

Wasatch County Fire Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday August 14, 2018

Meeting held at the Wasatch County Administration Building located at 25 N Main, Heber City.

Those in Attendance:

Spencer Parks

Mike Petersen

Steve Farrell

Greg McPhie -excused

Kendall Crittenden -excused

Danny Goode

Mark Nelson

Chief Ernie Giles

BC Gary Sessions

BC Jason Provost

Fire Marshal Clint Neerings

Fire Warden Troy Morgan

Merry Duggin

Items of Business to address:

Minutes

The minutes of the July 10th board meeting were presented to the board for their review and approval. **A motion was made by Councilman Goode to approve the minutes of the July 10th fire board meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilman Nelson and the motion passed all in favor.**

Warrants

The listing of warrants totaled \$195,449.32. This total included the added warrants and the payroll transmittals.

A motion was made by Councilman Parks to approve the warrants as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilman Nelson and the motion passed all in favor.

Chief report

Chief Ernie Giles reported that we received a check from California for a fire that we had assisted on in the amount of \$174,389.61. He also announced Rick Coleman's retirement party on August 22, 2018. He also said he would like to report on closed session from a week ago today.

Fire Marshal Report

Fire Marshal Clint Neerings - nothing new business as usual.

Councilman Steve Farrell asked how are things going with building permits.

Fire Marshal Clint Neerings - We are not seeing residential permits. We have been working with Hideout and their attorney to review their plats and have some say on what is going on in there. They have a Golden eagle phase one that is going on right now. They are proposing a phase 2 and phase 3 with upwards of 300 lots. The issue is that the lots are all one way in and one way out with no secondary entrance. We have been meeting with mayor and attorney to get on the agenda with their city council. The mayor is optimistic about getting us as approvers on their plats so we can have a say in their fire safety especially with all of the sage brush out there and them being next to the highway. They are starting to send plans our way as well as their single-family dwellings, plat inspections and sprinklers.

Councilman Steve Farrell- Are you currently doing anything with Heber City?

Fire Marshal Clint Neerings- Yes. We usually do all of Red Ledges, they have a new online permitting process that allows us to see everything that they submit. This allows us to have a say on access and width of the roads so that we can get firetrucks, ambulances and law enforcement in in case of an emergency. We also attend every Midway City DRC and give our input.

Fire Warden Report

Fire Warden Troy Morgan- Steve and Spencer thank you for coming out and looking at the strawberry river. The dollar ridge fire is up to 65,000 acres and the estimated cost is about 20 million. They did a lot of burn operations the last 4 days- hopefully they have the line tied in. I talked with Mike Erikson this afternoon and they are hoping it will start to ramp back down in the next week and turn back into a type 4 fire.

Councilman Mark Nelson- Did it start back up on its own?

Fire Warden Troy Morgan – Tuesday two weeks ago it flared up and jumped the line. It burned aggressively up timber canyon and pin hollow road the fire turned and burned back towards strawberry peak.

Councilman Mike Peterson- Was it caused by a guy burning his weeds?

Fire Warden Troy Morgan - An investigator has been in there and found where it was started but not a cause. 2 years ago, in beaver canyon subdivision there was a gentleman in there doing some debris burning. He burned down a few outbuildings and that fire was about 100 acres.

Councilman Spencer Park- Have you had any issues with the cabin owners or property owners? Since the road has been closed have there been any complaints or problems?

Fire Warden Troy Morgan- Not that I have heard.

Councilman Spencer Park -About half of the cabins burned, the nicest ones it looks like.

Fire Warden Troy Morgan- The cabins were secondary, I am sure there has been some kickback but nothing that I have heard about.

Fire Warden Troy Morgan – The other fire that is impacting Wasatch County is the Coal Hollow Fire. Highway 6 is still shut down they evacuated soldier summit area last night. Once highway is open they will lift those restrictions and let people back into subdivisions. Its hard to shut down the major highways you get a lot of pushback.

Councilman Steve Farrel- What was the fire on Sunday up in Big Hollow?

Fire Warden Troy Morgan - I was out of town apparently it was a gender reveal party. Where they shot some tannerite.

Councilman Mark Nelson- Which fire was caused by this?

