

## Wasatch County Fire Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday February 13, 2024

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

### Those in Attendance:

Steve Farrell

Spencer Parks

Luke Searle

Erik Rowland

Kendall Crittenden

Karl McMillan

Mark Nelson

Chief Eric Hales

Assistant Chief Clint Neerings

Dustin Grabau

Councilman Farrell: Welcome to the Wasatch Fire District Board meeting on February 13<sup>th</sup> @ 3:30. We have everyone here today. Let's start with the minutes for the January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023, meeting.

**A motion was made by Councilman Crittenden to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Councilman McMillan and the motion passed all in favor. Councilman Nelson abstained.**

Councilman Farrell: We have warrants in the amount of \$1,055,708.97. Chief is there anything on this warrant lists that stands out.

Chief Hales: Other than the million dollars-no. So no, with the warrants we have another large payment to Big-D and then we also have the payment for the ambulance chassis and the downpayment of an ambulance refurb which was budgeted for this year. So that is the two higher costs there but other than that, there is nothing that stands out.

Councilman Farrell: We have quite a high amount for uniforms, is that for the new hires?

Chief Hales: We have the new hires in there as well. That includes our six EMTs that we hired for the South Summit contract as well as the six firefighters that we hired as well.

**A motion was made by Councilman Nelson to approve the warrants in the amount of \$1,055,708.97. The motion was seconded by Councilman Parks and the motion passed all in favor.**

Councilman Farrell: Okay, Chief-you want to give your report.

### Chief report

Chief Hales: One of the things I want to highlight for this month is we did have some significant calls and I did actually, ask our Fire Marshal Clint Neerings to just chat a little bit about the incident we had at MWR hotel, we had a little propane fire up there on the construction site.

Fire Marshal Neerings: So the response was two Sundays ago, no I mean Monday morning at about 3am. We got paged out to the MWR hotel, it came out as a structure fire. Upon arrival of the first engine, well actually leaving out of the station at Jordanelle, they could see a significant glow and as they got our onto Jordanelle Parkway, which increases the concern level, so they got other apparatus heading that way. When they arrived on the southwest corner, they had two 1,000 gallon propane tanks, one of them was actively burning with 20-30ft high flames coming out. They protected the structure, we were not necessarily concerned about the structure burning down due to being a type 1 construction building, there is not a lot to burn in it but it did have exterior scaffolding around the side so if those two 1,000 gallon propane tanks were to supply heat or fuel to warm the exterior so they could side it. They do have a 4 inch natural gas main line coming into the building and to there interior heaters but this was just more economical and feasible for them. It is still under investigation but it looking like there was a mechanical malfunction from a piece, they call it a direct vaporizer. Generally, your normal at home propane tanks are going to draw vapor off the top part of your propane tank but they are running a significant enough fuel through, just like if you get a regular 5-gallon propane tank, open it and it runs out it freezes itself. So these actually have dip tubes that pulls liquid out and pulls them together to this direct vaporizer and goes into a container-and the simplest way to explain it is like a water heater; its got a flame on it to come down and heat up the liquid to turn it turn to a vapor. It is looking like there was an issue with that at this point. We held the scene, we had Utah LP and Jacobson maintain the scene, they have removed them from there and now the insurance companies are going to tear it apart to see what happened. It started a little barrel on fire which caused the propane tank to vent, once we got there it was as easy as containing it, shutting off the valve and stopping the fuel to it.

Councilman Crittenden: How much risk of explosion? That would have been major damage.

Fire Marshal Neerings: So, the main thing they did was protect the structure and cooled the tank. They hooked and ran a large diameter hose to a ground monitor, to cool the structure and cool the tank. Because that is one of the biggest concerns we have, they call it a BLEVE-a boiling liquid expanding vapor explosion, that if you get enough heat and not enough of it has dissipated in the propane tank, there can be a failure in the metal which if the propane expands, I think its 180x's-so once its goes from 1 cubic foot of liquid, that turns into 180 cubic ft of vapor which obviously... through the investigation they were 74% full at midnight that night, so you take 750-gallons, expand that by 180x or whatever the expansion rate is, it is a significant event.

Councilman Crittenden: So, we bailed out the MWR?

Fire Marshal Neerings: It would've made it a lot more interesting and a lot more paperwork for sure. So it still technically under investigation that is initially where we are looking to-we don't have a lot of direct fire vaporizers in use around the county, generally they use the standard tube heaters type of deal. Where we hadn't dealt with it a lot, we requested the state fire marshal send up two LP guys, their

experts, to come and take a look at it. They did and corroborated what we had thought and now it is in the hands of the insurance companies.

