

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Riverdale City Council held Tuesday, June 18, 2024, at 6:00 p.m., at the Civic Center, 4600 S Weber River Dr., Riverdale City, Weber County, Utah.

Present:

City Council: Braden Mitchell, Mayor
Bart Stevens, Councilmember
Anne Hansen, Councilmember
Michael Richter, Councilmember
Stacey Haws, Councilmember

City Employees: Steve Brooks, City Administrator/Attorney
Cody Cardon, Business Administrator
Brandon Cooper, Community Development Director
Casey Warren, Police Chief
Shawn Douglas, Public Works Director
Rich Taylor, Community Services Director
Jared Sholly, Fire Chief
Michelle Marigoni, City Recorder

Excused: Alan Arnold, Councilmember

Visitors:

Welcome & Roll Call

The City Council meeting began at 6:00 p.m. Mayor Mitchell called the meeting to order and welcomed those in attendance, including all Council Members, City Staff, and members of the public.

Pledge of Allegiance – Casey Warren

Invocation – Steve Brooks

Public Comment

Mayor Mitchell invited members of the public to speak. There was no public comment.

Presentations and Reports

Mayor's Report

Bonneville CTC has a new director, who wants to work on strengthening the CTC Board.

City Administration Report

- a. **Department Reports May**
- b. **May Anniversaries Employee Recognition**
- c. **Staffing Authorization Plans**
- d. **Community Development Report**

Consent Items

Action Items

1. **Public Hearing to receive and consider public comments regarding the following:**
 - a. Amending the Riverdale City budget for fiscal year 2024 (2023-2024).
 - b. Proposed amendments to the Riverdale City Code: 1-7-2 Salaries of City Council and Mayor, and 1-7F-6 Salary of the Justice Court Judge.
 - c. Nonreciprocal interfund activity transfer of resources utilized by the City's General Fund as provided by the City's Water Fund.
 - d. Adopting the Riverdale City Budget for fiscal year 2025 (2024-2025).

Motion: Councilmember Stevens moved to open the public hearing.

Second: Councilmember Hansen

All in favor, public hearing open at 6:12 pm.

Public Comment: None.

Motion: Councilmember Stevens moved to close the public hearing.

Second: Councilmember Hansen

All in favor, public hearing closed at 6:13.

2. Public Hearing to receive and consider public comments regarding the following:

- a. Proposed amendments to executive municipal officer compensation schedules.

Motion: Councilmember Stevens moved to open the public hearing.

Second: Councilmember Richter

All in favor, public hearing open at 6:13 pm.

Public Comment: None.

Motion: Councilmember Stevens moved to close the public hearing.

Second: Councilmember Richter

Motion passes unanimously, public hearing closed at 6:14 pm.

3. Discussion and possible action concerning ambulance services.

Mr. Brooks addressed misinformation circulating on the Riverdale Citizens' Facebook page about the city's emergency services. There was confusion about the expiration of the "hold harmless" provision, which expires in 2030, not in a year. The city's examination of some programs, including ambulance and fire services, has led to discussions on optimizing resources without compromising core emergency services. He clarified that the city has no intention of eliminating the fire department or crucial EMS services. The focus is on potentially altering the ambulance service due to staffing challenges and financial considerations. The fire department's EMS and paramedic services will remain unchanged, ensuring continued high-quality, life-saving care.

The primary issue is whether to continue the city's ambulance service or contract it out, as was done in the past, given the difficulty in hiring full-time firefighters and the potential for cost savings. Any changes would aim to alleviate the burden on current staff while maintaining essential services for citizens.

Cody Cardon presented the financial impact of various decisions regarding the fire department's budget, focusing on potential changes to the ambulance service. He explained that the tentative budget, approved on May 7, included revenues such as \$37,000 from the county and state for heavy rescue and \$450,000 from ambulance transportation fees. The expenditures covered full-time staff raises, equipment, operations, and fuel.

To evaluate the budget without the ambulance service, Chief Sholly had adjusted line items to reflect reduced expenses, such as equipment operations and vehicle maintenance.

