

CITY OF SOUTH SALT LAKE
CITY COUNCIL WORK MEETING

COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday, May 25, 2016
5:33 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, Ben Pender,
Shane Siwik, and Debbie Snow

COUNCIL MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Portia Mila and Kevin Rapp

STAFF PRESENT:

Mayor Cherie Wood
Lyn Creswell, City Attorney
Charee Peck, Chief of Staff
Ron Morris, Fire Chief
Jack Carruth, Police Chief
Kyle Kershaw, Finance Director
Mont Roosendaal, Public Assets Director
Craig Burton, City Recorder
Paula Melgar, Deputy City Recorder

OTHERS PRESENT:

See attached list.

Matters for Discussion

- 1. Budget Discussion.** Fire Chief, Ron Morris, presented on items that have been on a waiting list for funding. He has been very prudent to only bring items to the Mayor and City Council that the Fire Department has really been in need of. One item that has been on the waiting list is some money for the Fire Department's Engineer pay, which would bring his career ladder into alignment with the rest of the paramedics and what the valley is doing.

Chief Morris explained that as far as expenditures go, he has added a request for new garage doors for Station 41. He explained that the overhead doors are in deplorable condition which is wearing down the remaining system that tries to lift and close the doors. Another request was for a small increase in the uniform allowance; these costs have gone up due to requirements to wear a new visibility coat in the winter that costs

several hundred dollars to purchase.

Council Chair Snow asked about the request for one percent cost of living increase for salaries of all Public Safety. Chief Morris clarified that the request for the one percent increase came from the Mayor's Office.

Council Chair Snow recalled at the end of December, the Council authorized a large pay increase to all Fire and Police to make them whole, to make up all the steps. Chief Morris confirmed but added that some employees did not get anniversary step funded and if a one percent increase for this next budget year is not funded, they will not be brought up. If the City Council does not approve the one percent increase the Fire Department wages will be behind again.

Council Chair Snow asked Chief Morris if he had noticed an improvement in moral, since the December 2015 raise. Chief Morris noted that moral improvements have been tremendous and there are no longer talks of employees leaving.

Council Member Beverly reminded the Council that if they do not fund the steps every year and make it a priority, then employees will keep slipping behind and they will find themselves in the same situation in a few years. Step increases are very important because they impact everything, including retirement.

Chief Morris added that Salt Lake County has given their employees a 3.75% step increase plus a cost of living, which makes the City slide behind them again.

Council Member Pender explained that the Unified Police Department does not have a step every year, but a step every so many years. He then asked if the Fire Department operates under the same system.

Chief Morris explained that the Fire Department operates on a step per year, up to a max of 12 years.

Council Member Pender agreed with Council Member Beverly about keeping the Fire Department on steps but added that he was disappointed with the prior year City Council. They were negligent in the fact they did the raise but did not have a plan to back it up. Council Member Pender suggested coming up with a plan instead of giving arbitrary raises and explained that those cause fear among the employees because for all they know, on any July 1st the money could stop. Council Member Pender added that if the City Council is to continue to fund the steps, a plan needs to be in place; otherwise it is going to be an every year issue.

Chief Morris added that if there is a decision made to go a different direction with the ambulance; he will need more people at a cost of approximately \$700,000 plus funding for Dr. Hunts salary and medical supplies; which will end up at a total cost of approximately \$750,000-\$775,000.

Council Member Pender asked if another Fire Department was to come in and do the same thing, why would they need more people.

Chief Morris clarified that they probably would not, but would get hurt on the ISO rating. Chief Morris called ISO and they were very cautious about giving any information over the phone but if the Fire Department was to replace the 2 people on their ambulance with two people from another fire agency, ISO would see those people as mutual aid companies, not as employees and the City would not receive full credit for them, which could potentially drop the City Fire Department on their ISO rating.

Council Member Beverly stated that the City is so close to breaking even on ambulance services that she would not like to see it end before seeing what the possibilities are. She shared her experience at Fire Ops 101 where she noticed an incredible level of trust and brotherhood/sisterhood among the employees. Chief Morris expressed huge concerns on showing up every day and there are two new persons on the crew with unknown expertise.

Council Member Pender asked Chief Morris if they do a bid system for their shifts.

Chief Morris explained that they are starting to put a crew ladder in place and with that they will have a true bid system. Right now they use a modified bid system, where if they have an opening, they open it up for employees to move across, if they would like.

