



UNIFIED FIRE AUTHORITY BOARD FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

May 8, 2025

Meeting held both electronically via Zoom Webinar/UFA Headquarters

Committee Members Present:

Council Member Hull
Council Member Fotheringham
Council Member Harris
Council Member Henderson
Mayor Weichers

Council Member Butterfield
Council Member Buroker
Council Member Bailey
Mayor Silvestrini

Staff Present:

Chief Burchett
CFO Hill
AC Russell

CLO Roberts
Kate Turnbaugh
Shelli Fowlks

Guests:

AC Dern
AC Robinson
FM Watkins
Amanda O'Driscoll
Anthony Widdison
Ben Porter
Bill Brass
Brianna Nelson
Brook Burton
Bryan Case
Casey Bowden
Calogero Ricotta
Catherine Kanter, UFA Board
Courtney Samuel
David Chipman
Debbie Cigarroa
Erica Langenfass

Jared Gerber
Jay Torgersen
Jenn Bevan
Jill Tho
Jon Wilde
Jubal Perez
Embret Fossum
Kalle Robertson
Katherine Petersen
Kelly Millard
Kiley Day
Kiyoshi Young
Kristie Overson, UFA Board
Krystal Griffin
Meisha Marriott
Micayla Dinkel
Mike Bagley

Mike Greensides
Molly McClellan
Nate Kay
Nichole Holdaway
Nile Easton
Paul Larsen
Riley Pilgrim
Rob Ayres
Sam Christensen
Station 118
Steve Prokopis
Steve Quinn
Sylvia Cardenas
Tara Behunin
Tony Barker
Tyler Lintz

Call to Order

Meeting called to order by Chair Henderson at 8:01 a.m.

Public Comments

Public comment was made available live and with a posted email address

- ◆ David Chipman joined the meeting via Zoom for public comment
 - ◆ Mr. Chipman began with the Wildland Division, questioning positions and radio purchases.
 - ◆ The Capital Replacement Program followed, with questions concerning the combining of different apparatus into one chart and the movement of apparatus from front line to reserve.

- ◆ The status of the clean air filtration system retrofitting and a comprehensive fleet study was also mentioned.
- ◆ Some updating of the UFA website was also suggested.

Minutes Approval

Mayor Silvestrini moved to approve the minutes from the April 10, 2025 Finance Committee Meeting as submitted

Council Member Fotheringham seconded the motion

All voted in favor, none opposed

FY25/26 In-Grade Wage Adjustment for Variable Schedule WL Employees – AC Dern/DC Widdison

- ◆ The federal government recently enacted a resolution that significantly increased wildland firefighter compensation. As a result, the State of Utah has decided to stay in-market and will increase the state wildland firefighter compensation.
 - ◆ The Federal and State of Utah Wildland Firefighter Programs are comparable agencies for UFA Wildland Firefighters.
- ◆ AC Dern is seeking an increase of just over \$91,000 for personnel expenditures with a corresponding revenue adjustment for the FY 25/26 budget.
 - ◆ These adjustments were unknown and not presented through the typical budget process
 - ◆ Adjustments would be effective July 1, 2025.
 - ◆ The state has provided approval to increase the billing rate for wildland positions. The \$91,000 would be fully covered through UFA's rate agreement with the state.

Mayor Silvestrini moved to recommend the updated Variable Schedule Wildland Firefighter pay plan as discussed

Council Member Buroker seconded the motion

All voted in favor, none opposed

FY25/26 Seasonal Wildland Firefighter Pay Scale Adjustment – AC Dern/DC Widdison

- ◆ AC Dern noted that this request is similar to the previous agenda item. The federal resolution has also impacted UFA's seasonal wildland firefighter pay scale. AC Dern is seeking an increase of \$84,000 in expenditure and revenue for the Salt Lake Hand Crew. No adjustment is needed for Camp Williams.
- ◆ AC Dern presented two options for the Fuels Crew
 - 1) Increase the general fund transfer by \$50,000, bringing the total transfer to \$485,000. This allows staffing of 10 personnel. This will be approx. a 0.05% increase in the member fee.
 - 2) Reduce the number of personnel by one with the intent to increase to 10 in the next fiscal budget year.