Mr. Cardon provided a detailed financial analysis of various staffing and budgeting options for the fire department, focusing on how to manage staffing, overtime, and ambulance services. He explained how they calculated the budget figures, considering daily wages, overtime, and absences. They used an average of real wages multiplied by 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to arrive at a total of \$250,000 for full-time wages. Additional overtime was estimated at around \$40,000. He noted that Chief Sholly provided data on absences, showing an average of 5-8 sick days per month, which influenced their calculations. Five options were proposed:

Option 1: Maintain four full-timers, eliminate part-timers, and rely heavily on overtime. This would result in a deficit of approximately \$284,000 after considering the loss of \$450,000 in ambulance revenue and reduced expenses.

Option 2: Keep three full-timers and use part-timers to cover the fourth position, with overtime for unexpected absences. This would maintain minimum staffing and spread the workload more evenly.

Option 3: Similar to the current arrangement with three full-timers, but without consistent part-time coverage, relying on overtime to backfill absences.

Option 4: Maintain the ambulance service, increase full-time staff to five, and eliminate part-timers. This would fully staff the department but increase wages.

Option 5: Keep the ambulance service with four full-timers and one part-timer, using both part-time and overtime to cover shifts.

Mr. Cardon noted the variability in overtime costs and hiring uncertainties, making precise budgeting challenging. They aimed to find the best balance between maintaining service quality and managing costs, discussing with Chief Sholly to refine the numbers and ensure the feasibility of each option.

Discussion moved to ongoing issues with the city's fire and ambulance services, focusing on staffing challenges and financial implications. Councilor Stevens expressed confusion about the current situation, recalling past debates on the feasibility of contracting out services and the impact on staffing levels. He noted that the city has been dealing with staffing shortages for a while, with some positions unfilled and part-time staffing proving unreliable.

Chief Sholly explained that the transition from 24-hour to 12-hour shifts had exacerbated staffing issues, leading to high turnover and difficulties in maintaining adequate coverage. The introduction of a new staffing model, which aims to include more full-time personnel, was presented as a solution to stabilize staffing and ensure effective service delivery. However, this shift also involves significant costs.

Councilor Hansen raised concerns about whether the options for ambulance and fire services would result in cost savings or lead to higher expenses. She questioned the long-term benefits of the proposed changes and the potential hidden costs. Chief Sholly clarified that while the new staffing model was designed to address immediate staffing issues, the decision to continue or discontinue ambulance services needed to consider both financial costs and service quality.

The variability in revenue collections from ambulance services, which depend on the types of patients transported and their insurance coverage, was discussed. Chief Sholly noted that collection rates had fluctuated, with lower reimbursements from Medicare and higher collections from private insurers. Despite increases in billing and collections, reimbursement rates remained a challenge.

Councilor Hansen expressed support for the fire department, but voiced disappointment over recent misinformation and negative social media comments. She mentioned the lack of coordination from the city in general in handling the RFP for ambulance services, that the approach could and should have been better. That it is important to find opportunities to save the city money, but we need to work together and do it right. Councilor Hansen emphasized the need for unity and better collaboration between the council, fire department, and community, urging everyone to work together more effectively. Despite the challenges, she reaffirmed her commitment to the city and stressed the importance of dedication and integrity.

Motion: Councilmember Hansen moved to adopt option four to restructure the fire department and provide them with the budget that they need to maintain the ambulance service and have the staffing to provide the services that Riverdale needs.

Second: Councilmember Richter

Discussion: Mr. Haws asked if the tax would be increased to pay for this. Mr. Cardon offered multiple options and said it would be up to the council.

Councilor Stevens shared a personal experience involving ambulance services and discussed his conflicted feelings about potential changes. He had been open to experimenting with a year-long contract for ambulance services from outside Riverdale to assess its impact on the budget and service quality. He expressed concern over unfilled firefighter positions affecting morale and the budget.

Councilor Haws inquired about the increased tax revenue intended to fund additional police and firefighters. Chief Sholly noted delays in hiring due to natural attrition and uncertainty about filling vacant positions. He reviewed different options for managing firefighter staffing, including keeping full-time positions, using part-time staff, or a combination of both.

Mayor Mitchell stressed the need to finalize decisions to hold the fire department accountable for overtime and staffing issues. He recognized that there were missteps in handling the situation, such as the 12-hour shift experiment and ambulance contracting options, but he believes exploring cost-saving measures was worthwhile. He appreciated Councilor Hansen's feedback and acknowledged the need for improvement. Mayor Mitchell expressed ongoing support for the fire department and commitment to finding the best service at the best price for the city.

