

South Davis Service Area



Metro Fire

Meeting of the Administrative Committee

255 South 100 West, Bountiful, Utah via Zoom
May 11, 2020
5:00 p.m.

COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE:

NAME	POSITION / CITY REPRESENTED
Curtis Koch	Davis County
Brant Hanson	Centerville
Ken Leetham	North Salt Lake
Gary Uresk	Woods Cross
Duane Huffman	West Bountiful
Gary Hill	Bountiful

STAFF PRESENT:

Jeff Bassett, Fire Chief
Dane Stone, Deputy Chief
Nikki Dandurand, Secretary

Jessica Hardy, Accountant
Dave Powers, Deputy Chief

CONSIDERATION OF THE FY 2020-21 DRAFT BUDGET

Mr. Leetham reviewed the items from last week's meeting including the recommendation to the Board and several documents were sent out last week for review. Chief Bassett stated he sent out three budgets: 1. Using the new pay scale with adjustments; 2. New pay scale funding half the wage adjustment; and 3. A new pay scale funding all wage adjustments. Chief Bassett suggested the new pay scale with half the adjustments.

Chief Bassett stated: "We can pay this with fund balance, bring our employees up to date and this would not affect the cities." Mr. Leetham asked if half the adjustments were funded, what their city assessments would be. Mr. Huffman stated his concern is using the fund balance in such a rocky economy. Mr. Hill suggested a three-year process to get up to market.

Mr. Leetham asked if most employees would get an increase in pay. Ms. Hardy responded "Yes", by using the \$75,000, it is about a 5% increase. Mr. Leetham asked about doing a 1/3 increase, averaging 5-10%. Ms. Hardy responded that it would be fine because it will average out to about 6.5% a year.

Mr. Koch asked how are we going to pay this again? How confident are we that the survey will even be relevant now? Mr. Koch agreed that a three-step approach was a good idea, but we need things to settle down a little. Mr. Koch also stated we might be closer than we think. Ms. Hardy agreed that if the market does drop, we may become competitive, however, with only 1/3 increase per year for three years, she believes we will get behind.

Chief Bassett stated we already are behind. Mr. Huffman suggested waiting until next January to see where the market goes. Chief Bassett stated it is not easy to hire new people. Chief Powers stated that if we did this three years ago, right now we would be in a hiring freeze and be doing the same thing. Chief Powers further stated we went to a 14-point step system that hurt most of our employees. The way this plan was constructed caused personnel to level at five years.

Mr. Koch asked how many steps we had previously. Chief Powers responded either seven or nine. Mr. Huffman asked if they would have topped out anyways, why are they disgruntled. Chief Powers replied that almost all of them are very aware of what the pay is elsewhere. Now with the adjusted retirement system it adds to the problem.

Mr. Huffman stated about six years ago we expanded the steps. COLA was given, but now we are far behind again. We recently did a new study and found the deficiencies. But how do we pay for the increases now. He is okay for half or a third increase if the fund balance is good. Mr. Hill agreed. We need to revisit the fund balance discussion. He feels better with a three-step plan over the next year. Mr. Hill suggested a possible acceleration in January if things looked good.

Mr. Leatham added they would use the member assessments to pay. Mr. Hill said he would like to continue the fund balance discussion as well. Mr. Hill made a motion to approve the budget that moves the employees to a new plan and pay one third of the proposed market increase until fully funded. Mr. Hanson seconded the motion. No final vote was taken.

Mr. Uresk stated he is okay with the one third adjustment, just not right now. He would like to wait until the state is in "green." Then payments would be extended and retro-active back to July 1st. Chief Bassett asked what "green" status would have on the budget. Mr. Uresk replied it would just be better. Chief Powers stated the reality of going "green" most likely will not happen until there is a vaccine. That is a big concern, which bumps us into next year and tax problems, etc. Mr. Hill stated that the uncertainty is not good for the employees. We need to make it effective now.

Mr. Hanson would consider a delay, but its more of a cash flow issue. He would like to avoid using the fund balance but go with the one third option. It is a morale issue at this point as well. Mr. Uresk stated he is concerned about the perception from the public. Mr. Hanson asked if he is worried about the employees or the public. The best decision is to provide funding to these employees.

Chief Bassett stated we had the same discussion last year. Other benefits were tabled, and we were told no. Layton City is offering bonuses today. We just need to do something now, today. We need to make this jump. Mr. Huffman stated that several years ago, we increased the property tax to fund 24 employees. That property tax is not keeping up and now we pay through assessments. Chief Bassett said the property tax will have to be raised next year anyways. He said during the tax increase discussions it was very clear the tax rate would hold for 3-5 years, we are on year five now.

Mr. Hill stated to Mr. Huffman that we cannot go back and forth. Chief Powers stated we are still using fund balance to offset the 24 positions. We have an excess of \$200,00 we can use towards this salary increase. Mr. Hanson stated that we cannot constantly follow those 24 employees all the time. They do not hinge on a property tax increase right now.

Mr. Leetham stated there was a motion made earlier with no vote if they wanted to finalize that vote. A roll call vote was done with Mr. Huffman and Uresk voting “nay”, all others voting “aye.” The original motion passes with a 3-2 vote. This motion will be recommended to the Board.

Chief Bassett stated that Ms. Hardy will prepare the draft budget accordingly and send it out to everyone.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Leetham adjourned the meeting.

Ken Leetham, Chair

Nicole Dandurand, Secretary