



## CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL WORK MEETING MINUTES

**Thursday, May 15, 2014**  
**Approved June 12, 2014**

The following are the minutes of the City Council Meeting of the Herriman City Council. The meeting was held on **Thursday, May 15, 2014 at 4:00 p.m.** in the Herriman City Community Center, 13011 South Pioneer Street (6000 West), Herriman, Utah. Adequate notice of this meeting, as required by law, was posted in the Community Center, on the City's website, and delivered to members of the Council, media, and interested citizens.

**Attendance:**

Mayor Carmen Freeman

**Council Members Present:**

Mike Day, Matt Robinson, Craig B. Tischner and Coralee Wessman-Moser

**Staff Present:**

Brett geo. Wood, City Manager  
Gordon M. Haight II, Asst. City Manager  
Tami Moody, Executive Administrative Manager/PIO  
Jackie Nostrom, City Recorder  
Shauna DeKorver, Finance Director  
Cheeryl Jeppson, Human Resource Director  
Bryn McCarty, Planning Supervisor  
Blake Thomas, City Engineer  
Monte Johnson, Operations Director  
Ed Blackett, Streets Manager  
Wade Sharp, Parks Manager  
Danie Bills, Events Coordinator  
Justun Edwards, Water Director  
Luke Sieverts, Water Manager

**4:00 PM - WORK MEETING:** *(Front Conference Room)*

1. **4:06:13 PM** COUNCIL BUSINESS

**A. Discussion with the Managers and Directors**

City Manager Brett Wood informed the Council that the Mayor met with the Directors and Managers to discuss the Councils' direction of benefits. He explained to the Directors that the Council requested to have an open forum meeting to collaborate and determine an appropriate thought process to address benefits. He acknowledged the powerful statements the Council portrayed and explained that it would be imperative for the Council Members to explain their view and strategies on the issue. City Manager Wood portrayed the feeling of uncertainty that has been brought to his attention, and emphasised the dedication of each employee.

Councilmember Coralee Wessman-Moser referred to the budget amendment motion, and acknowledged the cause for question the action rose. She expressed her concern about the Vacation and PTO payouts and concluded that she was not in favor to support a “fake budget”. To ensure that the City had an approved tentative budget, the amended motion was made. She observed the commitment of the Council to wait through the process of having the benefits evaluated. Councilmember Moser informed the Directors that she felt the need to set the right expectation for the employees. She explained her perspective that she has tried to understand what each employee does and would be willing to make adjustments as necessary. She offered a rare example to have a slim vacation payout under manager recommendation; however, could not support employees being paid out for excess vacation or paid time off on a continual basis. She requested to hear feedback from the Managers.

Councilmember Mike Day agreed and elaborated that he is not supportive of payouts of any kind. He indicated that he currently does not have an alternative suggestion, and is committed to make adjustments after the data has been collected. Councilmember Day informed the Directors that he would like to have employee salaries and benefits above average comparably, and that would be determined once the analysis has been conducted. He requested alternative benefit suggestions in lieu of payouts, and offered to answer any questions.

Councilmember Craig B. Tischner informed the audience that he shared the same feelings that had been voiced. He explained the intentional use of vacation time should be utilized for its intended purpose to alleviate any “burnout”. He reiterated his perception that payouts are considered a government bonus. Councilmember Tischner offered his opinion that no other benefit would be changed, and he noted that he has been a strong advocate of government employees. He informed the directors and managers that he would be in favor of adjusting benefits adequately after the study has been completed. He asked if there were any questions.

Councilmember Day expressed his feeling that he expects the study to confirm his suspicion that comparatively City employee benefits and salaries will be average or slightly below, and adjustments will be made accordingly.

Councilmember Matt Robinson explained the learning curve of the newly elected Council and the different opinions each member brings to the quorum. He acknowledged the lack of candidly speaking about the benefits, and asked for patience during the study. He explained that there was not a preconceived decision of the benefits outside of the payouts, and wanted to assuage any concerns of other benefits being targeted. Councilmember Robinson relayed the origination of the benefits discussion and how the conversation led to a total compensation review. He expressed his desire to see that Herriman City does compensate employees competitively above other jurisdictions.

