

KAYSVILLE CITY COUNCIL  
February 3, 2022

Minutes of a regular Kaysville City Council meeting held on February 3, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers in Kaysville City Hall at 23 East Center Street, Kaysville, UT.

Council Members present: Mayor Tamara Tran, Council Member John Swan Adams, Council Member Mike Blackham, Council Member Abbigayle Hunt, Council Member Nate Jackson and Council Member Perry Oaks

Others Present: City Manager Shayne Scott, City Attorney Nic Mills, City Recorder Annemarie Plaizier, Community Development Director Melinda Greenwood, Information Technology Assistant Jordan Hansen, Assistant Finance Director Levi Ball, Police Chief Sol Oberg, Ammon Gruwell, Paul Allred, Curtis Koch, Ashley Alvord

**OPENING**

Council Member Oaks opened the meeting with a prayer and led the audience in the pledge of allegiance.

**CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

Nothing was brought under this item.

**PRESENTATIONS AND AWARDS**

**UTAH RECOGNITION AWARD**

Mayor Tran explained that this item had been postponed.

**APPROVAL VOTING PRESENTATION**

Ammon Gruwell, with Utah Approves, explained that approval voting is a voting system in which each voter may choose to vote for any number of candidates, and the winner is the candidate approved by the largest number of voters. It elects based on favorability rating rather than exclusive support. It tends to favor candidates with broad-based appeal over those with a passionate base of support. Our current system tends to work well for races with only two candidates, whereas approval voting can be for races with any number of candidates. There is a cost savings with approval voting because there is no primary election held so there is only one election. Approval voting has found to limit vote splitting and spoiled elections, and there are clearer winning mandates. In areas where approval voting has been conducted, they have found a higher voter satisfaction with consensus winners. It is secure, transparent and easily audited. Approval voting is a simple method for everyone involved. There is not much voter education needed, as ballot instructions are simple. Approval voting tends to have fewer spoiled ballots. The county will not need to purchase any new software and ballot sizes will remain unchanged. With approval voting, it shows the true levels of support for each candidate with how people vote. Our

current voting system is a simple system, but it has low voter satisfaction with crowded races. Ranked choice voting systems have a higher satisfaction rating, but are much more complex. Approval voting is simple, and has a higher voter satisfaction as well.

Council Member Oaks commented that the approval voting system seems like the votes could be easily manipulated. If you don't like a candidate, you could cast a vote for everyone except that candidate.

Mayor Tran asked about how many cities have used approval voting.

Ammon Gruwell responded that it has been used throughout the world. Most recently here in the US, it was adopted by Fargo, North Dakota and St. Louis, Missouri. In St. Louis, the voters felt that instructions were clear and easily understood. They felt that the use of approval voting should be expanded. Mr. Gruwell said that their group is asking cities to contact the legislatures to request their support for the bill allowing cities to use approval voting as an option. Once approval voting is an option, the city should consider opting into the pilot program to use approval voting in 2023.

Council Member Oaks asked if the aforementioned bill was being considered in the current legislative session.

Ammon Gruwell responded that it is currently being drafted and will be submitted within the next few days. It's possible that it could be pushed to an interim committee or to the next legislative session.

Council Member Adams asked about who would conduct the election when using approval voting.

Ammon Gruwell responded that the county would continue to run the election if the city wishes to continue to contract with them. Their group, Utah Approves, would not run the election but would be in a support role as a non-partisan organization to help with voter education. They feel passionate about making sure elections are secure and effective. They feel that approval voting would help to put more trust into the election system and would help people feel more represented and heard. They have spoken with the County who are aware of what would be required of them should the approval voting be approved.

Curtis Koch, with the Davis County Clerk/Auditor's office, said that the county appreciates the longstanding relationship that the city and county have had in administering the elections. In regards to tonight's discussion, there are currently several considerations for various methods of voting. The county is able to conduct approval voting with their current system and would be willing to do that for interested cities. This is an alternative voting method that all twenty-nine county clerks in Utah have said that they could administer if cities were interested. This alternative method was brought to the state by private citizens. When the state legislature opened up their pilot project for alternative voting methods, they only opened it up to one alternative method, which was ranked choice voting. Citizens then felt there were better methods, and they have since brought it to our state. Whether it will be allowed, will be at the discretion of the legislation. If this method is something cities are interested in, they should let their legislatures know. At this point, the county has not spoken with any of the cities that have conducted this approval voting method.

Council Member Oaks thanked the county for their efforts to inform the public about the integrity of our elections.

### **DECLARATION OF ANY CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

No conflicts were disclosed.

### **CONSENT ITEMS**

Council Member Adams made a motion to approve the following consent items:

- a. Approval of Minutes of January 6, 2022.
- b. Approval of Minutes of the joint work session of January 20, 2022.
- c. Appointment of Patti Cook, Michelle Barber, Desirae Carnahan and David Moore as Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Members.
- d. Appointment of Paul Allred as a Planning Commission Alternate.

The motion was seconded by Council Member Blackham.

The vote on the motion was as follows:

Council Member Oaks, yea  
Council Member Blackham, yea  
Council Member Adams, yea  
Council Member Hunt, yea  
Council Member Jackson, yea

The motion passed unanimously.

