

# Washington Terrace City Council Retreat 2018

MINUTES from  
Saturday, November 17, 2018  
Washington Terrace City Public Works Facility  
575 E 5600 S  
Washington Terrace, UT

## MAYOR, COUNCIL, AND STAFF PRESENT

Mayor Allen  
Council Member Monsen  
Council Member Brown  
Council Member Weir  
Council Member Barker  
Council Member West  
City Manager Tom Hanson  
Public Works Director Steve Harris  
Public Works Maintainer Supervisor Denzil Remington  
Court Clerk Jean Blair  
Recreation Director Aaron Solomon  
Finance Director Shari' Garrett  
Chief Building Official Jeff Monroe  
Fire Chief Kasey Bush  
City Recorder Amy Rodriguez

7:45 Breakfast

8:00 Welcome: Pledge of Allegiance

8:15 Council Policy and Priorities

- Mission, Organizational Philosophy and Core Values
- Council Policy Priorities, Review and Edits

Hanson outlined the core functions of the City with Council and reviewed Council goals. The Council goals are used as direction to staff on key priorities of the city.

Council Member Barker asked how we prioritize issues brought before staff from residents, citing a recent request from a citizen concerning street lights. Council Member Brown suggested a more constructive way to communicate with residents. He stated that staff should follow up with residents as to where their request is in the process. He suggested a checklist or request sheet for resident

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36 concerns. Hanson agreed that it was a very functional request and may be implemented. Council  
37 Member Barker stated that Council should also follow up with residents who contact them with  
38 issues. Council Member West stated that it should start with a service level agreement (SLA) that can  
39 give clear expectations to the resident and allows staff to track against it. Council Member Monsen  
40 stated that it is an unrealistic expectation to make everyone happy every time. He stated that there is  
41 room for improvement, however, we should not beat ourselves up about it.

42

43 Hanson reviewed policy statements, core functions, and goals.

44

## 45 **Highlights:**

46 Council Member Brown would like to add a function that addresses a responsibility to residents to  
47 address their needs and their capacity to pay for compensation for employees and other services that  
48 may be within our control.

49 Council Member West asked what happens when our needs exceed our ability to pay. He stated that it  
50 is a hard balance to provide the level of service and the city's ability to pay. He stated that there is a  
51 basic level of service that is increasing in cost and it has to be paid somehow.

52

53 There was discussion of a blanket mailer to residents notifying them about the newsletter. Council  
54 Member Brown stated that he is against mass mailings because it would be too costly.

55 Hanson noted that the new infill development ordinance is receiving results and developments are in  
56 progress, cleaning up vacant lots and bringing in property taxes. Monroe stated that the ordinance is  
57 very effective and the city is making sure that the interests of the city and residents is being  
58 monitored and reviewed. Monroe spoke on illegal duplexes and stated that it is one area that he runs  
59 into constantly. He suggested making the basement apartments legal, however, with specific  
60 requirements.

61 Hanson encouraged Council to review the priority list and let him know of any changes or concerns.

62 10:00 Break

63

64 10:30 Fire Department Strategy

65 Bush led the conversation concerning Fire staffing, noting that Customer Service is a high priorities.  
66 He spoke about the partnership with Ogden City, noting that we pay for 3 fire fighters, but receive 5  
67 bodies for staffing. Bush stated that ambulance 51 stays in our station for most of the time, instead of  
68 leaving the area for transports and calls out of the area. The added two firefighters will help comprise  
69 our staffing of 5 per shift, which will allow us to be on the Automatic Aid Agreement list.  
70 Bush stated that 3 firefighters is considered a fully staffed fire truck.

71

72 Bush stated that if the department goes to 3 on shift, it basically equals 16 members. He stated that  
73 that there is 1 chief, 3 crew members, 1 battalion Chief, 2 ambulance crew, 3 crew members from  
74 Ogden's engine, 3 crew members from South Ogden Personnel, and 3 from Riverdale Personnel. If  
75 we are in Automatic Aid, the cities must send out the personnel if they are available. If we stay in a  
76 Mutual Agreement, they do not have to send the personnel.

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77

78 Bush stated that recruitment and retention is difficult across the state. Bush stated that we run around  
79 1200 calls a year. Bush stated that we will increase service levels if we go to a three personnel shift.  
80 He stated that the goal is to offer competitive pay, which will lead to greater recruitment and  
81 retention, and bring enhanced fire response.

82

83 Bush stated that the increase in budget may result in a tax increase of \$93 on a \$207,000 home with a  
84 yearly increase of \$5-7.

85

86 Council Member West stated that the “why” of this move is related to level of service, noting that it is  
87 a service that you hope you never have to use, but when you do, you would like the best response  
88 time and service available. Council Member Monson stated that there is a certain level that we have  
89 to reach. He stated that he is worried on how we will pay for this increase. He questioned if we have  
90 the ability to pay. Council Member Brown stated that very little has to do with fire, with most of the  
91 calls being medical. He stated that he agrees that the department needs to be ready, but he would like  
92 to somehow separate medical and make those recipients pay for their services. Bush stated that there  
93 have been lawsuits associated with fee-based services. Mayor Allen asked if we could bill insurance  
94 companies for medical calls. Bush stated that we receive those funds from Ogden as part of their  
95 ambulance services. Mayor Allen stated that if we consolidated with neighboring cities, the tax  
96 increase would be almost double. Bush noted that even if we consolidated with the cities, we would  
97 not be able to get rid of our engines.

