

**M**INUTES OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL AND UINTAH COUNTY  
COMMISSION SPECIAL JOINT MEETING HELD JANUARY 25, 2021 at 4:30  
p.m. in the Vernal City Community room, 374 East Main, Vernal, Utah 84078.

**PRESENT:**

**UINTAH COUNTY:** Commissioners Brad Horrocks, Bill Stringer and Bart Haslem.

**VERNAL CITY:** Councilmembers Bert Clark, Dave Everett, Ted Munford, Nick Porter, and Mayor Doug Hammond.

**NAPLES CITY:** Mayor Dean Baker.

**BALLARD CITY:** Mayor Bob Abercrombie.

**STAFF:** Ken Campbell, Sterling Davis, Julie McMickell, Jessika Brown, Quinn Bennion and Roxanne Behunin,

**GUESTS:** Sonja Norton. TO Engineering: Jeremy McCalister and joined electronically via zoom.

**WELCOME:** Vernal City Mayor Doug Hammond welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT & APPROVAL OF SPECIAL MEETING:** *Councilmember Nick Porter moved to acknowledge and approve this special meeting. Councilmember Ted Munford seconded the motion. The motion passed a unanimous vote. Mayor Dean Baker was not present for the vote.*

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 14, 2020:** *Councilmember Dave Everett moved to approve the minutes of September 14, 2020 as presented. Councilmember Nick Porter seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.*

**FOLLOW-UP ON AIRPORT MASTER PLAN:** Ken Campbell, Vernal Regional Airport Manager, introduced the airport employees, Julie McMickell, Jessika Goodrich and Sterling Davis. He noted that he has been serving as the manager for 111 days. The engineers for the airport are TO Engineering and they have been working on updating the airport master plan. The plan covers the next 10 years of capital projects with the first 2 years being projects the FAA may agree to fund. The next year's projects need to be recommended by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). There are several areas that need to be considered such as the 7000 foot runway, precision approach lighting, terminal buildings etc. Some of these improvements are on-going from 2018-2019, and what is at the airport is fabulous for the size of the community. The path lighting is good; however the runway lighting is not. Jeremy McCallister with TO Engineering stated he is the project manager for the master plan, is working on the ground water project and was involved during the runway relocation project.

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Ken Campbell stated that the sequence of events for master plan will include noticing and marketing to ask questions and get answers from the public. Communication and education will be key components for three potential courses of action. Jeremy McCallister stated this project started last March and it is critical to create the best plan for the future of the airport. The three alternatives can include additional options so nothing is left out.

Ken Campbell displayed a map of the airport with the locations of the buildings, runway and parking. The first item being considered is to add 750 feet to the end of the runway with lighting which would allow the next largest aircraft to use the airport. Jeremy McCallister stated that is the longest the runway will ever be with the location of 2500 South Street and that property is already owned by the County. There is one property acquisition that would be needed for clearance only. In all cases, this is the most logical growth. Ken Campbell pointed out the next item for consideration is the terminal building that needs room for the ticket booth, security, bathrooms and car rentals. The idea for the first potential action is to move the terminal into the parking lot and repurpose the current terminal. Mr. Campbell displayed this change on the map. Jeremy indicated this layout is based on the study from 2015 to accommodate 2 commercial flights a day with better flow patterns for TSA. Ken Campbell stated that plan also considered the growth forecast. The next piece of the plan has to include the hangers for both fixed wing and helicopters. There is potential to gain more revenue by adjusting leases and adding hangers. The next item is the corporate apron configuration for future growth. Jeremy McCallister stated the plan needs to be flexible for future items such as air freight, and a separation between small traffic from large corporate traffic. There is also the possibility of another property acquisition for a small building. Ken Campbell stated the next item is the cross wind runway which gives the airport the ability to land different planes; however no commercial traffic could use that runway. Commissioner Brad Horrocks stated that does allow planes to land during bad weather. Mayor Doug Hammond questioned why the main runway was not extended during the reconstruction. Jeremy McCallister stated it was built to match the available funding. Commissioner Bart Haslem stated out of the five items items being considered in each course of action, lengthening the runway and adding lights will be paid with federal funds. The terminal cannot be funded that way. Ken Campbell agreed that the crosswind runway and terminal will require more local funding. Jeremy McCallister clarified that the land site for the terminal is federally ineligible and any land side pavement would also not be eligible. The remainder of the capital improvements would be eligible. The easiest distinction is the further away from the main runway, the harder it is to get funding from the FAA. However, the airport could use entitlement funds on all of it. Ken Campbell stated once it is decided what is needed, the next course of action is to fight for funding. Ken again displayed a map of the airport and showed the configuration of the terminal and hangers if the entrance to the airport was relocated. He noted that in some of the scenarios, the cross wind runway would be restricted. If that runway is eliminated in this plan, it will not come back. Jeremy McCallister stated that the Committee does not want to consider an alternative that eliminates the cross wind runway. However, he advises to at least include an alternative that doe eliminate the cross wind

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runway to consider all the options. The priority is to consider the best use of the land. The cost for the runway is \$1 million dollars for every 1000 feet which equals a total of \$3 million dollars. Commissioner Brad Horrocks clarified that would all have to be paid locally. Ken Campbell stated yes and asked if it is worth that for the benefit. Jeremy stated once there is an approved plan, there is no obligation to build; however, you will still have the option to do it. If any item is eliminated, there is no flexibility as the FAA will only approve what is in the plan. There was some discussion regarding putting in hangars or having clearance for the cross wind runway. Commissioner Brad Horrocks asked what the number one priority is. Councilmember Ted Munford stated a Salt Lake commercial route. Commissioner Bart Haslem stated that requires the terminal building. Jeremy McCallister stated that United may pull out if they determine the Denver route is not sustainable with both routes. The elected officials discussed the drop in enplanements with COVID-19 and how that may affect funding. Commissioner Horrocks suggested the airport look at a marketing plan to increase the enplanements. Commissioner Bart Haslem stated the travel industry is down 75%.

Quinn Bennion asked what the next step will be for the master plan. Ken Campbell stated the TAC will make a final recommendation and that will be brought back to this body along with input from a pilot meeting.

Commissioner Horrocks stated there may be some willingness for property owners to sell now for some of these items. Ken Campbell stated there is funding to purchase property.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:**

#### Airport Hanger:

Quinn Bennion stated there is an offer for the potential sale of a hanger. The City and County need to decide if they want to waive the first right of refusal on that sale if there is no interest in the purchase. After discussion, the consensus of the Vernal City Council was to waive the thirty day period and allow the sale of the hanger. Commissioner Bill Stringer indicated the County would prefer to see the offer first.

#### UDOT Agreement for downtown revitalization plan:

Quinn Bennion asked the Council to consider allowing the Mayor to sign the UDOT agreement that was originally approved and then minor modifications were made so it needs to be re-evaluated by the Council. He noted that the staff will contact them to explain the changes.

#### Electric Scooter:

Quinn Bennion explained that the Active and Healthy Committee has been working with a company to bring electric scooters to Vernal. The Council approved a Memorandum of

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Understanding to use these in the City. However, there are some locations in the County such as USU and UBTECH where these scooters may be useful. He asked the Commissioners to think about allowing this type of transportation in the County within certain areas.

**ADJOURN:** There being no further business; *Councilmember Dave Everett moved to adjourn. Councilmember Ted Munford seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote and the meeting was declared adjourned.*

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City Recorder