

MINUTES OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL AND UTAH COUNTY COMMISSION SPECIAL JOINT MEETING HELD, NOVEMBER 30, 2015 at 3:30 p.m. in the Uintah County Conference room, 147 East Main, Vernal, Utah 84078.

PRESENT:

Vernal City: Councilmembers Bert Clark, Ted Munford, Samantha Scott, JoAnn Cowan and Dave Everett. Mayor Sonja Norton was excused.

Uintah County: Commissioner Mark Raymond, Mike McKee and Bill Stringer.

Staff and Guests: Ken Bassett and Roxanne Behunin, Vernal City, SueAnn Dickson, Derk Hatch, Uintah County, Steve Evans, Gary Showalter, Jordan Mathis, Natalie Felch, Aaron Averett, and Channy Mecham, Sunrise Engineering, Troy Ostler, Civco Engineering, Kevin Yak, UBAG.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND APPROVAL OF SPECIAL MEETING: *Commissioner Mark Raymond moved to approve the special meeting of November 30, 2015. Councilmember Bert Clark seconded the motion. The motion passed with Commissioner McKee, Raymond and Stringer and Councilmembers Everett, Clark, Cowan, Scott and Munford voting in favor.*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JUNE 15, 2015 REGULAR MEETING: *Councilmember Bert Clark moved to approve the minutes of June 15, 2015. Councilmember Dave Everett seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote of the Uintah County Commission and Vernal City Council.*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JULY 20, 2015 REGULAR MEETING: *Commissioner Mark Raymond moved to approve the minutes of July 20, 2015. Commissioner Bill Stringer seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote of the Uintah County Commission and Vernal City Council.*

HOUSING UPDATE: SueAnn Dickson, Uintah County Housing Coordinator, stated there have been a lot of changes since 2014 with the housing market due mostly to the economy. The main goal is to keep residents from becoming homeless by providing rental assistance, deposit assistance, utilities or even bus tickets. Usually families are provided assistance once per year, with some exceptions such as senior citizens with medical bills or someone with a new job needing help for a few months until they are on their feet. UBAG has been a great partner along with churches who provide counseling for families to stick to necessities only. If their rent is more than 30 to 40% of their income, one suggestion is to move to a less expensive apartment, get rid of extra phones and television bills. SueAnn noted that the change in the rental market with the slowing economy has reduced her waiting list as people are able to find cheaper housing on their own. There are several agencies that help provide services such as Active Re-Entry, North Eastern Counseling, Victim Advocates, Food Pantry and even the Salvation Army. Commissioner McKee noted that in Salt Lake City he saw a non-English speaker person walk into workforce services and not find anyone that could help him. Here in Uintah County, that is

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not acceptable, so revitalization funds have been allocated for this program. Councilmember JoAnn Cowan stated that this is the first time the Myton Housing Authority has not had a waiting list. Councilmember Clark thanked SueAnn for her help stating this is a great program. Steve Evans asked how many people are helped annually. SueAnn answered that in the last three months she has processed 121 applications.

FLOOD CONTROL: Commissioner Mike McKee reminded the elected officials that a joint study was prepared dealing with flood control and storm water. The estimated cost to implement all the suggested projects was \$189 million dollars. The decision was made to tackle some of the smaller projects to mitigate water damage. The irrigation companies have helped provide some flood control in the valley over the years, and now are interested in piping the canals which would greatly affect flood control. Troy Ostler, engineer, stated that representatives from Vernal City, Naples City, Uintah County, the canal companies and special service districts met to see what could be done to put an actual plan together. Tentative recommendations have been made with a final recommendation to be presented soon. Commissioner Raymond asked what the cost would be. Troy Ostler answered approximately \$6 million dollars. He stated that the catch basins are the largest projects that still need to be completed. He suggested a Storm Water District be formed to take responsibility and keep track of what is needed. Councilmember Clark stated that the storm water enters the sewer manholes and is costly to treat. The Sewer Management Board has also identified problems areas that need corrected. Troy Ostler stated that is part of what the committee is looking at to collect the water ahead of time. He noted that existing drainages also need to be protected by ordinance. Commissioner McKee wondered how to pay for these necessary improvements and suggested one possibility of submitting a joint application to the Community Impact Board. Troy Ostler stated that Vernal City and Uintah County need to decide if they want facilities to be built to handle a 10 year, 25 year or 100 year storm. In 2008, projects were built to handle a 25 year storm, but the pipes for the airport are only for a 10 year storm. Further, there has been some discussion with the irrigation companies to allow the local entities to acquire a right-of-way for the canals even if they are piped, so the ditches can still be used to transport storm water and discharge it to debris basins. Commissioner Raymond noted that the last storm caused flooding when the water breached the Upper Canal which was less than 25 year storm. Troy Ostler stated they hope to have a finalized plan by January. Councilmember Clark asked Mr. Ostler to include Ashley Valley Sewer Management Board in the discussion. Commissioner McKee suggested Vernal City, Uintah County and Naples City sit down and figure out a joint venture to present to the Community Impact Board. Commissioner Ted Munford stated that it is time to consider making changes to flood control although another district pulling funding for employees and projects from the other districts that are already struggling financially may not be the answer. He suggested keeping a committee, but not a permanent district with employees to oversee these issues. Commissioner Mark Raymond stated he has been assigned to this Committee for the County and asked for a commitment from Vernal City to meet and identify issues. Ken Bassett stated that the Upper Canal and Highline Canal have been mentioned as getting funding to pipe their canals, and asked about any plans for Kids Canal. Troy Ostler stated there is no current plan to pipe that water. After further discussion, *Councilmember JoAnn Cowan moved to support this committee and have Vernal City be involved. Councilmember Ted Munford seconded the motion. Councilmembers Cowan, Munford, Everett, Scott and Clark all voted in favor for a unanimous vote.*

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Commissioner Mark Raymond stated that Uintah County is already moving forward in a big way and will continue to Chair this committee.

