

CITY OF SOUTH SALT LAKE  
CITY COUNCIL WORK MEETING

COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday, April 27, 2016  
6:00 p.m.

CITY OFFICES

220 East Morris Avenue #200  
South Salt Lake, Utah 84115

PRESIDING  
CONDUCTING

Council Chair Deborah A. Snow  
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COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sharla Beverly, Mark Kindred, Portia Mila (Via Telephone), Ben Pender,  
Kevin Rapp, Shane Siwik, and Debbie Snow

STAFF PRESENT:

Mayor Cherie Wood  
Charee Peck, Chief of Staff  
Lyn Creswell, City Attorney  
Ron Morris, Fire Chief  
Terry Addison, Deputy Fire Chief  
Jack Carruth, Police Chief  
Kyle Kershaw, Finance Director  
Mike Florence, Community and Economic Development Director  
Frank Lilly, Deputy Community and Economic Development Director  
Mont Roosendaal, Public Assets Director  
Sharen Hauri, Urban Development Director  
Craig Burton, City Recorder  
Paula Melgar, Deputy City Recorder

OTHERS PRESENT:

See attached list.

**Matters for Discussion**

**1. Budget Requests**

- a. **Fire Department.** Mr. Ron Morris, Fire Chief, thanked for the opportunity to speak on a couple of items.

The first item was a capital improvement request for the overhead garage doors for Station 41, for a little over \$24,000. Chief Morris explained that these are the original garage doors of the station and they have reached their lifetime period. At this point these doors affect the Fire Department's functions and Chief Morris feels this is a much needed request.

The second item is on the Ambulance Budget and a presentation given to City Council on how it works and why the City should have an ambulance service.

City Council Chair, Debbie Snow, asked Chief Morris to present on the Ambulance Services. A copy of this presentation is attached and incorporated by this reference.

Council Chair Snow asked for clarification on staffing.

Chief Morris explained that he needs 14 firefighters per day, since they run three shifts per day: A, B and C. Without the ambulances, staffing would drop to 10, which is below required staffing. The Fire Department gets credit for having firefighter paramedics on the ambulance for Station 42, without the ambulance they would not get such credit. So, the station would have to be staffed at 4, instead of 3. This would provide 4 firefighters per shift, per day.

Council Member Beverly asked for further explanation on the paid call.

Chief Morris clarified that they run a paid call firefighter program with 25 allocations for paid call firefighters. The firefighters are paid \$13 per hour and paramedic firefighters are \$15 per hour. The Fire Department currently uses this service to cover vacations and sick leave for other on-duty firefighters.

Council Member Pender asked what other Fire Departments do as far as personnel goes.

Chief Morris explained that Unified Fire has what they call a Swing Roster of extra personnel every day, full-time people; when someone is off on vacation someone from the Swing Roster rotates in to cover that spot. West Jordan staffs heavily at every station predicting that someone is going to be off, almost every day. Everyone but Unified, who runs a robust paid-call department, is staffed heavily with full-time people to cover for vacation and such. Most Fire Departments that have gotten out of the paid-call program are experiencing the same problem as South Salt Lake; keeping and relying on personnel.

Council Member Pender asked, hypothetically, if the ambulance service was outsourced and each station was fully staffed. How would that idea work with eliminating the on-call personnel?

Chief Morris stated that he likes the idea but that if one gets off the paid-call program, there will be no one to cover the vacations and sick leave.

Council Member Pender suggested a fifth person on Station 42 to rotate and cover those spots.

Chief Morris explained that the Fire Department allows three employees off per day and that is why it was proposed to have three additional firefighters to cover these spots.

Council Member Pender suggested adding an additional person on top of the ones he initially suggested, and instead of allowing three people to take time off, limit it to two and always have back coverage.

Chief Morris clarified that he has looked at that and determined that if vacations were cut back, there wouldn't be enough slots for firefighters to use the vacation they have earned; at the end of the year they would be faced with huge vacation pay-outs or disgruntled employees that earned more vacation than they could use.

Council Member Rapp mentioned that the maintenance cost of the ambulance was not presented, how much is spent on maintaining these ambulances. Council Member Rapp recalled that during his first budget season it was explained how Steve Foote basically sold the City Council a lemon when he came up with this entire service. He recalled being told that the City would make lots of money and the City Council voted for it, and it has failed miserably when it came to making money. That said, Council Member Rapp, stated that Chief Morris has done an exceptional job turning a lemon into something that is much better by utilizing the service in a good capacity, but even past-Council Member Roy Turner, who sat on the council when this service was approved, stated that this was a big mistake and that if he had a chance to do it again, he wouldn't. Although Chief Morris and his staff have turned the ambulance into a good service, the City is still lacking, the City just forgave a million and a half dollars to this fund and the ambulance is still not making money.

Chief Morris stated that 911 ambulances do not make money, especially in a demographic such as South Salt Lake's; but Chief Morris does believe that the City is in the ambulance business for the right reasons and should be in the ambulance business, because of the service it provides to its citizens and because it is integral for what the Fire Department does by allowing the City to help pay for the firefighters the ambulances needed. What is unfortunate is the information the Council was initially given because most cities in the valley do not make money out of their 911 business. The maintenance and replacement of ambulances makes it hard to be able to make a profit in this business; but it is a service that allows the Fire Department to get firefighters for an extremely reasonable amount of money.

Chief Morris admitted that the City Council is in a tough spot, with a tough budget and tough decisions to make, but as their Fire Chief he advised the Council that the City should be in the ambulance business which allows for growth in the Fire Department and it gives the City control over the service. Chief Morris referred the Council to several studies done that state that cities

should be in the ambulance business because it is a core function government should provide.

Council Member Kindred, asked for clarification on other cities which do not have their own ambulance service.

