



UNIFIED FIRE AUTHORITY BOARD MINUTES

May 16, 2023, 7:30 a.m.

Electronically Via ZOOM Webinar/UFA Headquarters – 3380 South 900 West SLC, UT 84119

1. Call to Order
Quorum present
Chair Weichers called the meeting to order at 7:34 a.m.
2. Public Comment
None
Public comment was available live and with a posted email address
3. Approval of Minutes
Council Member Stewart moved to approve the minutes from the April 18, 2023 UFA Board Meeting as submitted
Council Member Hull seconded the motion
All voted in favor, none opposed
4. Consent Agenda
 - Review of April Disbursements
 - No discussion

Mayor Dahle moved to approve the April disbursements as submitted
Council Member Perry seconded the motion
All voted in favor, none opposed
5. Committee Updates
 - Benefits & Compensation Committee – Chair Dahle
 - No meeting held
 - Governance Committee – Chair Silvestrini
 - No meeting held
 - Finance Committee – Chair Henderson
 - Meeting held 5/9/23
 - Council Member Henderson began with a brief overview of the meeting held on 5/9/23
 - One concern that was expressed was the additional requested administrative FTE's, specifically IT, and asked that IT Manager Bowden address the Board
 - Council Member Henderson is concerned that adding personnel will erode the efficiencies in scale
 - IT Manager Bowden explained that the previous direction was to contract the IT work, but the his desire is to bring it back in-house
 - IT Manager Bowden is working to automate many of the processes, this is part of his “automate or die” direction
 - The previous in-house support did not automate, and the current contract is not automating
 - Automation is cost control and the economies of scale will be realized over time

- Council Member Henderson worries that while there may be initial savings with automation, more personnel may be needed and added
 - As long as automation is the goal and not additional personnel, then the savings will be realized
- CFO Hill, in response to a question, stated that the costs are neutral depending on where in the pay range the new personnel are brought in, this is just a movement of funding in the budget
- Mayor Dahle expressed his concern in this area as FTE's always result in added cost to the organization
 - The organization needs to stay strong and healthy and has a good culture, but when layering personnel, it chews into the ability to stay competitive in the long-term
 - The mayor would like to see the data analyst position defended
 - While his thoughts are to remain competitive with COLA's, longevity, and step programs, adding more personnel puts UFA in a bad position long-term
 - Mayor Dahle would like the analyst position, but make sure we really need it, or can it be put off for now, make sure we are lean and healthy for the personnel who are here now
- IT Manager Bowden stated that the funding for the data analyst is from another account
 - Currently UFA has 50 automations with no staff, the focus of the analyst is only reporting, not management
 - Again, this is not adding a position, but shifting funding in the budget
- Chief Burchett explained that in 2018 UFA had an in-house data analyst, but the funding was then moved into professional services to contract with two companies
 - It was found that these companies did not truly understand the goal and the fire service and data in general
 - The ability to make data informed decisions is critical and this came to light while working through the Standards of Cover and the Strategic Plan
 - An in-house analyst would be involved in the process and produce what is needed more efficiently and quickly, there is a need to move forward on all decisions from a data informed stance
 - Currently there are 50 different data sets that are pulled from, and an in-house analyst would be more efficient
- Mayor Dahle asked as to why there is a \$25,000 increase if the funding is shifting within the budget
 - IT Manager Bowden explained there is \$150,000 in professional services, \$100,000 of that would be directed toward the analyst position with the need to increase \$25,000 for wages
 - Mayor Dahle reminded the Board that when changes such as these are made, there are also inflationary components that are ongoing as opposed to a contract fee, so be careful
 - The mayor expressed his trust in Chief that this is a critical position, but if adding administrative layers, ensure we absolutely need them
- Council Member Henderson stressed that efficiency is the issue, the efficiency is diminished the larger the agency gets, stay efficient, do not get too top heavy
 - The data analyst must help achieve the goals as efficiently as possible
- IT Manager Bowden also pointed out that the analyst will not only be pulling data, but the intent is to keep the position as busy as possible and provide value to the organization
 - The intent is to buy software before we buy people
 - The automation will weave into the culture and is part of IT Manager Bowden's 3–5-year strategy
- Again, Council Member Henderson stressed that the focus must be on automation rather than adding more personnel to do the work