Council Member Pender noted that he is not trying to get rid of the ambulance service. His concern is the \$1.5 almost \$1.6 million that is gone in tax payer money with no plan in place to recoup those funds. It is his belief that if the ambulance service is to be kept, the Fire Department will need new ambulances because 7 years on an ambulance is very rough, and if the City Council is going support it, then they will need to back it and be willing to step up and have a plan to replace those at a cost of about \$800,000. Council He asked where would the money come from, what would the plan be, and how to explain to the community the gamble on the 1.6 million that is not coming back; that the City is almost breaking even but they need new ambulances and there is nothing saved to cover those costs. He expressed the desire to see a plan in place to address those concerns.

Council Member Beverly stated that customer service is a big issue with residents and when Gold Cross was servicing South Salt Lake, there were a lot of complaints and service issues. But, she did agree with Council Member Pender in that the City does need a plan because of the experienced growth.

Council Member Kindred asked if the ambulance service was to be dropped, what would it do for the insurance.

Chief Morris explained that most insurance companies use the ISO rating as a barometer of where fire services are at; the lower the reading, the lower fire service

one has, which drives insurance rates up commercially and residentially. The City currently has a rating of 3, which is a good rating for a department their size but could easily slip to a 4, which would be of concern.

Mr. Mont Roosendaal, Public Assets Director, addressed the council on alternatives and options his fleet department has been looking at, regarding the ambulance rides. Mr. Roosendaal explained that there is a retrofit kit for the suspension of the ambulances, which costs \$12,000 each, that would correct and substantially improve the ride on the ambulances.

Council Member Pender posed that even if the suspension issue was fixed for \$12,000 each, the maintenance will still be creeping up and the ambulances, as previously indicated, are still worth \$70,000. In his mind instead of investing \$12,000, if City could get \$70,000 for the ambulance, it would be better to sell them and use the money to get new ones, and develop a rotation plan.

Mr. Roosendaal agreed with Council Member Pender but wanted to provide council with as much information as possible to help them with their decision as they move forward. Council Member Pender expressed appreciation for Mr. Roosendaal's intent and thanked him for the information.

Council Member Beverly expressed her desire to look into the collection system used by the City to collect on ambulance services.

Chief Morris stated that the City is very aggressive with their billing but he is working on getting the billing redone so that they can bring a few more dollars in. A fair amount of time is spent internally trying to collect on those bills, after they are sent to First Professional, a billing company servicing other ambulance services throughout the state, that collects on the outstanding bills; after that they go to Bonneville Collections. The Fire Department also writes off a small amount, every year, for hardships but that the real problem is with Medicaid, indigent patients and overall City demographics who do not pay their bills.

Council Chair Snow reiterated Council Member Pender's words, that if City is to remain in the ambulance service business that there needs to be a plan on how to fund equipment replacement. Her concern is that the way the budget is balanced this year, in the Capital fund, the City is down \$3 million dollars from what was typically spent in Capital expenditures. How and what the plan would be for major capital costs going forward, when City is already running so lean in the Capital Funds, is a legitimate concern that needs to be addressed.

Chief Morris addressed the take home vehicle policy and reported that there are nine employees within the Department with take home vehicles. All chief officers with take home vehicle provide the City with other duties than on-call. Most of these duties are administrative, such as emergency management and facilities, and several are involved in community meetings.

Council Member Pender asked if it would be possible to have assigned vehicles in the City for these chiefs to drive for City business.

Chief Morris stated that this would only help with the City business but would not help with the response calls; as public safety they need to get through lights and traffic, to respond to calls.

Council Member Pender asked how often they get called in.

Chief Morris explained that just about every fire goes to a second alarm just to get rapid intervention teams. Two battalion chiefs are sent to every working fire, and although Chief Morris couldn't provide a number on how often, it happens frequently. He added that for every fire, he sends out two engines, a ladder truck, a battalion chief and an ambulance, to the call. If it is a working fire, then a second battalion chief will be responding to that, if they are not helping with the fire because another agency is assisting, then he likes to have a the battalion chief stay in the station and respond to other calls, have the safety officer back on the scene and a battalion chief assist the incident commander.

Council Member Pender suggested that maybe an area that could be looked at to cut costs is the take home vehicle. He clarified that he was not opposed to someone who is on-called having a vehicle; but he reasoned that he was trying to find ways to free up some funds to accommodate the requests made.

Chief Morris stated that he was very sensitive to what Council Member Pender stated but that Fire's administrative duties and response duties are so intertwined that he hasn't been able to come back with a better alternative.

Chief Jack Carruth, Police Chief, clarified that his department will not be seeking any increases and he has not asked for any capital expenditures.

Council Member Snow stated she noticed some line items for capital expenditures but Chief Carruth explained that those were carried over from the current fiscal year.

