

**VISION DIXIE  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES SEPTEMBER 28, 2006**

Chairman James J. Eardley, Washington County Commissioner, opened the meeting at 2:06 p.m.

**Agenda**

The proposed Agenda for this meeting was as follows:

- Welcome .....Commissioner James J. Eardley, Chairman
- Discuss appropriate relationship between the Land Bill and  
Vision Dixie ..... Ted Knowlton
- Discuss status of Vision Dixie budget ..... Ted Knowlton
- Review scope of work for the housing analysis from the Strategic  
Planning Group; comments from SPG ..... Robert J. Gray
- Review scope of work from Winston Consulting Team .....Jeff Winston
- Review and finalize proposed workshop schedule ..... Ted Knowlton
- Review/approve details of Vision Dixie Summit .....Executive Committee
- Discuss agenda for next Steering Committee meeting .....Executive Committee
- Other business ..... Chairman Eardley
- Adjourn ..... Chairman Eardley

Members of the Executive Committee in attendance were:

James Eardley, Washington County Commission  
Alan Gardner, Washington County Commission  
Jay Ence, Washington County Commission  
John Andrews, School & Institutional Trust Lands  
Gary Esplin, City of St. George  
Daren Barney, Mayor, Ivins  
Ron Thompson, Washington County Water Conservancy District  
Karl Wilson, Mayor, LaVerkin  
Brad Barber, Oquirrh Institute  
Clark Fausett, City of Hurricane  
Scott Hirschi, Economic Development Council  
Rick Rosenberg, City of Santa Clara  
Lee Caldwell, Dixie State College  
Lorri Kocinski-Puchlik (formerly) St. George Chamber of Commerce

**Approval of Minutes**

The Minutes from the Steering Committee Meeting of August 24, 2006, were not available for review in sufficient time prior to this meeting. Accordingly, a decision was made to defer

approval of those minutes until the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

### **Relationship between Land Bill and Vision Dixie**

Chairman Eardley said that these two processes are parallel efforts. The Washington County Growth & Conservation Act of 2006 ("Land Bill") has been a controversial subject in recent months. The County Commission is firmly in favor of the Land Bill and encourages free discussion of the relationship between the Land Bill and Vision Dixie, which will be facilitated by Ted Knowlton of Envision Utah.

Ted said that the primary issue is to agree on a clear definition of the relationship between the two processes. One way to define the relationship is to develop a set of criteria that will form the bedrock upon which the more detailed issues of which lands are disposed of and how many will be based. Another potential avenue would be an examination of the total acreage without deciding the ultimate disposal of particular parcels. Chairman Eardley commented that the most controversial part of the Land Bill is the privatization of Bureau of Land Management (BLM)-held acreage. Up to 20,000 additional acres beyond the directed sales acreage of 4,300 acres are at issue. On September 5, 2006, the Washington County Commission adopted a Resolution in support of this planning process. Input from many sources and citizens is anticipated, including workshops and a summit that will kick off the process on October 17, 2006. The Commission has committed the County to participating in the process, identifying acreage currently held by the BLM that may become privatized. He asked for input from other Executive Committee members concerning this relationship.

Ron Thompson said that it is evident that the Land Bill prompted the Vision Dixie process. One cannot accurately undertake the planning of a county the size of Washington County without taking the public lands into consideration. He said he is troubled by those who criticize the Land Bill and then fail to participate in the subsequent planning process ( Vision Dixie) because their absence in some ways precludes having a fair and balanced representation on the Vision Dixie committees.

Alan Gardner agreed, saying that the Land Bill designates the corridors for transportation, utilities, etc. These issues have been under study for a long time in an attempt to coordinate adequate infrastructure with endangered species and protected habitat issues.

Mayor Barney asked for clarification on the amount of acreage that has been designated for the corridors. Chairman Eardley said that this acreage is not part of the 20,000 acres. He said that it is theoretically possible for us to have all the transportation and utility corridors in place and not have any acreage.

Lorri Kocinski-Puchlik asked whether individual cities and municipalities would be bound by the Vision Dixie process, and Chairman Eardley said that Vision Dixie has full representation among cities, many of whom have already passed resolutions in support of the Land Bill. As a result of the workshops, input will be received as to what vision citizens want to see, what acreage, if any, they want to add, and so forth. He reiterated that Vision Dixie does not want to force privatized

land onto any municipality but rather wants to establish a vision of how the total community should look like twenty (20) or thirty (30) years from now.