Council Member Fotheringham moved to approve the FY25/26 Seasonal Wildland Firefighter Pay Scale Adjustment as discussed in Option 1

Mayor Silvestrini seconded the motion

All voted in favor, none opposed

Budget Presentation

- ◆ Introduction and Profile – Chief Burchett/CFO Hill
 - ◆ Chief Burchett provided an overview of the budget process, including the proposed increase in the member fee.
 - ◆ Chief Burchett reviewed the UFA population service area, call volume, and history.
 - ◆ Chief Burchett explained the weighted voting process as outlined in the interlocal agreement.
 - ◆ Chief Burchett noted the current board members and subcommittee members, as well as those serving as liaisons to municipalities.

- ◆ Finance Budget Overview – CFO Hill
 - ◆ CFO Hill introduced the Fund Structure for UFA.
 - ◆ The Finance Budget Message includes a snapshot of where the agency has been and where it is budgeted to be in future years.
 - ◆ CFO Hill noted the FTE chart, which includes a request for 37 new FTE’s for review and consideration in this budget process.
 - ◆ CFO Hill mentioned adjustments to the fee schedule. The proposed adjustment requires a public hearing, which will be held at a later date.
 - ◆ Council Member Buroker thanked the HR division for downgrading a position, resulting in cost savings.
- ◆ Strategic Plan Overview – Chief Burchett
 - ◆ The plan contains 5 sustaining goals and 5 key initiatives.
 - ◆ All division budget items are tied directly to the Strategic Plan to ensure that we are preparing a budget that is in line with community and stakeholder fire service needs.
- ◆ Fund Summaries – CFO Hill
 - ◆ CFO Hill reviewed the revenue and expenditure fund summaries of the personnel, non-personnel, service, and capital asset funds.
- ◆ Funding Sources – Chief Burchett/CFO Hill
 - ◆ Member Fee – Chief Burchett
 - ◆ Chief Burchett discussed the member fee system and how proportioning is determined between municipalities.
 - ◆ Chief Burchett summarized that each municipality has access to all UFA resources, but only pays a portion of that cost.
 - ◆ 911 Emergency Transport – CFO Hill
 - ◆ This is the second largest revenue source for UFA.
 - ◆ CFO Hill addressed the history of the program, staffing, and call volume.
 - ◆ Council Member Fotheringham inquired about the Gold Cross Billing rate, specifically the collection statistics and bad debt.
 - ◆ CFO Hill responded that most of the bad debt comes through private insurance and self-pay.
 - ◆ UFA recently hired a new collection agency and has been pleased with their progress.
 - ◆ Other Funding Sources – CFO Hill
 - ◆ Council Member Fotheringham also inquired about fees for city events.
 - ◆ FM Watkins responded that the cities are not billed for permits. Fees would apply to school districts, churches, etc.
 - ◆ CFO Hill summarized additional funding sources, which include grants and interest income.
- ◆ Emergency Services – Assistant Chief Dern
 - ◆ Emergency Operations – Assistant Chief Dern
 - ◆ AC Dern provided an overview of the Operations Division.
 - ◆ The changes to the division expenditures were reviewed and consist of the addition of FTE’s to cover staffing at Stations 107 and 253, staffing a fourth Battalion, and a minimum staffing overtime increase for Standards of Cover (SOC) updating.
 - ◆ AC Dern has proposed funding for a low-acuity unit for a 1-year trial. AC Dern has asked that this be funded through the Fund Balance Special Project Fund. This trial has been presented as an improvement option for addressing low-acuity calls.
 - ◆ AC Dern discussed the market and operational needs of VECC and Central Dispatch, as well as the Special Enforcement program needs and the associated budget costs.
 - ◆ Council Member Buroker commented that it is disappointing that we must utilize overtime money to update the SOC.
 - ◆ Council Member Buroker asked how UFA intends to assess the low-acuity unit to ensure it is saving money?

