

**MINUTES OF THE  
FIRE CONSOLIDATION MEETING FOR THE CITIES OF  
WASHINGTON TERRACE, RIVERDALE, AND SOUTH OGDEN**

Tuesday, July 31, 2018, 7 p.m.  
Washington Terrace Public Works  
Building 575 E. 5600 S.  
Washington Terrace, UT

**Please see attached sign in sheet for attendance.**

**1. CALL TO ORDER - Washington Terrace Mayor Mark Allen**

Mayor Allen welcomed everyone to the Fire Consolidation meeting. He stated that this meeting is for information only. He introduced Susie Becker from Zion's Public Finance. He stated that this is not a sales pitch, informational only. The participants introduced themselves for the record.

**2. OVERVIEW - Riverdale City Manager Rodger Worthen**

Riverdale City Manager Rodger Worthen gave an overview of the how's and why's of the proposal. He stated that part of the goal is to determine if there is enough information to advance the idea for further considerations. Worthen highlighted each city's staffing levels.

He stated that some goals of the proposed district are to improve service levels, decrease reliance on auto and mutual aid, and improve response for large scale events. He noted that the district would bring about a consolidation of expensive equipment, eliminate jurisdictional boundaries, and create a more efficient system for residents.

Worthen stated that duplicate equipment would be addressed, including ambulance services. Worthen stated that there could be quicker response times for EMS and fire services. Riverdale Fire Chief Sholly stated that we could provide three ambulances in the area quicker than it is now.

Worthen stated that there would be quicker response times for South Ogden as well.

He stated that management of resources as one department would be a benefit. He noted that there would be one billing system that would benefit all three cities.

Sholly stated that we would be able to utilize the Speilman System and GPS out every call, which would increase the response time. The dispatch system shows the quickest routes, fire hydrants, and incoming engines.

Worthen outlined fire ground safety improvements with the proposed consolidation. Worthen stated that there would be ambulance stabilization with one medical director. He stated that Ogden Regional would be utilized as the Anchor Training Hospital.

Worthen outlined future opportunities, including paramedic response times as well as a wild land team with deployment options.

Worthen discussed some of the challenges with consolidation, which included: Loss of local control, Resident perception that consolidation will not provide the same level of service currently provided by the local department, and the differences in wages and benefits that are currently provided.

Worthen highlighted the governing body of the Consolidation, which would include a City Manager Oversight Board and an Elected Officials Board. He stated that this type of governing body would bring transparency, accountability, positive perception, and city participation.

### **3· CONSOLIDATION STUDY PRESENTATION – Susie Becker, Zion’s Public Finance**

Susie Becker, from Zion’s Public Finance, presented her findings on the Fire District Feasibility Study, which is attached to the end of the minutes, to determine if it makes sense to proceed looking into a consolidated fire district. She stated that it is an independent objective study to get the information out there.

Becker stated that Riverdale and South Ogden would be able to maintain the same service levels that they are operating at now. She stated that Washington Terrace would have increased service levels, however, there would be a cost involved.

Becker stated that it would cost around \$247.81 per resident in the taxing district. She stated that there would be a significant increase to Washington Terrace through a taxing district, however, it would be relatively the same for Riverdale and South Ogden for increased service levels. She noted that Riverdale sales tax largely pays for their fire services, and their residents would be better served by having the district be a fee-based district rather than being solely funded by taxes. Riverdale would not be able to decrease their property taxes enough to account for the transfer of fees to the district.

Fire Chief Sholly stated that Washington Terrace City does not typically support other cities, while Riverdale and South Ogden contribute to Automatic aid, thus contributing to a higher call service for Riverdale and South Ogden.

Becker stated that Riverdale and South Ogden have similar call numbers for fire, whereas Washington Terrace and Riverdale have similar call numbers for EMS.

Becker presented the consolidated budget. She stated that the budget is robust and noted that public service officers' wages have increased to stay competitive. She stated that the study accounted for increases in equipment costs as well as managerial costs and capital overlays. Becker stated that it is a conservative budget because they did not take money from the cities budgets. She stated that there would be ambulance revenue to offset the 5.2 million budget.

Becker stated that the study assumes a 3.5 percent growth increase across the board. Sholley stated that they would be adding another ambulance to the district. Becker stated that the Weber county average revenue per transport is \$625.00. She stated that she added this average into her projections.

Becker highlighted the projected impacts, which included Ambulance revenue, Operating expenses, Taxable value, and the impact on \$250,000 resident (\$247.00). She stated that the district taxable value would be 2.2 billion, with a conservative budget of 5.1 million. She estimated that the average annual capital/fleet cost would be around \$400,000.

Becker stated that the ambulance income of 1.2 million would be the main revenue source. She stated that other revenue sources include a Wild Land Program, grants, sales of fixed assets, and inspection fees.

Chief Sholly stated that there is definitely a need for paramedic services in all three cities. He stated that a district would have the means to fund the paramedic service. Sholly explained that a paramedic agency gets paid every time they ride in the ambulance whether or not the bill is collected upon. He stated that \$180,000 worth of paramedic programs are paid each year between the three cities. He stated that the district could run the paramedics differently and retain the revenue. He stated that by consolidating into one billing company, the district can gain additional revenue by balancing out the demographics.

Worthen asked if there are other sources besides a tax based system to fund the district. Becker stated that Riverdale would be subsidizing through sales tax. Becker stated that it would be a huge consideration for Riverdale if they were to implement the district.

It was posited that we could cut back on stations and just increase firefighters. Chief Sholly stated that response times need to be looked at when choosing locations. He stated that it is possible in the future to build a station closer to Ogden Regional, but it would have to be studied. He stated that having the Washington Terrace Station located where it is now would be better than what Riverdale has now.

#### 4. DISCUSSION ON CONSOLIDATION

Mayor Allen suggested that the cities take a month to mull it over and discuss the consolidation in open meetings and try to have a decision made by September first whether to proceed forward or if we are done with discussions.

South Ogden City Manager Matt Dixon stated that he wanted to emphasize the preliminary nature of the numbers in the study. He cautioned not to be alarmed if the numbers are different at the next meeting, noting that the finance directors are working on the budget issues.

Mayor Allen stated that fire service is very important. He stated that this would be huge for the future of this area and should not be taken lightly.

Washington Terrace City Manager Tom Hanson pointed out that this is in the preliminary stage, but it is a complicated proposal and worth the effort to discuss funding sources, service levels, and the individual cities needs to decide if it is a good fit for them. Hanson agreed that the cities should take a month to think about it and ask questions. He stated that the cities can meet again the first week in September to work through clarifying questions.

Dixon suggested that it may be easier to work in a smaller group, stated that a few members of city council could join the group to take the information back to the others.

5. ADJOURN : The meeting adjourned at 8:09 p.m.

