

**SEPTEMBER 30, 2024**

**A SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING** was called to order by Mayor Randall Hibberd at 7:01:14 PM with the following present:

**ROLL CALL:**

**PRESENT:** Herb Haun, Larry Hogg, Sterling Blackwell, Mike Hopkins, Marg Chipman and Katie von Brethorst.

**ABSENT:** None.

**STAFF:** Randall Hibberd, Natasha McDaniel, Mike Campbell, Bill Taylor and Sherri Breaux.

**FIRE BOARD:** Nick Rynearson, Seth Matthews and Dennis Cooper. Attorney Bill Punkoney.

**GUESTS:** Ginger Taylor. Shawn Smith and Bud Fisher.

**LONG TERM AGREEMENT WITH FIRE DEPARTMENT. 7:02:19 PM**

Bill Punkoney, we received a letter dated August 7, 2024, from the Mayor to the Fire District. Mr. Punkoney asked Nick Rynearson what issues are raised in this letter that we want to bring to the attention of the City Council?

**7:02:51 PM** – Nick Rynearson, the letter talks about some FY2025 preliminary numbers, because we had not gotten the L2 numbers from the County yet, that Council Person Hogg and I had discussed at a meeting on May 24, 2024. The big thing for us was numbers on the spread sheet that was shared. The Fire Budget that we had come up with, the Total Expenditures minus the grant revenue, minus the cost of Annex contract was \$579,200.00. According to our contract sections 6.5 and 6.5.1 the cost is supposed to be the same for the Fire District Budget and the City Budget, that would be \$289,600.00. According to the letter from the mayor, the city was budgeting \$270,529.00 which was the budget from last year times 3%.

**7:04:43 PM** – Mayor Hibberd, we had budgeted \$262,000.00 for the year. Nick Rynearson, that was what the city budgeted, that was not the fire district's number. Mayor Hibberd, when we had the contract negotiations, we agreed that the amount would go up by 3% a year, so that's what we did. I know that that did not make it into the contract, as a lot of things did not make it into the contract. Bill Punkoney, what else do you think is part of our agreement that's not in writing? Mayor Hibberd, the contract was hurried and there were several times when we discussed items and then the next time they wouldn't be in there, we'd have to go over it again and it wouldn't be in there. We had talked about a 3% limit per year and so that's what the city had budgeted last year, that's what we intended. There never was an agreement as to what budget number to use because there weren't adequate negotiations last year when we were trying to go over the budget numbers.

**7:06:54 PM** – Nick Rynearson, I met with Larry Hogg three or four times. Mayor Hibberd, but did you ever reach an agreement? Nick, we never reached a disagreement. I shared numbers, answered all questions and no one ever came back and said that this was wrong.

**7:07:29 PM** – Bill Punkoney, Mayor I have your signature on the agreement here. If there are different expectations from what's in the agreement here and what was negotiated...you were represented by legal counsel, we met at least five times, if we have that difference in understanding, we have big problems here. The fire district is operating on the basis of what's written in this agreement and if there's some idea that there are these other terms out there, like this 3% cap, that's why we are sitting here, because it's creating an enormous amount of confusion. The fire district is operating on the basis of what is written in the agreement, I don't know how else we can function. I mean if there's this set of expectations that we have that aren't written...

**7:08:34 PM** - Mayor Hibberd, do you have it in writing that we agreed to that number? Bill Punkoney, to the budget number? Mayor Hibberd affirmed. Bill Punkoney, in the agreement there is a process for setting the budget as between the parties. There is a couple of meetings and some notice. Mayor Hibberd, but there was an item that you came up with at the last minute to buy a command rig. We suggested that you lease it and there was never any agreement on that. Now we are over the \$262,000.00 and to me that's the reason why. Bill Punkoney, we did discuss that, I went out and did get the leasing terms and Council Member Hogg and I discussed them, and we discussed that it would make more sense for us to buy it because if we leased it, it would increase the cost close to \$20,000.00 and we had the money to buy it. Mayor Hibberd, but we are over what was budgeted. Nick Rynearson, the command vehicle was actually in the budget before.

**7:10:15 PM** – Mayor Hibberd, OK let's move on. Bill Punkoney, it seems like there is a fundamental misunderstanding or disagreement about the contract service price, is that accurate? Mayor Hibberd affirmed. Mr. Punkoney, how do you want to proceed? Mayor Hibberd, I'd like to negotiate that, because it was our understanding that there was a 3% cap, and that it didn't make it into the contract. Mr. Punkoney, I guess commissioner's we're going to have to decide if we can proceed under those terms, I mean we've got a signed agreement.

