

OFFICIALS PRESENT: Mayor Kevin Jeppsen presided and conducted the meeting. Esther Montgomery, Blake Ostler, Nathan Tueller, Toby Wright, and Andrew Watkins

CITY STAFF PRESENT: Shanna Johnson, City Recorder; Robert Barnhill, City Administrator; Tyler Wagstaff, Public Works Director (joined at 6:49 p.m.)

OTHERS PRESENT: Joshua Ward, Beth Holbrook-UTA, Shule Bishop-UTA, Howell Johnson-UTA, Melanie Barnhill, Jean Naisbitt, Greg Turner, Nelson Phillips, Brandon Hansen

ITEM 1: Welcome to Order and Welcome

Mayor Jeppsen welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

ITEM 2: Work Session Regarding UTA Mass Transit Tax

Robert Barnhill thanked the members of UTA for being present and stated that the City Council had asked for this meeting to explore what options the City has with the UTA tax due to some frustration with the budget and money that is being spent on the tax. He discussed Bill Morris, City Attorney, having reached out to Wasatch Front Regional Council and having some conversations with UTA. UTA wanted to meet with the Council to hear more of their thoughts and their concerns.

Council Member Tueller expressed not being a fan of UTA. He stated that he feels the City could use the money being spent in far better ways for transportation needs within the City. He does not see frontrunner being needed in this area for 30-40 years or longer. He said that he sees people leaving the County to go to bigger cities and spend their money in other places rather than within the community. He feels the tax can be used elsewhere. His understanding is that a lot of this tax is used for corridor preservation and feels that some of that land could be kept clear with zoning. He feels it is more of a benefit in higher density communities. He wants the money back in the City and feels that the frontrunner is an inefficient way of moving people around.

Council Member Wright agreed with Council Member Tueller. He said his biggest frustration is seeing half a million dollars a year go out and seeing nothing in return for it. He feels that Box Elder County is not getting the good end of the deal in this situation. He feels that if frontrunner ever does come to this area, it will only take people out and not bring people in. He said that Pleasant View was not successful and he does not see it being successful here. He has discussed this with people and asked if they would see a benefit of the frontrunner being here and that no one feels it would be beneficial because they would not be able to get where they want to go.

Council Member Montgomery said that when this tax was put in place there were promises connected to it that have not been delivered by UTA. She can't see in the next 30-50 years that it would be something needed in the community. She said the cost vs. benefit doesn't add up. So

many projects could benefit from the funds being collected and she doesn't think that people will use it in the community.

Council Member Watkins said he does not feel the rural population is being heard. He said he is a proponent for getting Box Elder County out of this tax. He feels that the voting was done blindly in November of 2007 and that it was not until two months later that the information was provided that this agreement had a 50-year term. He added that the Box Elder and Weber mobility study results showed that regional and major transportation was best met by other means of transportation.

Council Member Ostler said that this represents a bad business deal in terms of return on investment. He said that it is time to get out.

Mayor Jeppsen said these thoughts have been represented before and other cities agree. He said that there could be some easements in the right of way and zoning put in place in that area. He feels that this tax at some point needs to be stopped and hopefully the city can recoup some of it. He feels that UTA has some influence to change the legislature and would like to try and get reprieve that way instead of having to get it back on the ballot. He would like to see a way to come to an agreement if possible.

Council Member Tueller added that he would like to see a benefit come to the community and that the constituents and people in the community want to develop things here that will bring people here with the money instead of what the capital wants. He said that if there were a way to have it back on the ballot today, that people would vote to get rid of the tax.

Shule Bishop said that he is a 4th generation Brigham City resident and cares about this area. He shares some of the frustrations but asked for the Council to keep an open mind.

