

## August 22, 2022 Council Work Session

The City Council of the City of Idaho Falls met in Council Work Session, Monday, August 22, 2022, in the Council Chambers in the City Annex Building located at 680 Park Avenue in Idaho Falls at 3:00 p.m.

### Call to Order and Roll Call

There were present:

Mayor Rebecca L. Noah Casper  
Council President Michelle Ziel-Dingman  
Councilor Thomas Hally  
Councilor Jim Freeman  
Councilor Jim Francis  
Councilor Lisa Burtenshaw

Absent:

Councilor John Radford

Also present:

Bryce Johnson, Police Chief  
Eric Isom, Greater Idaho Falls Police Foundation Chair  
Don Stevens, Greater Idaho Falls Police Foundation Co-chair  
Tony Lima, Greater Idaho Falls Police Foundation  
Janet Allen, Greater Idaho Falls Police Foundation  
Royce Clements, Greater Idaho Falls Police Foundation  
Chris Fredericksen, Public Works Director  
Chris Canfield, Assistant Public Works Director  
Joel Tisdale, Police Captain  
Duane Nelson, Fire Chief  
Eric Day, Division Fire Chief  
Pamela Alexander, Municipal Services Director  
Josh Roos, Treasurer  
Randy Fife, City Attorney  
Kathy Hampton, City Clerk

Mayor Casper called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. with the following items:

### Calendars, Announcements, Reports, Updates, Questions, and Discussion:

Mayor Casper distributed calendar items for August and September. She stated the City Health and Benefits Fair as well as a Brownfields 101 Webinar will be held August 24, the final approval of the budget will occur August 25, a commissioning of a new Police Captain will be held August 26, and six firefighters are currently deployed.

### Liaison Reports and Councilmember Concerns:

Council President Dingman stated the BMX State finals will be held August 26-28.

Councilor Hally had no items to report.

Councilor Francis stated the Bonneville County Commissions have recently approved the E911 Dispatching Operations Agreement as well as the Law Enforcement Building (LEB) Lease Agreement. These items will be included on the August 25, 2022, City Council Meeting agenda.

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Councilor Freeman stated aha! Airlines will depart from Idaho Falls on Thursdays and Sundays, noting flights in general have increased from the previous year. He also stated the recently held UAMPS (Utah Associated Municipal Power Systems) conference included topics related to fish, electric vehicles, wildfires, and Cyber security among other things.

Councilor Burtenshaw stated there may be intermittent closures on 25<sup>th</sup> Street heading west.

### Police Department/Presentation: K9 Foundation:

Mayor Casper stated the Greater Idaho Falls Police Foundation has facilitated the donation of dollars to procure the K9s. She believes the city is fortunate to have the K9s team with the experienced officers/handlers. Chief Johnson stated Idaho Falls has traditionally had three dual-purpose K9s, noting the city now has six K9s due to community partnerships. He provided information for Argo, who is a dual-purpose dog for narcotics detection, apprehension, and handler protection, noting the city purchased Argo from a hospital K9 Program; Skadi, who is a single-purpose explosives ordinance detection dog, noting she was rescued from the Blackfoot Animal Shelter; and Ardis, who is a single-purpose electronic source detection dog. Chief Johnson also recognized additional K9s not in attendance, Harry and Rocky, who are getting ready to retire (a retirement ceremony will be forthcoming) as well as three officers who are currently on travel for three additional K9 purchases for drug/detention dogs. Handler/Detective David Shanor presented Skadi, a Belgian Malinois, stating training will begin in the near future. He believes the Foundation was instrumental in getting Skadi. He explained Skadi's duties, and he believes she will be a great tool for safety. Per Mayor Casper, Chief Johnson stated the dogs live with the handlers, and they will have a space at the new facility. He also stated handlers will typically keep the dog(s) once they've retired. He recognized Officer Gabe Klepich as being the master instructor for the State of Idaho. Handler/Detective Jared Mendenhall presented Ardis, an English Lab, stating Ardis is one of two dogs in the State of Idaho as an electronic source device detection K9. He also stated he is working with dispatch for elementary school presentations. Handler/Officer Mitch Bierma presented Argo, a German Shepherd, stating he is always working so extra caution must be used with people. He explained the 16 drive and characteristics for a K9. Officer Bierma expressed his appreciation to all those who support the K9 program as he stated K9 funding is not always easy. He recognized the ability to utilize a dog as a tool versus a human. Chief Johnson recognized additional community partners including the INL (Idaho National Laboratory), and Project Underground Railroad with the K9 Program, stating the Greater Idaho Falls Police Foundation has provided more than \$30,000 to help the K9 program as well as helping with other grants. He expressed his appreciation to this Foundation. Mr. Isom introduced the board members, as well as recognizing board members Nate Christensen, Carla McDaniel, and Chris Lee who were not in attendance. He also recognized the Advisory Committee consisting of Austin Allen, Casey Jackman, Randy Hughes, and Stephanie Taylor-Thompson. Mr. Isom stated the Foundation, with the primary goals related to mental health and addiction recovery, formally formed in October 2020, including fundraising efforts. He read the Mission Statement for the Greater Idaho Falls Police Foundation, stating the forming pillars are police equipment, training, mental health and addiction recovery, and community outreach. Ms. Allen stated her relationship with the Idaho Falls Police Department (IFPD) began approximately seven years ago. She shared her personal experience of joining this foundation as well as discussion/conversation regarding the Cross Foundation. She believes first responders are the most vulnerable population. Mr. Stevens stated the first Foundation event, a two-day event for emotional support and wellness for officers, occurred in February 2021 at Watersprings. He also stated the Foundation paid for this event, and for an officer and their significant other to attend. Mr. Stevens stated the Foundation partnered with the Cross Foundation for the \$30,000 grant, they have partnered with the IFPD for an additional \$173,000 grant, they are actively fundraising, they are seeking grant money from the INL, and they want to support the ISP (Idaho State Police) with a motorcycle purchase for urban areas. Mr. Isom stated seed money for the Foundation came from Melaleuca, Ball Ventures, and Bank of Idaho with a contribution of \$4,000 each. He believes the best is yet to come, and he requested support and to help spread the word of the Foundation. Mayor Casper expressed her appreciation for