**7:11:09 PM** – Mayor Hibberd, I would also like to mention that the process wasn't followed this year as far as meeting together, starting in February to negotiate. There could be up to seven times, I didn't see the budget until July. Nick Rynearson, I reached out on the 9<sup>th</sup> of May with Larry, met with Larry on the 24<sup>th</sup> of May and I said I would reach out when we both got back from vacation. Larry wanted to check with the Council Members, the Safety Committee and you with the budget. I reached out on July 9<sup>th</sup>, and I didn't get a response back from anyone about having another meeting to discuss the budget or anything until we got your letter on the 7<sup>th</sup> of August. Mayor Hibberd, at the same time I believe it was in May or June, I had notified you that we were going to go over the \$262,000.00 and City Council didn't intend on doing that, and the response was you're going to hear from our attorney. Nick, I said I would forward your message to our attorney, that's what I said. That was the 9<sup>th</sup> and that's why I reached out to Larry, to discuss and try to figure out where that was coming from. Mayor Hibberd, obviously the process

was not followed, there were no discussions. The contract also calls for the budget to be presented to the City Council and it wasn't followed, there has been very little communications.

**7:13:10 PM** – Bill Punkoney, can I ask you a question or two about that? Mayor Hibberd affirmed. Mr. Punkoney, to what end? What result do you think that leads to? Mayor Hibberd, so there will be a mutual understanding about it. When we brought up issues in the past they have basically been ignored. When we brought up concerns about wages, equipment there hasn't been any consensus. Nick Rynearson, you short paid invoices because you didn't like the charges, and we didn't do anything, we took your short payment. Mayor Hibberd, I'm talking about reaching consensus for budget numbers and planning with the Fire Department.

**7:14:20 PM** – Bill Punkoney, there is no meeting of the minds on the budget number and so you've set a number that is too low for the Fire District, what is the conclusion, where does this lead? Mayor Hibberd, that we need to sit down and talk and come to a meeting of the minds. Mr. Punkoney, we are here right now. Mayor Hibberd, on the budget for this year you had a reduction in all your revenue sources, except you increased the City's portion. The city has also had decreases in our revenues, yet you have a 3% increase, and that's coming from the city. We don't feel like we should be the one bearing the brunt when we are having to cut back on our services too, because our revenue sources are being cut back. We don't feel like we should be the source of your increase in expenses and revenues. Nick Rynearson, our revenues decreased from what was discussed in May, we had not received our L2 yet. Mayor Hibberd, all the information we have is what you gave us. The Annex contract went up \$2,500.00, Washington County sales tax you show going down \$3,000.00, property tax you show going down \$5,132.00, Washington County Ag Replacement you show going down \$3,387.00, Property Tax Replacement you show going down \$878.00 and then the City of Weiser Contract you show going up \$26,950.00 from what we had budget last year.

**7:16:44 PM** – Bill Punkoney, two more questions. According to your letter the City of Weiser wants fire services in exchange for, if we stick to budget, \$270,529.00. Mayor Hibberd affirmed. Mr. Punkoney, Commissioner's, can you do that? We can try. Mr. Punkoney, that's less than half of your budget, that's less than 50%. I believe that's the question you have to answer, can we provide what amounts to 50% of our services to the City of Weiser for less than 50% of the cost? Mayor Hibberd, but you also have other revenue sources. We also have more places to take and spread those funds out and we are looking at a deficit this year too. Mr. Punkoney, we want to do what's best for the community here, but that's both communities, that's the fire district as well as the city.

We can't have one group subsidize the other. We can't have the city subsidizing the fire district, likewise, we can't have the fire district public taxpayers subsidizing fire services in the City of Weiser. So, to the extent that you're asking to sit down and come up with the right number, I think our commissioners are committed to trying to do that. But in the end, if one side is paying significantly less than the other, it's not a workable model. That's why we went to this agreement in the first place, because, one side is subsidizing the other. Mayor Hibberd, but if we are paying half the expenses when your tax base is higher, you have \$300,000.00 that you're showing here, and why didn't that go up 3%? Mr. Punkoney, there's a lot of ways to measure this, one is upon your tax base, the other is for services. Mayor Hibberd, but why didn't you

increase your tax base this year? Nick Rynearson, why didn't we increase our tax base? Mayor Hibberd, you can increase it by 3%. Mr. Rynearson, my L2 comes straight from the County, I can't say what that is. Mayor Hibberd, if your L2 last year was \$305,000.00 you can increase that by 3%. Bill Punkoney, we can increase our levy by 3% up to the cap, but you can't change our property tax base. Nick Rynearson, what are we talking about here?