Councilman Crittenden: Will there be additional trainings on that in the future then?

Fire Marshal Neerings: Yep, we have talked with them and have revamped it. So weekly we have a prevention training that we go over these things, and we covered it last Wednesday. Going over what we did, what we can do better to improve to lessen the potential of this happening. But it just looks like a mechanical malfunction of one of the pieces of equipment.

Councilman Farrell: That type of heating systems is just a special heating equipment for the construction? It will not be on site after the construction is completed right?

Fire Marshal Neerings: Yep, so we work with Jacobsen and where they already have the natural 4in gas line coming in, we talked to them about removing all the propane and all of their direct fire vaporizers and just going straight off there natural gas. It is still dangerous but not nearly as dangerous as propane.

Councilman Farrell: Don't they have a watch man on site?

Fire Marshal Neerings: They do. He was actually pretty integral in the investigation and he took pictures of scene about 20-30 minutes before we got paged and those pictures are what directed us to the origin of the fire. So he had done his walk around the site, took the pictures, because he had thought this direct fire vaporizer was a heater which obviously their shouldn't be flames coming out the top of it, he left to do the rounds for another project of Extell and came back 20-30 minutes later and saw the tanks where actively on fire and that is when he called. Really the damage done, there was some melted plastic on one of the man lifts and on the exterior "scrim" they call it, which keeps things from blowing off the 8ft scaffolding, that got melted. So the damage was very minor outside of the vaporizer and the two tanks.

Councilman Crittenden: That is very fortunate.

Fire Marshal Neerings: Very fortunate. Any questions?

Councilman Farrell: Would it have gotten the building if you hadn't gotten to it? Or would it have just sat there and burned?

Fire Marshal Neerings: If the crews hadn't responded as quickly as they did and hadn't cooled the tank, there is a potential that it could've levied what would have been a bomb, which would have set the other tank off and that is a lot of propane at one location.

Councilman Farrell: Thank you Clint.

Chief Hales: Just thought we'd give you a little overview, we typically try to give you what happened last month but it was so close to the end that we did add that into this months report so if there is no further questions on that, we can talk about the schedule of the new station. We have been fortunate this year with snow, we have only lost 3 days this winter in building with the snow. So we feel very fortunate with that, the plan is with the schedule that on the 19<sup>th</sup>, next week, they will start the CMU block on the apparatus bay towards the east of the building. While they do that, they will be pouring slab on grade on the west side of the building for the other part of the station. That will commence next

week so you will finally start seeing something out of the ground. We did pass our final underground inspection yesterday prior to the slab-on grade so that is being prepared.

Councilman Farrell: How difficult is it for the contractor to get concrete?

Chief Hales: I don't think it is very difficult at all right now, I think it depends on the size of the contractor and the size of the job. But we haven't had any issues, thus far, with the footings and foundation. Their concrete guy, Black Ops is who they use, out of Utah County has been doing a good job.

Councilman Crittenden: Is Heber Building Department doing the inspection or does County Building Department do those?

Chief Hales: Heber has been the one doing it because that is who the permit is through, where the fees were paid, etc. And any issues that we might have had at the beginning have been worked out and we are moving forward very well with them.

The next update I wanted to give you, is that of two stations in Hideout. Basically its the temporary station, last month I believe we discussed that a contractor GCD , out of Utah County, are building a large community out there and they have donated a portion of their phase 4, to actually place our trailer on. That trailer has been placed there, was set there yesterday. The biggest issue that we are running into right now is that Hideout Town was in charge of the temporary structure to actually house the apparatus and what we came to find out within the last week or so, is that original order #1 was a tin structure and they never went through a bid process or a process to actually order that. The second issue there is they actually have no money and they need to run through a...

Councilman Searle: That's called burying the lead.

Councilman Crittenden: Isn't that there first issue?

Chief Hales: It is the first issue, but what they want to do is a fundraising process to this. With that, that can take some significant time, we have already invested in the temporary housing, we have already invested in the apparatus and in the personal starting January 1<sup>st</sup>, who were based out of the Jordanelle Station. One issue with the steel building, it doesn't meet our requirements of being moveable. Obviously you can disassemble a steel building and move it but it is not by design-once it is erected. I have been doing some research and there are two things and two 'asks' here is that I would like as a fire district, since this temporary structure should be ours and as we move it around, look into purchasing this building. Going through the process of actually purchasing this building so we own it and when we are done in Hideout and need to move it to Hwy 32, there is no issues. But if Hideout raises the money for it, it is there building but if it is the Fire Districts then we can move it to the next position. So that is one of the 'asks'-the company that we have been looking at...