Ted wanted to know specifically what to tell the public is the end product of Vision Dixie as it relates to the Land Bill. The workshops will, by their very nature, cause this question to arise, and the Steering Committee members who facilitate the workshops should have a clear answer in mind.

Jeff Winston, of Winston and Associates, said that part of his company's scope of work is to focus on transportation and utilities issues. He will be developing several scenarios which address the issue of dealing with future growth.

Barbara Hjelle asked about the procedure for dealing with conflict in the Vision Dixie process, especially those entities such as Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance (SUWA) and others who have orchestrated a public campaign to segregate Vision Dixie from the Land Bill and cast both efforts in a negative light.

John Andrews asked Jim Crisp how Vision Dixie influences future BLM Resource Management Planned Amendments. Is it contemplated that there could be an RMP Amendment that would take into account the community planning? Jim Crisp said that whether the Bill passes or not, Vision Dixie is an extremely important effort that has been needed for some time and it will have significant influence on our future decisions. If the Bill passes, it will be extremely helpful to us; if it doesn't, Vision Dixie will still be critically important and will wind up being reflective of BLM's planning process. Using the output of Vision Dixie, BLM will identify what areas communities have identified for additional acquisition, whether it's for privatization or for public purposes or land exchanges through reconfigurations.

John Andrews said that BLM does have land-sale authority now and was proceeding with that. There is some difference of opinion as to where the money goes that the Land Bill changes, but the land sale is the most controversial aspect of the legislation. Do you back off from that and allow the sales to take place through the BLM process? You'd have to do something legislatively to address where the money goes because that is the key issue. Ron Thompson agreed, saying that without legislation you're not going to dictate where that money goes. If you sell it without the Land Bill, the money goes to Washington. If you sell it with the Land bill, most of the money stays local to solve and deal with the federal regulations that to a large extent we have no funding for or the local funding may run out, yet are important to local interests. He said that if one looks at land bills that have been proposed, where local government has controlled the sale, the federal government's return on that has been exponentially higher; when they've done it on their own, they've gotten a lot less money. John said that his understanding is that under current law as much as 80% of the money has to be kept within the state. He said the BLM's process would follow the local process and make similar determinations.

Gary Esplin said that the County Commission has gone on record as supporting the outcome of this effort. What more can anyone expect of local leaders than to lead this effort? In planning what the county is going to look like, it has to involve a public process, public lands, easements, traffic corridors, wilderness, and all the rest in order to plan each community and the relationship

each community has with the county as a whole. The County Commission said it were not willing to accept the outcome of this process, then that's different, but where's you've gone on record supporting it, let's go after the ultimate goal. If we get zero land out of the deal, and the entire county is in agreement, then that's what we get. The chips will fall where they may.

Ted Knowlton said that the nature of the public process in the fifteen (15) workshops is that in each workshop people look at approximately one-fourth (1/4) of the county. They are thinking about a broad variety of topics: transportation, forms of development, the mix of development (densities), contiguous growth vs. new communities, and so forth. But the nature of it is that it has to be multi-jurisdictional, a large area where people don't start to see in their heads the impact of different potential patterns of development upon the overall footprint and quality of life of the county. It has to take a big step back and almost be done from a broader geography and longer time frame. People need to start to see the benefits of different ways of growing.

During the workshop process, Ted explained that Vision Dixie will be accumulating the best sources of data available for use in the process. Alan Matheson added that most individuals participating in the workshops will not be able to make sense of the more arcane data and are not expected to; what will happen is more of a broad-brush approach, whereby the public will develop general strategies and scenarios for use in creating guiding principles. Ron Thompson said that the relevant data such as earthquake zones, fault lines, and flood zones should be included in the maps, whether the general public can understand them or not. Mike Empey added that public lands should be identified on the maps, as well. Jeff Winston said that in developing the county-wide vision, it is necessary to look at the suitability of both public and private lands for development. Whether as a result of the Land Bill or not, there will always be land exchanges, and one must be ready to act rather than react in choosing that which is best for development. Alan Matheson said that his office will prepare talking points based upon this discussion for use in future meetings and in responding to a letter that has been received from SUWA.

### **Status of Vision Dixie Budget**

Chairman Eardley distributed copies of the proposed Budget and said that Vision Dixie has just received a bill for sixty-four thousand dollars (\$64,000) but only has fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) in hand at this time.