- In answer to Mayor Weichers question regarding if the current contract provides data analytics, IT Manager Bowden explained “no”, currently there is an entry-level analyst in Biotech, but that is the only one currently in-house
 - This ask is for a senior analyst
- Again, IT Manger Bowden stressed that his philosophy is to emphasize the ability to automate and keep expenses low
- Council Member Henderson also inquired as to the Staff Captain in IO, are we in danger there of being too top heavy
 - Mayor Dahle once again stated that there is a need to protect those currently employed
 - It is easy to add personnel, but the following years; when discussing COLA’s, markets, and the overall impact to cities, we need to defend these decisions
 - Council Member Henderson agreed, this is especially true with supervisory positions
- Further discussion on merit increases and the definition and various interpretations and uses of the term “merit” followed
- No further questions regarding the requested FTE’s
- Council Member Henderson explained that the real cost for UFA is the cost of service, which is the personnel who provide the service
 - At some point, the cost will exceed what taxpayers can burden, and this point is fast approaching
 - There needs to be a threshold of monies, there is a finite personnel pool
 - The “Top 3” goal is aspirational, not realistic every year
 - There is no COLA in the private sector, pay increases for public safety in general over the past 4-5 years is way ahead of actual inflation
 - Pay is topping out, and it is anticipated that this must be a topic of discussion, merit’s shouldn’t be automatic
 - Some positions at UFA last year received raises up to 15%
 - All fire entities are scrambling to keep up as a race to the top, but in actuality it is a race to the bottom
 - Most entities do a rolling average, which evens out over time
 - Council Member Henderson stated that we need to look at how we are handling this and keep the organization viable long-term so that we don’t get caught and have to take a step back
 - Mayor Dahle reminded the Board that there was a time when the economy was down and there weren’t COLA’s, or they were low
 - There is also the need to be careful with merit increases
 - The Board should be proud of all the work done to this point, but now the economy is flat, and we need to look down the road and watch for challenges to maintain and move forward
 - Taxpayers are significantly impacted by inflation and asking for more taxes has reached the ceiling
 - The mayor stressed that he would rather make a hard wise decision now rather than let things get out of control and the need to cut back arise
- Council Member Henderson stated that the intent is to not make changes across the board, but the discussion will be ongoing
- Council Member Henderson and the Finance Committee recommend that the budget be passed as presented, with the understanding that these topic discussions will continue
- Chief Burchett informed the Board that the Behavioral Health Grant was awarded to UFA last week, \$280,000
 - Also noted was that the SLCo Council postponed the canyon contribution decision for another 2-weeks
 - Deputy Mayor Kanter clarified that it was a question of semantics with regard to the resolution and that Council Woman Stringham is drafting an alternate resolution

6. Discussion and Approval of the 2023/2024 Tentative Budget – Chair Weichers

- Mayor Weichers asked that each Board Member express any concern with the budget
 - Council Member Stewart is in support
 - Mayor Stevenson agrees with Council Member Henderson and supports the budget
 - Mayor Knopp clarified that what he is hearing here is that the Board needs to say “no” once in a while
 - Deputy Mayor Kanter is in support and agrees with Council Member Henderson
 - Council Member Perry hopes that the Board does not avoid comparisons between agencies in order to avoid challenging comparisons
 - Mayor Dahle felt he already expressed his opinions
 - Council Member Hull supports the budget, but reminded the Board that we only have taxes for income, but be careful with comparisons for wages as there is no way to generate additional funding other than taxation
 - Mayor Overson supports the budget and documents
 - Council Member Henderson already expressed his opinions
 - Mayor Westmoreland supports the budget
 - Mayor Bourke supports the budget and agrees and thanked Council Member Henderson for his opinion and direction moving forward
- In closing, Mayor Weichers wants the organization to know the Board supports them and thanked both sworn and civilians for their amazing work

Council Member Henderson moved to approve the 2023/2024 Tentative Budget as presented

Council Member Stewart seconded the motion

Roll call vote taken

Bailey	Y	Knopp	Y
Bourke	Y	Overson	Y
Buroker	-	Perry	Y
Butterfield	-	Silvestrini	-
Dahle	Y	Stevenson	Y
Harris	Y	Stewart	Y
Henderson	Y	Weichers	Y
Hull	Y	Westmoreland	Y
Kanter	Y		

7. Consider the Date of June 20, 2023 for Two Public Hearings to Receive and Consider Comments on:

- a. Proposed Amendments to the 2022/2023 Fiscal Year Budget
- b. Final Budget for the 2023/2024 Fiscal Year

- CFO Hill explained that this will be the official budget adoption for FY23/24 and approval for amendments for the current year, FY22/23

Council Member Stewart moved to set the date of June 20, 2023 for two Public Hearings to receive and consider comments on the proposed amendments to the 2022/2023 Fiscal Year Budget and the Final Budget for the 2023/2024 Fiscal Year as presented