Councilman Farrell: What is the costs of that building?

Chief Hales: Some rough costs that we have been working on, the steel building was about \$50,000 and not being moveable and that was a bid. But with that bid, that didn't include a garage door, didn't include any of the heat or the lighting package or anything like that. It was just the steel structure to be delivered to Hideout, we would have to assemble it. I have been looking at several companies that build, you have probably seen them, High Valley Transit uses a temporary built structure for there buses.

Councilman Crittenden: Where are those?

Chief Hales: Out off I-80 by the school. Tuhaye has been using these as well. There are a couple companies, one of them is Sprung and then this other company known as Alaska Structures, and we should know them because they are the company that Jeremy bought all the temporary structures during COVID, all those temporary buildings that they used for drive through clinics is this Alaska Structures. So we do have some familiarity with them. I have talked with Jeremy and the thought is, they do have a 20x40 structure but the height is the issues. I don't know if the structures that the county owns now are tall enough. So to purchase a structure that would give us the height we need and all the amenities that we need inside to have it insulated, is roughly \$65,000-\$70,000. One nice thing is these structures all go up together, the County and Jeremy are very familiar with how these are assembled so there could be some cost savings there.

Councilman Rowland: How many square feet is that?

Chief Hales: The 30x40-would be 120 square feet.

Councilman Crittenden: But they would be more moveable than the steel structures.

Chief Hales: Yes, that is how they are designed. They are designed to handle the snow load, they are based out of Alaska and so they are designed for our area, they are designed to be moved because they do have a contract with JSA (the military) and they do move these all around the world, it is designed for that.

Councilman Searle: Does that include all the electrical, all the necessary mechanical equipment?

Chief Hales: It doesn't include the heat but apparently we have two 5-ton heat pumps that, well I guess Jeremy has, for these structures. Whether we could just utilize those or if we would just purchase our own, we would at least be using the same equipment throughout the county and think there is some value to that. Does that push us too "oh they could be a sole source", that is a decision that we would have to make if we want to continue with the same type of manufacture structure that we already have, that can be compatible with what we already have, is it something we would entertain or do we need to go through a over \$50,000 RFP process or go through a sole source based on some of the configurations we already have. That is a decision that you as a board would have to make.

Councilman Farrell: I don't know if we could sole source it due to the nature of the request.

Chief Hales: You're right. There is so many things that you can write into that and request that would drive it that way.

Councilman Rowland: So your request would basically be an estimate of what the total cost would be to get it up and running?

Chief Hales: Yes, what would that be?

Councilman Rowland: Yes, that is what you would present correct?

Chief Hales: Yes, that is what we would need to get from them. Obviously there is some slight site preparation-this company called GCD has done all the site preparation to this point at no cost, it has just been fantastic work they have been doing for us to get this project under way. Whether or not, we need

to decided-do we put this thing on a concrete pad? Is there some cost to that-say \$10,000 to put a 30x40 concrete pad there and I know it is not permanent but over the next 3-4 years will it be much more functional to have this thing sitting on an asphalt or concrete pad. And I say concrete pad because that is something we can do now, with asphalt we would have to wait until it is warmer.

Councilman Rowland: It would be nice to know with that particular solution, what the relocation cost would be. Again, that would be looked at and analyzed when we know we need to move it, its going to be X amount.

Chief Hales: Yeah.

Councilman Crittenden: When you say that it'll be moved to HWY 32, that would be referring to the permanent spot?

Chief Hales: No. The permanent station for our Hideout station will be off of SR 248, basically just across the road from where this temporary station is located. And then when we talk about the Victory Ranch Prospara (Benloch Ranch Area) area, is where the next fire station would be and we would move this temporary station over there to start providing coverage over once the Hideout station is built.

Councilman Farrell: Is the 30x40 going to be big enough for you Chief?

Chief Hales: Yes, because the apparatus that we bought, we actually sized it to put all of our current fire engines, not ladder truck, it will fit in there.

Councilman Crittenden: And you would just have an engine and a fast attack?

Chief Hales: It would just be what is called a mini pumper, has 1500/min pump, a 300-gallon/min water tank but it also carries a crew of two and the fire gear they need. So it is a mini pump, is a fast attack you would think but it is more than just a brush truck, it has more of a firefighter capability.

