

Wasatch County Fire Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday February 11, 2020

Meeting held at the Wasatch County Administration Building located at 25 N Main, Heber City.

Those in Attendance:

Spencer Park

Jeff Wade Not in Attendance

Steve Farrell

Marilyn Crittenden

Kendall Crittenden Not in Attendance

Danny Goode

Mark Nelson

Chief Ernie Giles

BC Gary Sessions

BC Jason Provost

BC Ben Fitzgerald

Fire Marshal Clint Neerings

Fire Warden Troy Morgan

EMS Director Clair Provost

Items of Business to address:

Minutes

A motion was made by Councilman Nelson to approve the minutes of the January 14, 2020 fire board meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilman Goode and the motion passed all in favor.

Warrants

The listing of warrants totaled \$197,842.39 This total included the added warrants and the payroll transmittals.

A motion was made by Councilman Goode to approve the warrants as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilman Nelson and the motion passed all in favor.

Chief report

Chief Ernie Giles- I do not have a lot to report, things are going smooth. We need you guys to sign the resolution 20-01 to change our meeting time to 3:30. I am going to have Kierstan talk about resolution 20-02 for the operating reserve. We have 5 fireman that could possibly retire next month, and we don't have a fund set up to fund their sick leave and vacation pay out.

A motion was made by Councilman Goode to approve resolution 20-01 to change the fire board meeting time from 4:00pm to 3:30 pm, the motion was seconded by Councilwomen Crittenden. The motion passed all in favor.

Kierstan Smith- As the chief was saying, we are wanting to set up an operating reserve to hold some funds. They would be made available for payout of vacation and sick time or if there is an unexpected short fall like a wildfire in California. The district still must meet payroll needs for that additional time that was not budgeted for until payment came in from California which could be months later. If we used the 2020 budget as an example, we are setting at approximately 1.2 million dollars. That won't be funded immediately we can probably accomplish that within 5 years. We will bring this to the board every year to show where we are at. We will always wait until the end of the year when the audit is finished. Then we will use those numbers to calculate how much we can fund into it.

Councilman Farrell- This will be in the budget every year? How will we set the percentage?

Kierstan Smith- We will look at it after the audit is completed and then we will know what excess funds will be available, from there we can determine how much we want to fund. We have a goal to have it funded within 5 years.

Councilman Farrell- Money can't be transferred unless an emergency or retirement pay out.

Councilman Goode- Would that be in our regular warrant approvals?

Kierstan Smith- You would have more than just a warrant approval. Let's say there was a fire, you would have to approve that funds could be released to make those payroll demands.

Councilwomen Crittenden- What have we been doing since you have not had this funding?

Kierstan Smith - There are PTIF accounts that hold operating funds that the district has. But there are no funds earmarked specifically for reserve so they can be used for operations at any time outside of what is designated for capitol fund.

Councilwomen Crittenden- Have you not had anyone retire up to this point?

Chief Ernie Giles- This is the first time that we have someone that has been here long enough to accumulate their 20 years. None of them have stated that they want to retire. But this got me thinking about where this money is going to come from. Generally, what happens is we put it in whatever is left in a capitol project fund. Now we want to fund this operating's reserve funds. It will be up to the direction of the board how much we do. In the next 5 years we could have up to 7-8 that are ready to retire.

Councilman Farrell- Well we have reserve funds as it is now.

Kierstan Smith- We have funds in a PTIF. But they are just operating funds. They are to use for operations.

Councilman Farrell- What is the difference?

Kierstan Smith- This will be separate from the normal accounts. The normal operating accounts money can be transferred in and out of it. There's no requirement that the boards aware of the funds and how they are being transferred. This new fund will put a designation on the money.

Councilman Farrell- This earmark it so it can't be used for anything else.

Kierstan Smith- It's just best practice to have something like this. Studies have been done with taxing entities showing that in the long run it steadies their tax mill. Please.

Councilman Goode made a motion to approve resolution 20-02 setting up the operating reserve fund, the motion was seconded by Councilwomen Crittenden. The motion passed all in favor.

Chief Giles- I will turn this over to Gary Kilgore for a presentation. This presentation of basically why we are doing what we are doing. It is very interesting to see how many hours it takes to upkeep certificates.

