

**Wasatch County Fire Board of Directors Meeting**

**Tuesday October 13, 2020**

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

**Those in Attendance:**

Steve Farrell

Jeff Wade

Spencer Park

Kendall Crittenden

Danny Goode

Mark Nelson

Marylin Crittenden

Chief Ernie Giles

EMS Battalion Chief Clair Provost

Kierstan Smith

Dustin Grabau

**Councilman Farrell stepped out for a few minutes. He will most likely be joining before the meeting is over.**

**Minutes**

**A motion was made by Councilman Crittenden to approve the minutes of the September 8, 2020 fire board meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilman Wade and the motion passed all in favor. Councilwoman Crittenden abstains. Councilman Nelson abstains and suggests the correction to remove himself from attendance.**

**Warrants**

The listing of warrants totaled \$814,014.09. This total included the added warrants and the payroll transmittals.

**A motion was made by Councilman Goode to approve the warrants as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilman Wade and the motion passed all in favor with Councilman Park opposing.**

### Chiefs Report

Chief Giles: As you seen in the warrants, we have collected enough money to pay down the property. I do not like paying interest on it. By making this payment it lowered the interest roughly \$1,000 a month. At the end of the year we are looking at possibly paying another \$250,000 to \$300,000. As of right there is roughly about 225,000 to 250,000 in that account. I wanted to play safe until the end of the year, but I would like to pay it off as soon as possible. That is why the warrants list was quite high this month. Other than that, I will entertain any questions if there is any?

Councilman Parks: Are you asking for a motion to transfer the \$300,000?

Chief Giles: Yes, a motion to transfer the money and make the payment. We are pulling some out of the impact money to pay it.

**A motion was made by Councilman Nelson to transfer \$300,000 and make the property payment. The motion was seconded by Councilman Wade. The motion passed all in favor.**

### Virtual Meetings for Fire Board

Chief Giles: It is a document that we had Steve sign make sure we are approved to continue virtual meetings. I want to cover my bases and have it on the agenda every month.

**A motion was made by Councilman Crittenden to continue with the virtual meeting document as it was previously approved and we are still in those guidelines. The motion was seconded by Councilman Goode. The motion passed all in favor.**

### Other

#### **Discussion on hiring and assistant chief**

Councilman Park: I went ahead and asked for this to be on there. I know there has been a lot of discussion and they are trying to make a job description. For budget reasons I wanted to make sure the committee finished their work before we went out and advertised/interview. I talked to a couple council members about this. The committee was made up of two advisory board members and Kendall, Marylin, and myself. We meet quiet a while ago but then we all got busy during the summer. We probably need to meet again and come to conclusion on that before we do the assistant chief just in case the committee's recommendations changes this plan. I know we talked about an assistant chief and I think it is a good long-term plan. I think that the committee needs to make their recommendation before we move forward. Is there any discussion on that?

Dennis Goudy: I am on the Fire Advisory Board and its good we still have a chance to meet. What I wanted to point out for the record is that it is very important in emergency management for the position's titles. What this description is written up for is a Deputy Chief not and Assistant Chief. There is a big difference and I just need to get that on the record. I can explain that if needed.

Councilman Goode: Could you explain that for me, so I understand the difference?

Dennis Goudy: Sure. In Fire, EMS, and Emergency Management, the term hierarchical titles really reflect a lot of times preset conditions, especially authority. A deputy chief has the authority to assume, not just step into the role, but act in lieu of the fire chief, all rights privileges, and authorities. They are required to follow all the departments procedures, policies along with any county/city ordinances. AN assistant does not carry the same level of authority. An assistant receives objectives and guidance from his or her superior but does not carry the full authority. It is true a lot of times that people have made those terms synonymous. But to be consistent with emergency management across the board, the deputy chief is much more important by title and name than an Assistant Chief. Because of that line of authority that person could easily step up to the chief position for any number of reasons. A process could still be in place if you want to officially appoint a fire chief, but the deputy chief could fill that position until that happens.

Councilman Crittenden: So, you are saying deputy chief has higher authority than a assistant chief.

Dennis Goudy: In this context, absolutely.

Councilman Goode: So, in our structure that means the deputy chief would be able to step in and assume the role as fire chief/district manager if something were to happen to Ernie.

Dennis Goudy: Yes, absolutely. Again, that is consistent. If you go out and look at any large scale incident management , there can be several deputies assigned to a incident, but per section it allows them to have a true deputy that carries the training, expertise, and authority to act at the top level of which they are representing. An assistant will carry a portion of that if that helps.

Councilman Goode: Thank you Dennis that makes a lot of sense to me.

Dennis Goudy: Okay, thank you.

Councilman Park: Sounds good, is there any discussion from the board?

Chief Giles: I guess all of you received the draft of the deputy chief that we sent out.

Councilwoman Crittenden: How did you send that out?

Chief Giles: It was sent out with the packet. We can email them to you as well. The Advisory Board and I have worked on this thing for a couple months. There was one thing that I noticed that was not in there that I would like to see put in there. I did not want to make any changes until the board put their eyes to it. Under the description, I think it should show under add under minimum qualification that they need to live within the county.

Councilman Goode: On those advisory board meetings, Steve and Spencer are you attending advisory board meetings? That is the way we had it set up. do you not want council to attend?

Councilman Parks: They are usually during the same time as these meetings. They have them after this while we are still in the SSD meetings.

Chief Giles: To their defense, we did hold a couple of them, but last week we held it a week earlier so everyone could be there.

Councilman Goode: Is there a reason you guys did not want the council to attend?

