

CITY OF OREM
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
56 North State Street Orem, Utah
August 6, 2019

3:00 P.M. OREM FITNESS CENTER GROUND BREAKING CEREMONY

The Mayor, City Council, and staff attended a ground breaking ceremony at the new Orem Family Fitness Center (580 W 165 S).

4:30 P.M. WORK SESSION – CITY COUNCIL CONFERENCE ROOM

CONDUCTING	Mayor Richard F. Brunst
ELECTED OFFICIALS	Debby Lauret, Sam Lentz, Tom Macdonald, Mark Seastrand, David Spencer, and Brent Sumner
APPOINTED STAFF	Brenn Bybee, Assistant City Manager; Steven Downs, Deputy City Manager; Greg Stephens, City Attorney; Scott Gurney, Fire Chief; Gary Giles, Police Chief; Charlene Crozier, Library Director; Chris Tschirki, Public Works Director; Brandon Nelson, Finance Division Manager; Karl Hirst, Recreation Director Ryan Clark, Development Services Director; Jason Bench, Planning Division Manager; Emily Guffin, Long Range Planner; Neal Winterton, Water Resource Division Manager and Jackie Lambert, Deputy City Recorder

DISCUSSION – Moderate Income Housing Update

Mr. Bench provided an update regarding Moderate Income Housing in Orem. He said the generally accepted rule was that housing was only considered “affordable” if the cost of housing, including all utilities, was no more than 30% of the household’s gross income. There was discussion about the upcoming 2020 Census, and how that would affect affordable housing in the area. Mr. Bench shared an example of a project in Park City, Utah, explaining that affordable housing did not always mean large, multi-family complexes. It could also be medium-density townhomes, small duplexes and triplexes, accessory apartments, or even single family homes on smaller lots.

The Council discussed the concerns residents had with affordable housing projects, including the idea that those projects would lower the value of existing homes. Mr. Bench said he did not believe that was actually the case. Mr. Bench continued, saying that affordable housing options led to a stronger local economy. Families that paid less for housing had more disposable income for things like paying bills, buying groceries and other necessities, shopping, eating at local

restaurants, and more. He shared median household incomes established by HUD, and discussed the common impediments to affordable housing, including:

- Lack of funding
- Land costs and availability
- Current zoning
- Neighborhood resistance (NIMBY-ism)
- Belief that low-income housing is a detriment to economic development

Mr. Bench said the number of new housing units did not meet the number of new households. This has caused housing costs to increase due to high demand and lack of supply. He reviewed the things Orem had done to promote housing affordability, including student housing developments, multi-family developments, accessory apartments, senior overlay zones, mixed-use districts on State Street, and more. There was concern about changing the requirements for lot sizes in existing residential zones. Mr. Bench said they were not suggesting a sweeping change, but rather a more individual case-by-case examination of what would fit in a given area.

Mr. Bench said Orem had a Biennial Plan that examined the current challenges in the housing market and explored options available to provide a reasonable opportunity for a variety of housing, including moderate income housing. He said that Utah law now mandated cities to implement three or more moderate-income strategies to ensure adequate housing opportunities for people of various incomes. Orem already utilized five of the proposed tools, but it was an ongoing annual requirement. Recommendations included:

- Update and adopt Orem Moderate Income Housing Plan
- Host an affordable housing charette
- Consider inclusionary zoning
- Partner with other public and private agencies
- Fast track affordable housing projects
- Reduce lot size and housing unit size minimums
- Explore a community land trust
- Focus on the missing middle housing
- Reinvest in Orem's older neighborhoods

Mr. Lentz recalled a discussion with Bill Hulterstom with United Way of Utah County in which Mr. Hulterstom shared the idea that building a stronger, safer community with people from all different backgrounds happened when neighbors knew one another and believed they could work together to achieve their goals. There was continued discussion regarding accessory apartments, affordable housing near transit projects like in Provo, smaller lots for more affordable square footage, and rental licensing and short term rentals.

Mr. Bench said this would not be something solved overnight, but he appreciated direction from the Council about options to explore and consider for long-term solutions.

Preview Upcoming Agenda Items

The City Council briefly reviewed items that would be coming before the Council in future meetings. Mr. Bench shared a number of planning items that would be considered at the August 27, 2019 meeting. The Council discussed the upcoming items and related issues of concern.

City Council Reports (Boards and Commissions, New Business, Etc.)

Mr. Spencer gave a report on his assignments as a City Council liaison to the Beautification Advisory Commission (BAC) and the Recreation Advisory Commission (RAC). He said the BAC had presented 25 beautification awards so far this year, and as well as creating a parade float entry for Summerfest. They were currently working with the Communications staff to include an article in the upcoming newsletter regarding ways to help bees, rules for garage sales, and water conservation. Mr. Spencer asked Mr. Hirst to share additional information about the role the RAC played in the supporting the Family Fitness Center project and what was proposed to keep recreation services during construction.