Councilman Farrell: Are we going to have any trouble meeting Hideout's building code as it relates to this temporary site?

Chief Hales: Well I guess, our cart is way before the horse because this would be permanently there but their planning commission has already been prepped and primed as far as what is going on. They are all very supportive of this but we are going through their planning process to get a conditional use permit for that area.

Councilman Rowland: And as a temporary structure I imagine it's a little more or different requirements.

Chief Hales: Yes. And obviously they don't allow trailer homes or single wide trailers in there town but they approved this and have one now. Again, the structure that they proposed, that they went out and got a proposal for, was a domed tinned structure and that again was \$50,000 without a garage door, without any utilities, insulation, etc. And the portability of this other structure is just second to none, these are designed to be there and last as well as to be moved.

Councilman Farrell: The outside skin is a heavy plastic?

Chief Hales: It is a membrain material.

Councilman Farrell: Could it be replaced over time?

Chief Hales: Yes, but they have these buildings-like Tuhaye had one of these structures in place for 10 years at there golf pro shop and their cart storage was one of these structures for 10 years as well so they have 15-30 year life. Most ski resorts have these in place, if you are up on the hill and see these little yurts and other type structures, that is what they are using.

Councilman Searle: But what would be the disadvantage of going out and getting an RFP for it?

Chief Hales: Time.

Councilman Searle: What would be the time frame?

Chief Hales: And it's really not, we can put out an RFP and get...

Councilman Searle: Because we want the best quality one right? We want the best thing if we are wanting to move it as well.

Chief Hales: Yes, we do. And that is totally fine, we can design an RFP. Our policy says it has to be posted for 7 days and it kind of follows the state procurement. That is totally fine. I just wanted to throw out that there are elements if we wanted to go sole source and make that, either way it would totally be up to you.

Councilman Crittenden: Would anything be comparable to this building because they are kind of unique?

Councilman Searle: Well it was already stated that there are two companies that are out there.

Chief Hales: There is one in West Jordan called Sprung, and then there is this Alaska Structures which is what Utah County uses and Wasatch County has. So obviously if it was underneath \$50,000, according to our policy, we would have a lot more flexibility but again I am not opposed at all of going through that process but I guess more than anything, the ask is would you authorize us, because we didn't budget for this at all this year, we would have to look into Capitol, I believe we have some money in Capitol to do that but to authorize those funds.

Councilman Rowland: That was a budget above and beyond the \$50,000 right because the \$50,000 was included...

Chief Hales: No, because again, Hideout was going to do it. And Hideout I think in the back of there minds, are still wanting to do a fundraiser and do all this stuff but this was suppose to be done by Jan 1<sup>st</sup> and here we are. We don't have anything yet and I would just like to take over that part of the project.

Councilman Crittenden: Maybe they can do the fundraiser to pay for the concrete pad down the line.

Chief Hales: And if they want to do a fundraiser, could they reimburse-I don't know how all that works, I don't want to...

Councilman Parks: I would say order whichever, if they are about the same price, whatever building you think is the best.

Councilman Farrell: Did Jeremy go through an RFP?

Chief Hales: He didn't have too because these were less than \$50,000. He went to Utah County, found out this was the company they used and had good luck with them so he purchased them through there bidder agreement-because I think he probably spent \$20,000-\$40,000.

Councilman Parks: Did you know Alaska Structures isn't based in Alaska, they are based in Las Cruces, New Mexico?

Chief Hales: No I didn't. But anyway, I guess that would be the ask for you guys on if you want us to pursue...

Councilman Farrell: I would like to see you go ahead and sole source it. That is my feelings, what about the rest of the board?

Councilman McMillan: I would say lets sole source it Steve, and let's get it done and move on. Because if we are waiting for Hideout, we will be long over...

Councilman Farrell: Yeah but if the fire district can put out an RFP-it takes time.

Councilman McMillan: Well what is the delivery time for these companies? Do you have any feeling for that?

Chief Hales: Right now, we are anywhere from 4-6 weeks to get the materials here and then the assembly. From any of them-it would be 4-6 weeks if we order it today.

Councilman Farrell: Do we have to assemble it?

Chief Hales: That is the piece, they could provide expertise to assemble it but where Jeremy has assembled these types of buildings, that is helpful to have that background. I don't know, since this is a taller structure, how much different it is but I would think it is very similar in assembly so that would be a component of that having an extra cost.