- ♦ Council Member Buroker asked for a brief explanation on the Special Enforcement RMS.
- ♦ Council Member Buroker stated that it seems a lot of overtime funding is used to cover community events. Have other options been explored?
 - ♦ AC Dern stated that Operations will assess the effectiveness of the low-acuity unit through 3 primary evaluations: First, the safety of our personnel. Second, are we meeting service expectations and still providing good service to the community? Third, what are the cost savings?
 - ♦ AC Dern explained that RMS is a record management system that will link with the dispatch center. CAD is a computer-aided dispatch. The Special Operations Division requires the law enforcement portions of these systems for their work.
 - ♦ CFO Hill stated that the minimum staffing budget is completely overtime funding. This allows UFA to provide the 118 minimum staffing number. The event's overtime cost is covered in a separate budget and is a little under \$20,000.
 - ♦ AC Dern commented regarding the utilization of overtime funds to complete the SOC. This is a request to have 2 members come into a day position for four weeks. They would be dedicated to preparing the SOC. Once completed, the document is good for 3 years.
- ♦ Special Operations – Assistant Chief Russell
 - ♦ AC Russell provided an overview of the Special Operations Division, which includes the HazMat, Heavy Rescue, and Water Rescue programs.
 - ♦ A stress test resulted in a \$18,000 cost savings. These funds were reallocated to replace items that have exceeded their service life.
 - ♦ AC Russell is proposing funding to replace a 22-year-old Stanley hydraulic power unit that has reached the end of its service life.
 - ♦ The HazMat Program requires funding for hazmat detection equipment. This will improve the program's monitoring capabilities.
 - ♦ An additional budget increase is for the Heavy Rescue Program. The proposed amount will allow the certification of 16 new Heavy Rescue Specialists within the organization.
- ♦ Fire Training – Battalion Chief Prokopsis
 - ♦ BC Prokopsis provided an overview of the Fire Training Division.
 - ♦ Fire Training responsibilities include training all new fire personnel as well as providing training opportunities to existing sworn personnel through certification courses and many disciplines.
 - ♦ BC Prokopsis proposed funding for 1 additional FTE to assist with the demand for more frequent and larger recruitment camps and lateral hires.
 - ♦ For future budget consideration, BC Prokopsis explained that Fire Training is currently undergoing a training site feasibility study. BC Prokopsis will bring additional information before the board when the study is completed later this year.
 - ♦ Council Member Buroker asked if a preliminary site plan is available.
 - ♦ BC Prokopsis responded that this has not been finalized but should be available soon.
 - ♦ Council Member Buroker asked if there has been pushback from the community, as neighborhoods are growing around the fire training site.
 - ♦ BC Prokopsis responded that they have not received any complaints. The division is conscious of being good neighbors.
 - ♦ Chair Henderson commented that it would be unwise to overbuild to manage a temporary increase. We would be wise to have a sustainable plan moving forward.
- ♦ Emergency Medical Services – Division Chief Ayres
 - ♦ DC Ayres provided an overview of the Emergency Medical Service Division.
 - ♦ The EMS Division proposes the addition of a 3rd EMS Training Specialist to support initial and ongoing clinical training.
 - ♦ To offset the budget request, the EMS Division has identified \$33,000 in non-personnel cost reductions, plus an additional savings of \$71,000 in overtime reductions.

