LONE PEAK PUBLIC SAFETY DISTRICT MINUTES

Wednesday, April 9, 2025
7:30 am
Approved May 14, 2025
Highland City Hall, 5400 West Civic Center Drive, Highland, Utah 84003

7:30 AM REGULAR MEETING

Call to Order: Chair Kim Rodela
Invocation: Chair Kim Rodela

The meeting was called to order by Chair Kim Rodela as a regular meeting at 7:30 am. The meeting agenda was posted on the *Utah State Public Meeting Website* at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

PRESIDING: Kim Rodela, Chair

BOARD MEMBERS: Brittney P. Bills - present
Kurt Ostler – present
Carla Merrill – present
Jason Thelin – present

STAFF PRESENT: LPPSD Executive Director Erin Wells, LPPSD Assistant Executive Director Shane Sorensen, Fire Chief Brian Patten, Police Chief Brian Gwilliam, Recorder Stephannie Cottle, Finance Director David Mortensen

OTHERS PRESENT: Doug Cortney, Jameson Bangerter, Zach Burkard, Mark Chatterton, Taylor Lythgoe, Austin Wilson, John Grayson Pollock, Danny Campbell, Tayton Christiansen, Dustin Mitchell

1. UNSCHEDULED PUBLIC APPEARANCES

Please limit comments to three minutes per person. Please state your name.

There were no public comments.

2. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Regular Lone Peak Public Safety District Meeting – February 25, 2025

Board Member Brittney P. Bills MOVED to approve the regular Lone Peak Public Safety District meeting minutes from February 25, 2025.

Board Member Kurt Ostler SECONDED the motion.

The vote was recorded as follows:

Board Member Brittney P. Bills Yes

Board Member Kim Rodela	*Yes*
Board Member Kurt Ostler	*Yes*
Board Member Carla Merrill	*Yes*
Board Member Jason Thelin	*Yes*

The motion passed 5:0

3. FY2026 LONE PEAK PUBLIC SAFETY DISTRICT TENTATIVE BUDGET

The Board will hold a public hearing and consider the approval of the tentative budget for FY2026.

Executive Director Wells introduced the tentative budget for the Lone Peak Public Safety District (LPPSD) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026. She highlighted the changes that have been made to the budget document since it was last discussed by the Board in March, which represents an increase of $35,557. The increases are due to medical insurance renewal rates coming in at 12 percent instead of the budgeted 10 percent and a correction to the Utah Retirement Services (URS) contribution rate for Tier II Defined Contribution employees in the Fire Department. Staff also took a second look at interest earnings and felt that the projection could be increased by $37,500 from the March 12 draft, so the changes ultimately resulted in a small net decrease in assessments to both Alpine and Highland cities.

Board Member Ostler asked if the LPPSD handles its own medical insurance benefits or if they partner with one of the cities for that service. Ms. Wells stated that Highland City and LPPSD employees are in a pool together, so the 12 percent increase is for the City and the District. Board Member Ostler inquired as to the increase in medical benefits for Alpine City, to which Assistant Executive Director Sorensen answered 7.4 percent this year. Board Member Ostler wondered why there is such a big disparity between the Highland and Alpine costs. Ms. Wells stated that Highland City changed its insurance carrier last year because of a large increase the former provider was trying to charge last year. This year, Highland Administration was told that the insurance costs for Highland employees were very high last year; there were several babies born last year and a high rate of visits to the emergency room. These instances cost much more than what the City and employees contribute to insurance. The provider initially asked for a higher increase, but the City's broker was able to negotiate a 12 percent increase.

She then summarized major changes by Department:

- **Administration**
  - *Revenue Adjustments*
    - Interest Earnings – Staff is projecting an increase of approximately $12,000 over budgeted interest earnings from the current fiscal year.
  - *Adjustments to Wages*
    - Wages – There is a proposed increase for salary adjustments of 3% for the Highland City staff who provide administrative services to the District. The percentage of each employee's time that is charged to the District is at the same allocations previously approved by the Board.
  - *Operational Adjustments*
    - Dispatch – Each City is responsible for its assessment from Central Utah 911. Staff understands the proposed increases amounting to nearly $62,000 are

largely due to wage adjustments. Dispatch fees make up 60% of the administration budget.

Overall, the Administration budget request represents an increase of $73,369 (18.2%) from FY2025.

- **Police**
    - *Revenue Adjustments*
        - School Resource Officer Reimbursement – A $5,000 increase to the contribution amount from Alpine School District for our 2 school resource officers.
    - *Adjustments to Wages*
        - Salaries – A proposed market adjustment of 5.5% to bring positions to average along with a 2.5% merit opportunity for employees.
        - Salary-related items – The salary increases above also increases overtime, call pay, retirement, and FICA/Medicare.
    - *Operational Adjustments*
        - Vehicle Lease – Decrease of approximately $33,000 due to the timing of lease payments for police vehicles.

Overall, the Police request represents an expense increase of $204,809 (4.4%) over FY2025.

Board Member Ostler asked if the 5.5 percent increase will get employees to the current market or where District leadership believes the market will be. Chief Gwilliam clarified the total increase will be 6.4 percent and that will get employees to what he believes the average wage will be on July 1 of this year, after other agencies have adjusted their compensation rates.

