**WOODLAND HILLS CITY COUNCIL**

**Work Session**

**Woodland Hills City Center, 690 South Woodland Hills Dr.**

**Tuesday, March 11, 2025**

CONDUCTING Brent T. Winder, Mayor

ELECTED OFFICIALS Council Member Ben Hillyard

Council Member Brian Hutchings

Council Member Janet Lunt

Council Member Kari Malkovich

Council Member Dorel Kynaston

STAFF PRESENT Ted Mickelsen, Public Works Dir./Fire Chief

Chris Helvey, Finance Director - electronically

Jody Stones, City Recorder

Wayne Frandsen, Code Enforcement and Planning Commission

FINANCE COMMITTEE Aaron Lowe

 Mike Taylor

 Tim Weeks

Mayor Winder opened the work session at 6:01 p.m.

1. **Employment Health Insurance- Aaron Lowe, Financial Committee:**

Aaron Lowe with the Finance Committee reported to the council that they had thoroughly reviewed the city’s current health insurance options.

The city currently offers health coverage through Select Health for three employees, Chris Helvey, Ted Mickelsen, and Toby Szalkowski, at a cost of approximately $6,600/month or roughly $100,000 a year. Select Health has proposed a 12% rate increase for the coming year. While the increase is in line with market trends, at the mayor's request, the Finance Committee explored alternatives to manage costs better while maintaining quality benefits for employees.

After evaluating several options, the committee found that PEHP offered the most competitive and flexible plans. PEHP provides both traditional and high-deductible health plans (HDHPs) and works directly with employers (no broker).

The committee's recommendation is to transition to a high-deductible health plan paired with a Health Savings Account (HSA). They feel key benefits include:

* Annual savings in premiums for the city
* Employer HSA contributionto help offset higher deductibles.
* Lower out-of-pocket maximums for the employees in catastrophic events (from $17,000 to $6,600).
* Enables employees to save and invest unused HSA funds long-term.

While copays are eliminated under the proposed high deductible health plan, HSA funds can cover these expenses. In many scenarios, the committee feels the employees would have lower out-of-pocket costs than under the current plan.

The two options that the committee is proposing under the PEHP are:

1. A Lower-deductible HDHP with modest HSA contribution.
2. A Higher-deductible HDHP with larger HSA contribution—ideal for healthier employees looking to save more.

Both options would save the city money compared to the Select Health renewal. The first option would result in a 9.8% savings, but either option would cost **l**ess than our current provider's proposed 12% increase. Either way, the committee feels that the city benefits financially, and employees would gain more flexibility and control over their health care spending.

Mayor Winder expressed that employees who choose to work in government often make a trade-off, accepting a lower salary in exchange for stronger benefits. He believes that is true in the case of the city’s employees as well. The city recently hired someone for whom the benefits package significantly influenced their decision. The mayor feels consistency in the city’s benefits offering is a top priority—to help ensure the city employees know what to expect and that they are valued.

Initially, he had thought that Option 2 was the preferred choice among everyone. However, after giving it more thought, he wants to say that Option 5 was probably the better option. Additionally, he would like to increase the city’s portion of the HSA contribution.

Mayor Winder and the Council expressed their appreciation to Aaron and all the members of the Financial Committee for their hard work in reviewing the plans.

Council Member Kynaston wants the city to have an A-grade plan for the employees. Aaron Lowe believes the city covering 100% of the premium cost is an A-grade plan, and PEHP is a good provider. PEHP would also allow employees to choose whether they are on the Advantage or the Summit Plan.

Further discussions occurred regarding how an HSA functions and the vision and dental plans that PEHP provides.

Chris Helvey spoke about some problems he felt the employees needed to be prepared for. He suggested possibly doing a step plan and suggested that the city consider an HRA in addition to the HSA. Overall, he felt option #2 was the better of the two PEHP plans.

1. **WCG Woodland Hills Trail Feasibility Grant Contract-**

Ted Mickelsen commented that the City's grant from Utah County for the trail study amounts to $100,000. The city has signed the agreement for the grant, which requires a financial contribution of $6,770 from the city out of the total $100,000. We then went through the process of selecting a consulting group to conduct the trail study. WCG, one of the approved consultants in our pool, has provided us with a contract for approximately $100,000, which matches the total amount of our grant to conduct the study. The request is for the council to approve the contract with WCG to perform the study.

