



## **UNIFIED FIRE AUTHORITY BOARD BENEFITS & COMPENSATION COMMITTEE MINUTES**

January 22, 2026, 9:00 a.m.

---

1. Call to Order  
CLO Roberts called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.
2. Public Comment  
None  
Public comment was available live and with a posted email address.
3. Minutes Approval  
No meeting minutes to approve.
4. Election of Benefits and Compensation Committee Chair  
Mayor Fotheringham made a motion to appoint Mayor Buroker as Chair of the UFA Benefits and Compensation Committee. Council Member Henderson seconded the motion, and all voted in favor; none opposed.
5. Utah Retirement System Update  
CFO Hill highlighted the URS memo and rate comparison chart outlining current and upcoming retirement contribution rates. Rates are preliminary but expected to be finalized soon without changes. Final rates are expected in approximately one month. CFO Hill explained how to read the chart, noting that the current fiscal year rates are shown in green, the proposed next fiscal year rates are shown in blue, and rate adjustments are shown in orange.

CFO Hill walked through the rate categories and reported that all Tier 1 plans show reductions.

- Tier 1 Firefighter — reduction of approximately 2.0%
- Tier 1 Public Safety — reduction of approximately 0.5%
- Tier 1 Public Employee — reduction of approximately 1.0%

CFO Hill stated that using the current payroll figures, there are estimated savings of around \$560,000.

- Tier 2 Public Employee (employer portion) reduction of approximately 1.0%

Tier 2 Firefighter and Public Safety—Employee Portion Increase

CFO Hill highlighted that the employee rate increases by 1.25% (4.73% → 5.98%). UFA has historically elected to pick up the employee portion by board resolution. The estimated cost to continue pickup is approximately \$267,000. Considering the savings mentioned and should the board continue to pick up the employee portion, there would be savings of \$293,000. CFO Hill

emphasized that these figures are baseline estimates only. COLA and wage adjustments will increase retirement contribution totals.

**Tier 2 Public Employee Impact:**

CFO Hill highlighted that the employee contribution increases by 0.49%. State law does not allow UFA to pick up this portion. Affected employees will see higher payroll deductions.

6. Cost-of-Living Adjustment (CPI) Process

CFO Hill presented the CPI memo and reminded the committee that the UFA Board and UFA Benefits and Compensation Committee have previously approved using a seven-year rolling CPI average. The 2.4% year drops off and is replaced with 2.6%. CFO Hill stated that the rolling average remains at 3.6% for fiscal year 26-27. Staff reminded the committee that the COLA is applied first, then market adjustments are applied afterward, where necessary.

7. Sworn Market Comparison

HR Director Day presented the sworn wage comparable summary report. Human Resources conducted an annual wage comparison using wages from 15 agencies across the Wasatch Front. The comparison evaluates base wages, guaranteed compensation elements, and non-performance pay factors. HRD Day stated that overall, UFA remains well-positioned across all sworn classifications relative to the surveyed agencies. The exception is the Senior Paramedic classification. The Senior Paramedic rank target is held at 3% above market to encourage advancement and retention. A targeted 0.68% market adjustment was identified to maintain the classification's structure positioning at approximately 3% above market.

8. Battalion Chief/Division Chief Rank

Chief Burchett gave the committee a historical explanation of the Battalion Chief/Division Chief rank. The goal for staff has been to maintain a 16% spread from the Captain rank to the BC/DC rank. It would be the recommendation of staff to increase the spread to 18%, which would result in a \$63,000 increase to the budget.

9. Civilian Market Comparison

HR Director Day presented the civilian compensation market review to the committee, stating that 80 civilian positions were reviewed. As a result, 23 positions were proposed to be reclassified to a higher pay grade, with an increased cost of \$29,644, which is a 0.04% increase to the member fee.

Some committee members asked further questions regarding the reclassifications, asking Human Resources to clarify the difference between market pay adjustments within the same classification and true reclassifications due to changed scope and qualifications. HR Director Day explained the process that is followed to make reclassifications, and that the wording might be confusing on the memo. Human resources will clarify the wording used in the memo for the next Benefits and Compensation meeting.

10. Contract Employees

Chief Burchett reminded the committee that, traditionally, the UFA Board meets in April to discuss the performance and compensation of the Chief Legal Officer and the Fire Chief. After the performance review of both positions, market adjustments, when applicable, are brought forward. Chief Burchett proposed that, going forward, the Board consider moving the reviews earlier in the fiscal year to help staff prepare an accurate budget.

Human Resources presented a compensation analysis on the Fire Chief and Chief Legal Officer positions, both contracted positions. The Chief Legal Officer position will be near the midpoint range after COLA and will require a minor adjustment. The group focused on the Fire Chief position.

Chief Burchett provided historical context regarding his initial contract development and compensation positioning at the time of his hire. Chief Burchett began the role approximately four years ago. At the time of hire, compensation was intentionally set below market and mutually understood by Chief Burchett and the Board. Chief Burchett's contract structure reflected a phased market-alignment approach rather than immediate mid-point placement. Chief Burchett's contract included three consecutive annual increases of 4% to gradually move compensation towards the mid-market target. Chief Burchett stated that the contract structure has worked as intended and that he was not making a request to reopen or renegotiate the contract terms. The current discussion regarding his contract relates only to market alignment.

Staff reminded the committee of how comparator agencies were selected for the contract market reference, emphasizing that organizational complexity, not just size, was a critical factor when identifying agencies to compare. Market comparisons show the Fire Chief's compensation is significantly lower than mid-market.

Mayor Buroker acknowledged the difficulty of self-advocating compensation in an open committee setting and commended the Fire Chief for handling the discussion professionally and transparently. The committee will review market data related to the Fire Chief further and will have a follow-up discussion in the February Benefits and Compensation Committee Meeting.

11. 401K Contribution

Chief Burchett and Local 1696 President Kiyoshi Young addressed the Board regarding a potential 401K contribution. Currently, UFA does not provide a 401k contribution to employees. Most comparable fire agencies are now offering 401k matches. A potential 2-3% 401k match structure was introduced for committee consideration, along with maintaining the 2% VEBA post-retirement medical support account contribution. The Benefits and Compensation Committee asked staff to provide an overview of the VEBA program at the next meeting in February in hopes to better understand all benefits that are being offered to the employee group.

12. Possible Closed Session

None

13. Adjournment

Mayor Fotheringham moved to adjourn the January 22, 2026, UFA Benefits and Compensation Committee Meeting. Mayor Jackson seconded the motion, and all voted in favor; none opposed.

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Council Member Henderson

Mayor Buroker

Mayor Jackson

Mayor Fotheringham

Mayor Bennion

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE

Chief Dominic Burchett  
HRD Kiley Day

CFO Tony Hill  
Clerk Micayla Dinkel

CLO Biran Roberts

ATTENDEES

AC Dern  
Union President Young  
DOC Easton  
Jill Tho  
Kate Turnbaugh

AC Russell  
Captain Doyle  
OC Kay  
Katherine Petersen  
Sylvia Cardenas

AC Robinson  
FF Bird  
HR Deputy Director Ricotta  
Bill Brass