- **Fire/EMS**
    - *Revenue Adjustments*
        - Utah County Reimbursement – A $52,000 increase due to the call volume and contracted amount for the Fire Department's coverage of property in unincorporated Utah County including American Fork Canyon.
        - Ambulance Revenue – A $25,000 increase in fees collected for service due to the increase in call volume.
        - Mental Health Grant – The use of $23,000 of grant money received in the prior fiscal year for a mental health program.
    - *Proposed Staffing Adjustments*
        - Salaries – A proposed 3% merit adjustment for the department's step and grade pay plan along with a market adjustment of 5% to bring the department's salary ranges to average.
        - Engineer position – Promotion of 3 firefighter positions to Engineers to oversee the care of our heavy apparatus to prolong its life and minimize repairs.
        - Part-time salary increase – $1.00 per hour increase for the part-time firefighters.
        - Staffing addition – Addition of 2 full-time and 1 part-time firefighter positions to bring the staffing level to 9 for each shift which will move the department closer to meeting industry standards and OSHA standards for the initial attack on a house fire.

        - Salary-Related Items – The staffing adjustments and salary increases above also increase overtime, holiday pay, retirement, and FICA/Medicare.
    - *Operational Adjustments*
        - Professional Services – The creation of a mental health program offset by grant revenue.
        - Medical supplies – A $6,580 increase due to increased call volume and the cost of supplies.
        - Training – A $5,000 increase to pay for paramedic school and the increased cost of training and travel.

Overall, the Fire/EMS budget represents an expense increase of $754,630 (17.8%) over FY2025.

Board Member Ostler stated he still has questions and feels he needs additional time to consider the requests that are included in the budget; he knows that not all members of the Board have been able to meet individually with District Administration and the Police and Fire Chiefs and he asked if it would be helpful to table an action on the budget today to give everyone a bit more time to digest the budget. Board Member Merrill stated it would be helpful to her and she does not believe that there is a clear consensus on the budget at this time. She asked when the budget must be presented to Highland and Alpine cities for their consideration. Mr. Sorensen stated that the City Councils will need to have a budget from the District prior to their first meeting in May. Board Member Merrill asked if the Board could meet the last week of April to consider final action on the budget.

Board Member Thelin stated he would also be supportive of tabling an action on the budget this morning. He still has some questions about grants included in the budget for Fire Department staffing and medical health support. Chief Patten stated that the District is receiving $23,000 in grant funding for medical health services for Department employees; however, the expense line item for that same cost only increased $8,000 and he is unsure of the ongoing costs for the service when the grant expires. This led to high level discussion of the mental health services/programming that will be available to Department employees through the grant. Chief Patten then then addressed the SAFER grant; the Department has applied for and not received the grant in the past and the decision was made to write for the amount needed to get the Department to a minimum standard for staffing based upon the understanding that the Department will not receive the grant for phased staffing adjustments.

Board Member Thelin stated that there have been significant increases in the budget in the last few years, as well as due to mid-year budget adjustments. He wants to arrive at a formal process for the annual budget in order to ensure that all members are receiving the same information and for transparency with the public.

Board Member Ostler stated he continues to be concerned about staffing models for the Fire Department; he wondered if it would be appropriate to consider staffing per station rather than as the whole District. These concerns are the reasons he would like to table the budget today.

Ms. Wells asked the Board if they were available to meet on April 29, to which all Board Members answered yes.

Board Member Jason Thelin MOVED to table the FY2026 Lone Peak Public Safety District Tentative Budget until the morning of April 29, 2025.

Board Member Carla Merrill SECONDED the motion.

The vote was recorded as follows:

Board Member Brittney P. Bills	*Yes*
Board Member Kim Rodela	*Yes*
Board Member Kurt Ostler	*Yes*
Board Member Carla Merrill	*Yes*
Board Member Jason Thelin	*Yes*

The motion passed 5:0

4. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

a. Administration

Executive Director Wells indicated she did not have anything to report.

b. Police Department

Chief Gwilliam stated he has been serving as the President of Utah Chiefs of Police Association and his term in that position ended a few weeks ago. He thanked the Board for their support and indicated he will still be involved in the Association, but not as the president. He then reported on efforts to train employees working in the School Guardian program. He added that his Officers who were involved in the response to a car fire incident in the District were publicly recognized during a ceremony in St. George and it was snice to see them recognized.

There was brief discussion among the Board and Chief Gwilliam about recent training events he participated in that provided information about new grant programs. There was also a quick focus on recent grant applications the Department has made.

c. Fire Department

Chief Patten provided an update on the recent return of the Department's Wildland team from Texas; he is projecting that somewhere over $500,000 will be billed for Wildland deployments.

Board Member Merrill briefly revisited the budget discussion and asked what the overall increase to the budget will be due to the proposed fire compensation increases. Chief Patten stated that the merit increase will be different for all employees, but the average would be three percent depending on an employee's evaluation. Board Member Merrill stated she needs to know the overall impact on the budget. Finance Director Mortensen stated the dollar amount he included in the budget was the impact of the wage increases.

Board Member Ostler discussed a tragic event that occurred last fall, and the recent announcement of homicide charges being filed as a result of the event. He thanked the professionals in the Fire and Police Departments for being astute and paying such close attention to detail.

5. CLOSED SESSION

The Board may recess to convene in a closed session for the purpose of discussing items as provided by Utah Code Annotated §52-4-205.

ADJOURNMENT

Board Member Carla Merrill MOVED to adjourn the regular meeting and Board Member Kurt Ostler SECONDED the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:17 am.

I, Stephannie Cottle, Recorder, hereby certify that the foregoing minutes represent a true, accurate and complete record of the meeting held on April 9, 2025. This document constitutes the official minutes for the Lone Peak Public Safety District Board Meeting.

Stephannie Cottle, CMC, UCC
LPPSD Recorder