Mr. Haws noted that the differences between options one and two were minimal, with only slight variations in cost and excess. He said that options three and four, which include keeping the ambulance, offer what seems to be desired by everyone with minimal additional cost compared to the alternatives. He expressed surprise at how little difference there is between the no-ambulance option and the option that retains the ambulance.

Councilor Hansen	Yes
Councilor Richter	Yes
Councilor Stevens	Yes
Councilor Arnold	Absent
Councilor Haws	Yes

Motion passes unanimously.

4. Consideration of Ordinance #983 approving proposed amendments to the Riverdale City Code: Human Resources Manual Employees Classification/Compensation Plan 1-7-2 Salaries of City Council and Mayor.

Mr. Cardon pointed out an error in the ordinance regarding the omission of a \$15 monthly stipend for electronic devices. He suggested adding this stipend but noted that no other changes would be necessary if the current ordinance remained in place.

Councilor Richter inquired about implementing only the electronic stipend without the salary increase. Mr. Cardon explained that amending the ordinance to reflect the \$15 monthly stipend, totaling \$720 over four years, would be required. He also mentioned that including this stipend as an increase in pay rather than a separate stipend would simplify payroll.

Motion: Councilmember Richter moved to deny Ordinance #983 for proposed amendments to the Riverdale City Code: Human Resources Manual Employees Classification/Compensation Plan 1-7-2 Salaries of City Council and Mayor, but to implement a \$15 per month electronic devices stipend.

There was discussion about using round numbers and what the result from the current motion on the floor would be, leading Councilor Richter to withdraw his motion.

Motion: Councilor Richter moved to approve Ordinance #983 with the amendment of maintaining the current salary and including a \$15 monthly stipend for electronic devices.

Second: Councilmember Stevens

Councilor Richter	Yes
Councilor Haws	No
Councilor Arnold	Absent
Councilor Hansen	Yes
Councilor Stevens	Yes

Motion passes 3 in favor and 1 opposed.

5. Consideration of Ordinance #984 approving proposed amendments to the Riverdale City Code: Human Resources Manual Employees Classification/Compensation Plan 1-7F-6 Salary of the Justice Court Judge.

Mr. Cardon noted the resolution was amended and the new amount was \$86,843.40 per year, which is the minimum Riverdale is required to pay the judge.

Motion: Councilmember Stevens moved to approve Ordinance #984 approving proposed amendments to the Riverdale City Code: Human Resources Manual Employees Classification/Compensation Plan 1-7F-6 Salary of the Justice Court Judge.

Second: Councilmember Hansen

Discussion: Mr. Haws noted the first section of the resolution establishes an hourly salary, not an annual or monthly. Mr. Stevens amended the motion to change it to an annual salary of \$86,843.40 and remove the hourly language.

Councilor Haws	Yes
Councilor Arnold	Absent
Councilor Richter	Yes
Councilor Stevens	Yes
Councilor Hansen	Yes

Motion passes unanimously.

6. Consideration of Resolution #2024-17 accepting Riverdale City's Certified Property Tax Rate of 0.001425 as calculated by the Weber County Auditor.

Motion: Councilmember Richter moved to approve Resolution #2024-17 accepting Riverdale City's Certified Property Tax Rate of 0.001425 as calculated by the Weber County Auditor.

Second: Councilmember Stevens

Councilor Haws asked if Councilor Hansen was interested in implementing truth in taxation. She expressed a desire to do so next year and align it with a more regular schedule, also noting she wants to see how the fire department situation develops. Mr. Haws suggested raising taxes at the same rate as salary increases.

Councilor Stevens questioned the cost-effectiveness of truth in taxation this year, considering the cost depends on how many other entities are doing it. Mr. Cardon noted that the impact on residents is greater when multiple entities adopt it. Mayor Mitchell added that new developments could also affect taxes. Mr. Stevens indicated he would support a minimal tax increase aligned with staff wage adjustments.

Mr. Richter said he was willing to withdraw his motion, second concurred. Motion was withdrawn.