Mayor Dahle seconded the motion

All voted in favor, none opposed

8. Fraud Risk Assessment

- CFO Hill reviewed the assessment
- The score is “low risk” at 355 points
- Council Member Stewart, as he did last year, challenged staff to encourage the State Auditor to change the wording/requirement or for UFA to reevaluate the annual signing of an ethics agreement
 - Again, referring to the issues that plagued UFA years ago
- Mayor Weichers feels good about the internal controls, but stressed that it is the external factors that worry him most
 - The mayor stressed the importance of all staff awareness of phishing emails and feels that UFA should send monthly test emails that if failed, would require those failing to take a class on cyber threats
 - The goal is that all staff be consistently aware of potentially fraudulent activity toward UFA

Council Member Perry moved to approve the Fraud Risk Assessment as presented

Council Member Hull seconded the motion

All voted in favor, none opposed

9. Fire Chief Report

- Fireworks Mapping – FM Larson
 - Fire Marshal Larson gave a brief overview of the timeline for fireworks
 - The fireworks map is scheduled for publishing 6/1
 - Reminded the Board that the dates for discharge are 2-days prior and following the holiday
 - In answer to Deputy Mayor Kanter’s question of whether UFA was planning on doing a PR campaign again this year, Fire Marshal Larson replied “yes”
 - Chief Burchett clarified that currently the focus is flooding and there has not been any discussion between departments as to whether or not the valley Fire Chiefs will once again do a media campaign together as was done last year
- Flood Update – DC Mecham
 - Division Chief Mecham provided an update to the flood situation
 - The concern currently is City Creek, Neffs, and Millcreek
 - It is anticipated that BCC and LCC flows won’t increase until June
 - Many municipality emergency declarations have been made
 - Emigration Canyon has unloaded it’s snow load for the most part
 - The main focus for public works and flood control continues to be keeping debris out of the creeks and drainage clearance
 - Emergency Management has worked with all municipalities to ensure command structures and emergency procedures are in place if the need arises
- Strategic Plan Update – Captain Quinn
 - Captain Quinn outlined the process going forward
 - Work to identify community leaders who wish to participate in meetings to help with challenges and analysis within their communities will take place
 - Meetings with the municipalities will be scheduled June/July
 - Aug/Sept work on the plan will take place
 - Oct/Nov the plan will come before the Board for approval
 - Chief Burchett invites 3-4 Board Members to take part in an ad hoc committee, to be heavily involved with the plan, creating key initiatives, and providing direction for the plan, please reach out to Clerk Young if interested

- Bluffdale Update
 - Year to date, UFA has received 66 calls for services and have received help on 37
 - Thus far there has not been a huge impact, but tracking continues
 - Bluffdale is working to increase their staffing

10. Closed Session

None

11. Adjournment

Council Member Stewart moved to adjourn the May 16, 2023 meeting

Council Member Henderson seconded the motion

All voted in favor, none opposed

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Council Member Kathleen Bailey

Council Member Catherine Harris

Mayor Robert Dahle

Council Member Trish Hull

Mayor Marcus Stevenson

Mayor Dan Knopp

Mayor Tom Westmoreland

Mayor Kristie Overson

Council Member Jared Henderson

Mayor Mike Weichers

Council Member Allan Perry

Deputy Mayor Catherine Kanter

Mayor Jeff Silvestrini

Mayor Roger Bourke

Council Member Sheldon Stewart

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Council Member Chrystal Butterfield

Council Member Tish Buroker

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

Chief Dominic Burchett

CFO Tony Hill

CLO Brian Roberts

Cynthia Young, Clerk

OTHER ATTENDEES:

Aaron Whitehead

AC Dern

AC Robinson

Adam Park

Anthony Widdison

Bill Brass

Brad Larson

Bryan Case

Calogero Ricotta

Casey Bowden

Catherine Harris

Chad Simons

Clint Mecham

Courtney Samuel

Danny Egbert

David Chipman

Embret Fossum

Eric Willden

Erica Langenfass

Jay Torgersen

Jeff Silvestrini

Jill Tho

Kate Turnbaugh

Kelly Bird

Ken Aldridge

Kiyoshi Young

Krystal Griffin

Kyle Maurer, Herriman City

Lana Burningham

Local 1696

Mike Greensides

Nate Bogenschutz

Nate Kay

Nile Easton

Paul Fotheringham

Rachel Anderson

Rian Andrus

Richard Rich

Riley Pilgrim

Rob Ayres
Scott McNeil
Shelli Fowlks
Station 121

Steve Ball
Steve Quinn
Tara Behunin
Tim Tingey

Val Greensides
Wade Watkins

DRAFT