Chief Morris explained that Salt Lake City is the only City which does not have an ambulance service. He added that the only money is in the inter-facility transports, that is where other ambulance services make their money. Those are money making ambulance services. The City does not have enough to even look at doing something like that. Chief Morris explained that the Fire Department has gone through rigorous brainstorming to make money with the ambulance service because they realize the tough position City Council faces.

Council Member Pender addressed the ambulance's twelve year life and that the report reflects a seven year life, which tells him that the Council should start looking at replacements. Also, Council Member Pender asked if there was a reason why these replacements have not been staggered instead of being faced with replacing all three ambulances at the same time. Council Member Pender asked if as the community grows the Fire Department is contemplating adding another ambulance.

Chief Morris explained that the twelve year life comes with the rational of not replacing the ambulances but remounting the ambulances. These vehicles are run hard and get worn out. Chief Morris admitted that another ambulance would be needed soon.

Council Member Pender asked if the City was to consider looking at contracting with UFA, if there would still be firefighters in the Station to satisfy the NFPA rules.

Chief Morris expressed that the idea is service wise, and it might make some sense, but he did not believe any money would be saved. Chief Morris added that the real nightmare would be the morale because UFA guys and City guys would be comparing paychecks. It is hard to blend services together unless city employees are getting paid the same hourly pay and benefits, which is not realistic for a city our size and a department the size of UFA. Chief Morris does not believe UFA could provide the services any cheaper than South Salt Lake Fire could, since UFA firefighters are paid more and their ambulances are much more then needed. Chief Morris would like to see a proposal from UFA because he believes the City would be considerably cheaper then UFA.

Council Member Pender expressed interest in looking at a proposal from UFA to see where it would be but that maybe Chief Morris is right and the City Council may still come back and say that the City is in a better situation.

Chief Morris added that there is a difference in running calls, like the Police Departments do, and living in the same Fire station for 48 hours, as the Fire Department would have to do.

Council Member Beverly emphasized the customer service part. She recalled her attendance at the Fire Department Awards Banquet and a story of a lady, being taken to the University of Utah Hospital by her husband, who was having breathing issues and lost consciousness around South Salt Lake. Fire fighters performed some miracles that saved her life. Council Member Beverly added that if this was a family member, a neighbor or a friend, and there is only half an ambulance in South Salt Lake, instead of the current two ambulances, she would not feel good about it. She would like for the residents in South Salt Lake to have the best service and that is a strong point to consider.

Chief Morris suggested to Council Member Pender that if the City was to entertain a proposal from UFA, they would need two dedicated ambulances for South Salt Lake and not be the next stop in the waiting stacks of UFA.

Council Member Pender supported Chief Morris suggestion.

Council Chair Snow thanked Chief Morris for his time.

Council Member Pender asked Mayor Wood if she would be okay with him contacting UFA about a proposal.

Mayor Wood explained that a formal proposal process is very structured and lengthy. She suggested and allowed for Council Member Pender to reach out to UFA for a presentation on the issue.

- b. Public Assets.** Mr. Mont Roosendaal, Public Assets Director, presented his budget requests for Parks, Public Assets and Fleet. A copy is attached and incorporated by this reference.

Council Member Siwik asked if there have been any improvements done to Columbus Center in the last six to ten years.

Mr. Roosendaal explained that there have been major repairs to the tower and that City Engineer, Dennis Pay, could speak to those. Mr. Roosendaal further explained that he and Facilities Supervisor, Mark Allen, have done inspections in the last year, maybe year and a half, and have noticed some problems that required some expert analysis that have revealed serious terracotta problems that will worsen with time. A patch was done but it will require further work.

Council Member Siwik asked if this was something structural that at some point the tower would just fall off the building.

Mr. Pay explained that the terracotta is what is failing. The structure of the tower is fine. Six years ago, the City did a project where they went in and replaced the roof with tile and put in a better and more secure system to hang the tiles. At that time, the terracotta was pointed and sealed in an attempt to keep moisture out but it is an ongoing problem and as the terracotta ages, it is something the City will need to continue to address. The City brought in a very good group last time that has a lot of experience dealing with these types of exterior treatments and had a structural engineer work on it. It is just an ongoing problem and City will have to treat the terracotta.

Council Member Siwik asked how often the Council would have to look at \$50,000.

Mr. Roosendaal explained that once repairs are done, the City would be looking at about \$25,000 in maintenance, every three years.

Council Member Siwik asked how the City leased a \$100,000 backhoe for \$4,000/year.

Mr. Roosendaal explained that this is a government program that does not come around very often, but when they do, cities take a hold of them. These programs are watched closely and should be talked about as they come around.

Council Member Kindred asked what the number was for the 2015 Critical Facility Capital Requests.

Mr. Roosendaal stated that last year, the number was \$750,000.

Council Member Pender asked Mr. Roosendaal for a copy of a list of employees with take home city vehicles.

Mayor Wood approved.

Council Chair Snow thanked Mr. Roosendaal for his presentation.

2. **Scott School ZAP Application.** Council Chair Snow apologized to Urban Development Director, Sharen Hauri, for continuing her topic to a future work meeting, due to lack of time.
3. **Review General Plan Map and Zoning Map.** Council Chair Snow explained that she wanted to speak on this topic to try to identify places where the City could do some single family housing zoning. It is her belief that plans were approved in the master street car and downtown for thousands of new apartments to come into the City and her concern was to offset some of that elsewhere, where the City can find, and plan on more owner occupied units. Council Chair Snow expressed that this would be an opportunity to review and make sure that Council still has the same

vision for the future land use map and zoning maps across the city.

Meeting adjourned at 6:57 p.m.



Deborah A. Snow, Council Chair



Craig D. Burton, City Recorder

