



## **Grand County Council Special Joint Meeting With Moab City and The Town of Castle Valley**

**Held Virtually on Zoom  
Moab, Utah**

**Minutes  
Friday 29, May, 2020**

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The Grand County Council, Moab City Council, and the Council of the Town of Castle Valley met in a special joint meeting on 29 May, 2020. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the meeting was streamed/attended electronically. Council members from Grand County, Moab City and the Town of Castle Valley were in attendance. Roll call below.

Mary McGann, Chair

**10:03 a.m.**

### **Call to Order**

Chair McGann began the meeting at 10:03 am.

### **Council Member Disclosures**

- Evan Clapper has a Commercial Use Authorization (CUA) with Arches and Canyonlands National Parks.
- Curtis Wells has an interest in nightly accommodations in Moab
- Emily Niehaus' husband sells art with Canyonlands Natural History Association
- Karen Guzman-Newton has a nightly rental and business on Main Street

**Roll Call:** Grand County Council members Mary McGann, Curtis Wells, Greg Halliday, Evan Clapper, Gabriel Woytek and Jaylyn Hawks. Moab City Mayor Emily Niehaus. Moab City Council members Rani Derasary, Kalen Jones, Tawny Knuteson-Boyd, and Karen Guzman-Newton. Mike Duncan joined at 10:09 am. Castle Valley Town Council Members Tory Hill, Harry Holland, Robert O'Brien, and Pamela Gibson. National Park Service (NPS) – Superintendent of the Utah Southeast Group Kayci Cook-Collins, and Amy Tendick, Compliance. Moab City Assistant City Manager Carly Castle, Moab City Recorder Sommar Johnston, and Moab City Attorney Laurie Simonson. Grand County staff in attendance were County Council Administrator Chris Baird, Assistant County Council Administrator Mallory Nassau, County Attorney Christina Sloan, and Clerk/Auditor Quinn Hall.

## **Citizens to Be Heard (none at this time)**

### **Presentations**

A. Presentation on the phased reopening and visitor access strategies for Arches and Canyonlands National Parks (Kayci Cook, Acting Superintendent, National Park Service Southeast Utah Group)

Kayci Cook-Collins presented about reopening strategies for Arches and Canyonlands National Parks during the COVID-19 pandemic. NPS is attempting to implement a temporary timed-entry approach at Arches National Park. National Parks were closed on 28 March due to the pandemic. During the first phase of reopening the roads, trails and restrooms are open and commercial tours are allowed to operate. Some public areas like the visitors' center, etc. are still closed. Timed entry would allow more opportunity for visitor spacing and distance. Kayci noted visitation is increasing rapidly after the COVID-19 closure. Kayci described how a temporary timed entry system would allow Arches National Park and the NPS to adapt and allow visitation and public access while keeping the public and employees safe. Timed entry would slow and coordinate visitor entry throughout the day. NPS would only meter for entry – with no requirement for exiting the park. Cost of the timed entry system would be included in the entry fee – not added to it. This would be implemented as a temporary safety measure and revisited/reevaluated in the future.

- Visitors would be allowed to stay in the park as long as they like.
- Entrance fees will be reinstated in the near future.
- Fees are suspended temporarily to limit public/employee interaction.
- The timed entry system will be temporary and reevaluated as the pandemic proceeds and public spaces reopen
- It will require a large public information strategy to inform potential visitors
- Controlled access/timed entry would only be during the busiest hours
- This is specifically to address the COVID-19 pandemic and the effort is a stand-alone attempt to mitigate safety, not a trial of a larger timed entry plan
- Kayci noted that visitation levels for summer could potentially be higher this year as folks are anxious to get out and travel
- Commercial Use Authorization (CUA) holders would likely not be subject to timed entry regulations/restrictions
- Canyonlands National Park is not seeking a timed entry system at this time
- Yosemite is looking at a similar system based on visitor numbers instead of entry times
- CUA holders have provided mitigation plans to keep visitors and clients safe
- Visitor data collection surveys have been delayed, but will likely move forward as visitation resumes – later in the year

### **Action Items - Discussion and consideration of**

B. Approving Grand County, the Town of Castle Valley and Moab City's joint letter of support for the National Park Service's visitor access strategy for Arches and Canyonlands National Parks, including a phased reopening plan and temporary timed entry system for Arches NP (Christina Sloan, Grand County Attorney)

**Motion by** Bob O'Brien (Town of Castle Valley) to approve the joint letter of support for the National Park Service's visitor access strategy for Arches and Canyonlands National Parks, including a phased reopening plan and temporary timed entry system for Arches National Park

**Seconded by** Harry Holland

**Roll Call Vote:** Harry Holland, yes. Bob O'Brien, yes. Pam Gibson, yes. Tory Hill, yes.

**Motion Passes** 4-0.

**Motion by** Rani Derasary (Moab City Council) to approve the joint letter of support for the National Park Service's visitor access strategy for Arches and Canyonlands National Parks, including a phased reopening plan and temporary timed entry system for Arches National Park

**Motion Seconded by** Mike Duncan

**Roll Call Vote:** Rani Derasary, yes. Tawny Knuteson-Boyd, yes. Karen Guzman-Newton, nay. Mike Duncan, yes. Kalen Jones, yes.

**Motion Passes** 4-1 with Karen Guzman-Newton opposed.

**Motion by** Greg Halliday (Grand County Council) to approve the joint letter of support for the National Park Service's visitor access strategy for Arches and Canyonlands National Parks, including a phased reopening plan and temporary timed entry system for Arches National Park

**Motion seconded by** Evan Clapper

**Roll Call Vote:** Greg Halliday yes. Curtis Wells, nay. Gabriel Woytek, yes. Evan Clapper, yes. Jaylyn Hawks, yes. Mary McGann, yes.

**Motion passes** 5-1 with Curtis Wells opposed.

**Discussion Items (none at this time)**

**Public Hearing (none at this time)**

**Future Considerations (none at this time)**

**Closed Session(s) (if necessary)**

**Adjourn**

Chair McGann adjourned the meeting at 11:16 am.