



UNIFIED FIRE AUTHORITY BOARD MINUTES

October 19, 2021, 7:30 a.m.

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

1. Call to Order
Quorum was obtained
Chair Perry called the meeting to order at 7:31 a.m.
2. Public Comment
None
Public comment was made available live and with a posted email address
3. Approval of Minutes
Mayor Dahle moved to approve the minutes from the September 21, 2021, UFA Board Meeting as submitted
Mayor Overson seconded the motion
All voted in favor, none opposed
4. Professional Firefighters of Utah Award
 - Captain Conn and Jack Tidrow, President of the Professional FF of Utah presented Captain Layne Hilton the Front- Line Leadership Award
 - Captain Hilton has been highly involved as a leader and for his service with the Peer Support Team.
 - His work to improve crisis intervention and behavioral health extends beyond UFA to other fire departments
5. Consent Agenda
 - a. Review of September Disbursements
 - No discussion

Mayor Hale moved to approve the September disbursements as submitted
Mayor Dahle seconded the motion
All voted in favor, none opposed
6. Committee Updates
 - Benefits & Compensation Committee
 - Mayor Dahle asked for information on market trending as soon as it is compiled
 - Chief Petersen stated that there was a 1% reduction for URS which resulted in a \$220,000 savings
 - UFA is holding reasonably well within the market following the first review of comparable agencies, however, there are a few more agencies to finish up the survey
 - More information will be available soon

- Governance Committee
 - No meeting held
- Finance Committee
 - No meeting held

7. Quarterly Financial Report

- CFO Hill stated that revenue is coming in as expected
- Expenditures are also as expected
- Wildland had a busy season; revenue is pending and should begin arriving in the coming months from the state
- Have begun to spend cash portions of the Capital Replacement Funds on tablets and the Storage Area Network
- No questions

Mayor Overson moved to approve the quarterly financial report including the list of expenditures for the last quarter as presented
 Council Member Hull seconded the motion
 All voted in favor, none opposed

8. Fire Chief Selection Process Ad Hoc Committee

- Mayor Dahle reviewed those who expressed interest in taking part on the committee
- Mayor Dahle wants to be sure the overall goal is a seamless transition, he feels the Board Members who have volunteered to serve on this committee are a good representation of the demographics of the Board
 - Council Member Hull
 - Council Member Stewart
 - Mayor Silvestrini
 - Mayor Overson
 - Mayor Dahle
 - Staff will serve as consultants and to oversee the process
 - CLO Roberts
 - UFSA Counsel Anderson
 - HR Director Day
 - IAFF Representative
- Mayor Dahle asked Chief Petersen to outline the focus of the committee
 - Review job description and expectations
 - Review compensation plan and employment agreement
 - Define the overall process
- The Ad Hoc Committee will work on these issues and bring a proposal to the full Board during the December Board Meeting
 - Once approved, the plan is to publish the opening in December
- Mayor Petersen asked if this process will be internal or a combination internal/external
 - Mayor Dahle shared that this has not yet been decided, however, his desire is to conduct an internal process first, if the Board does not select an internal candidate, then recruit externally
- Chief Petersen stated that the plan outlined by Mayor Dahle would have the highest chance of success and shared that if the Board does not select an internal candidate, he is willing to remain in the position during the external recruitment

- Chief indicated that the higher quality external applicants would typically not apply if there were viable candidates inside the organization
- This plan does not “lock” the Board into selecting an internal candidate, it only forces consideration of an internal candidate first
- Councilman Stewart stated that when UFA hired Chief Petersen, one of the assignments given to him was to prepare internal candidates for the Fire Chief position
 - Chief has done this well and there are at least two viable candidates
 - Council Member felt it would be important to follow through with an internal process first as a show of good faith
- Mayor Dahle requested that Cyndee Young set up two meetings for the Ad Hoc Committee to meet between now and the December Board Meeting
 - In addition, he requested the HR Director update the Fire Chief wage analysis that was done a couple years ago and asked Chief Petersen to prepare a recommended outline of the process