Mr. Hirst said many of the recreation classes and some of the equipment had been relocated at the Senior Friendship Center. People that had been hesitant about the facility were pleasantly surprised with how large the facility was and how well it would accommodate Fitness Center patrons. He added that they were extending the season for the Scera Pools; it had been an exceptionally hot summer and the pools had been busy. They hoped to be open through September and into October. Lap swimming would still be available in the mornings as long as they were able to stay open. At Mr. Spencer's request, Mr. Downs provided updates regarding the Futsal courts to be built at Geneva Park and needed maintenance at the All-Together Playground at the City Center Park.

Mr. Lentz asked for a few moments to discuss the investigation that was recently made public into Mayor Brunst's misuse of retirement funds from the City. He had hoped to discuss them further in a closed session, but as that would not be happening after the evening meeting he wanted to get clarification from City Attorney Greg Stephens.

Mayor Brunst stated that issues discussed in a closed session should not be discussed in an open meeting, and that the investigation in question was ongoing. Information should not be shared until the investigation was complete.

Mr. Lentz directed questions to Mr. Stephens regarding the ongoing investigation. Mr. Stephens said it would not be appropriate to discuss the scope or substance of the investigation, but said that the issue had been forwarded to the Utah County Sheriff's Office for review at the request of the City Council. He said that the investigation was ongoing, and therefore much of the information pertaining to the investigation was currently confidential.

Mr. Macdonald thanked Mr. Sumner for his service as the current Mayor Pro Tem, and echoed his comments that the focus should be on the good things happening in Orem. Mr. Macdonald said the investigation was being handled and would take its normal course. He hoped they, as a Council, could move forward without conflict and focus on the good things happening.

Lastly, Chief Giles shared information about the National “Night Out Against Crime” Event taking place that evening from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Mayor Brunst said the Council planned to attend the event after the conclusion of the regular meeting.

Agenda Review

The City Council and staff reviewed items on the agenda.

6:00 P.M. REGULAR SESSION – COUNCIL CHAMBERS

CONDUCTING	Mayor Richard F. Brunst
ELECTED OFFICIALS	Debby Lauret, Sam Lentz, Tom Macdonald, Mark Seastrand, David Spencer, and Brent Sumner
APPOINTED STAFF	Brenn Bybee, Assistant City Manager; Steven Downs, Deputy City Manager; Greg Stephens, City Attorney; Karl Hirst, Recreation Director; Gary Giles, Police Chief; Bret Larsen, Fire Marshall; Richard Manning, Administrative Services Director; Charlene Crozier, Library Director; Chris Tschirki, Public Works Director; Ryan Clark, Development Services Director; Pete Wolfley, Communications Specialist; and Jackie Lambert, Deputy City Recorder
INVOCATION / INSPIRATIONAL THOUGHT PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE	Martin Wright David Halliday

MAYOR’S REPORT/ITEMS REFERRED BY COUNCIL

UPCOMING EVENTS

Mayor Brunst reviewed the upcoming events, as listed in the agenda packet.

PERSONAL APPEARANCES

Time was allotted for the public to express their ideas, concerns, and comments on items not scheduled as public hearings on the agenda. Those wishing to speak should have signed in prior to the meeting, and comments were limited to three minutes or less.

Lisa Wilkey said she was concerned about the high turnover of experience first responders in Orem. She felt Orem was losing experience at an alarming rate, and that experience was needed to mentor newer first responders. Ms. Wilkey said there was enough stress on first responders

without being forced to learn on the fly. She said that people did not understand how physically or emotionally demanding the job was, and how it was made even more difficult because they often had to supplement their wages by taking on additional work. She urged the City Council to compensate first responders what they deserved.

Eric Wilkey too addressed concerns about first responders in Orem. He had compared compensation rates with other cities and felt Orem paid far below what they were offering. He felt the mindset in Orem was that fire, dispatch, and police were expendable positions, and therefore were underpaid and unappreciated. Mr. Wilkey felt the City was putting time and money into capital projects and upgrades, but they were unnecessary while critical public safety departments were severely understaffed.

Phil Murphy said he appreciated employees and spouses for attending and showing support, despite him hearing that they were warned not to attend. He said that six more public safety officers had left for surrounding cities or the private sector since he appeared at the City Council meeting in May, and the reason those employees left was for better compensation. Mr. Murphy said that as the “retail hub” of the county, Orem had significant tax revenue. He said the City should use that revenue to pay fire, police, and dispatch more, and to give Chief Giles the resources and authority to effectively lead his department.

Miriam Murphy echoed the other’s sentiments, and said she was especially grateful for the training and mentorship her husband Phil Murphy had while he was a police officer. If not for that training with experienced officers, he may not have survived being shot in the line of duty. She spoke about the sacrifice of not just the officers but of their families as well, and felt they were woefully undercompensated for all that they gave to the community. Ms. Murphy said they needed to take steps now to address these issues or they would soon be facing a public safety crisis.

