

RICH COUNTY COMMISSION MINUTES MAY 13, 2026

The Rich County Commission Meeting was held on May 13, 2026, at the County Courthouse in Randolph, Utah, beginning at 10:00 a.m. Chairman Simeon B. Weston, Commissioner William E. Cox, Commissioner Jonathan B. Lee, and Clerk Anneliesa Peart were present.

Commissioner Cox **moved to approve** the May 13, 2026 agenda as presented. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Taylor Payne, Resident, presented information about a countywide scam-awareness training event. U.S. District Attorney Melissa Holyoke will present on fraud and scam prevention on Monday, June 15, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the Rich County High School auditorium at no cost to the county. The Commission expressed support and encouraged broad community outreach through senior center lists, the Extension Service, and social media.

Mr. Payne also requested Commission support for a letter backing a normalized grazing permit on the East Woodruff Allotment (co-op) for the Kennedy Ranch in lieu of the current annual permission. The Commission directed Mr. Payne to submit a draft letter for review.

Mitch Poulsen, Planning & Zoning Administrator and Samantha Coontz, Bear Lake Regional Commission, presented a Short-Term Rental (STR) program update. Compliance has increased to 29%, with 142 permits projected once pending applications are finalized. Enforcement provisions and coordination with the Assessor's office were also discussed.

Jason Lutz, Staker & Parson Companies, appeared to request a business license approval for a ready-mix concrete plant and gravel facility on SR-30. Commissioner Cox **moved to approve** the business license for Staker & Parson Companies. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Kim Wilson, Assessor, reported on the state-authorized ambulance fuel surcharge option (\$0.25/mile when diesel exceeds \$5.10/gallon or gasoline exceeds \$4.25/gallon). Ms. Wilson and Ambulance Director Dale Stacey recommended against implementing the surcharge at this time. The Commission concurred, preferring a permanent rate adjustment over a surcharge if sustainability becomes a concern. Commissioner Cox **moved to**

maintain current ambulance rates without a fuel surcharge. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Ms. Wilson also presented personal property exemption lists for Commission approval. Commissioner Cox **moved to approve** the personal property tax exemptions as presented. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Chairman Weston called for an appointment to fill the **Bear Lake Special Service District** board vacancy created by the passing of Mike Leonhardt. Commissioner Cox **moved to appoint** Jason Thornock to complete the existing term. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Lee noted that Rich County Weed Board membership and terms also need to be reviewed and cleaned up. He will follow up prior to the June meeting.

After reviewing the annual State of Utah Administrative Office of the Courts District Court Contract, Commissioner Cox **moved to approve** the contract renewal for FY2027. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Cox presented two new UDOT Federal Aid Agreements required to authorize the drawdown of federal funds for two transportation projects. The first, PIN 21809, covers the reconstruction of Cisco Road, including widening, resurfacing, and connection of a bike path to SR-30. The total project value is \$1,391,000, with a federal share of \$1,296,829 and a county match of \$94,171. Engineering is programmed for 2026; construction for 2027.

The second agreement, PIN 21843, covers construction of approximately 2.6 miles of bike and pedestrian path along SR-30 and 800 N from the Rest Stop to Cisco Beach Road. The total project value is \$2,697,000, with a federal share of \$1,600,000 and a county match of \$1,097,000 from mineral lease funds.

Commissioner Lee **moved to accept and approve** the Federal Aid Agreement and routing form from UDOT for the Cisco Road Improvement and Bike Path, Project 2022, PIN 21809. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Cox **moved to approve** the SR-30 Bike Path agreement, PIN 21843. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Cox **moved to approve** the April 2026 expenditures as reviewed. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Cox **moved to approve** the minutes of April 8, 2026. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

The meeting recessed for lunch and reconvened at 12:30 p.m.

Ben Willoughby, County Attorney, and Travis Hobbs, Fire Warden, presented the county's WUI obligations under House Bill 48, including adoption of the 2006 WUI code, a

risk map, a Cooperative Agreement, and a future Interface Agreement. Fire Warden Hobbs presented the draft WUI map delineating high-risk unincorporated areas using road and geographic boundaries, with irrigated and wetland areas generally excluded. The map may be amended as needed with state notification. Hobbs also reported on a state-funded Sweetwater Hill mitigation project, including five planned safety zones and the establishment of marked evacuation routes.

