



---

South Davis Metro Fire Service Area

---

**Meeting of the Administrative Committee**

255 South 100 West, Bountiful, Utah and Zoom

March 4, 2021

3:00 p.m.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>POSITION / CITY REPRESENTED</b>
Heidi Voordeckers	Davis County
Brant Hanson	Centerville
Ken Leetham	North Salt Lake - Chair
Gary Uresk	Woods Cross
Gary Hill	Bountiful
Duane Huffman	West Bountiful

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Dane Stone, Fire Chief

Greg Stewart, Deputy Chief

Jessica Hardy, Accountant

Nikki Dandurand, Exec. Secretary

**STAFF EXCUSED:**

Dave Powers, Deputy Chief

**APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 2021 MINUTES**

Mr. Leetham had one item to change regarding the discussion of the paramedic levy. The term in the paragraph needs to be changed to valuations not evaluations. Mr. Uresk moved to approve the February 2021 minutes as amended and Mr. Hanson seconded the motion. All members voted and approved this motion.

**DISCUSSION OF CARES FUNDING**

Ms. Hardy stated we had originally projected for the CARES Act money; we had put in \$28,600 for cleaning our apparatus. A local vendor has been doing that for free, so we would like to reallocate that money to purchase

five (5) laryngoscopes for our ambulances. Mr. Huffman made a motion to allow SDMF to reallocate funds as appropriate within the CARES Act Funding. Mr. Gary Hill seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

### **2021/2022 BUDGET PLANNING - CHIEF STONE**

Chief Stone presented his Executive Summary on the department's budget needs. Mr. Leetham suggested we review the budget as a good place to start the budget discussion. Ms. Hardy discussed the County paramedic levy and her discussions with Ms. Voordeckers. Ms. Hardy reviewed the preliminary budget, for clarification on revenues and expenditures. Mr. Uresk presented his argument on why we should do a Truth in Taxation for just the paramedic levy and wait another year to hold the departments Truth in Taxation. Mr. Hill argued for doing both the Levy tax and the department's truth in taxation at the same time to help fund the department's needs. Mr. Leetham stated there is truth in both arguments. Mr. Hill stated the County paramedic service will be ending so the paramedic levy that the County imposes will now be re-imposed at the same rate by individual cities of South Davis County. The fire department will also need to do an increase to help fund other department needs. By doing both increases at the same time, we avoid the residents seeing another tax increase in consecutive years. Mr. Uresk agreed that we have been subsidizing the rest of the county. Mr. Uresk, believes residents will have a tough time separating the two tax increases. A strategy would be to explain that the county will decrease their rate, but we will increase our rate but it's a wash. However, in a couple of years we will get this subsidy back, so the message would be no tax increase this year, it's a wash but we don't have to expend a lot of effort trying to pull the two increases apart. The only way this works though, is if we have the flexibility to put it off and then do the tax increase next year. Mr. Leetham agreed that a one-time increase would be best. He wasn't thrilled about the 40% increase to his assessment. The committee continued to discuss options on how to proceed. Ms. Voordeckers made a clarification on when the paramedic levy funding would be coming back to the department, it would be fiscal year 2024 under Mr. Uresk proposal. Mr. Uresk asked if we can have a contract that as the other departments start their paramedic service, that we get some of the money back. Ms. Voordeckers stated that regardless of when the departments start their own service, the County is still providing the service until December 2022 and that funding still needs to be in place. Mr. Uresk stated that the County and South Davis should have a meeting and figure out how all this will work. Mr. Leetham agreed and stated he would like an agreement especially for his elected officials. Mr. Leetham posed the question of what part of the \$2.7 million that is showing is city assessments or tax rate? How much do we want to collect from the cities and how much do we want to roll into a tax increase if any this year or next year? Mr. Uresk stated it would be difficult for his city to come up with that amount. Mr. Leetham stated that they are all flush with CARES Act monies but is waiting to have to give it back. Mr. Uresk stated that regardless of what we do, the crucial thing is the messaging. The communication needs to be spot on. Ms. Voordeckers agreed that we need to be sensitive to the individual cities if any of them are planning on going through their own truth in taxation. We need to be aware, so they don't see two increases. Mr. Hanson said that Centerville is planning on a Truth in Taxation this year and that they are planning on doing one every year going forward. Mr. Huffman stated he is concerned we are more focused on revenue over all the expenditures we want to do this year. Are we all in agreement that we want to do all of this? We used fund balance this year to do the employee raises, and now the piper has come calling on the cities. Mr. Huffman agreed with Mr. Hill and Mr. Uresk, that once we decide on our expenditures, let us go get the Truth in Taxation done. Mr. Huffman stated that South Davis Metro Fire has a lot of trust in the community and the public looks at public safety differently than other things in the city. Mr. Hanson agreed with Mr. Huffman and states that we need to prioritize the needs and stated to Chief Stone he was not going to tell him what he needed to cut from the budget. The committee suggested the department make a priority list. Chief Stone agreed to look at things and put together a priority list. Mr. Hanson stated it