Ms. Hansen asked how much it would need to increase to cover the fire department's extra cost. Mr. Cardon estimated that about a 12 percent increase would do it, which would be about \$3.50 a month on an approximately \$450,000 home.

Councilor Hansen expressed hesitation about proceeding with truth in taxation this year, citing concerns over the cost and recent increases. She felt it was important that Council and staff regularly review the need for tax adjustments to avoid future large increases. Ms. Hansen noted that while the concept is valuable, the timing might be rushed given the recent tax hike and ongoing issues with the fire department.

Councilor Richter agreed that a more deliberate approach is needed, suggesting that discussions about taxation be more strategic and planned ahead-of-time, possibly starting at the beginning of the year. He also noted that recent discussions and decisions have been lengthy, and the focus should be on solving current issues before addressing new ones like truth in taxation.

Motion: Councilmember Richter moved to approve Resolution #2024-17 accepting Riverdale City's Certified Property Tax Rate of 0.001425 as calculated by the Weber County Auditor.

Second: Councilmember Stevens

Councilor Stevens	Yes
Councilor Haws	Yes
Councilor Hansen	Yes
Councilor Arnold	Absent
Councilor Richter	Yes

Motion passes unanimously.

7. Consideration of Resolution #2024-18 approving the nonreciprocal interfund activity transfer of resources utilized by the City's General Fund as provided by the City's water fund. The estimated value of these culinary water services is \$80,000.

Motion: Councilmember Stevens moved to approve Resolution #2024-18 approving the nonreciprocal interfund activity transfer of resources utilized by the City's General Fund as provided by the City's water fund. The estimated value of these culinary water services is \$80,000.

Second: Councilmember Hansen

Councilor Haws asked if water rate increases would impact the water fund. Mr. Cardon estimated that the increase would amount to \$188,000. Mr. Haws pointed out that if the city covered its own water bill, the proposed rate increases for residents could be halved. Mr. Cardon explained that covering the city's water bill would require an additional \$80,000 from the general fund, potentially requiring a tax increase.

Mr. Haws argued that since residents are already paying for the city's water through their bills, the city should cover this expense from its revenue. He acknowledged that this is standard practice but disagreed with it.

Councilor Hansen	Yes
Councilor Stevens	Yes
Councilor Haws	Yes
Councilor Richter	Yes
Councilor Arnold	Absent

Motion passes unanimously.

8. Review Fraud Risk Discussion for submission to the State Auditor's Office.

Mr. Cardon presented the annual review required by state law. He confirmed that there were no policy changes from the previous year and offered to answer questions.

Councilor Richter asked about the lack of a reconciler for P-card transactions. Mr. Cardon explained that while there is no designated reconciler, Mr. Brooks performs quarterly reviews of credit card statements, which serves as a compensating control. Mr. Richter also inquired about the absence of written policies on credit and purchasing cards. Mr. Cardon acknowledged this gap and noted that the switch to US Bank for P-cards has improved control.

It was decided that no formal resolution or vote was needed, and a verbal acknowledgment of the review was sufficient.

Consensus: The Council agreed verbally to acknowledge the review of fraud risk controls.

9. Consideration of Resolution #2024-19 amending the Riverdale City budget for Fiscal Year 24 (2023-2024)

Mr. Cardon explained that the proposed amendment involved increasing the sales tax revenue to cover additional costs related to training and wage adjustments, particularly in the fire department. He noted that they performed a financial review to identify areas nearing the budget limit and adjustments were made where needed.

Councilor Stevens questioned the discrepancy between the projected salaries and wages for the fire department versus actual part-time and overtime costs. Mr. Cardon clarified that the software used for budget calculations might show inaccuracies. Despite being over budget in some areas, overall part-time costs are under budget due to fewer part-timers working. Ambulance fees are also higher due to increased billings.

Mr. Cardon noted that the final budget numbers are preliminary and may not reflect the exact figures as final data on sales tax and other revenues are not available by the deadline. Mr. Stevens asked if the final budget would show some line items under budget and others over budget, with an overall balance. Mr. Cardon confirmed that while some areas like overtime might exceed the budget, the overall budget should be managed by adjusting other line items accordingly.