Fire Warden Troy Morgan - It was up above the gun range on Saturday afternoon, it burned 1.6 acres. The people stayed around, and it was on state land so the state will decide to press charges or not. It was a pretty good save from what I understand because that vegetation was so dry.

Councilman Spencer Park – On your long-term forecast are any weather changes upcoming?

Fire Warden Troy Morgan - No. We will have the occasional rain, hit and miss thunderstorm, but for the most part it will stay like this until the middle of September.

Councilman Mike Peterson- A 2 acre fire that will cost a couple of bucks wont it?

Fire Warden Troy Morgan – It depends on the type of resources you have, if you can get it done with local resources it is fairly cheap. If you have to start bringing in aircraft or hand crews then it gets expensive. We have an agreement with the federal government that the first 5k is free. We can use federal help for the first 5k and then after that point then they start charging us. That all gets worked out with year end billing with the state.

Councilman Steve Farrell- Is there any talk about sending people to California?

Fire Warden Troy Morgan - You will probably see UT fire fighters coming back due to the firefighter from draper that was lost last night.

Councilman Spencer Parks– The only reason we were able to send them last time was because it was after our season right? We wouldn't dare vacate our area.

Fire Warden Troy Morgan- They called and asked if we could go out again and with the conditions that we have here we can't. They are kind of on a year-round fire season now so there might be another opportunity come November or December.

Other Items

Councilman Steve Farrell- asked about approval for transfer out of capital projects.

Chief Ernie Giles- This is for equipment for the ladder and for midway station in the amount of \$70,523.00 I need a motion from the council to transfer that out.

A motion was made Councilman Goode to approve the transfer. The motion was seconded by Councilman Nelson and the motion passed all in favor.

Chief Ernie Giles - The second quarter of financials I need a motion that you have looked over and approved them. That is what I got written up for with the financial audit.

Councilman Danny Goode-Who does these reports?

Chief Ernie Giles- Kierstan Smith does.

A motion was made Councilman Nelson to approve the second quarter financials. The motion was seconded by Councilman Parks and the motion passed all in favor.

Chief Ernie Giles- The next item is with Kristen coming on she needs to be able to sign some bank documents, but board needs to sign their approval.

Councilman Steve Farrel- Kristen will you make sure we get them all signed before we leave here today?

Kristen Richardson – Yes.

Chief Ernie Giles – We have a rough draft back of the ESCI report regarding our needs assessment. We have been going through that, myself and my BC's, have been working on it. It is 109 pages, so it may take a few days. We are verifying that all of the information is correct. Some of the calculations are just a bit off. We won't have to do all of the recommendations all at once and most of it is what the advisory board and you gentleman already know. Some of it is generic and they just plug in Wasatch County. The last 20 pages are their big recommendations. I would like to get on a council meeting before the next board meeting, so we have a chance to look at it and show it to the advisory board.

Councilman Danny Good- Does the report have the changes by phases?

Chief Ernie Giles- Yes. They list is by top priorities. Just so you are not surprised their recommendation is 2 million dollars and to combine fire and EMS. They wanted a plan to start phasing some of the older

equipment out. Other than that, if you don't have any questions I just have the closed session for litigations. Maybe Merry has something to add.

Councilman Danny Good -Did you have a general good feeling about it?

Chief Ernie Giles- It makes me nervous, we are way light in the upper ends with assistant chiefs and we need training officers. I couldn't agree with them more.

Councilman Danny Good- So you think these are recommending that we move to a FT fire department?

Chief Ernie Giles-They have had recommendations with the volunteers as well moving forward we will have to adjust their wages or adjust them somehow. It is hard to know where that balance is. We have got to have them, it is going to be a lot of tough decision making. I will go ahead and let Merry speak for a minute.

Advisory Board Chairman Merry Duggin – I apologize for not being here more frequently it has been a bad year as far as personal stuff goes. There were three members of advisory board that met with ESCI representative on May 30th and council member Farrell as well. We have been waiting a long time for this to come in. Every member of the board has been anxious to see the draft hopefully we can get that as soon as possible. I don't know what role the advisory board will play coming into this phase. We will rely on guidance from you (the council) to let us know. We will have opinions and can make all kinds of recommendations but that is what the needs assessment is about anyway.

