

**Wasatch County Fire Board of Directors Meeting**

**Tuesday November 14th, 2023**

**Meeting held at the Wasatch County Administration Building located at 25 N Main, Heber City.**

**Those in Attendance:**

Steve Farrell

Spencer Parks

Luke Searle

Eric Rowland

Mark Nielson

Chief Eric Hales

Kierstan Smith

The minutes of the October 10<sup>th</sup> board meeting were presented to the board for their review and approval.

**A motion was made by Councilman Rowland to approve the minutes of the October 10th fire board meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilman Searle and the motion passed all in favor.**

**Warrants**

Farrell: We have warrants in the amount -I don't actually have the number in front of me, Chief do you have the number?

Chief: Its 1,037,208.71

Farrell: \$1,037,208.71-Is there anything in there that is unusual?

Chief: Well its not as unusual but about \$600,000 of that is for Big-D for the new station. Its site work, work on 160 E, its all the under-ground water and utilities and we started forming the footings and rebar.

Farrell: Okay, any questions on the warrants?

**A motion was made by Councilman Parks to approve the warrants as presented in the amount of \$1,037,208.71. The motion was seconded by Councilman Rowland and the motion passed all in favor.**

**Chief report**

Farrell: Chief, want to give us your report?

Chief: Yeah, I'll give a quick rundown. October our calls continued to go up, they are significantly higher in 2023 than they were in 2022 by almost about 80 calls. We had some significant incidents including a

fatal semi accident on SR 189; we had two house fires, one in Red Ledges and one in Valley Hills. Our crews had some opportunities to do joint Wasatch Back Training which included Park City, South Summit and North Summit. They did trench rescue training, which is specialized operations training, as well as, they did hazmat training as a collective group. We also brought AirMed in out of the University of Utah, and practice "hotload" training, what is unique about this that typically when we use an air ambulance, we have to shut that helicopter down all the way before we load the patient, this craft that AirMed has allows us to load a patient while its still running which actually saves a lot of time not having to shut down and start it back up so the time to hospital is greatly increased with this type of patient transferring so that was some great training we held over in Midway. So that's really what I have with the report.

Station 51 update, we are still waiting on a permit. They say we should have it Thursday because we do have concrete scheduled for Tuesday of next week. And then the trailer for the temporary station in Hideout, has been complete and they are preparing to transport that from Oregon.

Farrell: Good. Chief, have you drawn any money from the CIB loan on the new station yet?

Chief: Yes, I believe we have drawn at least a million if not \$1.5 million.

Farrell: Okay. That works then. Okay, are all these resolutions necessary for this meeting today, while we are shorthanded? Let's just go to the ones we need to be approved today.

Chief: Okay, well the biggest one we really need to discuss and make a motion on because of the time sensitive matter, is that of a resolution for a temporary contract with South Summit Ambulance. I brought this up a few months ago, that they had approached us to provide ambulance transport services for the year 2024 as they get their feet underneath them.

Councilman Rowland: Is this the interlocal agreement?

Chief: Yes, this is the interlocal agreement. So with that, basically by resolution whether or not you feel we should go into that temporary contract with South Summit and provide that ambulance transport service for them. In that packet, is a budget of what we told them it would cost, because our responsibility is that of personnel so everything regarding personnel. So anything from training to oversight, supervision, management of that is included in that fee. And in that interlocal agreement is talks about what South Summit is responsible for and what we are responsible for.

Farrell: Any questions for the Chief?

Searle: Chief, how has it been recruiting going for that? Has not officially happened because we haven't approve this and will after we approve this?

Chief: Yes. How we will look at this, because we do have our part time EMS division, we will do an internal recruitment for full time employees that we will carry on once we open Station 51 in Heber. So we haven't actually started recruiting for that yet but it is something we will start first thing in the morning if this gets approved. And over the next two weeks, we will start the recruiting process and hopefully have them hired by December 1<sup>st</sup>.

Searle: Sounds great.

Farrell: I want to approve the agreement with the temporary contract, I have no problem with it. Are you still comfortable with it Chief.

