

**SOUTHWEST UTAH PLANNING AUTHORITIES COUNCIL  
(SUPAC)  
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD  
JANUARY 3, 2008, 1:00 PM  
ZION NATIONAL PARK  
NATURE CENTER**

1. Vice-Chairman Wes Curtis called the meeting to order at 12:15 and conducted the meeting. He welcomed those present and asked for introductions. Wes thanked Jock Whitworth for hosting the morning tour of the new Zion NP Emergency Services Building and then turned the time to him for a report on Zion NP.

2. **Zion Park Update and Activities**

Jock reported that he had been on assignment in Kenya assisting with park management and Environmental Management System implementation.

The Park is beginning to renew planning for the Zion shuttle system, which is considered the best in the country. Planning for the shuttle system occurs each year. Some shuttles, which have a life-span of 13 to 17 years, will soon be replaced. The current fleet has been in use for 8 years and they have been very durable. The shuttles have a 10-year amortization, but a few will be replaced each year in the coming years so the Park isn't faced with replacing the entire fleet at the same time.

A question was asked if there are any planned stream restoration projects for the Park. Jock noted that a stream bank project by the lodge has been submitted but not yet funded.

Jock reported that Zion is the 7<sup>th</sup> most visited national park. There were 2.6 million visitors in 2007, and the Park is busy ten months of the year and really busy for five months. The record attendance was just under 2.7 million in 2005 and visitation has dropped slightly since then. Jock mentioned the book "No Child Left in the Woods" and that visitation to parks and public lands generally has been slipping.

Wes thanked Jock for hosting SUPAC at Zion.

3. **GOPB and SUPAC, State Planning Coordinator**

Wes noted that SUPAC is a membership organization that was created by then-Governor Leavitt in the mid-1990s. Ken Sizemore reminded all that SUPAC dues are due! Wes reviewed the purpose of SUPAC and read the purpose statements from the SUPAC Memorandum of Agreement, which created SUPAC.

Wes introduced Mike Mower, State Planning Coordinator (SPC). Mike distributed a SPC/planning section flier and provided a brief history of the planning section under Gov. Huntsman. He noted that the Governor wants to put an emphasis back on planning.

Mike listed the following areas as highlights of the SPC's role: State Population Estimates Committee and briefly discussed growth and population change in the state; housing and the housing market; water, particularly agriculture water conversion and the Lake Powell pipeline; public lands and RS 2477; and, air quality.

Mike noted that in the upcoming Governor's State of the State address the focus will be on teacher compensation, health care, which is a major concern for businesses, and economic development. The current economic development focus is to target nurses and engineers, and not just focus on recruiting companies.

Legislative issues, along with those outlined in the State of the State, include the municipal incorporation bill that was passed last year, planning grants, air quality, and he's interested in the local opinion about the proposal to designate Cedar Breaks NM as a national park.

Mike stated that a planning meeting will occur on Jan. 18<sup>th</sup> with planning leaders to discuss legislative issues and other issues regarding state planning. Mike introduced Evan Curtis, a new planner with GOPB.

Evan provided information and a brief tutorial about the new Zoning Ordinance Library ([planning.utah.gov/library.htm](http://planning.utah.gov/library.htm)). He also reminded the group about AGRC's 1-meter map data, which can be found at: [mapserv.utah.gov/planning](http://mapserv.utah.gov/planning)

Mike mentioned that GOPB's new SUPER tool will be Evan's responsibility.

Wes asked if there were any questions.

John Keeler expressed appreciation for John Harja and his staff for participating with the BLM RMP updates.

Jody Gale also thanked Harja for his interest in and support of socio-economic efforts regarding these plans.

Brent Gardner asked when the USU socio-economic study will be concluded. Jody said it was due by the end of 2007, but it has been delayed until spring 08.

Jim Crisp mentioned how valuable these studies are.

Mike informed that he will be attending SUPAC in the future or that Evan would be here if he can't make it. He also stated that the Governor supports SUPAC and his staff participating with SUPAC.

#### 4. **Upcoming Legislation**

Wes introduced and turned the time to Brent Gardner, Executive Director of the Utah Association of Counties.

Brent began with HB 466, the municipal incorporation bill that was passed last year. Brent reviewed the history of the bill. Mike Mower mentioned some current issues and noted Bryce Canyon City, Wasatch County and the proposed town of Alpine. Brent discussed impacts, particularly regarding county interests. He advocates repealing the bill and stated the legislature is currently considering an incorporation process akin to annexation. Kevin suggested the bill was passed because the previous method of incorporation was not working well.