Councilman Steve Farrell - We would like you to review the report and give us recommendations. Have other members of the advisory board tell us how they did it in their district. We can't do it all at once but over time.

Advisory Board Chairman Merry Duggin - The number of 2 million dollars is not shocking to me at all, in fact I would think it would be more than that. Considering the growth factor that is being applied and considering the diversity of the problems the situations that the fire district has to handle I am not at all shocked by the number of 2 million dollars and I don't think the public will be either. I think everyone is on board for the EMS and fire collaboration. We will see what that report recommends, and the board will have some good recommendations. Not necessarily me but I am the one that shows up at the meeting.

Councilman Mike Peterson- What is the timing for combining fire and EMS.

Chief Ernie Giles- I don't know Mike we are close to budget time. Could be done by the end of the year? Probably but I just don't know budget-wise. The county has a budget for EMS, if you actually took that budget and moved it to the fire somehow... don't quote me but I think it is about 1.6 million. If that was transferred the increase wouldn't be quite so dramatic. They are saying 2.4 million and some change. We would be a lot closer

Councilman Steve Farrell- I doubt we would be able to make it happen by the end of the year. It's too late now for a tax increase.

Advisory Board Chairman Merry Duggin – We had Mike Davis talk to us about this there is a budgetary split, the county subsidizes fire district with salaries and in other ways as well and so that all has to be

worked out. The county manager is not interested in hiring additional personnel. If we follow the recommendations hopefully from ESCI it will take the heat off everybody.

Councilman Steve Farrell – I don't think the county subsidizes the fire district in funds I think we pay for services.

Advisory Board Chairman Merry Duggin- Well you do, there are some capital funds that go into it. Hopefully that relationship can be firmed up a little. I wish I had a better answer for you, it has been a sore spot for the advisory board all along. We will see what we can do.

Councilman Danny Good – A lot of things will hinge on what the report advises and from the advisory board. From there we can say all right this is our plan. 2020 would be an optimistic outlook.

Councilman Steve Farrell – I think we will need to look at the report and work on critical issues first.

Advisory Board Chairman Merry Duggin – I do have one request. The advisory board will read and comment on it and once we get the final report I want to request that we have an open public meeting to present it to the public. I think that would go a long way and make everything a lot easier as to an explanation about how we have done this, where we are trying to get to and how much it is going to cost. It would be a great public relations move and I think it is warranted.

Councilman Danny Good -We can put it on the council agenda. We really appreciate the advisory board.

Councilman Steve Farrell- We have need for a closed session to update us in litigation.

A motion was made by Councilman Goode to go into a closed session regarding the ongoing litigation. The motion was seconded by Councilman Peterson and the motion passed all in favor.

Councilman Steve Farrell – We are now in closed session, it is ok for everyone to stay.

Chief Ernie Giles- At the hearing last Tuesday at 3 o'clock, Mark Gaylord showed up along with Melanie and David. Mark did an awesome job, I felt 100% better than I felt walking out of that court room last time. It hit home on some topics that plaintiffs have never produced any real evidence. We proved it was fraud. They were complaining about mine and Janet's affidavit. Through the whole process I felt awesome when we walked out of that room. I felt that he did a killer job. I have never seen him, but I have heard about him and after we walked out of the courtroom I told him I had to take back some of what I have said about him. He proved a lot of good points and he had some posters there that he had made up. She may have the written prior to September 1, if not the written she will have an oral by sept 1. It's a big deal. That is all I have unless you have any questions.

Councilman Steve Farrell - Have you been in the discussion with MIDA on the changes on road access?

Chief Ernie Giles- If it is through the MIDA planning (mayflower west) we have seen a portion of it. Just preliminary plans. It sounds like we signed a letter for mayflower north (will serve letter) we are meeting with hideout that crosses Jordanelle blvd that got annexed into hideout. There is a lot of preliminary stuff going on there, but I haven't seen anything solid on the MIDA deal.

A motion was made by Councilman Nelson to go out of the closed session. The motion was seconded by Councilman Peterson and the motion passed all in favor.

Councilman Steve Farrell – We are now back in regular fire district board meeting.

A motion was made by Councilman Parks to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilman Nelson and the motion passed all in favor.