Chief: Yes, how it is written, what we agreed with South Summit Fire and what our attorney and their attorney Byron, who has been working on this, I am good with how it is written and how it is presented to you and am comfortable moving forward.

**A motion was made to approve Resolution 23-04 for a temporary contract for ambulance services by Councilman Farrell. The motion was seconded by Councilman Searle. The motion was passed all in favor.**

Chief: Okay, we will move forward with that. The only other question we have on here, if we want to approach it the same way as the mutual aid agreement as we mentioned a couple months ago with that mutual agreement with Salt Lake, you guys gave me the authority to execute that, I would like to update the mutual aid agreement with South Summit and Summit County and the surrounding districts if you are okay with that. It's up to you if you would allow me to follow up and do that same mutual aid agreement.

Farrell: I have no problem with you doing that. Does anybody on the board have any concerns with that?

Searle: No.

Parks: No.

Rowland: No.

Farrell: Chief, you execute those as you see fit.

Chief: Okay. I will work on that getting a mutual aid agreement with South Summit like we did with Salt Lake County and Wasatch Front.

That is all I have. I know we need to turn the time over to Kierstan for the financials and proposed budget.

### Financial Report

Farrell: Kierstan are you on?

Kierstan: I am on. So I will share my screen and we will start there.

So these are our 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter financial statements, I am just going to point out a couple of items and at the same time with this, I will take about how I will amend the budget accordingly. So with property taxes within our 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, it looks like we are really below where we should be, and we were 75% throughout the year, so keep that number in mind but most of our property taxes are received in December and January, February of next year, and those property taxes are pulled back into this year 2023. But we will be making a slight adjustment to our budgeted amount for the year, we will be increasing it just slightly. We are expecting, from information we have received from the County, that that amount will be more than \$6.3 million. And so, you will see that on the proposed amended budget for 2023.

With processing fees, you will see that we are at 205% of the budget. And this is actually such a great indicator of the growth within the county. Because this fee is the \$100 fee that goes along with the landscaping deposit that developers make on a lot, requiring that if they can't get their landscaping in at a certain time and etc. So it kind of gives you an idea, as this fee is increasing it just means that there is more building going on and that buildings are being completed. So that will also be adjusted in our amended budget. With interest, of course, across the board we are seeing that those interest rates that are at 5-5.5% or somewhere around there, not sure exactly what the PTF is right now, and of course when we started out last year, that is not where we expected these to go so it is so great that they are so much higher. It has resulted in significant revenue for the district, some of which is restricted because it has to do with impact fees but it is a benefit for the district. So we will adjust revenues for that also.

One thing that you will see has a zero here, is proceeds from issuance of debt. Originally we were thinking that the bonds from CIB will come in earlier in the year and more of the construction would be done and we would just transfer over the remaining capital projects fund to carry over into 2024 but with changes that were made and the slight delay, this was received so much later in the year that we decided to recognize this in the Capitol Project fund right off the bat and then just transfer out what we need as the construction is happening. So, we have been doing so we have just kind of moved this budget item from the general budget fund to the capital budget which I will show you when we get over to the budgets.

Overall, on the revenue side we are looking really good. Most things are up slightly so revenue is great.

Moving to the expense side of things, you'll see that our salary and benefits were right in line of where we have budgeted for which is really great. We have projected for 2023 that we will be slightly over budget, so you'll see a slight adjustment. This is a result of all the additional part-time staff and full-time staff that have been hired this year in order to meet the expansion that we have been doing, the changes that have been made, scheduling and what's coming up with pulling those part time employees for this South Summit agreement, to be able to pull them into a full time position so you'll see a slight increase in the purposed amended budget for 2023 for wages and benefits.

Operation supplies, you will see that we are over budget currently for this line item but then you'll see under budget, you'll see there is nothing, a zero for ambulance expense and ambulance vehicle expense. The reason why is that at the first of the year you'll find that we changed the accounting structure for the district so now the district is made up of multiple departments so there is an administrative department, fire, EMS, there's public information, public education & prevention, and then there is also a vehicles department. Under that department, there are sub-departments so for example, fire is broken down to the station and then that allows us to track the budget better and to be able to project budgets easier and to be able to track costs more efficiently. So, what normally would have been expensed under ambulance vehicle expense are now up in other line items that apply. They are under operating supplies, under clothing and uniforms, they are under services, they are under all these other line items that are now general line items for other departments, so you'll see some of that adjustment on the 2023 projected amended.

