



Utah Quality Growth Commission
C/O Governor's Office of Planning and Budget
150 State Capitol
Salt Lake City, UT 84114
Telephone (801) 538-1027

Utah Quality Growth Commission

Flint Richards, Chair
JT Martin, Vice Chair

John Bennett, Executive Director

MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, March 24, 2011, 10:30 AM to 12:00 Noon
Governors Office of Planning and Budget Large Conference Room
Suite 140, Utah State Capitol Building
Salt Lake City, UT 84114

Members Present

Flint Richards, Chair
JT Martin, Vice Chair
Sally Elliott
Laraine Swenson
Justin Allen
Brent Tanner
Mike Styler

Evan Curtis

Visitors Present

Val John Halford, Wasatch Front Regional Council Staff
Joan DiGiorgio The Nature Conservancy
Janice Jardine, Salt Lake City Council Staff
Michael Patrick, Trust for Public Land, by phone

Staff Present

John Bennett, Executive Director

1. Welcome and Introductions,

Chairman Richards invited all present to introduce themselves. See list above for those present

2. Public Comments,

Chairman Richards invited all present to make public comments about items not on the agenda. There was no public comment made at this meeting.

3. Approve Minutes from January 2011 Meeting , and February, 2011

ACTION ITEM: Approve Minutes

John Bennett indicated that he had not completed the January and February minutes in time for this meeting. No meeting minutes were considered at this meeting.

4. Review of the Current Funding, and future funding options

John Bennett explained the current funding situation. He told the Commission that the Quality Growth Commission Line Item, and the LeRay McAllister Program received no funding for this year. Mr. Bennett then said that there is some money available as carry over funds from previous years. This is money received in interest on the fund in previous years when the program was a separate fund and received interest. This totals about \$600,000.

Mr. Bennett then offered options for the use of these funds. He indicated that the Commission could use

all the money available this year for grants this year and go back to the legislature next year having committed all their funds and ask for more. The commission could also choose to split the remaining funding into two pots and retain some money in case the funding situation was equally difficult in 2012. He said he wanted to give the Commission these options and discuss the pros and cons of both options.

Mr. Bennett described the pros and cons of spending all the money this year. Under that scenario, you go back to the legislature and can say to them, we have committed all the funds we have, and cannot continue to make grants unless you give us more money. They could say okay, here is more money, or they could say sorry, you can't make any more grants this year. There is some risk in this strategy.

The other option is to split the funding in some way, and retain a small amount as carry over so that if no funding is added to the program, you still have some ability to move forward hope things change in the next election. However, things could get worse, not better in the next election, so there is still some risk in this strategy.

Mr. Bennett indicated that which ever strategy they choose, the Commission should make an effort to reach out to the legislature this year and make the case.

Several Commissioners wondered what staff recommended. Mr. Bennett indicated that he had discussed with Mike Mower, Governors Deputy Chief of Staff, and Mike felt that splitting the remaining funds might be wise. Justin Allen, who is a lobbyist by trade indicated that he felt that might be wise as well. Others were reluctant to make the decision at this time because they did not know what applications would come in, and they wanted that information before making a final decision.

Chairman Richards appointed Vice Chairman Martin, Sally Elliott and Mike Kohler to a special subcommittee to discuss marketing the commission. The subcommittee scheduled a meeting for April 5, 2011 to begin discussing this issue.

The members present decided that they would wait to decide whether to spend all the funds this year until the May meeting so that they could see the pre-applications and have sense of how much demand there was for these funds.

**5. McAllister Program Funding Report
Outstanding Grants—Status Report
Requests for Extensions for OW Ranch and Elkhorn/Furhiman Farm
Review Emergency Application for Crawford Farm.**

ACTION ITEM: Act on Extension Request

John Bennett indicated that all the outstanding grants were progressing but that two, OW Ranch, and Furhiman Farm/Elkhorn Ranch would need to be extended. The commission agreed to an extension for both projects until October 31, 2011, though Mr. Bennett expected that they would close sooner than that. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the extensions with seven members present voting affirmatively.

John Bennett then reviewed with the Commission a request for an emergency allocation from the current funds for the Crawford Farm in Sanpete County. Therese Meyer of the Department of Natural Resources brought this to the Commission. She indicated that the property is critical habitat for the Columbia Spotted Frog, a species of concern that the state is trying to prevent from being listed on the endangered species list. This property abuts the Nuttall property that the Commission previously funded, so the amount of frog habitat protected would more than double.

The reason this is coming as an emergency application is that the property is under foreclosure, and will be sold at auction by May 10, 2011 unless this deal can be worked out. Several Commissioners asked whether this would set a bad precedent if we got involved in the foreclosure. Mr. Bennett indicated that if the Commission based its decision on the Conservation Values it could justify the allocation of funds.

As this had not appeared on the agenda prior the meeting, Mr. Bennett told the Commission that they would need to postpone a final decision until the April Meeting. This would allow sufficient time for a site visit to the property as well as other due diligence to be performed. The Commissioners also asked Mike Styler if this was the top priority for DNR since the Commission has a statutory set aside of 30 percent. Mr. Styler said that it was.

The Commission voted to move forward with due diligence on the Crawford Property, and authorized staff to arrange a site visit and prepare grant documents so that the grant could close quickly if the Commission approved it at the next meeting. The vote was unanimous with seven members present voting in the affirmative.

6. Review and approve McAllister Fund documents and schedule

ACTION ITEM: Approve Schedule and Documents

The Commission approved the schedule and documents for the 14th Round of funding. They authorized staff to send out the announcement of funds availability. These actions were unanimous with seven members present voting in the affirmative.

7. Administrative Matters: Next meeting scheduled for April 28, 2011, GOPB Large Conference Room