- ♦ The EMS Division is working with the IT Division to purchase FirstPass software. This program will automate a large portion of the QA/QI process and enable the EMS Division to identify patient care reports that need a closer review.
- ♦ DC Ayres discussed several modest increases to the fee schedule for EMT School and the public CPR courses.
 - ♦ Council Member Buroker would love to hear how the EMS Division encourages a sense of pride within the EMS system, when, culturally, maybe it is much cooler to be a firefighter.
 - ♦ DC Ayres stated that the EMS Division takes pride in providing top-notch medical care. Several award programs have been implemented, such as the Life Saving Award and the Stork Award.
 - ♦ Council Member Buroker asked if the EMS group works with HR when hiring and if the candidates understand that a major portion of the job is medical services.
 - ♦ DC Ayres responded that this message is communicated through the Information Outreach Division and is covered during recruit academy.
- ♦ Urban Search & Rescue – Division Chief Case
 - ♦ The Urban Search & Rescue (USAR) Division is commonly known as Utah Task Force One (UTTF1).
 - ♦ This division works hand-in-glove with the special operations programs within UFA, and the division’s purpose aligns with UFA’s Strategic Plan.
 - ♦ The division is funded primarily with federal funds.
 - ♦ DC Case is proposing a budget increase of 25% for staff overtime to account for work demands related to upcoming training events. One such event will include assisting in the development of an in-state response capability known as SUSAR with the State Department of Emergency Management.
 - ♦ Council Member Hull asked if the US&R program has heard anything from the federal government or had any indication that FEMA funding could be cut.
 - ♦ DC Case responded that a council has been seated at the federal level to review the FEMA program. The Utah Task Force has made several attempts to contact federal delegates to ensure they are fully aware of this task force and its capabilities. The Task Force is also communicating with the State of Utah and will continue to monitor this at the federal and state levels.
- ♦ Wildland and Camp Williams – Division Chief Widdison
 - ♦ The Wildland Division provides experienced resources for local and national incidents. They also focus on UFA communities to educate residents on preparedness and prevention.
 - ♦ The Wildland Division is largely funded through revenue generated from interagency deployments.
 - ♦ Due to the aging fleet and VTF Radios, DC Widdison has proposed using unrestricted net assets of \$225,000 to fund replacements.
 - ♦ Additionally, DC Widdison has proposed that the replacement cost of 2 crew carriers be included in the UFA capital funding. The Wildland Division will be responsible for the payments and interest associated with these costs.
 - ♦ The Camp Williams budget includes a new 5-year contract, which allows the division to staff crews in April rather than May. This crew's focus is on risk reduction before the fire season begins.
 - ♦ Chair Henderson brought forward a question that was introduced during public comment regarding the differing costs of the Wildland Division radios and the Camp Williams Radios.
 - ♦ DC Widdison responded that the cost is associated mainly with rechargeable batteries. Wildland members use a clamshell-type radio with replaceable batteries, as their work is often in remote areas.
 - ♦ Council Member Harris asked about the staffing count.

