

SOUTHWEST UTAH PLANNING AUTHORITIES COUNCIL (SUPAC)

Minutes of a meeting held January 3, 2006

1. The Southwest Utah Planning Authorities Council (SUPAC) met at the Five County Association of Governments Building in St. George, Utah, on Tuesday, January 3, 2006, at 1:00 p.m. Those in attendance at the business meeting are listed on the roster attached as Appendix A to these minutes.
2. Vice Chairman Scott Truman called the meeting to order and conducted the meeting. He welcomed those present and called for introductions. A roll was passed and the attendance at the meeting is attached to these minutes.
3. The **minutes of the November 2005** meeting were moved for approval by Mayor Lawson. Clare Ramsey seconded the motion and all voted aye.
4. The first item on the agenda was a **discussion regarding the establishment of SUPAC** and its purposes, values and members.

Ron Thompson spoke first. He explained some of the history of SUPAC. He said there were public land issues in Southwest Utah that the Leavitt administration was struggling with in Southwest Utah. There was also a lot of planning decisions and working with federal agencies on numerous issues such as Wild & Scenic River, desert tortoise, Woundfin Minnow and others. The BLM was in the process of upgrading their regional area management plan. The water districts had some areas of concern with that and were filing appeals, going to our delegation, state director, etc. It was a fairly contentious time with a lot going on. There was already a working group on the Virgin River trying to work on a long term management plan with local, state and federal stakeholders. The governor suggested extending that process and getting all those agencies around a table to talk to each other. He envisioned a more permanent organization for planning purposes and having continuing dialogue. Ron said he feels like SUPAC has helped alleviate a lot of potential problems on issues that could have been fairly contentious. There were so many issues at that time that the council was meeting every month. Ron said he feels like SUPAC still serves a purpose for the exchanging of ideas, updating each other on planning issues and a setting to interface with each other.

Diane Nielsen commented that there was lots of discussion when SUPAC was initially formed about what the different agencies roles would be. It is not an entity to take action. That is still up to the city, county, state and federal agencies. This is more of a forum for discussion of common interests and identifying problems before polarization occurs. She

said she gets reports from Scott Hacking and Randy Taylor since she isn't able to come to every meeting. She also mentioned that the tailings group that was organized in Moab followed the same format as SUPAC and they are still meeting and have been very successful in dealing with that issue.

John Williams added that the governor was the original chair and Dane Leavitt was the vice-chair. Scott Truman became the vice-chair after Dane Leavitt. John Williams volunteered to be the fiscal agent and Ron Thompson volunteered his staff to take the minutes. They have been able to keep the expenses low. The intent has been not to have the BLM tell Washington County how to do their business or vice-versa but rather to foster a relationship where discussion can take place. He said he believes this council provides a good opportunity to keep a good working relationship going between the entities and to break down turf barriers.

John Willie said he felt the greatest benefits that come from SUPAC are becoming acquainted with various department heads. It is then easier to call and talk to them about a problem or concern because you know them and many problems can be solved in this format.

Scott Truman said he would like more help in setting up agenda items. He said the agenda items should be set by members of this group. He also mentioned that the \$60 annual dues cover the lunch meals. They have tried to keep the costs as low as possible.

Lt. Gov. Herbert asked about the geography of the organization. Scott Truman explained that there are four counties involved at the present time. Beaver County has been invited to participate. Scott said there are also others in the room that are participants such as the congressional delegation.

The Lt. Governor said he was happy to be at the SUPAC meeting representing the Governor. He said their administration is sensitive to the Southern Utah area and our issues. He said they have demonstrated that by doing things like inviting the past Lt. Governor to stay on and help with some issues like RS2477; opening an office of public land coordination; 20 boards, councils, etc. that deal with rural issues in some ways. Water development and rural issues have both been assigned to the Lt. Governor's office. He said both he and the governor recognize that water development and Lake Powell Pipeline Project are both big issues. He told the council he went back and reviewed Governor Leavitt's remarks when SUPAC started and he understands the catalyst for forming this group. He indicated he would go back to Governor Huntsman tomorrow and report what SUPAC is doing. They both support this organization. He said he doesn't think the governor will be able to attend often but we may be able to get him to attend on occasion. Lt. Gov - he will try to attend on some kind of a regular basis. He'll try to attend as often as possible.

They have signed a memo of cooperation and they will be represented at each meeting, whether it is himself or Brian

Scott Truman encouraged the Lt. Governor to encourage his department heads or their staffs to keep in regular contact with the SUPAC group even if they can't personally attend all the time. Lt. Governor Herbert said he would bring this up in their next cabinet meeting.

