

MINUTES OF THE JOINT VERNAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING AND THE
UINTAH COUNTY COMMISSION MEETING HELD AUGUST 8, 2013 at
3:00 p.m. in the Uintah County Commission Conference Room, 147 East Main.

PRESENT:

Uintah County: Commissioners Mark Raymond, Mike McKee and Darlene Burns.

Vernal City: Councilmembers Dave Everett, Bert Clark, Sonja Norton, and Mayor Gary Showalter.

Staff and Guests: Ken Bassett, Roxanne Behunin and Lincoln Brown.

WELCOME: Commissioner Mark Raymond welcomed everyone to the meeting.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & APPROVAL OF SPECIAL MEETING: Councilmember Bert Clark moved to acknowledge and approve this special meeting. Commissioner Darlene Burns seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF MARCH 25, 2013: Councilmember Bert Clark moved to approve the minutes of March 25, 2013 as presented. Commissioner Darlene Burns seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

REQUEST TO SURPLUS FIRE TRUCK: Ken Bassett explained that Fire Chief Sam Howard is requesting to surplus the 1975 Mack pumper truck that is sitting in the City's public works yard. The vehicle has 108,000 miles, with a standard transmission and is not in bad shape. However, the vehicle is not used anymore, and a lot of the younger fire fighters do not know how to drive it. The initial intent was to see if any of the other fire stations in the Fire District could use it. The Fire Chiefs were contacted, and none of the local fire stations want the vehicle. If the elected officials decide to surplus it, bids will be solicited to sell it unless there is another agency that needs it. Commissioner McKee noted that many times a vehicle reaches a point that it should be replaced and not be kept around. Councilmember Clark asked how it would be sold. Ken Bassett stated it will have to be advertised, and if the elected officials want, they can establish a minimum bid. Councilmember Sonja Norton moved to approve disposing of the 1975 Mack fire truck. Councilmember Dave Everett seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Everett, Clark and Norton and Commissioners Burns, Raymond and McKee voting in favor.

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF BUILDING FOR SNOW REMOVAL EQUIPMENT AT THE AIRPORT: Commissioner Mike McKee reminded everyone that the airport recently purchased a new machine to help remove the snow from the runway. A loan was received from the Community Impact Board to purchase the equipment at a cost of approximately \$1 million dollars. The concern now is where to house the equipment as the hydraulic hoses will not wear well in this weather. The best option is to build a storage building to house the equipment inside. Commissioner Burns asked if the current building should be expanded. Commissioner McKee stated he was not sure what would be the best option. If the building is constructed up to FAA standards, the County and City can receive reimbursement for the cost. The estimated cost with

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FAA participation is \$800,000 and without federal participation is around \$500,000. Mayor Showalter asked if the intent is just for storage or will they be working in the shop. Commissioner McKee stated it will be mostly for storage. He asked the Council to consider participating with their 25% of the cost. Ken Bassett suggested Kelly Harvey and Kelly Hays work with the City on this project. Commissioner McKee noted they would be happy to work with the City's facility manager although the project does need to move quickly. Mayor Showalter suggested they look into Farm Tech for a cheaper way to erect the building. Commissioner Raymond asked if the building will have power and heating. Commissioner McKee answered yes. After further discussion, the consensus was to move forward with the building, looking at all options to keep the cost down. Ken Bassett asked the Commission to bring back a budget. Commissioner McKee stated they would look at a building without federal participation first.

DISCUSSION OF ESSENTIAL AIR SERVICE PROPOSALS AND SUPPORT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS: Commissioner Mike McKee explained that the airport currently receives \$150,000 a year from the FAA for maintenance. If the enplanements reach 10,000, that amount goes up to \$1 million dollars. The current enplanements are around 8,000 per year. The number of people booking flights is increasing; however, it is a challenge to increase the enplanements without reliable service and a hub for connecting flights. Councilmember Clark agreed that the current air service is full, and they are asking people to wait for the next flight. The essential air service contract renews every two years with the FAA. The local leaders have been asking SkyWest to consider bidding again. SkyWest has indicated they are only interested if they can get the subsidy and go to Salt Lake instead of Denver. SkyWest did submit a proposal after completing a traffic study. The concern with flights to Salt Lake is the oil and gas industry which likes to connect through Denver. However, with connecting flights through a true Delta connection, they do not have a problem with it. Councilmember Norton asked if a private service would be interested in providing air travel to Denver. Commissioner Burns noted that there is a flight to North Dakota now so it can be done. Commissioner McKee stated that SkyWest is proposing a Brasilia 30 passenger plane which will help the enplanements grow and the reliability will be better. A proposal was also submitted by Salmon Air who would use a non-pressurized cabin which does not meet the needs for Vernal. Mayor Showalter stated that it is important to have an airline that has a connection with a larger airline. Commissioner McKee explained that the proposals submitted are for Vernal and Moab and even though the bid from SkyWest is higher than Great Lakes, both areas would like to recommend SkyWest. He asked the City leaders to consider signing a letter of support for the SkyWest bid. Mayor Showalter clarified that SkyWest airlines will provide a plane that carries 30 passenger and Great Lakes airline will carry 19 passengers. Commissioner McKee answered that was correct. Councilmember Clark noted that the number of passengers was up 22% above last year. Commissioner Raymond displayed the bids from each carrier as follows:

SkyWest Airlines, \$1,415,696 subsidy, 30 passenger plane, 12 flights per week.

Great Lakes Airlines, two or three round trip options, \$1,798,772 subsidy for three flights, and \$1,297,615 subsidy for two flights, 19 passenger plane.

Boutique airlines \$4.3 million split between two communities with Vernal being \$2.15 million.

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Commissioner Mike McKee stated that the cost is actually cheaper, per passenger, for SkyWest. and if there is strong community support the FAA will look strongly at their bid. After further discussion, Mayor Showalter moved to endorse the bid from SkyWest Airlines. Commissioner Mark Raymond seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

Ashley Creek Protection Zone:

Commissioner Mike McKee explained that the County is looking at a proposal to provide a 4 mile buffer zone along Ashley Creek to protect the water supply for the valley. There is also a proposal to exchange land to move any phosphate development away from the water supply.

Conference Center:

Commissioner Mark Raymond explained that a public hearing has been set for September 9th to show the possible configurations and size of the convention center. A key element will be the Children's Justice Center. The Commission expressed their hope that the building could remain on the convention center site. There was some discussion regarding the safety of the demolition of the homes for the convention center.

ADJOURN: There being no further business, Councilmember Bert Clark moved to adjourn. Councilmember Sonja Norton seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote and the meeting was declared adjourned.

Ken Bassett, City Recorder