is hard to promote increases year after year. Mr. Leetham stated there may be other ways to look at needs. Vehicle lease programs etc. He also stated he was bugged by IT cost that are always increasing. The continued cost for co-locating compared to a one-time server cost isn't appealing. Mr. Huffman asked what Mr. Hanson's view was on the tax increase, if it was all in or staggered? Mr. Hanson stated he was all in and didn't need the arguments to make his decision. Mr. Leetham asked what the budget schedule is and when we would need to take it to the governing board. Ms. Hardy replied the tentative budget for 2021/22 is due in May. Mr. Leetham stated that the staff look at the expense side of the budget and get another recommendation. Mr. Leetham stated it seems the majority vote is a one-time tax increase and Truth in Taxation. Ms. Hardy asked if we are trying to get the city assessments to a certain percent increase or are we trying to get them to zero? Mr. Huffman proposed that we prioritize the expenditures and if we had to, how would we rank these requests. With each request how does it fall in line, is it a city assessment request or is it a property tax request? We need to be consistent with how we want to use the property tax. Mr. Hill agreed with Mr. Hoffman and stated that as hard as it is to see increases to our assessments, we must maintain some consistency in the philosophy. Mr. Leetham mentioned we review the Fund Balance policy and that we are true to that as we move forward. Mr. Hanson, asked if this is something that may require a subcommittee to help with the budget? Mr. Hanson stated it would be helpful to see the ongoing instead of the one time. Mr. Hanson stated he wasn't going to run the fire department, but we control the money. Chief Stone stated he was good with either option. Mr. Leetham asked if the department could send out some different options to the committee so they could "chew" on it. Ms. Hardy said we could have one out next week. Mr. Leetham brought up fixing the assessments and stated that it's not a popular thought and that his city would be a winner but maybe not fair. It would make it easier if we did that. Mr. Uresk reconfirmed that the department would send out a priority list and each item would be marked as funded by either the property tax or assessment and one time versus ongoing. Chief Stone and Ms. Hardy acknowledged that request. Mr. Hill stated that personnel would be split, some would support the tax increase, and some would be assessment. Mr. Huffman stated that it is clearly delineated that the 24 employees would be funded for by the property tax. Mr. Leetham agreed with the advice given by the committee.

#### **FIRE CHIEF REPORT**

Chief Stone had nothing to report.

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE CHAIR UPDATE**

Mr. Leetham asked for an update on HB204.

Chief Stone suggested a date change for the April Committee meeting to April 8<sup>th</sup> because of spring break. Mr. Leetham suggested to move the Admin. Meeting to March 25<sup>th</sup> to accommodate that change. All agreed.

#### **ADJOURNMENT:**

Mr. Uresk moved to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Leetham seconded the motion. The Administrative Committee was adjourned.



Ken Leetham, Chair



Nicole Dandurand, Secretary