8. Discuss Process for Fire Chief and Chief Legal Officer Job Performance and Compensation Review

- Chair Perry discussed how last year all direct reports and the IAFF met with the Board to review the performance of the Fire Chief
- There was general support for this process again this year
- Chief Petersen reminded the Board that two years ago the Board met with everyone individually and last year the Command Staff requested to meet as a group, he asked that the Board consider giving the Command Staff the option either way
- The CLO review was a discussion between the Fire Chief and the Board of Directors then a meeting with CLO Roberts to provide feedback, there was support for that same process
- Mayor Dahle asked for an updated market for both positions to review the compensation issues
- Chief Petersen asked that no work be done on behalf of his compensation, instead focus on compensation for the incoming Fire Chief and the current CLO
- HR will have the information for the November Board Meeting
- The November 16th Board Meeting will host a Closed Session to allow Board Members to meet with those who report directly to and work with Chief
- The Ad Hoc committee will take the information from the full Board and provide feedback from the Closed Session to Chief at a later date
 - Chief Petersen will not be in town for the November Board Meeting, he will be presenting to the IAFC Fire Service Executive Development Institute in Virginia

9. Seismic Retrofit Update

- Division Chief Robinson provided an update to the seismic work
 - 5 Station structural
 - Stations 110/116
 - Hazardous Materials Testing has completed with no issues at either 110/116
 - RFP for general contractor services has been awarded to Paulsen Construction
 - No firm date for work to begin
 - Crews will remain in the stations while the project is underway
 - Stations 107/109/115
 - Projects are still in the design phase
 - Targeting early January for posting for general contractor RFP
 - 20 Station non-structural
 - Stations 108, 113, 119 – canyon stations
 - Coleman Quality Seismic is scheduled to begin work on 10/20

- Anticipate completion by end of 2021
- Emergency Generators
 - Stations 103/107/113
 - Generators have been ordered, but will not arrive for 30-33 weeks
 - Prep work will be completed at all sites prior to their arrival
- Mayor Peterson requested that Division Chief Robinson be available to present the update on Stations 110/116 to the Cottonwood Heights City Council
 - DC Robinson will make himself available to the council

10. Fire Chief Report

- Overtime vs Staffing Levels
 - Our budget is holding well, we are 4.2% or \$355K underspend through the October 10 payroll for wages and overtime combined in Operations
 - There has been an uptick in Sick Leave, last year at this time the average was 4.2 sick calls per day, this year we are experiencing 6.2 per day
 - Chief Petersen feels the primary cause is the impact of COVID on families
 - Staff is watching this closely to see if it trends down over the next few months
 - An increase of 2 calls per day average is equivalent to about 7 FTE's to cover these vacancies, currently it is causing additional overtime
 - Last December UFA overhired by 11 positions and are situated just two short of full staffing as of today
 - The year before, we overhired by 6 and were short by 6 at this time and in 2018 before any overhire process, we were down 15 positions by the month of October
 - About one dozen overhires seems to be the right number each year
 - Chief noted that the culture is also changing, in that there is not the same desire for OT as has historically been the case
 - Staff continues to look for the balance between too much and too little overtime
 - Chief shared that we know we found the right amount when an equal number of Firefighters complain about the lack of overtime and those who complain about too much
 - UFA is using Mandatory Staffing less this year than last (.42 positions a day vs .68) however still more than wanted
 - This is often caused by a spike in vacancies for that particular day
 - A day with 14 sick calls is difficult to fill using the Pick List (people signed up to work OT)
 - Chief is looking for a consensus from the Board on the possibility of converting more positions to FTE to help offset OT and reduce daily vacancies to a more desirable number
 - His intent is to overhire 18 in this process, 12 would be the normal overhire and six would be new FTE's for consideration next fiscal year
 - Staff is considering another six FTE's hired in a lateral hiring in June
 - This would provide 12 new FTE's.
 - The cost of training them this fiscal year should not require a budget amendment, however, it may stress the ability to provide the \$2.5 million in under expend for next fiscal year
 - Once the 12 Firefighters are assigned to shift, the cost is roughly \$200,000, wages increase by \$870K and overtime reduces by about \$670K
 - Chief asked if any Board Members were concerned about this approach, none expressed any concern
 - Chief plans to bring this issue up again before another hiring process begins for the spring with a goal of starting the next fiscal year with 12 additional non-constant staffed positions

