



UNIFIED FIRE AUTHORITY BOARD MINUTES

August 18, 2026 7:30 AM

Electronically via Zoom Webinar/UFA Headquarters-3380 South 900 West SLC, UT 84119

- Call to Order

Quorum present

Chair Fotheringham called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

- Public Comment

No members of the public requested to speak either in person or electronically. Public comment was available live and through the posted public comment email address.

- Special Recognition—Councilmember Tyler Huish

UFA recognized White City Councilmember Tyler Huish for his dedicated service to UFA and UFSA. Chair Fotheringham expressed appreciation for Councilmember Huish's leadership, support of UFA firefighters and staff, and commitment to providing exceptional emergency services throughout UFA's communities.

Councilmember Huish thanked the Board and stated that serving with UFA had been one of the best parts of his service as a city councilmember. He expressed his appreciation for the organization and those who serve within it.

- Minutes Approval

a. July 21, 2026, UFA Board Meeting Minutes

Mayor Gettel made a motion to approve the July 21, 2026, UFA Board Meeting minutes as submitted.

Mayor Gray seconded the motion. All voted in favor; none opposed. The motion passed unanimously.

- Committee Updates

Chair Fotheringham reported that no committee meetings had been held since the previous Board meeting.

- Consent Agenda

a. Review of July Disbursements

CFO Hill presented the July disbursements for the Board to review. He noted that the report was generally consistent with previous months. No questions or concerns were raised.

Mayor Gettel made a motion to approve the consent agenda as submitted. Mayor Overson seconded the motion. All voted in favor; none opposed. The motion passed unanimously.

- **Quarterly Financial Report**

CFO Hill presented the Quarterly Financial Report and provided the Board with a preliminary look at fiscal year 2026 year-end results. He noted that the figures were not yet final, as Finance continued processing year-end transactions and preparing for the annual audit. Final year-end numbers will be presented following completion of the audit.

General Fund

CFO Hill reported approximately \$98 million in General Fund revenue, which was generally consistent with expectations. Member fees had been fully collected, and ambulance revenue totaled \$13.6 million. Although ambulance revenue was \$590,000 below budget at the time of the report, collections remained within the 60-day year-end window, and CFO Hill anticipated the budget would be met or exceeded.

Other fees totaled \$3.1 million and were generally on budget, including \$365,000 in hazmat fees. Intergovernmental and grant revenues were also consistent with expectations. CFO Hill clarified that the majority of the apparent revenue shortfall was related to the budgeted appropriation of fund balance. Excluding that appropriation and accounting for remaining ambulance revenue, total revenue was expected to be \$99 million and essentially on budget.

Salary and benefit expenditures totaled \$79.1 million. Vacancies resulted in savings in salaries, wages, and benefits, while overtime was slightly over budget due in part to vacancy coverage. Overall, salary and benefit expenditures were \$2.4 million under budget, which CFO Hill noted was consistent with prior years and assists UFA in meeting the annual member fee credit.

Other expenditure variances included savings in clothing due to smaller recruit camps and an under-expenditure in paramedic school due to fewer students than budgeted. Fuel and vehicle maintenance exceeded their individual budgets somewhat but were offset by savings in other areas.

All planned transfers to the capital and wildland funds had been completed, including \$5.8 million to the Fire Capital Fund for debt service and slightly less than \$500,000 for the Wildland Fuels Crew.

Total General Fund expenditures, including encumbrances, were \$97.9 million, with approximately \$3.9 million in under-expenditures at the time of the report. CFO Hill anticipated the final under-expenditure would be approximately 3–4%, consistent with UFA’s historical experience.

Financial Impact of Major Incidents

Mayor Overson asked about the financial impact of significant fire events, including overtime, equipment costs, and potential state or federal reimbursement.

Chief Burchett explained that costs vary by incident. The North Union Apartments fire required some additional staffing and overtime to maintain system coverage, while certain wildland incidents may qualify for State reimbursement. UFA also budgets for normal emergency response expenses, including equipment and hose that may be damaged or consumed during incidents. Staff indicated that most of these costs can be managed within the existing operating budget.

Other Funds

The Wildland Fund reported \$7.8 million in revenue and \$7.1 million in expenditures. Despite a busy year, the fund was expected to add to fund balance, which is used for future replacement of engines, crew carriers, and other program equipment.

The Emergency Management Fund received slightly more than \$3 million in revenue and had \$3.5 million in expenditures. \$430,000 of fund balance was used for planned one-time purchases.

