

Utah Quality Growth Commission Meeting

July 17, 2009

3:00 PM

Festival Hall, Cedar City, UT

MINUTES

Commissioners Present

Flint Richards, Chairman

Reed Erickson

Leonard Blackham

Laraine Swenson (by phone)

Staff Present

John F. Bennett, Executive Director

Visitors Present

Craig Call, Utah Land Use Institute

Mrs. Jenene Call

Chairman Flint Richards conducted the meeting

1—Welcome and introductions

Chairman Richards asked everyone present to introduce themselves.

2—Public Comments – 5 minutes

There were no public Comments.

3—Approval of Minutes from May 2009 meeting – 5 minutes

ACTION ITEM: Approve minutes

As a quorum was not present, the minutes were not presented for approval. Approval of the minutes was postponed until the August 26, 2009 meeting in Summit County.

4—Discussion of LeRay McAllister Fund requests – John Bennett, 15 minutes

This item is for discussion only, commission will schedule site visits and begin the review process.

John Bennett began the discussion by referring commissioners to the spreadsheet that contained a summary of this year's applications. He reminded the commissioners that the total appropriation for this year is \$410,200. The total amount requested for this year is

\$2,582,845, so the commission will not be able to fund all of the requests that have been made.

Mr. Bennett pointed out that a couple of the projects requested more than we had, but even if those were reduced, we still won't be able to fund everything that we have been asked to fund.

Mr. Bennett reviewed the projects that had applied.

Quarter Circle JB Ranch, Cache Valley: He indicated that there is one project in Cache Valley this year, the Quarter Circle Ranch project in Nibley. He indicated that the total cost was over \$800,000.

Stringham Homestead Property, Davis County: The second project is one in Davis County. The total project is 110 acres. They have asked the Commission to assist in purchasing one twenty acre parcel. The area is high up on the mountain, and has no development value because there is no access, so a conservation easement on the property is not possible. The City of Bountiful is putting up most of the money for this project. They want to acquire the land from the private owners, and then transfer the land to the US Forest Service, which owns all the surrounding land, in return for some Forest Service land down near the developed part of Bountiful which would be easier for the City to maintain.

There are currently 14 owners, all family members. They have been able to negotiate an agreement with Bountiful to sell all this property right now.

Pine Valley Meadows, Phase 2, Washington County

Last year, the commission agreed to provide \$200,000 to protect a part of the Pine Valley Meadows. They asked us for \$400,000. They have been able now to fill the gap between what we agreed to give them and what they needed except for \$32,500. They are asking the commission to provide this additional fund this year to complete this project.

Dry Lakes Ranch, Iron County

This ranch is North and West of Brian Head. It is abutted by cabin sites. It is a working cattle operation. The owners still trail their cows up the highway from Parowan each spring to reach this ranch. The request is \$100,000.

City of South Jordan, Salt Lake County

The City would like to help pay for the masterplan and some restoration along the river. The commission has paid for planning in the past when the planning is related to conservation projects.

Roring Sage Grouse Project, San Juan County

In San Juan County there is a species of grouse called the Gunnison Sage Grouse which is a threatened species. The Nature Conservancy has been working with DWR in the area for some time and they have more than 2000 acres under easement to protect habitat for

this grouse. This project would add to that an important Lek. Commissioner Blackham asked why they need more acres if they have 2000 under easement already. Is this throwing good money after bad? John Bennett indicated that we will need to ask that question when we visit the site.

Killyon Canyon, Salt Lake County

Utah Open Lands, working with the city and the county open space funds is trying to acquire this canyon which abuts development above Salt Lake City. The commission will just provide a small piece of this project. The remainder is being provided by the City and County open space funds.

Tooele City, Tooele County

The city has a 110 Acre parcel above Tooele that is permitted for development. The owners are willing to sell it for conservation purposes instead, and the city would like to preserve the foothills. The city owns several other parcel abutting this piece that are protected and would like to protect this one as well.

Bear Lake Gateway Project, Rich County

275 Acre Farm near Laketown in Rich County. The city and county would like to preserve an agricultural gateway near the lake.

Wasatch Hollow, Salt Lake City

City has requested funds to assist in the restoration of this natural area along Parley's Creek. The City will be providing the match. Previously, the city had asked the Commission to assist in the acquisition. The valuation of the property could not be resolved prior to our deadline, so the commission did not participate in the acquisition. Now, they are coming back to us with a request to assist with restoring the natural area.

TreeUtah and Center for Documentary Arts, Salt Lake County

The Commission has funded TreeUtah for the last 5 years in a row. They are doing a very successful restoration project along the Jordan River, and have received additional federal funding this year to continue the work. They are requesting \$25,000 for this project. The Center for Documentary Arts is partnering with TreeUtah to promote a photographic exhibit about the river, and give TreeUtah some publicity for what they are doing.

Total of 11 applications, John Bennett and the Commissioners began scheduling site visits. See the attached site visit schedule.

The commission had a discussion about conservation easements, their terms and conditions. Leonard Blackham asked for time to discuss the issue of Conservation Easements with the Commission. Flint Richards explained the concerns of many farmers. John Bennett suggested that the commission should explore the notion of term easements further to see if some additional interest in conservation could be generated.

**5—Discussion of Land Use Leadership Alliance Training from November of 2008.—
John Bennett and Craig Call, 20 Minutes**

The Commission sponsored this training, and Craig Call of the Utah Land Use institute thanked the commission for their support and discussed the success of this program and the future of the program. John Bennett and Mike Mower attended the training and it was very well received by those in attendance. The Utah Land Use Institute would like to do this training next in Cache Valley. John Bennett explained that the commission probably can't participate this year due to the changes to the fund. Leonard Blackham asked if farmers would be included among the stakeholders. Craig Call indicated that he thought that was important. Leonard Blackham indicated that the Department of Agriculture would be willing to help sponsor the program if the issue of agriculture preservation could be part of the discussion. Leonard and Craig Call agreed to meet to discuss a sponsorship.

6—Conservation and planning needs in Southern Utah—

John Bennett indicated that he would be meeting with local land trusts and others to discuss this issue during the trip.

7—Administrative Items

The commission will hold two site visits following the meeting. They are scheduled for:

Site Visit to Pine Valley 6:00 PM Friday, July 17, 2009, Meet at Cemetery in Pine Valley

Site Visit to Dry Lakes Ranch, 10:00 AM Saturday, July 18, 2009, Meet at Cemetery at Mouth of Parowan Canyon.