Washington County is in the process of completing its portion of the funding for Vision Dixie (\$50,000). Brad Barber said that the Oquirrh Institute is very committed to the process and is doing everything in its power to proceeding with its contribution of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000). He also said that The Nature Conservancy is also committed, and that the committee can count on that organization. Jim Crisp said that because Vision Dixie falls outside the budget process, the money BLM contributes will have to come out of someone else's pocket, and the chance of that happening at this time is not good. Ted Knowlton said that the Governor's Office of Planning & Budget pledge of forty thousand dollars (\$40,000) is firm. Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) has been contacted for its pledged amount but no reply has yet been received. Alan Matheson said that some grant applications have been put together with various

foundations, and those are pending. Chairman Eardley said that each city has been asked to contribute two thousand dollars (\$2,000) and most have agreed. Gary Esplin said that the City of St. George considers this process very important and can realistically be expected to contribute more than the minimum of two thousand dollars (\$2,000). The County will invoice all the various entities for their portions of the budget, but there is still not enough money to pay for the first bill.

Chairman Eardley said that it is important at this time to finalize a budget. Whether funding has been received from the various entities or not, an amount has to be agreed upon by formal motion. The budget will probably be changed at some point, but an initial acceptance is necessary to proceed with other matters. Ron said that he was concerned that there was not enough private sector buy-in. John suggested that Scott has contacts within the business community and could solicit private donations from various job-generators in the county. Alan Matheson said that the Executive Committee has financial oversight of the process, so the decisions that are made here will allow the scope of work that is done and how much each of those tasks will cost. Envision Utah has recently received copies of scopes of work from the proposed consultants that will be heard from today. It is important to be very careful with money, not to spend what we don't have. Chairman Eardley said that he is very uncomfortable receiving bills when the committee has no budget, no money in the bank, and no authority to spend it even if it did. The current budget contains certain items that can be cut or reduced. He would like to work with the number four hundred and sixty-five thousand dollars (\$465,000) as a starting point for the purposes of approval and authorization. Additionally, it is important to create a Budget Committee to oversee the receipt of funds and the expenditures, to ensure that no money is spent beyond that which is in hand. Gary Esplin was concerned that Vision Dixie not commit funds prematurely, and Chairman Eardley responded that the committee will not obligate itself beyond its resources. Alan Matheson added that the contract between Envision Utah and Washington County says that if there are funding difficulties with the Vision Dixie process, Envision Utah does not get paid. In fact, he said, Envision Utah expects to take a loss on this planning effort.

Washington County Deputy Attorney David Patterson clarified the terms of the contract between Envision Utah and Washington County, and reiterated that it is not binding on the Executive Committee of Vision Dixie.

The Executive Committee and the Technical Advisory Committee are composed of Washington County residents appointed by County to provide, respectively, project oversight and technical recommendations for Vision Dixie. Envision Utah shall only perform Services after authorization from the County, and only for the amount authorized by the County, after consultation with and recommendation by the Executive Committee and Envision Utah. The County shall only authorize services when funds are available for the services authorized.

Dave said that Washington County is contractually bound by this language. The County cannot do anything more than is authorized by this contract, and he would like to see some language by motion by the Vision Dixie Executive Committee that is similar to the language quoted above,

which will define the budget and then to authorize the expenditures after the money has been received.

**MOTION: Motion by Ron Thompson to accept the Vision Dixie budget in terms of source of funds in the amount of four hundred and sixty-five thousand dollars (\$465,000) with the caveat that no money will be spent until actual funds have been raised to cover expenditures, and the expenditures have been approved by the Washington County Commission and the Vision Dixie Executive Committee. Motion seconded by John Andrews and carried by unanimous vote.**

### **Review Scope of Work for Housing Analysis from the Strategic Planning Group/Comments from Strategic Planning Group**

Robert Gray, Chairman and CEO of Strategic Planning Group, an international consulting group based in Florida, narrated a PowerPoint presentation to the Executive Committee. He introduced Anthony Mondae, President of SPG, who was also in attendance. A complete copy of the PowerPoint presentation in hard copy form is available in the office of the Washington County Commission.