The Fire Capital Fund reported \$28.1 million in revenue and \$28.2 million in expenditures, primarily related to loan proceeds and purchases of apparatus, vehicles, ZOLL monitors, and other equipment. The Eagle Mountain Capital Fund activity primarily consisted of a transfer to build fund balance for future capital needs.

The Wildland Fire Station project remained in its early stages, with \$84,000 spent on design and construction management. These costs are reimbursable through the Bureau of Land Management. CFO Hill stated that preliminary year-end results were generally consistent with expectations and that final figures would be presented as the year-end closeout and audit progressed.

The Board thanked CFO Hill and the Finance Division for their work and the positive year-end financial position.

Mayor Jackson made a motion to approve the quarterly report as submitted. Mayor Gray seconded the motion. All voted in favor; none opposed. The motion passed unanimously.

- **Operations Report**

Pioneer Day Holiday Response

Assistant Chief Dern provided a follow-up regarding emergency activity during the July 24 and 25 holiday period. UFA responded to 30 fewer incidents compared with the same period the previous year. Although 30 incidents may not appear significant across an entire day, AC Dern explained that the reduction was particularly meaningful because these calls typically occur within the concentrated two-hour period between approximately 8:30 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. Historically, dispatch and field resources experience nearly continuous activity during that period.

UFA also experienced 20 fewer fire incidents during the July 24–25 period compared with the prior year. Two somewhat significant fires occurred. One was initially reported in Midvale but was ultimately determined to be in West Jordan near the Jordan River bottoms. UFA crews and the Fuels Crew assisted with the incident. A second small grass fire occurred in Midvale. Both incidents were fireworks-related and were contained quickly.

Call Volume Report

UFA had responded to more than 25,000 incidents year-to-date. Based on current trends, AC Dern anticipated approximately 40,000–42,000 incidents by the end of the year, representing an increase of approximately 3,000 incidents. First-due performance was 94.7%. Unit hour utilization had increased approximately 0.4% year-to-date.

For July, UFA responded to just under 4,000 incidents, 360 more calls than July of the previous year. AC Dern explained that July is historically a busy month because of increased outdoor activity, community events, and fire activity, but the year-over-year increase was still significant. July first-due performance remained at 94%.

There were 369 concurrent calls during July. AC Dern noted that the North Union Apartments fire significantly affected this figure because UFA resources remained committed to that incident for three and one-half days while the organization continued responding to other emergencies. Several units experienced increased unit hour utilization during July, including Medic Ambulance 101, Medic Ladder 106, Medic Ladder 110, and Battalion 14. Much of the increase was directly related to the North Union incident and the need for other units to provide broader coverage while resources were committed to the fire.

July incidents included 156 fires, 237 hazardous situations, and 2,700 medical calls. Fire responses had increased from 88 in April to 113 in May, 153 in June, and 156 in July. AC Dern anticipated similar activity during August before the typical seasonal decline.

Chair Fotheringham asked whether any of the metrics caused concern, particularly the nearly 10% increase in July call volume and continued growth within UFA communities. AC Dern stated that the increase was generally expected, particularly given growth in several communities. UFA continues to evaluate alternative response models, including the proposed low-acuity unit, as well as community risk reduction strategies to better manage increasing call volume.

Tanner Park Fire

Operations Chief Kay provided an overview of the August 3 Tanner Park Fire. UFA crews responded to a rapidly spreading grass and brush fire along eastbound I-80 near Tanner Park. Crews initiated a direct attack from the freeway while simultaneously coordinating structure protection for nearby residences as

the fire moved through grass, trees, and dense oak brush. Because of the rapid fire spread and difficult terrain, UFA requested aircraft and evaluated potential landing and water-dipping locations for helicopters supporting suppression efforts. Ground and aerial resources worked together to slow the fire's progression and reduce the threat to nearby structures.

UFA's Fuels Crew played a significant role in the response. The crew participated in initial attack operations and returned at 0600 the following morning to assume incident responsibilities and relieve station crews. This allowed frontline personnel to return to service while the Fuels Crew continued suppression and mop-up operations.

OC Kay stated that the incident demonstrated the value of UFA's specialized fuels resources, rapid initial attack capabilities, aerial firefighting coordination, and ability to transition resources during a developing wildland-urban interface incident.

Mayor Jackson, whose neighborhood was affected, thanked UFA for the response and noted the concern experienced by nearby residents. The incident also illustrated that wildland-urban interface risk can exist in areas that may not traditionally be identified as WUI areas.