Beth Holbrook agrees elements did not work out as some articulated and wanted to share some perspective. She understands that Perry City does not want to be Salt Lake and that there is a different perspective and way of life in Box Elder County. She said that studies show what transit does to communities and that it brings people to the community and economic development to surrounding areas. She said that it is a double edge sword because you want to see economic growth but you want to preserve the community. She discussed growth being driven by entities that move with the demand of transit. She said that fifteen years ago Silicone Slope was unknown and now Lehi is one of the fastest growing communities. She also discussed Hill Air Force Base having challenges and that five years ago an infrastructure was established that allowed for development and now Falcon Hill has a million square foot building being built and the surrounding city benefits from that infrastructure. She said that there is growth in the entire area of southern Box Elder County. She discussed the right of way being purchasing and said there is a defacto on this, that this fund will at some point not be needed anymore. She wants to make sure there is opportunity for growth for Box Elder County. She said the intent is to purchase corridor and right of way.

Howell Johnson discussed transit use and had a presentation he shared with the Council. He discussed the existing services that exists in the community, the 630 bus that goes to Ogden from

Brigham City and a flex route within the City, which are both funded by the first quarter sales tax that was passed for Mass Transit. He said that between those two services it carries 700-800 customers per day and that it is a benefit to those customers. Mr. Barnhill clarified that the total amount that goes out to mass transit tax every year goes out in two parts (in reference to the first quarter funding Mr. Johnson was talking about). Council Member Tueller said he does not see that number of customers using the buses in Perry that Mr. Johnson discussed. Mr. Johnson said that there is more utilization in Brigham City and that through Perry there are just a few along the route. He added that the second quarter sales tax passed for Mass Transit is going toward the corridor preservation and that so far there have been seven properties that have been purchased, three in closing and four more in negotiations with another couple that are in environmental review. There are also some properties they are working on with Union Pacific and UDOT. He said they are working on purchasing the station sites as well and that there has been a big dent made in the corridor preservation. He said that if there are things they can do with zoning so that they don't have to purchase the corridor that would be beneficial. He said they have \$8 million so far and have spent about half of that on property purchases. He added that with the pipeline most of those remaining dollars would be spent. In the future the total cost would be \$14-16 million to have the corridor purchased and then the funds can be used for other transit projects in the community. He said that every penny that has come in is being spent in Box Elder County and that it is invested in the community. He said the study that was championed by Box Elder County recommended continuing forward with the right of way preservation efforts. He said there are funds that can increase the frequency of the bus stops between Ogden and Brigham and they would like to do bus stop improvements. He also discussed working with private service providers to provide other regional connections between Brigham City and Cache County. He said he understands the concerns of the council but wanted to provide more information on what the money was being used for.

Council Member Watkins said that he understands improving bus stops and other things but even if the corridor preservation is complete by 2040 or 2050, the growth projected doesn't seem to be as much as was thought to be 10-20 years ago.

Mr. Johnson said that corridor preservation is a good investment from his point of view and that transportation is usually a multi-generational investment. Right of way preserved by an earlier group creates opportunities in the future for children and grandchildren. He said that the change that happened in the last legislative session created more flexibility and that it benefits the whole County.

Mr. Barnhill expressed that the legislation changed to allow for collector roads as an option and would like to see the sunset period change from 2058 to ten years from now when the corridor preservation is complete. Mr. Johnson suggested bringing in Wasatch Regional Council on that conversation as it relates to regional transportation for future dialogue and assumptions. Beth added that UDOT should be added to that conversation as well.

Council Member Tueller expressed his frustrations with frontrunner and that it is not worth the price.

Mayor Jeppsen stated that it is pretty obvious that front runner is no longer part of this plan that's part of the frustration and that it sounds like the goal now is corridor preservation. He commented that the corridor to Honeyville cannot be bought as there are not enough funds for the City to accomplish this but we are buying right of way for UTA, which is also part of the frustration.

The meeting adjourned at 6:57 PM.

Shanna Johnson, City Recorder

Kevin Jeppsen, Mayor

Tyra Bischoff, Deputy Recorder