**7:19:38 PM** – Larry Hogg, these were obviously preliminary numbers, what did they end up being? Nick Rynearson, the Washington County taxes ended up being \$347,382.00, the preliminary was \$323,000.00.

**7:20:24 PM** – Sterling Blackwell, we as a city have approved \$270,520.00, the fire district in your budget have \$289,600.00. Nick Rynearson, that's the 50/50. Sterling, so it's roughly about \$19,000.00 that we are looking at being short, the disagreement between the two entities. Mr. Rynearson affirmed. Last year the city increased their budget by 3%, you went from \$255,000.00 to \$262,000.00. The 50% of our expenditures in the 2024 budget would have been \$281,375.00, that's what the actual 50% was. So, we actually only went up 2.92%, so we are sticking to the 3%.

**7:21:30 PM** - Mayor Hibberd, so we have a difference in the base then. Nick Rynearson, exactly. The very first year, the \$255,000.00 was the number written in the contract. Mayor Hibberd, so why don't we use that as the base? Mr. Rynearson, because the first year the city was not paying the salary. We always knew that the first year was going to be lower than what the actual expenditures were going to be. Mayor Hibberd, our first year was \$189,000.00. Mr. Rynearson, we pay salaries once a year... Mayor Hibberd, in arrears... Mr. Rynearson, and you guys were paying \$15,000.00 a month in the original contract, the very first contract. We didn't think it was fair to then turn around and have the city pay a full year's wages, we didn't charge you the 50%. That's why there's a big discrepancy between the first year of this contract and the second year. All the wages for the fireman we pay in November.

**7:23:01 PM** – Mayor Hibberd asked Clerk McDaniel to pass out the worksheet he had printed.

**7:23:17 PM** – Herb Haun, you said that the wages are paid in November, is that the volunteer fireman that are paid in November? Nick Rynearson affirmed. Herb, how many full-time firemen do you have? Mr. Rynearson, we have two full-time plus the Chief, but it takes about five people to cover it. Firemen wages, we only pay out in November but if someone leaves the department, we pay them out.

**7:24:09 PM** – Mayor Hibberd, the concern here, looking at historical numbers here, of course in 2021 there were two separate departments. In 2022 the expenses go up by 14%, in 2023 they went up by 22%, this year they went up by 8% and now we are projecting another 12% increase. What we are looking at is expenses going out of control. Bill Punkoney, did you say your expenses are out of control? Nick Rynearson, they were high this year because of the command vehicle. Mayor Hibberd, but you have another command vehicle in your budget this year. Mr. Rynearson, no, we have the outfitting of the command vehicle. Mayor Hibberd, so that command vehicle still isn't in use yet? Mr. Rynearson, it's being outfitted. What I'm saying is that there are concerns about the costs of this and the city cannot just write a blank check. We have to take

and follow a budget; we have to have a good idea of what those numbers are going to be and I'm having a hard time with that.

**7:26:15 PM** – Nick Rynearson, we have a budget also that we have to abide by, which was provided, which you haven't gone over yet. One question I did have is, I need to know if the bill we just sent you is for all of August's expenses, when we send that to you, is that a September expense or an August expense for you in your budget? Mayor Hibberd, it's an August expense. Mr. Rynearson, I just wanted to make sure our years were lining up. Mayor Hibberd, in looking at those bills, most invoices look like they are dated in the prior month, there are a few that get carried over to the next month but very minimal, so I include those.

**7:27:32 PM** – Nick Rynearson, I did a worksheet also of where we were for the last two years of the contract. Obviously, we have one month to go in this budget and according to the contract and how it's calculated, we are within \$10,000.00 of this year's budget. We have not billed you for September's expenses yet. Larry Hogg, so we have \$10,000.00 to pay September's bills. Mr. Rynearson affirmed, adding that September is the month they go back and recalculate all the costs for providing the service and Annex, and provide you all of that. In the past we have given you half of the revenue because it is a way larger number, but that's not what is written in the contract. We discussed if you guys wanted to change that, and I've never heard anything. We are going forward with calculating the expense and making sure it's off the city.

**7:29:26 PM** – Mayor Hibberd, keeping with openness, when we got the August bill, we added up the expenses that had been paid for the year and we wrote a check for \$8,100.00 which brought it up to the \$262,843.00, so we did not pay the full amount we were billed for.

**7:30:03 PM** – Clerk McDaniel, just to clarify, I think where the discrepancy might be is like was mentioned, what they started their budget at and what we started our budget at was different. We started at \$262,000.00 and they started at the \$270,000.00 something. Nick Rynearson, based on the contract.