6. Ron Thomson gave an **update on the Lake Powell Pipeline Project**. Ron told the council that former Governor Walker commenced a task force to look at two projects - the Bear River Project and the Lake Powell Pipeline Project to see if they could become state projects. They met and came out last fall with a series of recommendations including that both projects become state projects, that the Lake Powell project would be in front of the Bear River Project as far as timing and that both projects need to keep moving forward. Some of the recommendations of the task force were a proposed amendment to the Bear River Act to allow them to get into the planning process, legislation to make Lake Powell a state project, a recommendation that the 16th cent sales tax cap be lifted and earmarked for these projects to help with initial studies, rights-of-way, etc. Ron said the underlying concept as far as financing is that the state is a financing arm but the local water communities will have to repay the state for their investment. The latest proposal in the legislature in regard to these projects was to try to earmark a portion of the unallocated surplus to go into the state water project fund. Senator Hillyard is pursuing this legislation. This wouldn't be a big amount but would put some money away each year for these projects. Ron indicated he feels the counties need to try and start putting money aside for the Lake Powell Pipeline project now. The concept on the Lake Powell project is that each county will pay their proportionate share of the project. Kane County would take 10,000 a.f. of water and Iron County 20,000 a.f. and pay their pro rata share of the project. Ron said he expects to see these pieces of legislation move forward in the legislature. Ron told the council he feels this project is really important. No society can outgrow its water supply. The surveys done in regard to this project show that people's perception of this project are very good. It also showed that water is pretty high on most people's list of important issues in the state.

Commissioner Stowell commented that the Iron County Water Conservancy District is moving ahead with trying to raise their mill levy. They have had a truth in taxation hearing and now need to have some legislation passed to try and get it up to the .001 level.

7. The next item on the agenda was the **10J condor status for the State of Utah**. Henry Maddux was not able to come to the meeting. There was some discussion among the council regarding educating people about 10J ruling and action that would move this forward. There was a discussion of having Commissioner Gardner and Commissioner Stowell put it on the Association of Counties agenda throughout the state. Ron Thompson also suggested having Reed Harris pursue the 10J ruling on behalf of the state since they could probably facilitate it faster than anybody through the state. Alan Gardner will follow up on this and report back. Mike Styler said he would follow up with Reed Harris.

8. Ken Sizemore gave a brief status report on the **OHV TAG** since Bevan Killpack was not at the meeting. Ken reported the contractor has finished the evaluations. They reviewed the route reports with the county commissioners. The next step is to get the study team together to craft a feasibility recommendation. He said their biggest problem now is funding.

9. **Congressional Reports** were the next item on the agenda.

Bryan Thiriot from Senator Bennett's office covered three brief items:

- January 11 Senator Bennett will be here for an economic conference;
- Senator Bennett will introduce the Wash. Co. Bill this year;
- Federal funding requests should be turned in no later than March.

Peggy from Congressman Cannon's office indicated they had the same deadline for federal funding requests. She also reported that the President did sign off on a piece of legislation that enables the state to transfer Minersville State Park to Beaver County. It gives Beaver County the authority to sell off part of that land to pay for maintenance. The Paiute tribe and Richfield City did a land exchange for a three acre parcel (adjacent to airport) so they can expand the airport. This was a win-win for the Band and Richfield City. She also reported that they will be looking at full funding of PELT again this year. She said their bringing in all their Washington DC people to Utah for a three day training retreat next week

Mike Empey from Congressman Matheson's office said the Congressman wanted to express his appreciation for being able to go through Kane, Iron and Garfield Counties. He will continue to follow up on issues raised from those visits. He learned a lot during that three day tour. Congress is out until the end of this month. Utah and Nevada delegations recently introduced bills regarding onsite storage of nuclear waste. There is lots of concern about transportation waste to Yucca Mountain. He also said the delegation was able to get another million dollars for a semi conductor plant in the Fort Pierce Industrial Park.

10. Vice-Chair Scott Truman called for other business. There was a discussion regarding the next meeting date and moving it from March 7 to March 14 because of a conflict with the Utah Water Users Conference.

11. A list of those still owing dues was passed to all council participants for their review.

12. Agenda items for the next meeting:

- Randy will bring the new Arizona Strip BLM person and introduce him.
- Legislative report since the legislature will be done.
- Critical lands mapping tool kit - Governor's Office of Planning & Budget
- Ken Sizemore - will introduce new RC&D coordinator to council

13. There was a motion to adjourn and the meeting was adjourned.

Secretary

APPENDIX "A"
SUPAC ATTENDANCE LIST
JANUARY 3, 2006

Ron Thompson, Washington Co. Water Conservancy District
Dan McGuire, Washington Co. Mayor's Assn.
Dianne Nielson, Utah DEQ
Randy Trujillo, BLM
John Williams, Five Co. AOG
Clare Ramsay, Garfield Co. Commissioner
John Willie, Washington Co. Commissioner
Gary Herbert, Lt. Governor, Utah
Kevin Carter, SITLA
Mike Styler, DNR
Alan Gardner, Washington Co. Commissioner
Kim Lawson, Kane Co. Mayors Assn.
Rob Quist, Utah State Parks
Scott Hacking, DEQ
Randy Taylor, District Engineer DEQ
Jody Gale, USU Extension
Paul Roelandt, NPS, Cedar Breaks Monument
Ken Sizemore, Five County AOG
Marreen Casper, Senator Orrin Hatch
Todd Christensen, BLM
Bob Russell, USDA FS Dixie
Ken Sizemore, Five County AOG
Mike Empey, Congressman Jim Matheson
Bryan Thiriot, Senator Bennett
Peggy Harrison, Congressman Chris Cannon
Brian Cottam, GOPB
Scott Truman, SUU URDC Stewardship Center