BC Fitzgerald- We would like to thank the fire board for all the support, the fire chief and the fire advisory board for all their support. We will also have BC Jason Provost and Gary Sessions present portions of this. We would also like to thank Gary Kilgore for his help. We will have time at the end to answer questions. Our scope and purpose are to present the information that outlines the requirements of the district and employees and how to move forward to meet those standards and requirements. I just want to remind the board that this is one of the topics you requested further information on. We are also wanting to provide basic information needed to justify future needs. We are taking a proactive approach. We have the ESCI report that identified critical areas for immediate and future actions to that are used to better map a prepared community and strong response. The primary mission is to move aggressively with actions and making a stronger safer community. We are highly motivated due to recent local and regional disastrous incidents. Wasatch County Fire/EMS is committed to making our lives safer and better. Our response capability is a view into National Institute of Standards and Training (N.I.S.T). NIST is an organization that develops standards. While NIST is not law, it is the standard that all departments are measured against. We will present recent conclusive tests on construction factors, fire behaviors, modern fuels, and attack procedures. We will present best practices in fire response based on national standards and national training and certifications.

BC Sessions- Changing environmental fire behavior. Fires don't burn today in the same fashion that they did 15-20 years ago. They are much more challenging today. Tactical options, we need to change how we fight fires today based on new technology, tools, equipment and resources. Changes in building construction materials and techniques are occurring at a rapid pace. All of these materials changes affect the way a fire burns and the how long we have to work to provide rescue services. Newer and improved equipment, hoses, nozzles, engines, trucks, and trainings help provide the best service but comes at a cost. Since the 1970's, the average single-family dwelling in this county has increased by nearly 56 percent. With transition from a single story to a 2-story structure or open floor plans, tall/vaulted ceilings, great rooms, foyers, etc. it produces more oxygen for the fire to grow. Large open areas allow for rapid smoke to spread and heat is carried easily to remote locations throughout the structure. Toxic environments develop far from the seat of the fire. Also, they have become much more

energy efficient resulting in greater heat retention. Less air seepage meaning air in and out of the structure will hold more heat making the temperature inside of the structure much higher. Due to the higher temperature, the structure is less capable of maintaining the structural integrity. Legacy fuels were typically natural woods and fibers like cotton and wools. Today's fuels are mostly synthetic made up of hydrocarbon. Modern fuels burn 10 times hotter and 10 times faster and produce much more smoke. (Shares a video comparing natural room burning to a synthetic room burning.)

Gary Kilgore- As we are watching this video, imagine this being the size of a home today as far as the volume, space, and the amount of combustibles. This video shows a pretty small room. What you are watching is a fire that could have happened 15 years ago compared to new construction and new interior finishes. The clock has been sped up but that is a real time stamp.

BC Sessions- The 2 biggest challenges to fighting fire today is the limited amount of time and the amount of water that needs to be applied to the fire. The success of these actions is dependent on staffing levels and response times.

BC Provost- NFPA is a standard that was set for the ability to save lives in 1896. They are not a government agency. They notice there were so many departments doing different things to get a better outcome. NFPA is not a law it is an agency that sets a standard. In a court of law, they would hold us to those standards that are set. We are trying to meet those standards to protect our fireman and save lives. The standards that are set forth are not arbitrary, but they are set in a systematic approach. There is one area in our county that falls within the rural or remote area and that is strawberry, all the other cities within the county fall within the urban and suburban area. When it was all volunteers one of the goals was to have the volunteers close to the station so we could have those numbers as high as we could. As time has progressed, we don't have that luxury anymore as our roads are busier and people aren't able to get away from their jobs like they used to be able to. The Advisory board has been very good with the ESCI report to look at these things and see where we can better meet these standards. We need to make stations and facilities in places that allow us to meet the NFPA standards. NIST worked alongside NFPA to set these standards for fire departments. They performed a test regarding effectiveness regarding staffing levels. As they put this test forward, they were able to take a typical 2 story, 2000 square foot residential home which is on the low end for our county. What they found is it took a 3-person firefighter crew 80 percent longer than a 4-person crew, the study also found that a 2-person crew took more than twice the amount of time. All these tests were done in the same circumstances. The study found that the 2-person crew took 10:16 minutes to advance to the fire and extinguish. The 3-person crew was 9:15 and the 4-person crew was 8:41. The reason being, if you were to think of your own homes from the front door to say your bedroom. There are many factors including how many turns you have left and right, whether you are going upstairs or downstairs, pulling hoses, and can't see where you are going. There are things that prevent the crew from just walking in and walking to where you need to go and effects the time stamp. When a fire department utilized a 4-person crew, firefighter injuries were reduced by 54 percent vs a 3-person crew. As was talked a little bit about from the chief. These are just the minimum qualifications for a firefighter and EMT to even meet the qualifications to be put on a fire ground. As you can see those 724 initial hours are just classroom hours, it doesn't consider study time, preparation time or ride-alongs. What is not in there is our PEPS and PALS classes or our CPR certifications. As the community continues to spread out through the county, including vehicles and ATVs taking them to all corners of the county, we are seeing the need for continued education not just the minimum standard. We are finding we need to grow from training the