Some highlights from his presentation:

- Mr. Gray said that his company has been a leader in the field of long-range planning. It started in economic development and has recently been involved in workforce and affordable housing projects.
- Housing prices have doubled in the past five (5) years, mainly due to historically low interest rates; and now that speculators are now moving out of the market, land costs may begin to fall.
- For every point of interest that goes up, the home buyer loses eleven percent (11%) of his buying power. The second largest expenditure, next to the home, is transportation. Mr. Gray said that there is now a change in the housing paradigm. The ownership period was investor-driven, like any other commodity. Scarcity of land (or the perception thereof) caused the price of land to escalate tremendously, rising construction costs continues.
- The new paradigm in housing is rental. At this time, it is cheaper to rent than to own, and that was not the case a year ago.
- His company will provide benchmarking services with different scenarios: looking at other communities that have already gone through what Washington County is now facing.
- SPG made a presentation to the Dixie Area Workforce Housing Affordability Committee (DAWHAC) yesterday.

Scott Hirschi requested a change in the horizon analysis from 2010 to 2012, which Mr. Gray said was easy to do. He also suggested sharing data with the DAWHAC committee to avoid duplication of effort, and perhaps sharing costs, as well. Chairman Eardley agreed, suggesting that ultimately it may not be financially advantageous to have both groups (Vision Dixie and DAWHAC) addressing essentially the same issues.

### **Review Scope of Work from Winston Consulting Team**

Jeff Winston sees his company as having a hand-in-glove relationship with Envision Utah, an extension of its staff. Winston Associates obtains from the participants a general sense of direction, extracts common elements from the various workshops, and then generates scenarios. There will be two and one half weeks of workshops, after which the results will be accumulated, synthesized, and analyzed. One of the ways to make the process as successful as possible is to introduce new technology in visualizations: putting bubbles on maps, aerial photos of terrain, so that people can look down and see actual patterns of development on the ground, what actual densities look and feel like. Another new technology is key-pad polling, whereby there is immediate feedback from the voting of the attendees. This gives people a sense of the feelings of the group instantly, allows them to understand whether they are or are not in the majority on a certain issue, and it is a very powerful educational tool for gaining consensus.

Ralph Becker and several other consultants are on the team as well, who will be modeling transportation alternatives, such as quantity and location of roads, traffic congestion. Through the whole process Winston will be doing “indicators,” which is developing a list of criteria to be measured: land consumption, vehicle miles traveled, schools needed, water consumption, jobs and housing, and so forth. The strategies will then be converted into implementations of the vision.

Scott Hirschi mentioned that he has seen in action the software programs mentioned by Jeff Winston and found them to be amazing. They are instantaneous and very valuable. Jeff said that responses can also be cross-referenced against statistical data to provide immediate answers.

### **Finalize Proposed Workshop Schedule**

Ted Knowlton distributed the proposed workshop schedule, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. He said that Envision Utah has tried to improve the efficiency of the workshop schedule to minimize expenses for the consultants. The location of each workshop does not mean that the only focus of that workshop is that municipality. All of the workshops service a group of municipalities, not simply the location of the workshop. We want people to understand that the workshop is about the region, not the city or entity; so there will not necessarily be a workshop in every town.

If the Executive Committee approves this schedule, Envision Utah will e-mail the full packet of digital invitation templates to use as each member sees fit according to the entity that he or she represents. Commissioner Gardner recommended moving the Veyo workshop to the Fire Station, since participation would be poor if Veyo citizens had to drive down to the Water

Conservancy District in St. George to attend. Ted agreed that it was a good idea to do so.

The invitation letters will be mailed out so that they will be received approximately one week prior to the workshops.

**MOTION: Motion by Daren Barney to approve the Vision Dixie Workshop Schedule as presented. Motion seconded by Ron Thompson and carried by unanimous vote.**

### **Vision Dixie Summit: October 17, 2006 at the Dixie Center**

Alan Matheson distributed a draft agenda for the Vision Dixie Summit, scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on October 17, 2006, at the Dixie Center. This meeting is open to the public and will present an overview of the growth issue and regional vision in Washington County. Alan said that community education television, KCSG, would film the meeting and replay it on the educational channel. Ads will be placed in local newspapers, inviting participation. Lorri said that KCSG has already devoted time to a series on the Vision Dixie process.

Sharon May of Dixie Weekly Magazine expressed interest in the Vision Dixie process and offered to cover it in her publication.

### **Agenda for Steering Committee Meeting**

The next Steering Committee meeting will be on October 5, 2006, at the Hilton Gardens at 2:00 p.m. The proposed agenda is attached to these minutes.

The Executive Committee is scheduled to meet on the second (2<sup>nd</sup>) Thursday of every month.

### **Adjourn**

Chairman Eardley adjourned the meeting at 4:09 p.m.