1. **Discussion with Senator McKell-**

Senator McKell expressed his appreciation to the council for allowing him to come and update the council on the recent legislative session. He explained that during this legislative session, he took on a new role as part of the leadership team in the Senate, which meant hehad the opportunity to work on some of the more contentious issues. The most contentious issue of the session was the Union Bill, but thankfully, that was the one bill he didn’t have to work on. Instead, he worked on the election bill, which Representative Burton and he spent about seven weeks on.

Another major bill he worked on for an extended period was the GRAMA Bill, which was supported by the League of Cities and Towns. The state has been losing millions of dollars each year due to vexatious GRAMA requests, and the public hasn’t been well served as a result. After much work, the legislators successfully changed the law. While it was initially very contentious, it ended up being much less so, and since the session ended, there hasn't been a single article in the Tribune, Deseret News, or on KSL about the GRAMA Bill. He feels he managed to get the media coalition to remain neutral on the bill.

Overall, he felt we had a productive session. The legislation balanced the budget, and the legislators took pride in that. In fact, there is only one state in the nation—Vermont—that doesn’t have a balanced budget amendment. Forty-nine out of fifty states balance their budgets every year, and Utah does a better job of it than most. There are fewer than ten states with a triple-A credit rating, and Utah is one of them.

On the local level, he gave credit to Doug Welton, who was instrumental in securing environmental funding for the Benjamin exit study. That interchange is one that many of you use, and it needs to be expanded and improved, so that was a significant win. The state also received some support for Highway 6 at the mouth of the canyon.

He noted that Woodland Hills, has a number of senior citizens and the exemption for Social Security has now increased to $90,000. Additionally, the flat tax rate has been lowered to 4.5%. Every teacher received a $1,423 ongoing bonus and a one-time bonus of $1,000 and the weighted pupil unit increased by 4%.

He added that during the legislative session, a debate arose regarding time standard policies. While the House favored standard time, the Senate committee supported daylight saving time, resulting in the rejection of the standard time proposal. Although the bill did not progress to a full Senate vote, there was significant support for change. Public opinion, as shown through surveys, indicated a preference for daylight saving time and a consistent time system. However, transitioning to daylight saving time would require federal action, as we could switch to standard time legally but not daylight saving time without federal involvement.

The session also involved discussions on various policy matters, including paramutual wagering, where the speaker expressed disappointment over the bill’s failure, noting a lack of understanding around its potential positive impact. Additionally, while the Union Bill sparked controversy, the speaker felt that public collective bargaining was ultimately detrimental to taxpayers. There was also a noted conflict with the state auditor, who made misleading statements regarding efforts to relocate her office, which the speaker found inaccurate and inappropriate.

In terms of domestic violence funding, concerns were raised about a decrease in appropriations. However, the speaker highlighted recent efforts to strengthen penalties for repeat offenders in sex abuse cases, focusing on more aggressive prosecution of such crimes.

Council expressed appreciation for Senator McKell’s service and for taking the time to highlight some of the bills the legislation looked at.

1. **Ordinance 2025-10 Updates to Title 11 Subdivision Ordinance**

Chairman Frandsen explained that the proposed ordinance is to close the loop on some of the items that need to be tweaked in the Subdivision Ordinance passed at the end of 2024. A few diagrams were added to the chapter, and there were a few grammatical changes, but the content and the processes stayed the same.

1. **Grant Updates**
	1. **Woodland Hills Culvert –** Ted Mickelsen explained that the scope has shifted slightly. Several of the culverts that need replacement are located outside of the city right-of-way. A new survey must be completed, and property owners will need to grant consent to the city. An extension has been submitted to FEMA.
	2. **Ready Set Go-** Ted Mickelsen mentioned it is a grant he applies for each year, but had nothing to report at this time.
	3. **2024 Utah County Recreation Grant-** The city recorder indicated she has submitted receipts to Alice Black at the county for reimbursement.
	4. **2025 Utah Outdoor Grant-** Council Member Lunt spoke with Sherry Burger, and she is feeling good about the application. Council Member Hutchings would appreciate a copy of the grant application.
2. **Large Purchase Requests**

There were no requests to approve.

1. **Update on Sale of Surplus Equipment**

Council Member Hutchings had some questions on the verbiage in the city’s ordinance and how items might be sold. He would like clarification on whether items could be sold outside of the auction process. Ted Mickelsen commented that the code gives three options. He added that if it goes over a certain dollar amount, it would need to go through the council. Council Member Hutchings is willing to do the administrative side, but does not want the responsibility of assessing a value.