Motion: Councilmember Hansen moved to approve Resolution #2024-19 amending the Riverdale City budget for Fiscal Year 24 (2023-2024)

Second: Councilmember Haws

Councilor Arnold	Absent
Councilor Richter	Yes
Councilor Stevens	Yes
Councilor Hansen	Yes
Councilor Haws	Yes

Motion passes unanimously.

10. Consideration of Resolution #2024-20 adopting the Riverdale City Budget for Fiscal Year 25 (2024-2025)

Mr. Cardon noted that the change with the fire department would alter the budget. Mr. Stevens asked if he could adjust the line item for office furniture. Mr. Cardon explained how to include it in a motion to balance the budget.

Motion: Councilmember Stevens moved to approve Resolution #2024-20 adopting the Riverdale City Budget for Fiscal Year 25 (2024-2025) with changes: Option four for the ambulance/fire department, offset with \$212,000 increased in the sales tax to balance the budget and 45-47-7000 for civic center furniture increased by \$52,000 with funds from 45-47-9000 to balance the budget.

Second: Councilmember Hansen

Councilor Haws	Yes
Councilor Hansen	Yes
Councilor Stevens	Yes
Councilor Arnold	Absent
Councilor Richter	Yes

Motion passes unanimously.

11. Consideration of Resolution #2024-21 to approve the 2024-2025 Consolidated Fee Schedule

Motion: Councilmember Haws moved to approve Resolution #2024-21 amending the 2024-2025 Consolidated Fee Schedule with one change: the increase in the water does not go into effect until October 1st.

Second: Councilmember Hansen

Councilor Haws explained he wanted to make the increase in the water fee more palatable for residents by delaying it until after the highest usage period.

Councilor Stevens	Yes
Councilor Arnold	Absent
Councilor Richter	Yes
Councilor Haws	Yes
Councilor Hansen	Yes

Motion passes unanimously.

12. Consideration of Resolution #2024-22 approving a UDOT betterment agreement concerning work to be performed on the bridges located on 4400 South.

Mr. Cooper clarified that agenda items 12 and 13 pertain to the same project, which requires two separate resolutions. The project involves lengthening and widening bridges, in addition to the work planned by UDOT. The total cost is \$1.6 million, initially paid by Riverdale City and later reimbursed by America First Credit Union (AFCU). The work is expected to be completed in the next construction season.

Councilor Hansen inquired whether the Redevelopment Agency (RDA) would eventually reimburse AFCU. Mr. Cooper explained that the obligation is to try to do so. Ms. Hansen also asked about potential traffic impacts and whether any other components of AFCU's project are included in this scope of work.

Motion: Councilmember Richter moved to approve Resolution #2024-22 approving a UDOT betterment agreement concerning work to be performed on the bridges located on 4400 South.

Second: Councilmember Stevens

Councilor Hansen	Yes
Councilor Richter	Yes
Councilor Stevens	Yes
Councilor Arnold	Absent
Councilor Haws	Yes

Motion passes unanimously.

13. Consideration of Resolution #2024-23 approving an agreement between Riverdale City and America First Credit Union regarding the funding for work to be performed on the bridges located on 4400 South.

Motion: Councilmember Stevens moved to approve #2024-23 approving an agreement between Riverdale City and America First Credit Union regarding the funding for work to be performed on the bridges located on 4400 South.

Second: Councilmember Richter

Councilor Richter	Yes
Councilor Hansen	Yes
Councilor Stevens	Yes
Councilor Arnold	Absent
Councilor Haws	Yes

Motion passes unanimously.

Comments

Councilor Hansen clarified that her intention was not to criticize but to express appreciation for the efforts to try new approaches, like the shift changes in the fire department. She felt that trying different strategies is valuable, even if they don't always work out. Ms. Hansen emphasized the need for improved communication and suggested that slowing down the process to review numbers before moving forward might be beneficial. She also encouraged avoiding public discussions on social media platforms.

Chief Warren expressed gratitude for the council's support and acknowledged the difficulty of the meeting. He commended the council for their thoughtful and thorough consideration of various issues. Chief Warren noted that the questions asked were pertinent and appreciated the effort put into supporting the city's staff, especially the police department.

Mr. Brooks noted there was a drug court graduation on June 27th at 1pm, which would be the last one.

Adjournment

Having no further business to discuss, Councilmember Stevens moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Hansen seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 9:13 p.m.

Date Approved: 7/16/2024