- ♦ DC Widdison clarified that the division staffs 4 alternates during two weeks of critical training. Those alternates are then able to fill in as needed throughout the season.
- ♦ Chair Henderson paused the meeting for a 10-minute break
 - ♦ Chair Henderson asked DC Widdison to reply to a public comment addressing the need for an Engine Coordinator.
 - ♦ DC Widdison responded that the Engine Coordinator is one of the Wildland Specialists. This is a shared position with Operations. The coordinator works directly with Station 103 as the Wildland Specialist.
- ♦ Support Services – Assistant Chief Robinson
 - ♦ Logistics – Division Chief Greensides
 - ♦ The Logistics Division has made selective budget cuts to save \$181,000 through this year’s stress test. These funds were reallocated to areas of need within the division.
 - ♦ Substantial reductions were noted in capital fleet maintenance, gasoline and diesel fuel budgets, as well as the cost to outfit each firefighter.
 - ♦ DC Greensides highlighted specific funding increases, which included an electronic tool needed for apparatus maintenance, asphalt pavement restoration at the logistics site, supply fixtures, furniture, replacement equipment at Station 103, clothing and provisions to support the Dirty Exchange Program, helmet fronts, and for outfitting UFA firefighters.
 - ♦ The Logistics Division has a future budget request for an additional FTE to assist in the growing workload of laundering turnout gear and to provide the support unit with greater capacity.
 - ♦ Council Member Harris asked about the increasing rates for utilities and water, and if UFA has factored in this increase.
 - ♦ DC Greensides commented that UFA is anticipating some increase in power and utility costs.
 - ♦ Chair Henderson brought forward several questions from public comment regarding muted projects. The first question was regarding the air filtration systems for engines, and the second was a feasibility study of the fleet.
 - ♦ DC Greensides explained that it is not cost-effective to retrofit the older engines with air filtration systems. Moving forward, the air filtration systems will be included in the specifications.
 - ♦ The comprehensive fleet feasibility study began when DC Greensides was very new. He states that he feels confident with where we are in our fleet.
 - ♦ Chair Henderson inquired as to the scope of that study?
 - ♦ DC Greenside shared that the intent was to have the right people in the right locations, and to ensure that we have the correct number of mechanics caring for our fleet.
 - ♦ Information Technology – IT Manager Bowden
 - ♦ The IT Division is fully staffed and has completely transitioned away from a managed IT contract.
 - ♦ IT Manager Bowden explains that the division's budget is relatively flat, with the largest cost increase from Dark Horse, the purchase of FirstPass software for the EMS Division, and ESO Snowflake.
 - ♦ IT Manager Bowden highlighted a request to upgrade the Communication Specialist to a supervisor. This will create an organizational structure similar to that of other divisions and will allow for future advancement opportunities within the IT Division.
 - ♦ Council Member Buroker commented that she would love to see some research from the IT Division on the payroll process at UFA, specifically options that would move away from the manual functions that are currently used.
 - ♦ Emergency Management – Emergency Management Director Behunin
 - ♦ EMD Behunin provided an overview of the Emergency Management Division.
 - ♦ The funding for this division comes largely from Salt Lake County.
 - ♦ EMD Behunin outlined overall savings and stated that there is no increase to the budget.

- ◆ Revenue sources include federal grants, and there is some unknown with federal funding. EMD Behunin is working closely with state partners as new updates come from the White House Administration.
- ◆ EMD Behunin highlighted a software purchase for Starlink Go Kits.
 - ◆ Council Member Buroker asked EMD Behunin to describe the Starlink Go Kit.
 - ◆ EMS Behunin responded that Starlink is creating a compact kit that provides Wi-fi internet capabilities. This kit will allow for internet and cell communication during emergency events.
- ◆ Administration & Planning – Assistant Chief Russell
 - ◆ The Administration & Planning budget reflects a deliberate focus on maintaining essential services and supporting the priorities of the organization.
 - ◆ AC Russell highlighted the Behavioral Health Program Coordinator. This part-time position has been funded through a grant. AC Russell is proposing a fund increase to cover this part-time position moving forward.
 - ◆ Additional proposed budget increases include additional funding for cyber insurance, growing staffing needs, and the replacement of employee badges.
 - ◆ AC Russell highlighted the travel budget, noting that the agency has made intentional and difficult decisions to limit travel expenses.
- ◆ Fire Prevention – Fire Marshal Watkins
 - ◆ FM Watkins provided an overview of the Prevention Division.
 - ◆ Highlights include UFA’s Hazardous Materials Inspections. This program generates over \$285,000 in revenue. Inspectors facilitate roughly 1,100 inspections per year, with an estimated 500-600 businesses that need to be inspected.
 - ◆ FM Watkins has allocated \$45,000 for a cadre to support Prevention in facilitating HazMat inspections.
- ◆ Special Enforcement – Division Chief Larsen
 - ◆ The Special Enforcement Division provides a vital and highly specialized service through UFA.
 - ◆ DC Larsen highlighted professional development within the division and has a future budget request to create a Specialist III position within the program.
 - ◆ DC Larsen briefly explained several services provided through the Special Enforcement Division in the past year, including the completion of 206 background checks, response to 293 explosive and fire-related incidents, and 82 SWAT Paramedic deployments.
- ◆ Finance – CFO Hill
 - ◆ The Finance Division is requesting \$3,600 for training and professional development.
 - ◆ The external auditor's fees have increased by \$3,200.
 - ◆ UFA is required to conduct a full evaluation of the OPEB program every 6 years, with an associated cost of \$6,000.
 - ◆ Additional requests are to align ambulance costs with revenue, and to match the state-set Medicaid Match Program.
 - ◆ In response to an earlier question from Council Member Buroker regarding the complicated payroll process, CFO Hill provided information surrounding UFA’s payroll, scheduling, and HR Management software needs.
 - ◆ Through a bid process, UFA identified two proposals that met the minimum requirements for our agency and entered into a 5-year contract with UKG.
 - ◆ CFO Hill briefly explained the complex scheduling and payroll needs of UFA.