Dennis Goudy: No. We only did that once. Steve Farrell caught that, and I really appreciated that. I was thinking of efficiency with our virtual meetings and on site. Once Steve pointed that out, we immediately stopped. There should never be a conflict with your meetings vs. the advisory board meetings. There had not been up until that one I believe was the August meeting that was a conflict. I apologize.

Councilman Goode: No problem. Thank you for moving that meeting. I appreciate it guys.

Councilman Crittenden: Hey Ernie, maybe if you could send out a hard copy through email. I know its hard to pull stuff off of our agenda to go thing.

Councilwoman Crittenden: I would appreciate it if you would email the packet all the time.

Councilman Crittenden: I prefer to look at it on our emails as well.

Chief Giles: I will send it out by email so you can all look at it. I am working on the budget and should have a preliminary budget out by our next fire board meeting. To get to Spencer's comment, I would like to try and budget for this deputy chief if possible.

Councilwoman Crittenden: Spencer, Will you clarify what your request was?

Councilman Parks: My request was that we do not advertise and interview until the committee has completed their work. I think there is probably no reason that we can't meet within the next few weeks to get that going again. Is that okay Chief?

Chief Giles: Yes, and we wouldn't have the money until January, so we have time to do it. I just wanted to help if we could. We have pulled info from different departments and just hopefully lightened your load as you proceed. We would not go into any of that without the Councils permission. We are just trying to get a description and to see if there is anything you guys want to add or delete.

Councilman Park: Maybe when the committee meets, we can go through the draft. I think that would be helpful. I just want to make sure the committee makes their recommendations before we move forward. Is there any other items on the agenda or a need for a closed session?

### **Other**

Goode: Can I ask an Ernie a question? Are we under other?

Councilman Park: Yes

Councilman Goode: How are the things going with fires? How did it go with our guys going over to California? Did we send someone last year? How are we for the remainder of the year/fire season?

Chief Giles: I wish troy was here, but he just got back to. We sent 4 firefighters and Jeremy Hales went with them. They were there for I think 11 days. I had nothing but good response from the folks that were there. They were glad to go help. As all of you know from previous years, that money is a little slow we probably will not see that until May/June of 2021. Its roughly a year out. Its always good to help your neighbors. We had good support here. When the request came out a month ago, I was too nervous to send people. It was just to dry. It just so happened that we had the Lake Creek fire at the same time. We had a start up there from a short on a power pole. It was between the rock quarry and Timberlakes turnoff. We were very fortunate to catch some of the fires this year. It was a great save. They got up the

hill quick enough to get a line around it. Mother nature treated us good to. It could have been up to Wolf Creek Ranches in a hour if the wind was blowing. We were lucky with that. Clint Neerings was the IC on that scene, and I thought he did an awesome job. They did have helicopters in town that we asked for help. When it first started, we did not know if we would get around it. We had Heber light and power ran us more water to the pond incase we needed it. Nobody got hurt in California and everybody is back healthy. Hopefully, things are semi back to normal. Are there any other questions? I would be happy to answer them.

Councilman Goode: Ernie, what is the moisture level in the debris in our forest?

Chief Giles: The moisture level is way low. I could not tell you exactly. I know Troy would know that. Even the big timber, if you have been up lake creek at all, the forest was wanting to burn the west fork of the Duchesne. But as dry as it has been, they have held off for at least for now. They are lifting their fire restrictions the county is not. We are keeping our restrictions on for another week or to. Even with that ½ inch of snow in strawberry valley it is still very dry and dusty.

Councilman Goode: I think it was last year that Troy said the lumber you buy in the lumber store is wetter than what is in the woods. Would that still be accurate?

Chief Giles: That would still be right.

Councilman Goode: Have we been able to go in a create logging roads? Do you know if that has happened and are you apart of that?

Chief Giles: Not to my knowledge that is the reason they want to burn the west fork, to remove all of the beetle kill spruce trees. I would love to see somebody go in a harvest that for paper but there are federal regulations and out of my control.

Councilman Park: In our public lands meeting we have talked about that a couple of times with Danno. He has tried to. Last year or the year before he put out roughly 3 logging bids and did not get any responses. He went back in and tried to make it easier and less restrictive to do it. I do think he had some, but a lot of our mills around here are closed. There is just not the demand for it that we use to have in years past.

Chief Giles: Troy just texted me, he is listening in. The heavy timber is at 7%. How its staying alive is crazy.

Councilwoman Crittenden: To add to what Spencer said, in public lands they did confirm that it is drier than what you buy in the stores. I appreciate that you are keeping our county under fire restrictions.

Chief Giles: Well, the deer hunt starts Saturday, and the elk hunt is already going. I was out a little bit on the weekends. It's surprising that people are listening. I did not see a campfire other than the propane ones. I hope these restrictions will stay until we do get some moisture. You even step on that grass its kindle dry. We have been very fortunate.

Councilman Goode: Hey Ernie, can people still use propane burners? What if they have firepits in their backyards? Can people still use those?

Chief Giles: Yes they can use propane. You can use those out on the forest, public or private ground just so they are gas operated. Charcoal burning and wood burning is not allowed at this time. From what I could see I was out looking and in the strawberry area all the fires I seen were propane.

Councilman Goode: Okay, thank you.

Councilman Crittenden: As far as fire pits and restrictions your talking about places outside of city limits, right?

Chief Giles: No, even inside city limits. There is a difference in approved and improved. As long as they are careful within city limits, we are okay with it. We do not approve fire pits. There are improved guidelines on our website.

**Councilman Farrell rejoined the meeting.**

Councilman Park: Any need for a closed session or any other business? If not, I am looking for a motion to adjourn.

**A motion was made by Councilwomen Crittenden to adjourn, the motion was seconded by Councilman Goode the motion passed all in favor.**