In response to a question regarding Salt Lake City's involvement, OC Kay explained that the response was coordinated with Salt Lake City Fire Department and included multiple Salt Lake City units. The fire was ultimately delegated to the State, which assumed responsibility for eligible response costs. When asked about the cause, staff indicated that, based on the location where the fire originated, it appeared likely to have started from something associated with the freeway; however, no definitive cause was officially stated.

North Union Apartments Fire – Midvale

Operations Chief Kay provided a detailed report regarding the July 31 fire at the North Union Apartments, located at 942 North Union Avenue in Midvale. The four-alarm fire began in the upper portion of the building and spread rapidly through concealed attic and roof spaces. As conditions deteriorated, interior operations became increasingly unsafe.

Operations Chief Kay explained that large apartment and high-occupancy residential buildings are becoming increasingly common throughout UFA's response area and create unique operational challenges, including high residential populations, complex building layouts, concealed spaces, and the potential for rapid fire growth. Fires in concealed attic and roof spaces may burn or smolder for an extended period before being detected, which can allow a significant fire to become established before the first 911 call is received. These conditions may limit the effectiveness of interior operations and require significant additional resources.

All 220 occupied units were evacuated, displacing hundreds of residents. As the fire progressed and structural concerns increased, crews transitioned to defensive operations. The fire burned for more than 24 hours and required more than 60 hours to fully extinguish.

The extended incident demonstrated the importance of maintaining adequate staffing and apparatus while simultaneously preserving emergency response coverage throughout UFA's service area. Two ladder companies from Stations 117 and 121 were backfilled and assigned to the incident. One was staffed with off-duty Operations personnel and the other with sworn day staff. These additional UFA resources relieved automatic-aid units from neighboring fire departments, allowing those agencies to return resources to their own jurisdictions.

The response required hundreds of personnel hours and significant coordination among UFA, neighboring fire departments, dispatch, law enforcement, Salt Lake County Emergency Management, Midvale City, Animal Services, the American Red Cross, and other community partners.

Drone and thermal-imaging technology also provided important situational awareness, allowing crews to evaluate fire conditions and areas that were unsafe for personnel to enter.

The incident resulted in the safe evacuation of residents with no major firefighter or civilian casualties. Midvale Mayor Dustin Gettel discussed the significant impact of the incident on the community, noting that approximately 1% of Midvale's population had lived in the apartment complex. He reported that the majority of displaced residents had since found housing.

Mayor Gettel thanked UFA and responding agencies for their extensive efforts throughout the incident and recovery. He emphasized the significance of evacuating the building without loss of life or injuries despite the extensive fourth-floor damage.

Mayor Gettel also thanked Operations Chief Kay and UFA personnel for their continued presence at temporary recovery centers established at Hillcrest High School and Union Middle School, where residents needed information and support following the fire.

Operations Chief Kay thanked Midvale City for its support and recognized residents and local businesses that provided water, ice, food, drinks, and other assistance to firefighters during the extended incident.

- Administrative and Planning Report

Assistant Chief Russell introduced the Administration and Planning report and discussed community risk reduction efforts that occur before an emergency.

AC Russell highlighted UFA's Multifamily Housing Inspection Program as an important community risk reduction initiative because of both the number of residents living in multifamily developments and the potentially significant consequences of fires within these properties.

AC Russell explained that the effectiveness of community risk reduction cannot always be quantified because it is difficult to measure fires that never occurred, property that was not damaged, or injuries that were prevented because a hazard was identified and corrected. However, he stated that the Multifamily Housing Inspection Program has likely prevented significant potential fire loss and may have saved lives. Fire Marshal Watkins then provided a detailed update regarding the program.

The program was developed approximately three years ago under former Fire Marshal Brad Larson and Deputy Fire Marshal Devoogd. Fire Inspector Sean Callesto previously served as the program lead, and the program has since expanded with support from Inspectors Greg Bell and Richard Clayton.

The program focuses on reducing fire risk and improving life safety within multifamily housing through targeted inspections, fire safety education, and partnerships with property managers. Fire Marshal Watkins identified two primary goals: establishing productive relationships with property managers and bringing properties into fire code compliance through those relationships. Providing safety information to owners and residents is also an important component.

UFA had completed focused inspections at more than 195 apartment complexes, encompassing approximately 1,788 individual buildings. Inspections evaluate access and egress, fire extinguishers, alarm systems, suppression systems, and other fire and life-safety requirements.

Information gathered during inspections is also compared with incident data, including fire origins, ignition sources, and recurring hazards, allowing UFA to identify trends and better target future inspections, education, and outreach.