Other than that, we are doing really well for the general fund and the capital projects fund. Here are the changes, you can really notice with the interest and what a swing there has been. Then with the CIB money coming in, we won't have this big transfer over that we had originally projected because we are accounting for it differently.

That being said, I am going to move into the 2023 amended 2024. So, our proposed 2023, we have talked about items changing there and there is not a lot, mostly it is revenues going up other than this contribution is now over the capital projects fund, so revenues are great. On the proposed 2024 budget, we are projecting just slightly higher for property tax income. Most other line items are pretty much in line with what we are proposing for 2023, you will see that there is a little less in grant proceeds here, just with what has been applied for and what has been accepted so that is going to be a little bit less. And also, a little bit less interest revenue because we will be using the CIB funds, we won't be earning the interest that we are now. And then also, you'll see that this is higher and that includes the South Summit projected revenues from that agreement with them.

On the expense side, you'll see we are slightly higher on wages and that is to accommodate all the additional full-time staff and additional part time staff that are being projected for this next year, plus there benefits, so you'll see those changes all through this section up here that has to do with wages, salary and benefits. Another area that is actually more of a significant change that you'll see is down in your professional services and it's not a huge change their which is great but we do have a little bit more because everyone's cost is going up. And that includes a little bit more time for those professional services, like medical director cost and things like that, the audit cost, things like that. You'll see that with operating supplies is slightly less and so that due to a couple of things, like I said, we have moved some things around and where they are being accounted for. But the district has put into place more bulk buying that allows the costs to be more reasonable than firefighters buying individual things for each fire station, so we are hoping to be able to save some costs that way. And then you'll see the capital outlay here with the completion with the station and what costs more there so things are right in line. For the most part things are right in line, but of course we will see the first payments on the CIB loans, principle and interest soon. But other than that, it's pretty much in line, except for the additional cost for the additional staff. That is what you'll see throughout the 2024 budget.

Any questions about either the proposed amended budget or the 2024 proposed budget that I can answer?

And for the capital projects fund, you'll see that the only real changes are we not budgeting for those proceeds from debt and then use of the funds that we do have to finish the station so those are your significant changes from the prior year.

Farrell: Thank you, Kierstan. We need to set a public hearing date for this.

**A motion was made by Councilman Parks to set a public hearing at 6pm on December 12<sup>th</sup>. The motion was seconded by Councilman Nielson. The motion was approved all in favor.**

Farrell: Do we have anything from the advisory board?

Chief: I don't think so, unless Dustin is on. I know Kristen has one item that she'd like to bring up just before, but I don't there is anyone from the advisory commission that is on.

Farrell: Okay, let's have Kristen bring up the other issue then.

Kristen: I was just going to bring up the 2023 fraud risk assessment, it is in your packet. As you can see, our numbers are in the 'below' category. And we are only a couple of points away from being classified

as a very low fraud risk. I imagine with the completion of some of our new policies, that by the time we do this risk assessment this time next year, that we will firmly be in the very low category.

Farrell: That sounds very good Kristen.

Kristen: I will need to track you, Steve, down to sign it at some point and we will need a motion to accept it.

**A motion was made by Councilman Rowland to accept the fraud risk assessment for 2023. The motion was seconded by Councilman Parks. The motion passed all in favor.**

Farrell: Anything else Chief?

Chief: No, I think we are good. Thank you all.

Searle: I didn't get a chance to look deeply into this packet but if Prop 9 passes, will that adjust our 2024 budget?

Chief: Yes, we obviously did not account for any of that in the 2024 budget.

Searle: But we will have to after the fact.

Chief: Yes.

Searle: It won't go into place until...

Chief: Like March, 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter I believe.

Searle: Sounds good.

**A motion was made by Councilman Rowland to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilman Parks. The motion passed all in favor.**