firemen and EMTS to make proper choices when driving to the hazardous materials that flow through the county. There are all these facets that don't fall under normal qualifications. We also see the need to prepare people to be in officer positions to make decisions as we progress and grow as a district. Troy put a wildland class on last year to help us progress in that direction. All those things take hours and money. We have appreciated the advisory boards help. One of the things that is very important is we talk about the money and the things that are associated with the money but we don't talk about the why and that why is to protect us while we are doing that but give the best possible outcome to the community. We appreciate your time and allowing us to share these things. Does anyone have any questions?

Councilman Farrell- You brought up hazmat and increased concern. On Highway 40 what change in materials have you seen going through and do we get any assistance from federal government?

BC Provost- No we don't get help, unless we are able to get a grant. Along with the population growth, there is a need for more trucks with chemical.

Gary Kilgore- The certification for hazmat is 220 hours just for a technician. There are 3 different levels for hazardous material responses. They can only do certain things. Depending on the level, some can't even get closed to the product. The federal government offers a number of avenues to get training, but you have to be able to send your people across country. There is trainings and funding but then again that is hours. They can range anywhere from 2-4-week classes. There are grant funds to help assist. A few years ago, Utah Highway Patrol used to be responsible for all hazardous materials and now it falls to the fire departments. It is a very costly service for the fire department to provide. Right now, there is a coordinated effort which is called the Wasatch Back hazardous material response team. This is made up with Wasatch Fire District, Park City Fire District, North and South Summit. Park City does have the apparatus and Wasatch has minimal equipment for these things. They really rely on working together.

Councilman Farrell- I know between Deer Creek reservoir and Jordanelle that is a big concern to Wasatch front. When we had that oil tanker spill Central Utah Water was very complimentary to how Wasatch County handled that and mitigated that.

Chief Giles – Just a few thoughts along those lines, they do tests at every one of these weigh stations. The one in our county has more hazmat than any other port in Utah. I would like to thank the advisory board as well; they have spent lots of hours.

Gary Kilgore- This was a foundation of what ESCI report was based off of, these standard and that's something to look at; The entire county, were the fire stations are located, staffing, how you respond to it, all came from standards. Then ESCI tied these standards into the projected growth of the county. The other thing is to get to any of these places we are lacking infrastructure to be able to put people in place. We need places to house and train the firefighters. You can't handle the growth without the support infrastructure.

Councilman Farrell- Where does the county rank in comparison to other counties of similar size?

Gary Kilgore – To be point blank and honest, you are way behind. Not in service, but in station locations. If you were to start a fire station today it would be at least 2 years before it can be used. I don't think you are meeting any of those NFPA standards. Mostly this is because of travel distances and where your infrastructure is at. It has nothing to do with the personnel. They are doing what they can with what

they have. As far as growth if you want to compare it to Weber County as a fire district. It happened in park city where I came from. We simply outgrew the ability of the volunteer service. Right now I do believe Ernie is trying to catch up. You can catch up, but the county continues to grow when you try to catch up.

Dennis Goudy- What is unique about Wasatch is how we compare with other counties. The biggest challenge with Wasatch is that we are an island. We don't have the luxury, even with Park City as close as it is, we don't have any mutual aid. We are on our own because we don't have the luxury of help from other surrounding districts. If someone can send the help it would be 45 mins to an hour before they could get there to help us. We have got to build our own community. That's a comparison against other counties similar in size. We met Paul from Weber the other day. They have a lot of departments there and here we only have 1.

Gary Kilgore- The board has done a good job stepping up and starting to head in the right direction, there is still a lot of work to be done. It comes down the community is growing fast.

Councilman Nelson- There has been a lot of discussion lately about the Heber fire station and its location. Heber City is trying to look at long term planning and so is the county. There is a section in this report, do you have any thoughts about where you can build a station?

Chief Giles- Looking at station sites, with what is around the Heber station that is probably not the spot. The Heber station is categorized as a garage and not an actual station. We are hoping in the next year to buy a piece and we are looking at more of the south end of town. We try to keep these within a 5-mile radius for iso ratings.

Councilman Nelson- So you are thinking between the existing station and south of town?