Fire Marshal Watkins encouraged Board members to consider the larger multifamily properties within their communities and the challenges those developments may create for emergency responders. Fire Marshal Watkins stated that he was evaluating ways to continue improving and expanding the program.

Mayor Bennion discussed a proposed 14-story apartment development in Cottonwood Heights and emphasized the importance of coordination among fire prevention personnel, developers, property managers, and local governments as increasingly large residential developments are constructed.

Fire Marshal Watkins explained that UFA strives to work cooperatively with property owners and managers to achieve compliance. He emphasized the importance of early and clear communication, particularly when required corrections could create a significant financial impact.

In response to a question regarding resistance from property owners, Fire Marshal Watkins acknowledged that challenges do occur. For example, discovering that numerous fire extinguishers or other systems require replacement may create an unexpected financial obligation for a property owner. Inspectors work with property representatives to clearly communicate expectations and assist them in achieving compliance while ensuring fire code requirements are met.

The Board asked whether elected officials could assist UFA in those efforts. Fire Marshall Watkins encouraged elected officials to remain aware of multifamily properties within their jurisdictions, particularly older developments constructed under different standards and conditions.

- Support Services Report

Assistant Chief Robinson introduced Technology Division Director Casey Bowden and recognized the Technology Division for its work supporting UFA personnel and maintaining reliable organizational systems. Director Bowden explained that the Technology Division consists of three primary areas: Communications, Information Technology, and Biotechnology. The Division supports radios, networks, servers, computers, medical technology, applications, data reporting, and other technology necessary for safe and reliable emergency service.

Director Bowden emphasized that customer service, reliability, accountability, practical solutions, and automation are central to the Division's work. The Division utilizes a ticket-based work system to provide transparency and accountability. Service requests allow the Division to track work, measure response times, and evaluate performance against service-level expectations.

Communications

The Communications group, led by Jared Morgan, supports radios, paging systems, network connectivity, and technology associated with fire stations and apparatus. Director Bowden highlighted the team's role in preparing newly received apparatus for service by ensuring radios, connectivity, and other technology are installed, tested, and operational before the apparatus enters service.

Information Technology

Information Technology provides traditional IT services, including file services, printing, backup and recovery, and help desk support. Director Bowden reported that the Division was in the process of migrating UFA email from on-premises infrastructure to cloud-based services. The migration is expected to

improve collaboration and efficiency for employees. Configuration changes associated with mailbox migration were scheduled to begin shortly, with additional employee communication planned.

Biotechnology and Data Analytics

Biotechnology, led by Staff Captain Andrus, supports technology that directly interfaces with patient care, including AEDs, ZOLL cardiac monitors, LUCAS devices, and medication security systems. The area also includes operational and medical data analytics. Two data analysts support organizational reporting, data analysis, automation, and requests for information.

Cybersecurity

Director Bowden emphasized that cybersecurity is a shared organizational responsibility. He reported on a recent cybersecurity incident during which UFA followed its established incident response plan and temporarily disconnected internet and VPN connections. A third-party review verified that no accounts were compromised, no malicious payloads were delivered, and UFA data was not accessed. Director Bowden stated that other security controls functioned as intended and recognized the Technology Division for its response. UFA planned to conduct a penetration test later in the year using an outside cybersecurity firm to identify potential vulnerabilities and further strengthen security.

Automation and Efficiency

Director Bowden discussed the Division's continued focus on automation and provided printer management as an example. An automated process checks toner levels each morning. When toner at a station drops below a predetermined level, the system automatically generates a service ticket so a technician can replace the toner before the end user experiences an interruption.

The Division has also adjusted toner density to extend cartridge life while maintaining acceptable print quality. Director Bowden stated that these types of small improvements demonstrate the Division's broader focus on efficiency, continuous improvement, customer service, and responsible use of organizational resources.

The Board thanked Director Bowden for the report and recognized the Technology Division's work.

- **Fire Chief Report**

- a. **Event Season Update**

- Chief Burchett asked Director Easton to provide an update regarding UFA's summer community event season and Public Information Officer activities. UFA's PIO team managed more than 100 community events during the summer. Individual PIOs are assigned groups of UFA member communities and work directly with municipal PIOs and event staff.

UFA distributed approximately 7,500 safety-related promotional items during community events. Director Easton noted that the items had been popular and continued to be used by children following the events, helping extend UFA's safety messaging. From May through September, events ranged from smaller community breakfasts to multi-day community celebrations. Individual events may require between two and ten EMTs.

