

UINTAH CITY



2191 East 6550 South – Uintah, Utah 84405

(801) 479-4130 Fax: (801) 476-7269

Office Hours M-W 9:00-5:00 Th-F 9:00-1:00

Mayor Gordon Cutler

UINTAH CITY COUNCIL

Planning – Robert Guillier

Council Members:

WORK SESSION

Building Inspector-Jeff Monroe

Michelle Roberts

Kristi Bell

WEDNESDAY, October 28th, 2020

Treasurer – Mike Ulrich

Jerry Smith

Dave Boothe

6:30 PM

Sheriff – Lt. Butler

MINUTES

Attendees: Mayor Cutler, Jerry Smith, Michelle Roberts, Kristi Bell, Dave Boothe, Marc Sacco, Casey Christiansen, Chris Wilden, Paul Sullivan, Britt Clark, David Reed and Darinda Wallis

MEETING MINUTES:

1. **MEETING CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Cutler called the meeting to order.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by Michelle Roberts

CONFLICT OF INTEREST: None

2. **DISCUSSION ON UINTAH CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT:** (00:00:50)

Presenter: Mayor Cutler

- The Mayor opened this discussion explaining that the purpose of this meeting is for the City Council to do the City's work, with the discussion being on public record. The Mayor stressed that he wanted this meeting to remain fair and stay on topic. There has been a lot of misinformation being circulated and in trying to be fair and transparent we called this meeting with both our Fire Department Chiefs and Weber Fire District's Chiefs so that we gather good information. Everyone will be given time to talk and the Mayor noted that he didn't have the ability to "mute the mikes".
- Chief Sullivan began with saying that there has been a lot of misinformation being circulated via a letter sent to the residents from the Uintah Fire Department written by Marc Sacco. He commented that he wished we could have had the town meeting so that they could have answered any questions or concerns that our residents have. Chief Sullivan stated that their motive is to explain what services they provide and how they can benefit our community. They are public servants and they recognize that there is lots of passion regarding this topic.
- Chief Sullivan stated that Weber Fire District is our first responders and that they currently have a contract with the city to provide these services and at minimum we are billed for forty five calls at three hundred dollars per call for a minimum cost each year of thirteen thousand five hundred dollars. Chief Sullivan explained that QRU stands for quick respond unit and you have to have a Medical Director to have a QRU. He also cleared up the misinformation regarding the exclusive geographic license to transport. South Ogden has that license and they are the ones responding to transport. Weber Fire District does not want it and they have never asked to have it. Chief Sullivan explained that South Ogden is really busy and does not want to do both, first response and transport. This is a good arrangement the way it is now.
- Fire calls/structure calls - Chief Sullivan defined the difference between automatic aid and mutual aid. Uintah City does not have any automatic aid; we have mutual aid agreements that will respond when asked. Automatic aid is when they have agreed to send automatic aid within a stack system for certain responses to certain needs. There are six career departments within Weber County with automatic aid and nine departments that have mutual aid. Weber Fire District takes issue with the statement in the letter to the citizens that Marc Sacco wrote that said that they were going to come anyway; why buy the milk when the cow is free; they are going to come anyway. Why would we pay into the system when they are going to come for free? This is an issue to Weber Fire District and our Board. We benefit from the system because we will get all their resources in a structure fire although it is not reciprocated. We are not available to come and back them up. To have automatic aid we would have to be fully staffed. Should the taxpayers in the county be supplementing Uintah City; or any other city; it works if we are all equally vested.
- Chief Sullivan explained how they tax. He asked John Bond (County Treasurer) about Uintah City and the figure given was \$143,000 that was at last year's rate of .001463 not this year's rate of .001378; so it would be less. He explained that the increase from new growth goes back to the taxpayers and by code Weber Fire District can't get less than what was budgeted before. If we decide to request annexation our citizens would not pay a dime out of their pocket until December 2022. That would be two years of service for just the cost we are paying them now for first responders. Chief Sullivan also stated that the trailer court would be charged one rate because it is a business and if passed down to each trailer it would be roughly \$1.22 a month; dismissing the rumors that the increase would "kill the trailer court".
- Chief Clark from Weber Fire District took some time and talked about their Wildland Fire Team as well as certifications and post certifications. He stated that they wanted to be sure that whatever was

being said is fair and accurate and that we need to do what is best for the citizens and that is to show up fast, help them and to be compassionate. Chief Clark also stated why should they leave their paying citizens to help the nonpaying citizens.

- Mayor Cutler explained that we arrived at these crossroads when our Fire Chief moved out of the City. We felt that we needed to do our due diligence to the citizens and determine which route to take with the department. He explained that was why we went and spoke with Weber Fire District; Right away they have been helpful with covering for us during this period of diligence.
- Chief Reed from Weber Fire District addressed the ISO rating score and explained that our homeowner's insurance rates are based on that score. He explained that Uintah City received a score of three and that is really good; but in reality it should be a seven or eight because we were given credit for a ladder truck and we don't have one and we were also credited for being fully staffed and we are not. Chief Reed also explained that the certified tax rate with this year's rates would be more likely for the City \$122,000; which if we had our own department would only pay for one to one and a half employees. Chief Reed also explained that we should consider the liability the Fire Marshall has in regards to developments and making sure that they meet code and the adopted State Codes.
- Our Battalion Chief Casey Christiansen expressed the departments sentiment that they believe that there should have been more intermediate steps from deciding to move from a volunteer department to annexation into Weber Fire District. He stated that he believes that if funded they could recruit and staff our department so that Uintah City wouldn't lose the department.
- Casey went on to explain that they can get volunteers because the training they receive while being a volunteer is a more affordable way to achieve their certifications. He also outlined the strategies that they would use to get the additional volunteers we need to staff the department.
- The council asked questions that have been asked of them to both our department and Weber Fire District. The discussion included concerns for celebrations, being last on the list because of our size and why we are in this position not once but twice in the last five years. The response was due to funding and that Weber Fire District is non-territorial. The Federal Standard Labor Act (FSLA) was also discussed and how it could be detrimental to small departments if not managed.
- Chris Wilden was asked to attend the meeting to explain the benefits of having a wildland division of the department. He explained that it is a way to fund the department. Mayor Cutler explained that he felt a small community that is having difficulties recruiting their own volunteers should not be in the business of fighting fires elsewhere.
- The Council thanked both departments for taking the time to answer questions and clear the air with some of their concerns. They thanked them all for their service to our community and stated that fighting fires is not for the faint of heart and we truly appreciate having someone respond when we call for help.

3. MEETING ADJOURNMENT: (02:15:55)

Jerry Smith motioned to close the public work session.

Seconded by Dave Boothe

All in favor; the motion passed. The meeting was adjourned.

APPROVED by City Council this 17th day of November, 2020.



Darinda Wallis, Uintah City Recorder