Brent noted that UAC is working on west desert water legislation that would continue funding for monitoring wells, and that there may be other pieces of west desert water legislation, though not by UAC.

Brent stated that Justice Court operations are facing major legislative structural changes and that UAC is opposed to the proposed changes.

Other items UAC is watching include a range of ideas regarding property tax, funding for continued AGRC mapping initiatives, R.S. 2477 and the recording process, and bison management.

Wes asked if there were other legislative interests.

Randy Taylor noted air and mercury monitoring funds & equipment were important for DEQ.

Mike Mower mentioned the Canyonlands air monitoring station and the need to maintain it. There was discussion about Zion NP air quality monitoring.

Wes asked about GOPB planning grants. Mike responded that \$300,000 is being requested.

Wes asked about the Kane County Center for Education, Business, and the Arts (CEBA) and if it was in the Governor's budget proposal. Mike didn't know but would check.

Kevin Carter noted HB 75 & 76, privatization bills, which would provide citizen appeal ability regarding state & local government services. He also mentioned a government transparency bill by Sen. Niederhauser. Mike Mower stated it is based on a Missouri bill and initiative and that cost and implementation are key. Kevin also stated that SITLA is working with UAC to resolve mineral lease monies for counties from exchanged lands.

Ken asked about funding for new regional USU Extension agents similar to Jody Gale's role. Jody didn't know any further details.

John Keeler mentioned that there has been lots of general talk about a bill that would focus on the authority of the State Water Engineer. A partial forfeiture bill is also being worked on by Rep. Painter.

Wes stated that the March SUPAC meeting will report on legislative happenings.

#### 5. **SUU Regional Services Projects**

Wes expressed that SUU is moving beyond just being a Cedar City University and that, through Regional Services, SUU desires to be a partner and deliverer of resources to the region. After reviewing the mission of Regional Services, he provided a brief PowerPoint presentation that identified some of the projects and services Regional Services is involved with or offers:

- Regional Education Demand Assessment

- UT Center for Rural Health

- Intergovernmental Internship Cooperative (IIC)

- SUU Outdoor Initiative (an inventory of SUU Outdoor Initiative components was distributed)

- SUU/National Park Service shared position

- Iron County Resource Management Planning

- Kane/Kanab Center for Business, Education and the Arts (CEBA) Content Analysis Project and CEBA Entrepreneur Forum

- Garfield County economic development planning and plan implementation

- Canyon Region Economic Development Alliance (CREDA) second home-owner economic development survey

- Southern Utah Business Resource Center (SUBRC)

There was discussion about the value of the IIC and assisting land management agencies with employee needs. Many agencies are having a hard time filling available positions and an internship program is viewed as very valuable.

Commissioner Willden asked if SUU was aware of or involved with the Southwest Renewable Energy Initiative in Beaver County and with Milford Town. He also talked briefly about the UPC wind project.

Wes assured him that Regional Services was aware of both the UPC project and the renewable energy initiative and that he and Brian had been attending planning meetings.

Brian Cottam expressed that all the items presented, both by Wes and with the Outdoor Initiative Inventory, are things that are already actually happening, not conceptual or hoped for, and where SUU funds or staff time are being used. The renewable energy center is one of many projects that Regional Services is participating with while still trying to identify where SUU resources and expertise can best be utilized before listing it as a project we are involved with beyond planning or simply attending meetings.

#### 6. **Washington County Lands Bill**

Commissioner Gardner explained that the bill is still being tweaked back in Washington D.C. The county has not yet seen a final version. Field tours with interest groups have occurred the past few months.

#### 7. **Growth Along the Highway 9 Corridor**

Wes introduced Tom Dansie, Springdale City's Director of Community Development, which includes planning responsibilities.

Tom said he had been asked to come and talk about growth and development along the Highway 9 corridor from LaVerkin to Zion NP, including the towns of Virgin, Rockville, and Springdale. He said that while he is Springdale's planner he also provides planning input to the towns of Virgin and Rockville as they don't have planning staff. Tom also lives on the west side of the corridor (in Hurricane?) and drives the entire length every day to work. So he has a good understanding of the topic.

Tom provided a ppt presentation and explained that he wanted to make two points:

- 1) There needs to be a vision for growth; and,
- 2) For the vision to be successful, planning needs to be done on a regional scale (at least from La Verkin to and including Zion National Park, including other land management agencies).

Tom provided some history of development and commerce/economy in the region. Tourism-based development is the current economic emphasis, while second home and vacation home building is also occurring rapidly. However, the absence of development along the corridor is the most telling characteristic, but this leads to the potential for development. Therefore, vision is key.