### **WORK ITEMS**

#### **POLICE SALARY DISCUSSION**

Chief Sol Oberg explained that at the city council work session on January 28, 2022, he approached the council regarding what could be called a crisis in law enforcement right now. There is a shortage of available police recruits in the State of Utah, which has led cities and counties, particularly those located across the Wasatch Front, to significantly raise the wages of their sworn peace officers. This has proven to be necessary to recruit and retain officers. This ongoing issue has been increasing for the last couple of years, but hit a tipping point in the last six months, which has resulted in many cities giving significant out-of-budget increases to their officers and raising their pay scales and compensation plans. Commonly these increases have ranged from 10-30% in order to stem the loss of officers to other, better paying agencies. We have been reaching out try to recruit candidates in any way we can, and has advertised positions in our department nationwide. The Kaysville Police Department is currently unable to compete with what many other cities are paying their officers. Due to our current pay plan and compensation levels, we are at risk of losing many of our peace officers in the immediate to near future. Staff is requesting an immediate increase in police pay rate of our current sworn officers as well as the adoption of a new compensation plan with higher wage levels. This will enable the department to keep the officers we currently have as well as successfully recruit new officers, thereby maintaining adequate service levels and the high quality of life our community enjoys. Chief Oberg added that a

compensation study was recently completed for the police department. The consultant used to conduct the study looked at thirty-four other departments and included all of the sworn positions within the department. The survey included the effective date that wages were increased by these cities, the wage for each position, the salary increase for each position, ranking by position, and recruitment/retention incentives. One of the issues we have found is that some of our officers have topped out on our pay scale for that position, and yet they can find the similar job elsewhere that will start them at the same salary they were already making.

Council Member Oaks asked what could be administratively.

Chief Oberg said that they could potentially move the salaries within the existing ranges, but he would like the council to consider changing the police to a ten-year pay plan. If our costs of living increases are not as large as other cities for more than a couple of years, it really hits our pay plan hard. Changing to a ten-year plan would help prevent more problems in the future. We also need to look at the salary for each position and how long it will take to get to the top of their salary range.

Council Member Jackson asked if the department is seeing more officers leave in certain positions.

Chief Oberg responded that it has varied. Kaysville hasn't seen as many officers leaving after their ten-year mark, and we hope to keep it that way. Chief Oberg added that he also would like to be able to offer incentives, such as education reimbursement.

Council Member Jackson commented that Kaysville is one of the lowest, if not the lowest, in our police wage of all of our neighboring cities.

Council Member Blackham said that while some of the wages of the positions are comparable to neighboring cities; other positions are too low and need to be increased. Council Member Blackham said he feels that the city could be able to bring the wage up for certain individuals in the department without having to do a blanket increase for all positions. Is there room in the budget for Chief Oberg to move certain individuals up in their pay? The amount being asked for with this proposed salary increase would cost \$183,000 for the remainder of this fiscal year, and \$433,000 for the next fiscal year, which does not include an additional 30% for benefits. Council Member Blackham said that he would like to see the city not raise taxes this year and feels there is room in our current budget to give raises for those officers we are afraid of losing.

Chief Oberg said that is what he is doing here tonight. The amount being proposed is not changing the salary range for the police department, but is only moving the rates for each position to where it is comparative to other cities. Some positions will be getting more of an increase than others will. They are not being proposed in excess of what is comparable.

Council Member Blackham asked about the compensation study done a couple of years ago.

Chief Oberg said that it was a good survey, which resulted in moving the salary range for their officers, but not giving them a significant wage increase.

Council Member Blackham said that he would like to have further discussion in order to get the specifics on where our officers are at on their salary range and pay scale, and which officers we

are concerned about losing. Council Member Blackham added that he is also concerned about taking care of the rest of the city employees and ensuring that any decisions made won't negatively affect them.

Shayne Scott said that if Chief Oberg has the discretion to give an individual a salary increase where he feels merits it. However, this issue is a statewide problem and is not something that will only effect one individual but has affected our whole police department. If this proposal were within the police department's current budget, Chief Oberg wouldn't be making this request.

Council Member Hunt said that the city does have some rainy day funds, and suggested that maybe in lieu of a salary increase, offering our officers the equivalent amount in a form of a bonus for the time being. Then the council can work on finding a different way of covering this cost before the next fiscal year. Once we commit to a salary increase, we can't go back on that. We can also look at other incentives rather than increasing salary right away.

Chief Oberg responded that he is willing to try anything but doesn't feel as if this crisis will go away anytime soon and a wage increase will need to be considered. We already offer many incentives for our officers, which are great but they don't help our officers in regards to having what is needed to help take care of their families. Chief Oberg said that he would like to see the city consider offering a compressed 8-10 year pay scale, FTO pay while training new officers, new hire sign on bonuses, among other incentives we are seeing at neighboring cities.

Council Member Adams said that the city seems to be bringing in more money every year through taxes and feels that we would be able to help pay for this proposed increase through those taxes. Council Member Adams said he would like to see the officers' sign an agreement committing to working for Kaysville for a specified amount of time.

Nic Mills responded that those types of employment contracts are hard to manage and if an officer were to leave before the specified time it would be cost-prohibitive to enforce the agreement.

Council Member Adams said that he feels the proposed salary increase should be approved, but that the city should use our rainy-day funds in order to supplement this for a year. Council Member Adams said that he hopes the city continues to see an increase in our sales taxes. If we don't see that increase, it may result in the council going back to Chief Oberg to discuss where he is at with the police department at that time.

Shayne Scott said that staff is not prepared tonight to discuss the specifics of the budget and how this proposed salary increase would be budgeted. However, the council will need to make a decision on item soon.

Council Member Adams made a motion to move this item to an action item, seconded by Council Member Hunt.

The vote on the motion was as follows:

Council Member Blackham, yea  
Council Member Adams,  
Council Member Hunt, yea

Council Member Jackson, yea  
Council Member Oaks, yea

The motion passed unanimously.

### **COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS**

Council Member Adams said that the youth city council would be doing a mock city council meeting next month on March 3, 2022.

Council Member Tran said that the council has been participating on many discussions at the capital and participated in a UAMPS training earlier that day.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Council Member Oaks made a motion to adjourn the City Council meeting at 8:34 p.m., seconded by Council Member Adams and passed unanimously.