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this support. Mr. Lima shared the Foundation's website. He believes there's a community role. Chief Johnson expressed his appreciation for these individuals.

### Public Works/Construction Update: Idaho Falls Police Complex:

Mr. Canfield reviewed the project schedule, and the construction schedule for the main building (noting the masonry block that was originally scheduled to start in the following week will not arrive until October 2022) and the auxiliary building. He also reviewed the construction budget status – original contract = \$23,847,576, noting there has been one change order for additional asbestos abatement removal in the amount of \$17,530.12; the current construction contract = \$23,865,106.12; and work complete through July 2022 = \$3,994,333.44, stating the complete and contract time through July 2022 are both at 17%. He displayed photos including the layout, the main footing, the mechanical building footing, the roof system delivery, the auxiliary building footing, and the main footing wall. Mr. Canfield reviewed the Project "Hard Costs" Construction, totaling \$23,943,702; the Project and Additional "Soft Costs", including the FF&E (furniture, fixtures, and equipment), totaling \$4,437,441; and Owner's Project Contingency (Construction) 5%, totaling \$1,225,743; for a total project cost of \$29,606,886. Director Alexander explained the FF&Es. Captain Tisdale explained the moving costs and audited evidence lockers. Mayor Casper stated this project is an in-house team effort that has not been used before. She expressed her gratitude for this process. Mr. Canfield stated the project began in April 2022 with anticipated completion date for October 24, 2023. General comments followed, including any repercussions to the block supplier. Per Mayor Casper, Mr. Canfield indicated he spends 10-25% of his time on this project.