- Mayor Dahle asked if UFA is having the same challenges as law enforcement in hiring
 - Chief indicated he will jump to the following items in his section to answer that question
- Firefighter Hiring Process
 - The culture and climate within UFA and the work the Board has done to this point continues to attract quality candidates
 - The support of the Board in maintaining the Top 3, in addition to the transparency of all our actions is helping
 - UFA anticipates 24 hires right now and Special Enforcement is currently conducting background checks on 35 candidates
 - 12 of the 35 are Paramedics
- Paramedic Positions
 - Working to improve the role of Paramedic, currently UFA is down 12 Paramedic positions
 - Chief explained his interest in developing the Paramedic role to be as stable as the Engineer and Captain ranks.
 - This requires increasing the pay and bid opportunities while decreasing the mandatory OT
 - Currently, the Board approved an overmarket of 1% for the Medic Position, Chief plans to ask for that to be increased during the upcoming budget process
 - UFA has made seven conditional offers to Medics during this hiring process with another five still in backgrounds
 - Another 6 are being considered in a lateral next June, and there are 9 Firefighters in Medic school now
 - There could be as many as 25 new Medics by next June
 - Fire Agencies across the country are struggling to find Paramedics, the focus needs to be on this critical rank to maintain the numbers
 - The position leads about 70% of the calls UFA respond to and typically does very well on Captain promotional exams
 - Chief asked if there were any questions or concerns about this approach
- 3 or 4-Person Crews
 - This topic was discussed during the UFSA Finance Committee Meeting
 - Chief reminded Board Members that there is value in a 4-person crew with their ability to solve problems quicker and that this is controlled by the risk tolerance of each member
 - 18 of 24 crews are staffed 4-person
 - Stations 251, 115, 108, 113, 119, 116 are 3-person crews
 - A concept Staff has been working on; wherein full funding is not needed during training and would allow a municipality to pay the actual cost of the employee during training then apply the full Member fee once they are assigned to the crew
 - If a municipality is interested in adding the 4th person, the cost would be \$90,000 for the first 5 months of training and \$420,000 for a crew of 4 going forward
 - Chief is just asking for awareness if anyone is interested in this concept, as it would need to go through the budget process
 - Mayor Petersen expressed his appreciation for this adjustment and would very much like to return Station 116 to a four-person crew, but the sustainability of the full cost has to be OK for the city before that happens
 - Chief will memorialize this option/concept into the upcoming budget process

11. Closed Session

None

12. Adjournment

Council Member Stewart moved to adjourn the October 19, 2021, meeting
Mayor Hale seconded the motion
All voted in favor, none opposed

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Council Member Chrystal Butterfield
Council Member Gary Bowen
Mayor Robert Dahle
Council Member Trish Hull
Mayor Robert Hale
Mayor Kristie Overson
Mayor Mike Peterson
Council Member Jared Henderson

Council Member Allan Perry
Deputy Mayor Catherine Kanter
Council Member Sheldon Stewart
Mayor Jeff Silvestrini
Mayor Tom Westmoreland
Council Member Dea Theodore

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Council Member Kathleen Bailey
Mayor Dan Knopp

Mayor Harris Sondak

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

CFO Tony Hill
Chief Petersen

CLO Roberts
Cynthia Young, Clerk

OTHER ATTENDEES:

Arriann Woolf
Bill Brass
Brian Roberts
Bryan Case
Erica Langenfass
Jill Tho
Brandon Dodge
Layne Hilton
Steve Quinn
Kenneth Aldridge
Larson Wood
Michael Greensides
Nathan Cherpeski - Herriman
Patrick Costin
Paul Fotheringham

Ryan Love
Darran Park
Tim Tingey
Bill Brass
Jay Torgersen
Kiley Day
Lana Burningham
Michael Conn
Nile Easton
Patrick Costin
Rachel Anderson
Shelli Fowlks
Stephen Higgs
Zach Robinson
Tua Tho