98

99 Hanson stated that doing our work in house might make it more complicated, but changing the wage  
100 may motivate more personnel to volunteer. Council Member Monsen asked how we will fill three  
101 slots if we are having trouble filling 2 slots. Council Member Monsen stated that he feels that we  
102 must go employee based. He stated that we cannot bank on volunteers to fill shifts. Hanson stated that  
103 staff is suggesting that we keep the branding of volunteer and stay within their parameters. Bush  
104 stated that the consolidation is still banking on relying on part time employees. Bush stated that full  
105 time firefighters are the only ones who are guaranteed a slot, noting that the part time people may not  
106 pick up shifts. Council Member Monsen stated that we have to ensure that we have people to fill the  
107 shifts. Bush stated that the only way to do that is to go to three full time firefighters per shift. Bush  
108 stated that there are no guarantees, however, we can push forward towards that goal. Hanson stated  
109 that he is not comfortable going to full time, but would like to go to the step of pay and structure to  
110 see if we can be more competitive and more affordable. He stated that with the increase of pay scale,  
111 training, and Automatic Aid, he feels that we will be able to bring firefighters to the city.

112 Bush stated that the Automatic Aid will help with Council Member Monsen’s concerns. He stated  
113 that we have to have 3 person shifts to be eligible on Automatic Aid. He stated that once we are in  
114 Automatic Aid, the other departments will be available if we are short manned for a fire. Bush stated  
115 that the pay increase will help substantially with recruitment. Bush stated that our shifts are filled  
116 around 90 percent of the time.

117

118 Bush stated that once we go to three personnel, we will be able to call on other departments for back  
119 fill when employees are sent to trainings.

120 Hanson stated that this will be discussed during the budget process for next fiscal year. Garrett  
121 cautioned that there is a one-time bump, but there is also a maintenance fee every year to maintain the

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122 increase in level of service. She stated to consider the totality when considering this move. She stated  
123 that we are not experiencing the growth to offset the costs. She stated that there are competing  
124 interests for funding. Mayor Allen asked if we have looked at all our options to pass costs along to  
125 businesses that use the fire services.  
126

## 127 11:00 Future Funding and Taxing Capacity :

128 Mayor Allen proposed that Council give a coupon to employees to use for one day off in place of a  
129 holiday party. He stated that there is a soft cost to this and the employees appreciate the gesture.

130 Hanson stated that he would like to have a work session in January in place of a Council meeting to  
131 speak on capital improvement and future casting, as well as taxing capacity

132

## 133 11:15 Code Enforcement and Court Processes

134 Monroe and Blair explained the steps concerning code enforcement and the court process. Monroe  
135 stated that about 2 percent of all his code violations end up in court. The rest are taken care of before  
136 they head to court.

137 Blair proposed that the court maintain a copy of all the closed cases from Monroe for tracking  
138 purposes so that they know who has been into court before. Blair noted that if a defendant ends up in  
139 court and pleads guilty, the judge will not issue a judgement at that time. With the streamlined  
140 version, the judge will know the history of the defendant.

141

142 Monroe stated that the violator has 1-14 days to get a complaint fixed. He stated that it is dependent  
143 on the urgency and severity of the violation. He stated that the Planning Commission is currently  
144 reviewing the nuisance ordinance to determine what is a defensible to be prosecuted. He stated that  
145 the Commission is working on definitions with Monroe.

146 Council Member Brown asked why we cannot put a lien on the properties that are non-compliant and  
147 are bank owned. He would like the properties cleaned up. Hanson stated that he is working with  
148 Monroe on setting up a good system and a budget amount that we could work on a property and  
149 charge the owners, or lien the property to recoup the amounts. Council Member Monsen stated that  
150 bank owned properties usually have a realtor that is in charge of cleaning the property. He stated that  
151 he has always had an issue with our code concerning dry, dead grass. He stated that weeds are a  
152 problem, but dry grass is not a problem if it is kept up. He stated that the banks should tell us who is  
153 responsible for the property. Monroe stated that he has been given the run-around trying to find the  
154 owner.  
155

156 Blair stated that the judge will continue the court case to give them an opportunity to speak to  
157 Monroe about remedies. Blair stated that the court can compile a report, freeing up Monroe, to file a  
158 formal information report. This report will outline what is needed through the court process. She  
159 stated that the gathering of information is for pre-trial information. It will also offer a historical  
160 perspective.

161 Blair stated that a summons, and secondary courtesy letter is sent to the defendant to appear. If they  
162 do not appear, it is given to the judge.

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163 Monroe stated that there are 48 identifiable nuisance violations to explain to residents what code they  
164 are violating. He is currently working on re-defining some of the specific violations. Blair stated that  
165 Monroe is never out of the process. He will have more time freed up because court will be compiling  
166 the report so that they can move forward. It will also alleviate the need for Monroe to stay after work  
167 on court days to talk to the judge on the history of the complaint. Monroe stated that he currently  
168 testifies in court, but future needs may diminish with the new system. He may only have to appear  
169 when and if the case goes to trial. Blair stated that if they do not pay their fine, she suggests that  
170 instead of going to a warrant and possible arrest, she would rather go through debt collection services,  
171 who can put a lien on a property. Blair stated that the goal is to get it cleaned up with lesser impact.  
172 Council Member West asked if there is any way we can align service opportunities with properties  
173 that need cleaning. Monroe stated that there are liability issues with that, but there may be particular  
174 properties that may prove to be beneficial.

175

176 11:30 Capital Improvement Future Casting...Introduction to future meeting:

177 Hanson stated that he would like to have a work session on January 15<sup>th</sup> in place of a Council  
178 meeting to speak on capital improvement and future casting, as well as taxing capacity

179 11:55 Conclusion and wrap up

180 12:00 Adjourned

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184 Date approved

City Recorder

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