The Cooperative Agreement (the county's longstanding annual fire suppression cost-sharing agreement with the Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands) is ready for signature. The Interface Agreement governing high-risk structure assessments is still being finalized by the AG's office. The Commission agreed the state should handle both property owner notifications and high-risk structure inspections.

Commissioner Lee **moved to sign** the Wildland Urban Interface Cooperative Agreement with the Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Cox **moved to adopt** Resolution 26-2, approving the WUI agreements as part of the Utah Cooperative Wildfire System and adopting the WUI map. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Cox **moved that** the State handle property owner notifications for those within the high-risk WUI area. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

PUBLIC HEARING – Rich County Ordinance for Campaign Financial Disclosure Requirements

Chairman Weston called for a Public Hearing. Commissioner Cox **moved to open** the public hearing. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Ben Willoughby, County Attorney, explained that Utah Code §17-70-403 requires counties to adopt a campaign finance disclosure ordinance. The proposed ordinance tracks statutory defaults, requiring disclosure reports no sooner than 14 days and no later than 7 days before each primary and general election. No public comment was received.

Commissioner Cox **moved to close** the public hearing. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Cox **moved to adopt** Ordinance 26-2, the Rich County Ordinance for Campaign Financial Disclosure Requirements. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

PUBLIC HEARING – Rich County Ordinance for Asphalt Production Use

Chairman Weston called for a Public Hearing. Commissioner Cox **moved to open** the public hearing. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Ben Willoughby, County Attorney, explained that Staker & Parson Companies holds a conditional use permit for a gravel pit on SR-30 issued after Rich County's mid-1980s agricultural zoning restriction. State statute (Utah Code §17-27a-1003) authorizes asphalt batching as an extension of gravel pit operations, but does not automatically apply because Parsons' permit postdates the restriction. The proposed ordinance amends the Table of Uses to add a conditional use designation for asphalt production in the agricultural zone, allowing Parsons to proceed through P&Z. A conditional use hearing is already scheduled for later in May.

Jake Goodle and Jason Lutz, Staker & Parson Companies, described the proposed asphalt plant adjacent to the existing quarry near the SR-30 sewer lagoons. Benefits include eliminating ~50,000 tons of asphalt trucked over Logan Canyon annually and creating 3–4 local jobs. Air quality compliance is managed through a state-regulated baghouse. No public comment was received.

Commissioner Cox **moved to close** the public hearing. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Lee **moved to adopt** Ordinance 26-3, the Rich County Ordinance for Asphalt Production Use. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Ben Willoughby, County Attorney, and **Wally Schulthess, Secretary-Treasurer, Woodruff Irrigation Company**, provided an update on the Woodruff Creek Watershed Plan Agreement with NRCS. NRCS confirmed Rich County must remain listed as a sponsor per federal regulations but may be removed from Table 1 (financial obligations). An MOU between the county and the Irrigation Company would clarify that Rich County serves only as a pass-through entity with no financial liability. Due to significant public questions and misinformation regarding the scope of the watershed map, the Commission agreed to hold a public hearing before signing. Attorney Willoughby will contact NRCS and JUB Engineering within two weeks to finalize the MOU structure. Item continued to June 2026.

Ben Willoughby, County Attorney, presented an emergency drought resolution pursuant to Utah Code §17-78-307. Current conditions include reservoirs at ~30% capacity, Bear Lake at 65%, and snowpack at 40–65% of normal; over half of Rich County is designated in severe drought. The resolution enables access to USDA, SBA, and other state and federal drought assistance programs and remains in effect until rescinded.

Commissioner Cox **moved to adopt** Resolution 26-3, declaring Rich County in a state of emergency drought. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

With no further business before the Commission, Commissioner Cox moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Approved: 
Simeon B. Weston, Chairman

Attest: 
Anneliesa Peart, Clerk