Council Chair Snow inquired about the dash cameras.

Chief Carruth explained that those are projected for the 2016-2017 JAG Grant the Police Department will be applying for; the funds will offset the cost of the in-car camera system and supplement the body cameras program.

Finance Director, Kyle Kershaw, added that to replace a fourth of the cameras every year, it will cost approximately \$60,000 to \$70,000. The program uses the JAG Grant to replace half of the cameras, a small state grant for \$7,500 to buy equipment; and, about \$34,000 of City funding to help replace the cameras.

Council Chair Snow inquired about the notebooks.

Mr. Kershaw and Chief Carruth explained that this is an IT expense that allows for the replacement of in-vehicle laptops and printers of Police Officer's vehicles.

Council Chair Snow inquired on the status of the body cameras program.

Chief Carruth advised that the Department has 6 cameras currently being tested to help calculate the size of storage it is going to take for the 37 cameras to be implemented; so far the 6 cameras alone have doubled the storage space. Chief Carruth added that the IT Department has included in their budget funding for acquiring additional space with the projected need. He explained that what is unknown is how many of these records will be requested through GRAMA, how much time and money it will take to train someone on redacting and the cost of the redacting software.

Council Member Beverly asked how restoring police officer's steps and making the Department whole has impacted police morale.

Chief Carruth explained that with hiring, it increased the hiring starting salary and overall range, which made it easier to attract officers to the City for recruitment. Making the Police Department whole saved the Department from losing more experienced officers and losing natural succession.

Council Member Beverly asked about the 11 year steps. Chief Carruth explained that this is another concern that needs to be addressed because the Police Department needs something put in place that funds retirement and 11 steps is not enough to provide for retirement. Eventually the Police Department will not be able to recruit because officers will top out at 11 years and still have 11 more years or so to go; they will leave to make up for those steps.

Council Member Beverly suggested that if there were more steps, maybe it would only cost a little bit more each year and might be easier for the Council to plan those increases. Chief Carruth agreed.

Council Member Pender asked if police officers get a step per year of service.

Chief Carruth confirmed that officers get step increases with each anniversary by the following July 1st.

Council Member Pender asked if Chief Carruth would be opposed to extending steps to maybe 14 or 15, to incentivize officers to stay longer. Chief Carruth explained that the pension payout and state are putting that back on the cities to make up the difference, and that needs to be taken into consideration.

Council Member Beverly, Council Member Pender and Chief Carruth discussed the two public service tiers and how those tiers affect retirement. Chief Carruth explained that even hiring experienced tier 1 retired officers, who no longer collect retirement, still costs the City because URS still charges a percentage on that.

Council Chair Snow thanked Chief Carruth for his time.

Animal Services Supervisor, Debbie Pedersen, presented some pictures to the Council depicting a 1959 license plate with South Salt Lake Animal Control. Other photos depicted the old Animal Shelter located at Andy Avenue, the one on 600 West and the current building in front of the water tower.

Ms. Pedersen explained to the Council the services offered by the City's Animal Control, including: enforcement of animal related City ordinances and state laws; educate residents on regulations; respond on lose dangerous animals to ensure safety of public and animals; assist police and fire as needed; barking and noise complaints; animal neglect and cruelty; pet care and health resources for pet owners; help with basic care questions and direct citizens to more help; spay, neuter and vaccinations; animal adoptions and follow-up; take animal surrenders; work with adoptions and rescues to get animals placed; animal licensing; microchips; rent live traps for a refundable deposit; live trap picked up by animal control at no additional cost; organize and attend off-site adoption events; answer calls from residents on wild life and respond to such calls; contract with veterinarian technician program at Broadview University for veterinarian care and surgeries, if needed; offer educational presentations to schools, Pre-K through 12th, church groups, special interest groups and social services facilities, that cover safety, identifying and reporting animal abuse pet care tips, responsible pet ownership and the importance of spaying and neutering; humane euthanasia and cremation services.

Ms. Pedersen added that costs are being kept down through a contract with Broadview University for veterinarian care and the Walmart Distribution Center program, where every other week the City gets anywhere from 2-3 pallets of dog and cat food, cat litter and bird seeds.

Ms. Pedersen stated that officers do get called out on emergencies for animal attacks and bites, depending on the severity and if animal is restrained, officers will respond either the same day or the next day; respond on animals that are a public safety threat, such as animals in traffic; police and fire assists and assist other agencies. All Animal Control Officers are certified in several FEMA courses and regularly attend the Emergency Systems ESF 11, to plan with the whole county for emergency preparedness.

