

MINUTES OF THE JOINT VERNAL CITY AND UINTAH COUNTY
COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING HELD AUGUST 22, 2016 AT 3:30 P.M.
IN THE UINTAH COUNTY CONFERENCE ROOM, 147 EAST MAIN,
VERNAL, UTAH.

PRESENT:

UINTAH COUNTY: Commissioners Mark Raymond, Bill Stringer and Mike McKee.

VERNAL CITY: Councilmembers Ted Munford, Travis Allan, Bert Clark, Samantha Scott and Dave Everett, and Mayor Sonja Norton.

GUESTS: Mayor Dean Baker.

STAFF: Sue Ann Dixon, Ken Bassett, Roxanne Behunin.

WELCOME: Mayor Sonja Norton welcomed everyone to the meeting.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & APPROVAL OF SPECIAL MEETING: Commissioner Mark Raymond moved to approve and acknowledge this meeting. Councilmember Bert Clark seconded the motion. Commissioners Stringer and Raymond and Councilmembers, Munford, Scott, Allan Clark and Everett voted in favor for a majority vote. Commissioner McKee was not present for the vote.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF JULY 18, 2016: Councilmember Bert Clark moved to approve the minutes of July 18, 2016. Councilmember Dave Everett seconded the motion. Commissioners Stringer and Raymond and Councilmembers, Munford, Scott, Allan Clark and Everett voted in favor. Commissioner McKee was not present for the vote.

HOUSING UPDATE: Mayor Norton noted that Sue Ann Dixon was present to give an update on the housing situation. Sue Ann Dixon stated she looked at three months from last year and three months for this year, May through July, to compare the workload. Last year there were 90 families helped with rent deposits or utilities in the amount of \$22,972 while this year there were 88 applicants and the amount spent was \$19,869. Ken Bassett asked where the funding comes from for this program. Sue Ann Dixon stated revitalization funds are designated for housing. Commissioner Raymond stated that those funds come from tribal royalties and have a complicated formula how it is split between the State of Utah, the Ute Tribe and Duchesne and Uintah Counties. Sue Ann Dixon stated the goal is to keep residents from becoming homeless, although this program can only offer assistance once per year. With the downturn in the economy, there have been instances where applicants receive help more than once. Circumstances that qualify them could be they just got a job and have not received a paycheck yet. Mayor Sonja Norton asked if there is a policy in place on how to use the funds. Sue Ann Dixon answered no. Commissioner Mark Raymond stated that would be a good idea. Sue Ann stated the priority is helping families with children, single parents and the elderly. UBAG also has funds available to help with rent for up to 4 months. Financial counseling is also provided so they can manage their expenses. Councilmember Bert Clark asked if she worked with the federal

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voucher program. Sue Ann Dixon stated that she does not handle Section 8 vouchers. If someone want to apply for that funding they have to live in Duchesne County. The current market has also affected housing as the people on the waiting list for low income housing are now finding apartments for less than they would pay for a low income place so that list has disappeared. However, most of the families they deal with are in crisis mode and need immediate assistance. The Salvation Army will also help families that are displaced by disasters such as fire. Gas cards are given to help people look for work and occasionally emergency food is provided through Davis Food and Drug. Councilmember Dave Everett asked how much is given on the gas cards. Sue Ann Dixon answered that they are usually \$15 each and she only has \$370 for that program. Also, Sue Ann stated she applied for a grant with Deseret Industries to help families with clothing. Councilmember Samantha Scott asked what the requirement is to provide this kind of funding. Sue Ann Dixon stated they fill out an application and have to choose what kind of help they need the most. Mayor Norton stated this job is overwhelming and thanked Sue Ann for her work. Commissioner Mark Raymond stated there are a few that take advantage of the programs available, but the majority really need the help. Councilmember Ted Munford thanked Sue Ann for her work and dedication as well. Tamara Massey asked for an explanation on the funding. Commissioner Bill Stringer explained that the State receives severance tax off tribal and federal land in the County. The vast majority goes to the Ute Tribe, and the remainder is split with the State and Counties up to a specific amount. Once the Counties reach their allotment, the funds stay with the State of Utah. The County does not expect to get their full amount this year. The Council, Mayor and Commission thanked Sue Ann for her work and report.

BTA PLANNING MEETING: Mayor Norton explained that a meeting has been scheduled for September 12 at 3 p.m. in the County Commission conference room to discuss the future of the BTA program. Commissioner Mark Raymond stated that Laurie Brummond with UBAG will sponsor the meeting. Currently the Vernal loop and portion of the cost for the Roosevelt to Vernal bus costs \$240,000 which is being paid by the Uintah Transportation District. The mineral lease funds have dropped drastically and all the Districts are struggling financially so some programs will have to be dropped. Councilmember Bill Stringer stated the Animal SSD will be out of funding in December. Money has already been moved to get them through the end of the year. The Fire SSD will run out in March. The choices are to possibly dissolve those districts or cut programs. The Recreation District and Health District are in the same position. Commissioner Mike McKee stated he took the opportunity to meet with Mayor Norton and Ken Bassett and understand the City is also financially strapped. The County employees have not had a raise in two years and benefits are costing them more. Ken Bassett asked if there were any agreements with UBAG for the bus system. Commissioner Raymond answered no, the three year commitment has passed. Ken Bassett asked what the time frame is to stop the bus service. Commissioner Raymond stated there possibly will not be any service beginning in 2017. Commissioner Bill Stringer reminded the elected officials that Uintah County voters voted down the added sales tax for transportation while Duchesne County voted in favor. Commissioner Mike McKee stated there could still be a contract for one route from Roosevelt to Vernal, but not the Vernal loop. He stated that Vernal City would have to be a partner on it to continue. Shanna Braymond stated that the bus service is the only way for her husband to go anywhere and they are willing to pay to ride the bus. Commissioner McKee stated that in order to get federal funds, the bus has to have services for the disabled which adds a lot of cost. There was some discussion

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of using smaller vans. Jerry Davis, resident at 1017 West 650 South, reminded the elected officials that Terra Academy also uses the BTA. Commissioner Stringer asked Commissioner McKee to explain the revitalization funds formula. Commissioner McKee stated that 17% of the land mass in Uintah County is tribal. The severance tax from that property is collected by the State. Of the first \$3 million dollars collected, 75% goes to the Ute Tribe. Uintah County receives 12.5% and Duchesne County receives 12.5%. The next \$3 million dollars collected is shared equally with each entity receiving 1/3rd of the revenue. An inflationary index has been built into the formula with a maximum amount of \$1,250,000.

ATV JAMBOREE: Commissioner Bill Stringer explained that the ATV Jamboree went well with having a short time to prepare. A total of 63 participants from four states signed up and 42 volunteers helped the riders. Utah State Parks sponsored this event and there is \$6000 left for next year. The only glitch was allowing the riders to ride on City streets. No tickets were issued, however, better coordination is needed. The hot weather did not help the event so next year it may be moved to June and expanded into the Bookcliffs. The final schedule will be set after a meeting with the tour of Utah. Commissioner McKee stated they do have to match the funds from the State. Commissioner Stringer stated there are two bike races scheduled which will bring about 2000 people to Vernal. Also, the School District is reporting the same number of students enrolled so there has not been a lot of children moving from the area. Commissioner McKee stated they are working on diversifying the economy with recreational events and conferences.

ADJOURN: There being no further business, Commissioner Mark Raymond moved to adjourn. Councilmember Ted Munford seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote and the meeting was declared adjourned.

Kenneth L. Bassett, City Recorder