Councilman Crittenden: If the delay with Hideout would give you the time to do an RFP and then compare the costs of the two, if they are even comparable structure.

Chief Hales: Well, yeah. If we are going to compare to the tin building...

Councilman Crittenden: No, I didn't mean the tin building but comparing the companies that do these types of structures.

Chief Hales: It would just be put out as our RFP and it would basically become our building. If Hideout, would like to participate in that, I don't know if we could except there donations at that point though. But if that's the case, it just speeds up our process with that. Again, I have no issues putting together an RFP, I just wanted to make sure that we are authorized to pay for it afterward and if we are good with that part of it then I am more than willing to follow those rules.

Councilman Searle: It sounds like we are on the border of the cost being \$50,000-we are just hovering above it? Is that the problem with it or...

Councilman Crittenden: No closer to \$65,000 but it comes with all the things we need.



Chief Hales: Yeah, I think-driving down here from my last meeting, I was on the phone with them and I said give me a ballpark and he said generally \$65,000-\$70,000 and that is with insulation, electrical, heating, etc.

Councilman Rowland: We just need an RFQ, not much different than a RFP. You know what you want, we know what we need-we just need a proposal. So give us an RFQ, go see what they are.

Councilman Searle: Is that faster? Because don't necessarily want to delay, I am happy to authorize the funds.

Councilman Farrell: It's not because we are going to have to wait a month until the next meeting.

Councilman Crittenden: Unless he can come next Wednesday...

Councilman Searle: No because it has to be posted for 7 days. I think if its hovering around those cost, I feel comfortable sole sourcing. Because like you said, there are aspects of this that make it unique. And it's not like there are 1,000s of companies. But I think its just...

Councilman Farrell: We are going to do it regardless so an RFQ is a good idea but what we get a number and we are going to go ahead with it either way.

Councilman Rowland: Unless it is way out there.

Councilman Farrell: Why don't we approve up to a certain amount-like up to \$70,000 and if its over that, than we have to come back. Does that work?

Councilman Parks: Let's go to \$75,000.

**A motion was made by Councilman Parks to authorize a purchase up to \$75,000 for a temporary structure from a company of Chiefs thinks is best. The motion was seconded by Councilman McMillan. The motion passed all in favor.**

Councilman Farrell: There is your direction Chief.

Councilman Chief: That is perfect. If we wanted to a concrete pad, we would be okay with site prep additionally?

Councilman Crittenden: What is the plan with the personnel that is already hired?

Chief Hales: They are already up and running, they are just living...fortunately/unfortunately we want to hire 9 employees but were only able to hire 6 employees. So, we had a couple rooms for that at Jordanelle. But they are running, responding to calls in that area, we are just not getting the benefit of being over there yet.

Councilman Crittenden: Slows them down a bit.

Chief Hales: But I will tell you, on events like the other night, when you have additional personnel in that area Councilman it makes a huge difference.

Councilman Farrell: Does the citizens of Hideout realize what this means to them...

Chief Hales: I think some are starting to understand.

Councilman Farrell: With insurance. It's a huge benefit.

Councilman Searle: I think you express our appreciation to Hideout for their corporation in getting this and that we want to move forward with this to utilize the structure in the future but one of their town members has been instrumental in finding a site for us.

Councilman Farrell: And them not having to put any money into this structure if we are planning on moving it to another site.

Chief Hales: Exactly. If they wanted to prep some site and beautify it a little because Hideout does want it looking nice, if they want to do that then we would welcome it but this does keep it ours.

But anyway, thank you. I do appreciate your support on this.

Councilman Farrell: Anything else Chief:

Chief Hales: Quickly, just on the advisory commission. Chief Neerings gave a report of the fire prevention bureau , an overview of that and then we introduced the strategic plan for them to review. Our meetings this year will basically be developing the strategic plan for 2025-2030 so I guess my ask for you-as we come to you if there are any things that you see that the district could be doing better moving forward, any things that we may be missing in the plan that we have. You guys are familiar with the plan that we have been working on but moving forward one of the biggest things we need to focus on is recruitment and retention and how to bring the best possible people to our area. And to give them, obviously you guys helped us with the livable wage part, but also helping with retaining them as well.

That is all I have unless you have questions.

Councilman Farrell: What was the event Sunday night? There were multiple ambulances and firetrucks- was that a medical event?

Clair Provost: Yes. I believe so.

Councilman Farrell: Thank you Chief.

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