1. **January 2025 Check Disbursements and Financials**

Chris Helvey noted that the financials were sent out. He is still working on the February financials. Council Member Kynaston mentioned the attorney fees incurred during January, while Mayor Winder stated that the staff is mindful of the costs. Chris Helvey explained that the council will receive a copy of the entire balance sheet every quarter.

1. **Department Reports**
	1. **Public Works**- Ted Mickelsen reminded the council that at the last meeting, he reported the Maple Canyon Well went out. Salem has a contractor who will be installing a new casing that will cost $257,790.00. Woodland Hills' portion will be 40%, or roughly $110,000. They hope to have it finished by mid-April.
	2. **Fire-**Chief Mickelsen mentioned that the Fire/EMS appreciation dinner will be this Thursday at 6:30 pm.
	3. **Code Enforcement**-Wayne Frandsen noted he has been looking at some of the financial policies that the city has in place, and the council may want to consider updating some of the city’s financial ordinances.
2. **Mayor and City Council Reports**
	1. Mayor Winder: SESD, MAG/COG: Mayor Winder had nothing to report.
	2. Council Member Hillyard- Dry Creek Transfer Station: Council Member Hillyard noted that with spring clean-up taking place, residents are reminded that chemicals and hazardous waste can be taken to the transfer station and not to place them in your garbage can.
	3. Council Member Hutchings:- Council Member Hutchings had nothing to report on Mt. Nebo Water Association or SUVMWA.
	4. Council Member Kynaston: Council Member Kynaston reported that the district is looking at a first draft of fees, and currently it looks like the city’s portion would go up by $4000.00.
	5. Council Member Lunt: Council Member Lunt mentioned she will work with community members tomorrow night on the city history project.
	6. Council Member Malkovich: Council Member Malkovich announced that the Animal Shelter will hold a fundraiser event on May 31st.
3. **Upcoming City Council Items**

The council will hold a Town Hall Meeting on March 25, 2025, starting at 6:00 p.m., with the Community Development Committee Open House following the meeting.

Council Member Hutchings requested a copy of the survey results.

**The closed work session was adjourned at 8:17 p.m.**

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**CALL TO ORDER**

1. **Call to Order**: Mayor Winder called the meeting to order at 8:25 p.m.
2. **Invocation**: Council Member Malkovich offered an invocation.
3. **Pledge of Allegiance**: Council Member Lunt recited the Pledge of Allegiance
4. **Public Comment**: No public comment was heard

**CONSENT AGENDA**

1. **February 11, 2025 City Council Meeting Minutes**

**MOTION:** Council Member Kynaston moved to adopt the February 11, 2025, City Council Meeting Minutes.

**SECOND**: The motion was seconded by Council Member Hutchings.

**VOTE**: The motion was passed unanimously.

**BUSINESS AND DISCUSSION**

1. **Employee Insurance**

**MOTION:** Council Member Lunt proposed that the city offer the PEHP Insurance Plan #5, which is part of the Summit Network, with the city contributing $3000 towards either an HRA or HSA.

**SECOND**: The motion was seconded by Council Member Hillyard.

**VOTE**: The motion was passed unanimously.

1. **Authorization for the Mayor to sign the Contract with WCG for a Woodland Hills Trail Feasibility Grant**

**MOTION:** Council Member Hillyard motioned to authorize the Mayor to sign the contract with WCG for the Woodland Hills Trail Feasibility Grant.

**SECOND**: Council Member Hutchings seconded the motion.

**VOTE**: The motion was passed unanimously.

1. **Ordinance 2025-10 Updates to Title 11 Subdivision Ordinance**

**MOTION:** Council Member Malkovich moved to adopt Ordinance 2025-10.

**SECOND**: Council Member Hutchings seconded the motion.

**VOTE**: The motion was passed unanimously with a roll-call vote.

1. **Approval of Large Purchase Requests**

There were no large purchases to approve.

1. **Authorization to Sell Surplus Equipment**

No authorizations were needed to sell any surplus equipment at this time.

1. **Resolution 2025-08 January 2025 Check Disbursements**

**MOTION:** Council Member Hutchings moved to approve Resolution 2025-08

**SECOND**: Council Member Lunt seconded the motion.

**VOTE**: The motion was passed unanimously.

**ADJOURN**

**MOTION:** Council Member Hillyard moved to adjourn the meeting

**SECOND**: Council Member Malkovich seconded the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

/s/

Jody Stones, City Recorder