Chief Giles- Yes probably on the other side of the intersection. Somewhere by highway 189 and highway 40. The hospitals are there, the daycares are there, transfers, etc.

Councilman Parks- How big a parcel would it need to be?

Chief Giles- We are looking at about 2.5. We want it big enough so that we can have a training tower with it. We are really trying to get the counties ISO ratings down to about a 4. We are currently at about a 6. This would be a HUGE difference to the business and people of the county on their insurance. We can't do it without you. It is a team effort. We want a 2-3-acre site. There are several out there. They might be sold the time we get approval to move forward.

Councilman Farrell- You mentioned a training tower, what is a training tower and why is that essential? Don't we have some in neighboring counties we can use?

Chief Giles- With ISO and the ESCI report you must use your own equipment. With air packs, Trucks, SCBAS, smoke simulators back in the day you had to use real smoke. Also, when we must drive down there and get crews down there, we must backfill their shifts here. The training towers are .25 million dollars to buy a prebuilt. We like to have a 3-story fireman challenge type training.

Councilman Goode- What is your projection of when you need the tower and the facilities?

Chief Giles – I can't thank the board enough for impact fees. That will help us fund these.

Councilman Goode- Do you need it now? In 10 years?

Chief Giles- Now, I can see us generating a 1 ½ - 2 million in 1-1.5 years.

Councilman Goode- The developers are telling Heber that their base density and there being a little fishy and there not being clear. There saying performance density is what they should be getting. The growth is enormous. If we were going to pencil in were, we are going to have the training facility or whatever, is this a 5-year plan item? How much do we need to set aside? We cannot stop growth. We promote your advisory board to everyone because of the success of your board. We need help with planning to achieve your milestone. This was a great presentation. The growth is coming we need to be ready.

Dennis Goudy- Our number one priority is the capital facilities plan. 0-6 months when this was written we want to add \$10,000 to identify and secure a concept plan to construct the Heber station. Then from 12-36 months complete a new Heber station. There are some things we can do up front which we talked about. We have a timeline listed.

Councilman Goode- What is your current budget?

Chief Giles- Close to 6.

Councilman Goode- How underfunded are we?

Gary Kilgore- I couldn't speak to that. The thing I could speak to is you didn't have the avenue for the capital improvements, now you have it.

Councilman Goode- You get a new council every two years now. When you have these long-term plans in place it makes it much easier for politicians to follow the schedule.

Councilman Nelson- Developers were presenting plans, one for their sections included a 5-story building. Do we have the ability to fight a fire on the 5th floor of something?

Chief Giles- You have heard me talk about a platform truck and we don't have one. They are 1.5 million. We need more training. Can we put a fire there out? Most of that is sprinkled so that will help. Clint has been very involved with that, there are several big developments. The road issues are something we must look at as well.

Gary Kilgore- Eventually you will have a building that you can't get on top of. Those type of buildings have more built in fire protection systems such as automatic ventilation systems, stairways that are pressurized, equipment caches for the fire department. That's all a built-in system.

Fire Marshal Neerings – To follow up on the council meeting last Wednesday about the glamping ordinance. I met with him and told him we still need some more information. He hasn't provided anything as of yet. He is getting documents together. We would like to pull that from tomorrow's council agenda because we are still doing footwork. We have found a NFPA standard on recreational vehicles campgrounds. I have provided that to him, and it is found in section 503. I told him it doesn't really help his situation, but there might be something in there. We are just not comfortable putting 90-120 recreational vehicles. It gives further stipulations of 400 square feet with all the pop outs. He didn't feel that it should be classified as single family dwelling. I told him I feel they are more hazardous because they have engines, fuel, propane. If you have ever seen an RV or Trailer burn, they burn very

quickly. We had a fire 2 years ago below the Deer Creek dam, one trailer fire destroyed 3 and damaged another. I told him we are willing to work with him but not at 90-120.

Chief Giles- I would caution anything over 30 units. These folks are living there with their kids and families. You have one way in and one way out.

Fire Marshal Neerings- These things don't just get up and leave. You have pop outs, self-leveling, it's not like if there is a fire they can get in their car and leave. It takes time for these to become mobile. You can fit 2-15 people in them. That takes it from hotel/motel standard (which have significant fire protection installed). So, we don't feel like that is an accurate way to count the ERUS.

Councilman Goode- I was very impressed with Clint last week on how he presented for Clint last week.

A Motion was made by Councilman Parks to adjourn, the motion was seconded by Councilwomen Crittenden. The motion passed all in favor.