Hearings (none scheduled)

Closed Session(s)

Motion by Commissioner McGann at 8:52 p.m. to enter closed session to discuss the character, professional competence or physical or mental health of an individual

Motion seconded by Commissioner Hedin

Discussion (none at this time)

Motion passes 6-0

Chair Hadler adjourned meeting at 9:14 pm

Jacques Hadler
Chair, Grand County Commission

Gabriel Woytek
Grand County Clerk/Auditor

DRAFT