Councilmember Robinson requested that a policy be drafted regarding benefits. He explained that the City Officials are elected to make certain the City is financially stable, and added that routine evaluations every three to five years should be mandatory practice to ensure accuracy. City Manager Wood agreed. Councilmember Robinson informed the audience that a high value will be placed on the study to make certain the City is on the correct path to make the best decision. He expressed that he was open to any questions.

Parks Manager Wade Sharp conveyed his appreciation of authority to the Council. He explained his perception of payouts being utilized as a tool to keep staff at work to keep the City

functioning normally. He observed the stress of all employees caused by being short handed. Manager Sharp informed the Council that many people in the workforce could only afford a “stay-cation” because realistically they can’t afford to go anywhere. He expressed foreseeable problems in pursuing that path and that the production cost savings would outweigh the benefit cost. Councilmember Robinson demonstrated Human Resources generalized total compensation graph, and explained that from the payout concept the vacation is not mandated, but is difficult to schedule. Manager Sharp conveyed to the Council that the reduction of benefit should constitute a salary increase. Councilmember Robinson reiterated the concern of payouts and the proactive approach to eliminate any potential burnout factors. Manager Sharp explained that working the four day workweek or the “9-9s” help with allowing employees to have time off. Councilmember Robinson noted there were other financial ways to compensate employees. He passed on information that some employees acknowledged that they weren’t aware of the existence of the policy. Operations Director Monte Johnson disclosed that his department reviewed the policy manual regularly and has been fully informed of its contents. He offered a brief history of how the benefit was started. Councilmember Robinson responded that from the policy perspective the benefit is not good practice.

Parks Manager Sharp told the Council that employees have been concerned with the collective change of benefits overtime. He specified the implemented changes, and offered a brief synopsis of government employment compared to the private sector. City Manager Wood reported that overtime reduction was requested by management, not the Council. He revealed that management determined that any overtime should be validated, and observed the unintended consequence that overtime limitation could cause. Councilmember Robinson thanked the Managers, but hesitantly expressed the legality concerns because of their dedication. Manager Sharp expressed his apprehension that the experienced employees’ opinions are not being valued by the Council. Councilmember Day asked for clarification. Manager Sharp offered an example, and explained that the City has acquired a team of experts in each field. Councilmember Day acknowledged his concern and explained that plans are continuously altered. Councilmember Robinson added that the Council is cognisant of their expertise. Councilmember Tischner commented that questions from the Council are merely for educational purposes.

Manager Sharp referred to the study that was conducted in 2011 that indicated he is down six employees. He asked if it would be possible to reduce the amount of projected employees and allow for an overtime budget for those individuals who request extra hours to work. City Manager Wood confirmed that several employees have disclosed that they have additional employment in order to make ends meet. He extended his appreciation to Manager Sharp for his comments.

Water Director Justun Edwards asserted the burden of flex-time when departments have already been understaffed. He relayed the employee concern of the method the benefit removal, not just the sole loss of the benefit. Employees had been under the impression that a study was to be conducted before any changes were implemented, and then a benefit had been removed. Councilmember Day confirmed that the benefit needed to be altered. Director Edwards inquired about the next benefit to be removed. Councilmember Robinson discussed the uneasiness that rumours create, and reiterated that benefits are not being targeted. City Manager Wood divulged to the Council that employees are worried about their 401K accounts. Councilmember Robinson declared that the only benefit of concern was the payouts. Councilmember Moser requested to have the benefits outlined in the policy manual. She reported that the Council is

not going to change the benefits they just want the manual updated. Human Resource Director Cheeryl Jeppson disclosed that the benefits were outlined in the policy manual under direction of the City Attorney John Brems.

Councilmember Robinson referred to a comment he made in a past meeting about employee morale. He noted he was genuinely concerned with employee morale. He examined the core principle that the benefit should change, and the employees are subject to the correct information. Director Edwards responded that employees expected change, but not the way that it happened. Councilmember Moser clarified that there was never a commitment of not having benefits changed. She stated that the money was required to put in a fund to adopt a balanced budget, and is subject to change.