Ms. Pedersen addressed concerns over the take-home vehicle explaining that officers are required to respond within 30 minutes to a call, having City vehicles allows for a fast response with needed equipment. During the winter it would be unreasonable and delay response time if one was to defrost one vehicle, only to get to the shelter and defrost another; especially if the call is regarding an attacking animal. Officers backup each other in case of an unexpected event that does not allow on-call officer to respond (i.e. sick child). Some calls have required two officers, such as loose horses and multiple dog attacks.

Ms. Pedersen added that other agencies have take home vehicles, such as, Draper City, South Jordan City, West Valley City and Sandy City. Salt Lake County and the City of West Jordan, which services Murray City, have only their on-call officer take a City vehicle home.

Ms. Pedersen listed individual cities with their own animal services: Bluffdale, South Jordan, Draper, Sandy, Cottonwood Heights and South Salt Lake. Murray contracts with West Jordan for animal services. Taylorsville contracts with West Valley City; and Salt Lake County covers Salt Lake City, unincorporated areas of Salt Lake County, Holladay, Midvale, Riverton and Herriman.

Council Member Kindred asked what five services are offered by South Salt Lake that County doesn't offer.

Ms. Pedersen explained that those are: open shelter for owner surrenders; the live traps rentals; the wild animal pickup; the response to wildlife calls; euthanasia with owner present and the special cremation.

Council Member Kindred asked who requires Animal Services to respond to a call within 30 minutes.

Ms. Pedersen responded that this is part of City's ordinance.

Council Member Kindred asked if the officers live within a 30 response time of South Salt Lake.

Ms. Pedersen replied that they do.

Council Chair Snow asked about the hotline.

Ms. Pedersen explained that if someone calls the shelter, it states in the message that if the call is for an animal related emergency, to call the Police Dispatch; Animal Control Officers are dispatched 24 hours a day through the Police Dispatch.

Council Chair Snow asked if South Salt Lake Animal Services has a veterinarian that works at the shelter.

Ms. Pedersen explained that the shelter has a contract with ABC Advanced Veterinarian Care for emergency care and Broadview University for veterinarian care. The City saves approximately \$2,647 of services rendered at no charge, within a certain week.

Council Chair Snow asked how many officers are employed by Animal Services. Ms. Pedersen explained that there 3 FTEs and 1 PTE. Council Chair Snow asked how many vehicles, to which Ms. Pedersen answer, three.

Council Chair Snow asked Ms. Pedersen when the Council could expect to receive a copy of her budget.

Ms. Pedersen agreed to provide the budget information by the end of the week but added that no increases had been requested.

Council Member Pender asked how many animals are housed at the shelter.

Ms. Pedersen explained that on average they usually have 10 to 12 dogs and 15-20 cats. Currently, because of the super-adoption, there are only 6 dogs and 4 cats. She also clarified that the shelter has the capacity to hold approximately 45 cats and 25 dogs.

Council Member Pender asked about advertising for adoption.

Ms. Pedersen explained that their computer program allows for when an animal is entered into the system to automatically upload to PetHarbor.com with a picture and description of the animal. The shelter also posts on the City's Animal Shelter Facebook page.

Council Member Pender asked about outside surrenders.

Ms. Pedersen clarified that for South Salt Lake residents, if the animal is not licensed, they charge a \$10 fee, if it is licensed, it is free. For outside residents, the shelter charges a \$15 fee.

Council Member Pender addressed the take-home vehicles policy and explained that his concern is that all three officers have take-home vehicles and it would seem more practical to have only one.

Ms. Pedersen stated that that has been done in the past but it created response delays on emergencies, especially during winter months. She added that in NIMS trainings it states that in the event of a natural disaster in the City, the vehicles outside the disaster area would be able to respond to the City; Animal Control Officers are trained and required to be responders.

Council Chair Snow thanked Ms. Pedersen for her presentation and time.

- 2. Discussion regarding obtaining City council attorney.** Council Chair Snow explained that due to time constraints, this topic would be moved forward to the next Council's Work Meeting.

Mr. Lyn Creswell, City Attorney, stated that the Council had requested a breakdown for outside attorneys and a summary of legal work done for the Council by his office, which he will make available to them after the meeting.

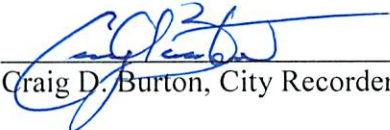
Council Chair Snow asked that those documents be put into the Council's Dropbox.

Mr. Creswell stated that he would have the City Recorder, add the documents to the Dropbox.

Meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.



Deborah A. Snow, Council Chair



Craig D. Burton, City Recorder