### Fire Department and Municipal Services/Presentation: Ambulance Collections:

Division Chief Day displayed Ambulance Call Volume by Year from 2007-2021, stating the number of calls continues to increase which affects the amount requested for write-offs. He believes this trajectory will continue. Per Councilor Hally, Division Chief Day believes this increase may have been impacted by COVID-19 (Coronavirus), although he emphasized the amount of growth. Director Alexander reviewed the Ambulance Write-offs by Year and Call Volume from 2009-2021, stating the billing contract with Wittman began in 2014, and the Professional Credit Contract for collections began in 2016. She commended this company for their work on collections, stating collections have increased from 4% on old accounts to 11-12% on new electronic accounts. She also reviewed the combined totals of ambulance write-offs: Medicare – 53%, Medicaid – 25%, contractual – 5%, collection agency – 14%, and hardships – 3%. Division Chief Day stated the Medicare and Medicaid amounts have been fairly consistent. He believes the effort to collect is the goal of the group. Director Alexander reviewed the collection industry timelines, noting the goal is to collect ASAP. She also reviewed the 2021/22 Write-off Requests, totaling \$3,827,633, noting these amounts are from 2017-2021. She indicated this write-off request will be included on the September 8, 2022, City Council Meeting agenda. Division Chief Day explained ways to pursue additional money through the insurance companies. Per Councilor Freeman, Division Chief Day stated the city typically collects approximately 50% of total gross charges. He also stated Medicaid is reviewing their collection data for any adjustment to ambulance reimbursement rates. Director Alexander noted this annual presentation assists with the auditors. Per Councilor Burtenshaw, Division Chief Day stated the budget is built around actual revenue. Per Councilor Freeman, Chief Nelson stated half the service is supported by the tax dollar and the remaining half is paid by the user fee. Director Alexander reminded the council that the Ambulance Committee meets monthly, and they meet with the collection agency quarterly. Chief Nelson noted Medicare and Medicaid make up approximately 65% of call volume.

### Municipal Services/Follow-up Discussion of August 11 Budget Hearing:

Mayor Casper stated, per discussion with a quorum of the councilmembers, the August 23 follow-up budget meeting has been canceled. It was noted there was no concern by the councilmembers with the proposed budget as presented. Director Alexander recapped the Property Tax Levy and Valuation presentation at the August 8, 2022,

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City Council Work Session. She stated, since that time, she was notified that the county is going to perform an analysis in the upcoming days which could possibly change the levy rate number of 0.00602239. Mayor Casper stated the city certifies dollars, which are based on those county numbers. She believes any slight budget adjustment could come from the Contingency Fund, although, any large amount may delay the budget approval. Council President Dingman clarified another public hearing would not be required if the maximum budget amount does not increase. She believes the council should proceed with the current schedule.

**Fire Department/Discussion: APCO (Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials-International) Dispatching Software:**

Chief Nelson stated this software was approved by the ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act of 2021) Committee and then approved by council. He also stated the software packages and dispatch contracts are held between dispatch and Bonneville County. He indicated the Idaho Falls Fire Department (IFFD) requested a software change as the dispatch software does not meet the IFFD needs. Chief Nelson stated the MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) is an agreement to the county that states IFFD will pay for the software. He is hoping for implementation by January 1. He also stated the approved MOU would then move to the commissioners, noting the cost amounts to \$75,854.12, including a \$10,000 annual maintenance. Per Councilor Francis, Chief Nelson stated Bonneville County will pay for the cost upfront with full reimbursement from the IFFD. Per Councilor Burtenshaw, Chief Nelson stated this software has no benefit to the county, and the current software is unable to prioritize calls. Discussion followed regarding the current software system and the costs. Per Councilor Francis, Chief Nelson stated the City of Ammon could potentially benefit if they would pay. He believes this would be a huge advantage for EMS (Emergency Medical Services). Chief Nelson and Division Chief Day explained the current process and the proposed process, stating there's an upside to the safety side. Following additional comments, this item will be included on the August 25, 2022, City Council Meeting agenda.

The council then took a break at 4:59 p.m. to travel to tour the site at 370 E. 65<sup>th</sup> S. The council reconvened at 5:24 p.m.

**Fire Department/Onsite Tour and Discussion of Fire Station Property:**

Chief Nelson stated the property, currently owned by the Bonneville County Fire District #1, consists of 1.2 acres, with services provided by well, septic, and Rocky Mountain Power. He is hoping to acquire additional property on the east or south sides of the property to allow additional parking. He indicated the current price to the property is \$1,535M, noting this is a slight increase from the previous \$1.2M as was discussed at the April 11, 2022, City Council Work Session. Chief Nelson stated the facility includes six bedrooms, two bathrooms, a double-deep bay with heated floors, and an exhaust system similar to Station #1. He believes the facility 'as-is' is move-in ready, although, bedroom doors and lockers would be needed at an approximate cost of \$16,000, noting equipment could be transferred from Station #3. He indicated personnel could be provided from the SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response) Grant. He also indicated Idaho Falls Regional Airport (IDA) has agreed to pay for the US Digital Designs alerting software. He believes the facility could be annexed and connected to city services following expansion of 65<sup>th</sup> South.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:41 p.m.

s/ Kathy Hampton \_\_\_\_\_  
Kathy Hampton, City Clerk

s/ Rebecca L. Noah Casper \_\_\_\_\_  
Rebecca L. Noah Casper, Mayor