Streets Manager Ed Blackett relayed the message that was heard when the Council changed to the benefit package before the study had been conducted. Operations Director Johnson described the difficult situation the managers and directors were placed in when they tried to confront rumours. Water Manager Luke Sieverts agreed that it has been a struggle to deal with employee morale and rumours. He remarked that the intention of the Council may not have been the perception portrayed to the employees. Councilmember Robinson expressed his concern over the lack of communication. Councilmember Moser declared that a decision should be rendered prior to communication being relayed. Public Information Officer Tami Moody identified the information that was given to employees. Councilmember Robinson reiterated the crucial necessity of having a communication plan and requested for the plan to be drafted and approved by the Council.

Manager Sieverts extended his gratitude to the Council to request this meeting and concluded that employees would have minimal concerns with the information that was discussed. City Manager Wood agreed, and applauded the positive outcome from the deliberations. Director Johnson pointed out that employees are eager to work hard and accomplish tasks that the Council has requested in order to get back to the “Herriman feel”. Councilmember Day acknowledged the symbiotic relationship to help each other succeed. Manager Blackett asked why the Benefits Committee was assembled and if it had been abandoned. Councilmember Moser replied that the committee was formed prematurely. She indicated the committee would be necessary if the survey determined that employee benefits are low and benefit recommendations were warranted. Manager Blackett reported that the committee has not received any direction, and relayed their concern of decisions being rendered without their knowledge. Councilmember Moser summarized that the committee would be utilized at the appropriate time.

Councilmember Tischner revealed he started hearing rumours earlier in the week which solidified that a discussion was warranted. He explained that positive morale in the City is necessary and the cost of turnover is so much greater than to maintain current employees. Manager Sieverts thanked the Council and noted this could help rebuild trust. Councilmember Moser agreed. Councilmember Robinson invited staff to approach the Council Members if there is ever a context challenge. He extended an apology if information was miscommunicated.

Events Coordinator Danie Bills commented that a decision needs to be rendered so everyone can move forward. City Manager Wood indicated that that study should be conducted to compare where the City fits in with competition, and to be able to understand other perks to retain good employees. He declared that the success of the City is due to the employees, and acknowledged

the great service provided for the allocated budget. Councilmember Robinson confirmed that the City has been overdue for a compensation review, and noted no other benefits had been targeted. Director Jeppson asked about the list of five concerns. Councilmember Robinson responded that reviewing and targeting benefits were different, and it didn't mean those items would be altered.

City Manager Wood expressed his delight of the discussion and requested collaborative meetings to be scheduled either monthly or quarterly. Councilmember Robinson suggested a question and answer sessions. Councilmember Tischner requested for concerned employees to come talk to a member of the Council. Director Jeppson reminded the audience to follow the proper procedure in following the chain of command. City Manager Wood agreed. Public Information Officer Moody requested to have a newsletter article drafted by the Council to help bridge the gap with employees. Councilmember Robinson expressed his support of the idea, and added that the Council is not the administrators for the City. The administration should be governed by the proper authority. Public Information Officer Moody agreed, and offered an alternative.

City Engineer Blake Thomas suggested reviewing the vacation policy of the "use or lose" and consider the major staffing problems that could create. Councilmember Robinson requested Director Jeppson to research articles regarding payouts in common Human Resource practices to help the Council become better informed.

Manager Blackett asked for consideration of overtime instead of flex time due to the strain that it puts on the departments. Events Coordinator Bills agreed. Councilmember Moser clarified their request to have support would be to have budgeted funds for overtime.

Manager Sieverts offered a short anecdote of the collaborative departments of Herriman City, and reported other jurisdictions have acknowledged their employees aren't as dedicated. City Manager Wood agreed that our departments work well collectively. Director Jeppson informed the Council that with the Enduro Cross event no accidents were reported in the set-up or removal of the event.

## 2. ADJOURNMENT [5:54:41 PM](#)

Councilmember Day moved to adjourn the City Council work meeting. Councilmember Moser seconded the motion, and all voted aye.

*This document constitutes the official minutes for the  
Herriman City Council Meeting held on Thursday, May 15, 2014*

*I, Jackie Nostrom, do hereby certify that I am the duly appointed, qualified, and acting City Recorder for Herriman City, of Salt Lake County, State of Utah. I do hereby certify that the foregoing minutes represent a true and accurate, and complete record of this meeting held on Thursday, May 15, 2014.*

  
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Jackie Nostrom, City Recorder