UFA had participated in 12 parades during the season. The 1936 Mack antique engine participated in eight, with additional appearances scheduled. Engine 911 continued to be particularly popular at community events.

The Fire Safety Trailer was also used extensively and provided interactive opportunities for children and families to learn about fire safety, CPR, and other emergency preparedness topics. Upcoming community breakfasts and additional fall and holiday activities were discussed, including Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas events.

Director Easton also discussed the PIO team's response to major incidents. During the North Union Apartments fire, UFA handled more than 100 media interviews and inquiries, including national media attention. UFA PIOs also utilized drone technology to support incident information and situational awareness. Mayor Gettel thanked the PIO team, specifically recognizing Captain Koston for his significant assistance during the North Union Apartments fire.

Board members were also invited to UFA's annual picnic scheduled for August 29 at Magna Copper Park.

b. EMAC Update

Chief Burchett provided an update regarding UFA's Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) deployment. On July 29, UFA deployed eight personnel to Oregon under EMAC, a state-to-state mutual assistance agreement used when an emergency exceeds a state's available resources. The deployment included a task force leader, a task force leader trainee, four personnel assigned to a Type 1/3 engine, and two personnel assigned to a water tender.

Personnel were initially assigned to the Grasshopper Fire in Oregon for approximately three days before being reassigned to Washington in response to significant fires in the Spokane area. UFA personnel primarily conducted nighttime structure protection operations in Spokane and surrounding communities. The crews returned safely on August 15 after completing an 18-day assignment.

Chief Burchett discussed the value of these deployments in developing relationships with agencies in other states and building experience that UFA personnel can bring back to Utah. Fire service leaders in

Oregon and Washington personally contacted Chief Burchett to express appreciation for UFA personnel and their professionalism.

Chief Burchett noted that the recent fires in Washington provide an important reminder that UFA communities face similar wildland-urban interface risks. Fires such as Tanner Park demonstrate how quickly an incident can transition from an urban area into the interface under dry and windy conditions. UFA’s investment in the Fuels Crew has significantly increased local capability, but Chief Burchett stated that additional work remains to continue building organizational resilience and response capacity. Although sending personnel on EMAC assignments can require UFA to use overtime to maintain local staffing, Chief Burchett noted that eligible deployment costs are reimbursed by the State.

c. Mutual and Automatic Aid

Mayor Gettel asked about the brush fire near the Jordan River that was initially reported as a Midvale incident but was ultimately determined to be within West Jordan. Chief Burchett explained that UFA maintains mutual and automatic aid agreements with surrounding fire agencies and that wildland incidents frequently require resources from multiple jurisdictions because of specialized apparatus and operational needs.

AC Dern further explained that the fire was originally dispatched with a Midvale address. West Jordan resources were on scene, including a battalion chief, engine, and Type 6 apparatus. The responding battalion chiefs coordinated command and continued managing the incident collaboratively rather than allowing the jurisdictional boundary to interrupt operations. AC Dern noted that this cooperation works both ways. During the North Union Apartments fire, West Jordan provided several resources, including a ladder company that conducted aerial operations for approximately 14–16 hours.

Because the Jordan River incident was relatively small and had a short operational period, it was not delegated to the State. The associated response costs were therefore considered part of the normal costs of providing mutual and automatic aid.

- Possible Closed Session

No closed session was held.

- Adjournment

Mayor Gray moved to adjourn the August 18, 2026, UFA Board Meeting. Mayor Jackson seconded the motion. All voted in favor; none opposed. The motion passed unanimously.

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mayor Cheri Jackson

Mayor Dustin Gettel

Mayor Paul Fotheringham

Mayor Jared Gray

Mayor Gay Lynn Bennion

Councilmember Catherine Harris

Councilmember Chrystal Butterfield
Councilmember Kathleen Bailey
Mayor Scotty John
Mayor Kristie Overson

Councilmember Jared Henderson
Mayor Roger Bourke
Deputy Mayor Catherine Kanter

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Mayor Tish Buroker
Councilmember Sheldon Stewart

Mayor Mick Sudbury

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE

CFO Tony Hill
CLO Brian Roberts
Clerk Micayla Dinkel
Fire Chief Dominic Burchett

ATTENDEES

AC Dern	AC Robinson	DC Fossum
AC Russell	FM Watkins	DOC Easton
OC Kay	Specialist Rivera	Digital Media Specialist Samuel
DC Greensides	Captain Costin	Captain Park
Inspector Callesto	Inspector Bell	Tyler Huish
DC Prokopis	Rachel Anderson	Director Behunin
Specialist Cochran		