EAS PROPOSAL: Commissioner Mark Raymond stated he wanted to make everyone aware of what was happening with the essential air service. He reminded everyone that when SkyWest backed out, the FAA bid out the EAS service and awarded the contract to Great Lakes who was not able to find pilots to provide the service. Finally, the DOT terminated Great Lakes contract and solicited new proposals. Two companies provided bids - Via Airlines and Boutique Airlines. Via Airlines has Brasilia airplanes, and the County provided a letter of support for that carrier. However, the County was notified that Via Airlines is not a certified EAS carrier. After some engaged conversations with Boutique, they are proposing flying to Denver and Salt Lake City with additional flights if there are enough travelers. There was some discussion regarding travelers being bumped off flights for freight. Councilmember Dave Everett asked what the length of the contract with Boutique would be. Commissioner Mark Raymond answered two years. Ken Bassett asked if DOT expects the sponsoring agencies to come up with any funds if this proposal is higher than the EAS cap. Commissioner McKee stated the discussions with Boutique have made it clear that their proposal must be within that cap. Commissioner Raymond explained that if there is a passenger in a seat, the DOT pays the difference in the actual cost to transport that person. If the seat is empty, the cost to DOT is higher and the cap is reached quicker. The best solution is to have the community fill the seats. After further discussion the elected officials voted as follows:

Vernal City:

Councilmember JoAnn Cowan moved to support Boutique Air as the EAS carrier for Vernal Regional Airport. Councilmember Ted Munford seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Cowan, Munford, Clark, Scott and Everett voting in favor.

Uintah County:

Commissioner Mark Raymond moved to support Boutique Air as the EAS carrier for the Vernal Regional Airport. Commissioner Bill Stringer seconded the motion. The motion passed with Commissioners Raymond, Stringer and McKee voting in favor.

WAIVING FEES AT CONFERENCE CENTER: Councilmember Bert Clark asked if the fees were being waived at the conference center under certain circumstances. Derk Hatch stated that the conference center is doing very well with 21 conferences scheduled next year along with 14 banquets and trade shows. Some events have been moved from the Western Park which then frees up that space for horse events. Also, the hotel owners and catering companies are hoping the conference center helps their businesses. He noted that part of the marketing ploy for the conference center is to ask the organizations to book their first event for free if they book an additional event at full price. Councilmember Clark asked about booth set ups. Derk Hatch explained they charge per space as most conferences do have trade organizations that come with them. Councilmember Clark asked about food service. Derk Hatch answered that there are 41 people in the area that can provide food service from a full meal to snacks. He noted this is helping support small business. Councilmember Clark stated his hope is the conference center is Self-supporting within 5 years. Councilmember Cowan suggested Vernal City have a

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representative on the advisory board for the conference center if one is formed.

WELLNESS WAGON: Commissioner McKee updated the elected officials on the meeting held with UBAG to fund the wellness wagon, and there was unanimous support to find a way to run this program. Commissioner Stringer stated that originally it was proposed to use funds from Proposition 1 to fund this program, if it passed, and try to get funding to transport veterans to necessary doctor appointments. Many items were discussed at that meeting including a schedule, pick up locations, insurance and especially funding. It was noted that some patients are getting paid for personal transportation when they were actually using the wellness wagon and one suggestion was to have the program get paid directly by Medicaid or Medicare. Ken Bassett asked what the expected time frame is to reinstate this program. Kevin Yak stated they hope to have it running in January. There was some discussion regarding the cost to run this program. Councilmember JoAnn Cowan stated they will need to evaluate the cost to use a small UTA bus with wheelchair accessibility over the Honda Odyssey van. Gary Showalter stated that it does not make sense to use the bigger bus, although there are good reasons to go that route, but the cost would be too high. He stated that there is money available from Petroleum days that the members would like to go to this program if it actually helps the residents and not used for administrative costs. Commissioner McKee agreed that the BTA bus is not the answer. Commissioner Raymond stated that UBAG indicated they can run this program without adding any more staff. Councilmember Clark stated that the veterans van has specific guidelines making it difficult to have volunteers drive. Gary Showalter stated that if the VA administration would work with a local governmental entity it may be possible to transport veterans with other residents. Commissioner McKee asked Jordan Mathis to provide the costs for this program and asked that another meeting be scheduled to come up with a solution. There was some discussion regarding bring needed services to the Basin rather than transporting patients to the Wasatch Front. Commissioner McKee asked Commissioner Raymond to chair a committee to find a solution to this problem. Commissioner Stringer asked them to consider scheduling, pick-up and drop off locations, type of vehicle, including veterans, and cost.

MEETING SCHEDULE: After discussion, the consensus was to hold the next meeting on Monday, January 25th at 3:30 at the City office.

ADJOURN: There being no further business; Councilmember Bert Clark moved to adjourn. Commissioner Bill Stringer seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote and the meeting was adjourned.

Ken Bassett, City Recorder