Tom explained that he contacted an elected official or planning commissioner from each town and he profiled the respective perspectives of growth by each incorporated town. There are definite differences between the towns in their attitudes towards growth and development. There are also three land management agencies that control much of the land along the corridor: SITLA, BLM, and Zion NP.

Tom concluded by making a plea and a proposal to SUPAC: he asked for the creation of a group to work on a regional growth vision.

Many SUPAC members expressed their support for this concept and that it would follow nicely on the heels of Vision Dixie.

#### 8. **Roundtable**

Jim Crisp—Kanab Field Office RMP is at the comment review stage. The final RMP is due by June 08. There are lots of power & pipeline proposals in the region.

Jim announced that he is retiring March 1. Many in the group expressed their appreciation for Jim and asked the federal representatives if a bill can be passed that would not allow him to retire!

Jody Gale—offered to have Dr. John Keith present the USU socio-economic study results at an upcoming SUPAC meeting. Many expressed their interest in this and Jody said that late spring or early summer should provide enough time for the report to be finalized.  
Dutch Cowboy Dairy in Iron Co. is operational.

John Keeler—reminded all that Farm Bureau encourages local participation in agency planning and that he attended a Washington County Farm Bureau meeting the night before.  
Commissioner Alma Adams—2007 building permits exceeded 2006 numbers, which was somewhat of a surprise with the housing market situation

Alan Gardner—Washington County hosted the Western Interstate Region of NACO this past fall.

Jock Whitworth—Zion NP's centennial is 2009. A planning committee is already working on the celebration.  
The Park's budget is looking ok, with a slight increase this year.

Ken Sizemore—contrary to news reports, Vision Dixie is not dead! An implementation committee is meeting regularly.  
What's Up Down South conference is next week.  
SUPAC dues are due.

Kevin Carter—SITLA is continuing work with Washington County and St. George on the milepost 2/southern corridor & road to new airport.  
SITLA is assisting Big Water Town in trying to find resources for a wastewater treatment facility study.

Randy Taylor—DEQ is working on storm water pollution prevention plans for Iron County.

Larry Gray—There are currently six vacancies in state parks and only two applicants. As with other agencies, State Parks is having a difficult time filling vacancies.  
Next week State Parks is holding internal meetings to identify partners for the Sand Hollow RMP update.

Commissioner Don Willden—power should be to UT Western Copper by February. There is talk of a refinery in Milford, in connection with Wolverine Oil in Sevier County. Heritage Plastics has been hiring. There is lots of economic development going on in Beaver Co.

Bevan Killpack—Forest Service Wild & Scenic Rivers public meetings scheduled for Escalante on the 9<sup>th</sup> and St. George on the 10<sup>th</sup>

Marreen Casper—Jace Johnson is Senator Hatch's new Chief of Staff

Bryan Thiriot—Federal spending bills did pass at the end of the year. Senator Bennett was able to deliver \$209 million for Utah projects.

Mike Empey—Utah Sheriff's Association received federal funding for jail monitoring and Washington County for flood control in the Gunlock area.

9. **Next meeting**

Due to the legislative session ending right before the next regularly scheduled SUPAC meeting (first Thursday, every other month), the group determined to meet later in March in order to allow for a complete legislative review at the March SUPAC meeting.

SUPAC will meet again: **March 21, 2008, 1 pm – 3 pm;** lunch will be served at noon.

**LOCATION to be determined** (somewhere in Kane County with a possible field trip to Big Water)

Meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

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Secretary

Minutes submitted by Brian Cottam, SUU Regional Services

**APPENDIX "A"**  
**SUPAC ATTENDANCE LIST**  
**January 3, 2008**

Kevin Carter, SITLA  
Jock Whitworth, Zion NP  
John Chartier, Utah DEQ  
Bryan Thiriot, Senator Bennett  
Marreen Casper, Senator Orrin Hatch  
Mike Empey, Congressman Jim Matheson  
Wes Curtis, SUU Regional Services  
John Keeler, Farm Bureau  
Ken Sizemore, Five County AOG  
Alma Adams, Iron County Commissioner  
Jim Crisp, BLM St. George, Kanab & Cedar City  
Mike Mower, GOPB  
Evan Curtis, GOPB  
Brent Gardner, UAC  
Jody Gale, USU Extension  
Donald Willden, Beaver County Commissioner  
Larry Gray, UT State Parks  
Bevan Killpack, US Forest Service  
Randy Taylor, UT DEQ  
Wes Curtis, SUU Regional Services