Dru Christiansen said she loved Orem and wanted to keep her home beautiful and safe. She was alarmed to hear about first responders that were not being paid enough to live on, with some qualifying for food stamps and living under the poverty line. She said these jobs were psychologically taxing, and having no mentorship and being underpaid exacerbated those issues. These families should not have to worry where their next meal was coming from, as that put huge strain on their performance. Ms. Christiansen urged the City to make first responders a priority.

Emily Vance said she was the spouse of an Orem police officer, and she agreed with the comments made thus far. She relayed the story of the ancient Battle of Thermopylae and the 300 Spartan soldiers that fought so valiantly. They had not lost their lives but had given their lives for the sake of those they were fighting to protect. She said the police badge was a sacred shield worn by officers who put their lives on the line every day to protect the people. Ms. Vance said police, fire, and dispatch were tired of the lip service and empty promises from the City Council and the City Administration. She said they deserved better.

David Halliday said he was not related to first responders but had the chance to get to know many as a City Council candidate. He found the turnover rate alarming, and said he could not believe dispatchers were paid less than some telemarketers. He said when people’s lives were on the line, they needed well trained and well compensated first responders. Mr. Halliday said he

was in favor of the City's proposed property tax increase to hire four new police officers, and he hoped the City could find solutions to this problem.

CONSENT ITEMS

- Approval of July 16, 2019 City Council Meeting Minutes
- MOTION – Hold a Special City Council Meeting on August 20, 2019, to hold a Truth in Taxation Public Hearing
- RESOLUTION – Supporting the Utah County Good Governance Advisory Board's recommendations to place a change of form of government question on the November 2019 Ballot

Mr. Macdonald moved to approve the Consent Agenda as listed. **Mr. Seastrand seconded** the motion. Those voting aye: Richard F. Brunst, Debby Lauret, Sam Lentz, Tom Macdonald, Mark Seastrand, David Spencer, and Brent Sumner. The motion **passed**.

CITY MANAGER INFORMATION ITEMS

Mayor Brunst said that he and the Council greatly appreciated the fire, police, and dispatch employees of the City. They had met in regards to compensation issues, and wanted to correct the issue.

Mr. Bybee said he could assert that the Mayor, Council, and City Manager Jamie Davidson cared deeply about this, and they were looking at many ways to address the issue. They would need a multi-pronged and multi-year approach to address additional career ladder phases, bonuses, increased sick leave and vacation, etc. He said this was not just a pay issue but a work load issue, and said they were hoping to hire additional public safety personnel with the proposed tax increase. Mr. Bybee said this was not an Orem-specific issue, but was happening in communities state and nationwide. He said it should be clear that the City Council and City Administration truly cared, and wanted to be part of the solution.

Mrs. Lauret asked that dispatch be considered in their assessments; Mr. Bybee said they would do so. Mr. Lentz asked Chief Giles about the number of current police officers; Chief Giles said approximately 93 officers currently, and hoped to get to 97 with the tax increase. The general rule was to have one officer per 1,000 residents. Mr. Bybee added that Orem had a higher daytime population and calls for service was more telling than the ratio of officers per resident. Mr. Spencer asked how many positions were currently vacant. Chief Giles said he could no longer keep track, and spoke of the difficulty in recruiting officers either from the police academy or attracting lateral applicants. He mentioned recent mass shootings in Dayton, Ohio and El Paso, Texas where police response time was critical. He said a ratio of one officer per 1,000 residents was a good start, but was not the ultimate solution.

There was continued discussion with the Council and staff regarding:

- Ways to attract lateral applicants for police and fire;
- Regional competition for public safety officers and keeping Orem competitive;

- Orem's fire service for Vineyard and ways to balance crews at fire stations; and
- Assistance for fire and police officers that had experienced trauma on the job.

Mr. Seastrand asked Chief Giles if there had been progress in recent years, particularly in regards to vehicles and equipment. Chief Giles said in those regards things were excellent. Chief Giles said he could not speak to the fire department, but he talked about committees and programs within the police department in place to help with the stress of the job. They were trying many things to assist with the financial, physical, and mental health of the officers. He hoped to have the resources he needed to empower his officers.

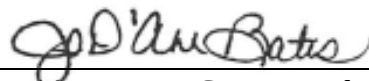
ADJOURN

Mr. Spencer moved to adjourn the meeting. **Mrs. Lauret seconded** the motion. Those voting aye: Richard F. Brunst, Debby Lauret, Sam Lentz, Tom Macdonald, Mark Seastrand, David Spencer, and Brent Sumner. The motion **passed**.

The meeting adjourned at 6:56 p.m.

Approved: August 27, 2019




JoD Ann Bates, City Recorder