

THE EMIGRATION CANYON METRO TOWNSHIP COUNCIL, STATE OF UTAH, MET ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2024, PURSUANT TO ADJOURNMENT ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2024, AT THE HOUR OF 7:00 P.M., AT THE EMIGRATION CANYON FIRE STATION 119, 5025 E EMIGRATION CANYON ROAD, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: ROBERT PINON  
CATHERINE HARRIS  
JENNIFER HAWKES, Deputy Mayor  
JOE SMOLKA, Mayor

COUNCIL MEMBER EXCUSED: DAVID BREMS



Mayor Smolka, Chair, presided.



Emigration Canyon Community Council Reorganization

**Bill Tobey**, Chair of the Emigration Canyon Community Council, stated that the meeting focused on the challenges the Community Council is facing, particularly in trying to get a complete slate of officers for the upcoming year due to a shortage of active members. There is a possibility of reorganizing the Community Council under the Metro Township Council to help address these challenges. Key considerations included avoiding unnecessary management responsibilities for the Metro Council and managing potential liabilities from volunteers operating within the Township government.

**Mayor Smolka** stated the Council would need to have some oversight over the committee.

**Deputy Mayor Hawkes** stated the committee would still need to adhere to rules regarding recorded meetings, meeting minutes, and other procedural requirements, which might differ from the standard practices of the Metro Township Council.

**Zach Posner**, Emigration Canyon Community Council, stated that a committee not involved in policy decisions can meet under different requirements.

**Mr. Tobey** stated the Community Council would primarily handle tasks and responsibilities, with most members performing specific jobs. Any significant decisions, particularly those involving expenditures, would require approval from the Metro Township Council.

**Deputy Mayor Hawkes** stated there could be separate committees, such as a firewise committee or a communication committee, to handle specific areas.

**Mr. Tobey** stated expressed concerns about the limited number of people working on firewise and wildfire safety initiatives, noting that these tasks are more extensive than they initially appear. Currently, only two individuals are involved, and with one of them leaving soon, the workload will fall to just one person. The Metro Township might be able to hire an employee

to take on a significant portion of the work through grant opportunities. Ideally, a firewise team would consist of three or four people, with the possibility of expanding volunteer involvement in other areas over time. However, at present, most activity areas have only one person managing the workload, making the development of dedicated subcommittees something to be considered in the future.

**Council Member Harris** asked what the key activities are that the current Community Council oversees.

**Mr. Tobey** stated there are challenges in managing communications, which include tasks such as producing newsletters, maintaining the website, and, at one point, developing a social media presence. Currently, the communications effort has dwindled to just two people: one focusing on content generation and the other handling the technical aspects.

A resident, Jeff Carlston had approached the Community Council with a proposal to collaborate on community programming, specifically focused on education and development around local history. The Community Council responded positively to the idea. Mr. Carlston also offered to contribute \$5,000 in book profits towards these community activities.

**Deputy Mayor Hawkes** stated there is an outdoor recreation grant available; however, the deadline is approaching soon. She suggested that this grant could be used to match funds for a community program. The program could be tailored to specific needs.

**Mr. Tobey** stated that the conversation regarding Jeff Carlston's proposal is still in its early stages. While the Community Council responded positively to the idea, no further planning or discussions have taken place. This represents another potential area where volunteers, in collaboration with the Metro Township, could contribute positively to the community. Canyon cleanups are another important initiative that should be considered.

Fire safety has consumed the majority of their time and effort. He acknowledged that there is significant potential for expanding communications efforts if there were more capable individuals available. The lack of progress in communications is disappointing.

**Mayor Smolka** stated it was proposed that separate accounts could be created under the supervision of the MSD to manage funds. Specifically, accounts could be established for distinct purposes, such as one for firewise activities and another for the Historical Society.

**Mr. Posner** asked whether the proposed changes, which would transform the organization into a city, would affect the creation of separate accounts for managing funds. They mentioned not being certain if the legislation had passed but noted that it could impact the current arrangements.

**Deputy Mayor Hawkes** stated any website associated with the subcommittees must include a privacy statement detailing how information is collected, shared, and used. The requirements include disclosing how personal information is handled and ensuring transparency about its use, including prohibitions on selling such information.

Another issue raised was regarding insurance coverage. It was suggested that, for meetings, it would be important to keep records of when and who attended to address any potential issues

that might arise. The speaker was uncertain about how these practices would impact insurance rates.

**Mr. Tobey** stated if a subcommittee were formed under the Metro Township, the Community Council would need to dissolve as a nonprofit corporation and surrender its status as an independent legal entity. The subcommittee would then operate as a voluntary committee under the Metro Township's jurisdiction.

**Council Member Harris** suggested reaching out to the Association of Community Councils Together (ACCT) to get guidance on transitioning from a nonprofit organization to a voluntary committee under the Metro Township.

**Mr. Tobey** stated most of the questions that have arisen so far have relatively straightforward solutions. However, if any complex issues arise, they could be addressed with the help of the ACCT. While cash assets might be rolled under the Metro Township, other assets require consideration. Specifically, the absence of a communications team and the potential need for someone to manage newsletters after his departure. They noted having a MailChimp account that costs \$30 per month and inquired whether the Metro Township would find it useful and be interested in taking it over.

**Deputy Mayor Hawkes** stated she did not believe the Metro Township would need MailChimp. Resources are also available through the Utah League of Cities and Towns, which can provide assistance with these questions. The speaker planned to reach out to them, as they also have access to staff who might offer additional support.

**Council Member Pinon** suggested exporting all contacts from the MailChimp account to ensure that the information can be retained and used, regardless of whether the account is transferred to the Metro Township.

**Mr. Tobey** stated there are useful pieces of content on the current website, including a wildfire safety orientation article. Is there a need to maintain a separate website if the organization is incorporated into the Metro Township. He suggested that it might be more practical to extract and transfer valuable content from the existing site.

**Deputy Mayor Hawkes** asked Mr. Tobey to email her what he recommended keeping on the website.

**Mr. Posner** offered assistance with the migration process if needed. Once the majority of content has been transferred, they proposed setting up a redirect from the old website to the Metro Township Council website to ensure that all traffic is directed appropriately.

**Paul Brown**, Emigration Canyon Community Council, stated the state registration has been renewed for the year, which required a small financial fee. He saw no issue with closing the checking account and writing a check to the Metro Township Council to settle the finances. Finding volunteers for various tasks, such as Firewise initiatives, remains a challenge, whether for a Community Council or the Metro Township Council. Subcommittees would need to be formed, which still require volunteers, posing the same issue as finding volunteers for the Community Council.

**Mr. Tobey** stated there are enough people in the Canyon who would be interested in participating, particularly if the issue is a high priority for the residents. He suggested that a targeted outreach effort could be effective in encouraging residents to join the Firewise initiative. That is a specific appeal that he thinks could get some response.

**Mayor Smolka** stated if there were one or two core individuals involved, it would be possible to bring in additional people for short-term commitments, such as a month.

**Mr. Tobey** asked the Community Council members if there were any opposition or reservations about moving forward with the process, determining the next steps, and continuing to pursue the outlined plan. Those present were in agreement to move forward.



THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS to come before the Council at this time, the meeting was adjourned.

  
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MAYOR, EMIGRATION CANYON METRO TOWNSHIP COUNCIL

ATTEST:

  
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Nicole Smedley, City Recorder