- ◆ Human Resources – HR Director Day
 - ◆ HR Director Day provided an overview of the HR Division, highlighting the reclassification of one Deputy Director position to a Senior HR Analyst position and the part-time Administrative Assistant position to a full-time HR Technician.
 - ◆ Proposed increases include professional service fees to accommodate the rising cost of background investigations, psychological evaluations, and medical assessments.

- ◆ Office of the Fire Chief – Chief Burchett
 - ◆ Information Outreach – Director of Communications Easton
 - ◆ The IO Division identified a \$4,000 savings, primarily through cutbacks in recruitment marketing.
 - ◆ DOC Easton is proposing an increase of \$3,000 for overtime staffing. This will allow his team to staff additional events and after-hours incident response.
 - ◆ DOC Easton is requesting \$4,000 to replace the aging wraps on trailers.
 - ◆ Capital Replacement – Chief Burchett & CFO Hill
 - ◆ Chief Burchett outlined the Capital Replacement Fund.
 - ◆ This is funded primarily through a contribution from the general fund and through the sale of equipment.
 - ◆ The plan includes 3 rotating lease payments, with 6- or 9-year terms.
 - ◆ Chair Henderson asked, based on public comment, why the staff vehicles were moved from a 9-year life to 6 years.
 - ◆ DC Greensides responded that Logistics identified cost savings on our staff vehicles if they are on a 6-year rotation.
 - ◆ Chair Henderson added a comment regarding financial planning, stating that the 6-year plan smooths out the financial obligation and makes planning more predictable.
 - ◆ DC Greensides commented that this is also the case with the large apparatus.
 - ◆ Chief Burchett commented that Council Member Stewart asked UFA to look into an actual lease program last year, and DC Greensides took the initiative. DC Greensides found that moving the light fleet vehicles to the 6-year loan was the most cost effective way to manage light fleet.
 - ◆ Chair Henderson asked UFA staff to provide information regarding the Air-Light Unit, as mentioned in public comment. Will it be out of service more often because they are responding to more calls?
 - ◆ Chief Burchett responded that the Air-Light Unit will not have an increased call volume. They will have increased responsibilities. The unit is stationed in Copperton, which has a history of low call volume. The unit is now referred to as the Rehab Vehicle. It makes financial sense to run this vehicle out of a slow station.
- ◆ Closing Remarks – Chief Burchett
 - ◆ Chief Burchett stated that UFA Division Leaders have made difficult decisions while preparing division budgets.
 - ◆ Chief Burchett noted that this has been 6 months of hard work. He feels that UFA has made progress in the areas of sustainability. He is also proud of UFA's finance and funding models.

Deliberation – Chair Henderson

- ◆ Chair Henderson and the committee did not request time for deliberation. Chair Henderson appreciates the work and sacrifice made and recognizes that this has not been easy.

Consensus on Recommendation to Full Board of Directors – Chair Henderson

Mayor Silvestrini recommended submitting the proposed budget to the Board of Directors for consideration
 Council Member Harris seconded the motion
 All voted in favor, none opposed

Closed Session

- ◆ None

Council member Buroker moved to adjourn the May 8, 2025 UFA Finance Committee Meeting

Mayor Silvestrini seconded the motion

All voted in favor, none opposed

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