**7:30:51 PM** – Nick Rynearson, the two big expenses this year were the command vehicle we bought in November that we could have bought before the end of last year which you could see there was room in the first year but when we looked, we were paying premium for that vehicle. When we had discussed leasing and all of that we thought that it was bad faith going and spending more than we had anticipated just to get it in the right fiscal budget year. I guess we could have done that, just to get it in the right year, but that is why we choose to wait until we found something that fit in the right price range, and we were comfortable with purchasing. That's how the vehicle ended up in this budget year instead of last budget year.

**7:31:48 PM** – Nick Rynearson, the other big thing is the Engine that we have gone rounds and rounds. Before we ever did the contract, we had an order for an Engine then Covid happened, big fiasco. Rosenbauer was close to canceling the contract on us because they couldn't build the engine for the contract that we had signed because the cost had gone up so much. They actually had it in their contract that they could cancel the order on us, and then we would go from the front of the line waiting for our Engine to the back of the line. So, we reached out, the original order was for an International chassis, and that was one of the big, huge hold ups. In

negotiations they said go to a Freightliner chassis and if you're willing to pay a little more for the increase in cost, you can keep your spot in line, and we will build this fire truck for the contract plus sign a new contract that increased the cost \$40,000.00. We went to our leasing company about this increase, and they said they would increase the financing on the truck by that \$49,000.00 but we had to pay \$10,000.00 of it. Those are the two big expenses that hit this year. Actually, the third one was we decided to buy some turnouts which are \$3,500.00 each. To buy three turnouts you are looking at another \$10,500.00. Seth Matthews, there has been a delay in getting them up to this time so we ordered ahead, and this time we should have waited. Dennis Cooper, because they showed up early. Nick Rynearson, it was the popular size, I'm sure. Those are the three things that have had the largest impact on our budget this year.

**7:34:04 PM** – Herb Haun, in the future, no matter what happens tonight, it looks like we need more communications earlier, because we are forced to set our budget in July. We need more meetings with you guys to know prior to setting our budget, what we are looking at. Nick Rynearson, more than willing to do that. We could start on the 15<sup>th</sup> of February; we would be halfway through a current year, but we could start.

**7:34:43 PM** – Sterling Blackwell, even if you guys are able to identify big purchases you know you need to think about in the budget, so that it's things that are on the radar and it's not a surprise. Granted there's always going to be surprises, that's life, but the big things that are in rotation that we know, OK we have another truck that we need to be thinking about.

**7:35:04 PM** – Nick Rynearson, we currently have interim fire chiefs, our fire chief resigned at the beginning of September. We currently have Bud Fisher and Ron Bruce as our interim fire chiefs, so getting them on board and having them go through the fleet and figure out exactly what we need. I don't expect to maintain an old fire chiefs budget layout. I would suspect that we will hire a new fire chief, and they will have their own opinions on what needs to be replaced. I suspect that vehicles, what needs to be bought and when will be changing as soon as we get a new chief.

**7:35:55 PM** – Mayor Hibberd, I think part of the frustration comes because recommendations we've made in the past and questions that we've had in the past, I know that we have questioned raises, increased labor costs and asked for information, and what we got was indecipherable. When we have made recommendations like on leasing the vehicle, it's ignored. Nick Rynearson, it was not ignored. Mayor Hibberd, but the Council made that decision, and you simply told Larry, this is what we are going to do, basically. Mr. Rynearson, I had that conversation with Larry of what would be best. I did not have that conversation with the fire board. Larry and I had the conversation, and we came to an agreement. Mayor Hibberd, but it was a Council decision that had made the recommendation, it wasn't brought back to the Council. Nick Rynearson, I don't answer to the Council. If you want me to answer to the Council, then you've got to give me an opportunity to speak to you guys and answer questions. I thought my avenue was Larry. Mayor Hibberd, either way the recommendation wasn't followed. Bill Punkoney, we are independent not public. Nick Rynearson, we have to do what's best for us and you have to do what's best for you. Dennis Cooper, the Council's recommendation would have cost \$20,000.00 more. Nick Rynearson, and this is why we're here, you're saying it cost too much. Dennis Cooper, we have to pay half that \$20,000.00 additional, so it's kind of a no brainer, when

you've got cash use cash. Mayor Hibberd, at the same time it comes across as we have little to no input and yet we are having to come up with half the expenses.

**7:38:20 PM** – Bill Punkoney, so a full invoice wasn't paid this last month, is that what I understand? Nick Rynearson, that's what I understand. Mr. Punkoney, can I ask a question? What do you want, do you want us to do exactly what you tell us to do? Mayor Hibberd, no. What I'd like to see is more communication, more negotiation on the budgeting process. Mr. Rynearson, you understand that we won't sacrifice a level of service? Mayor Hibberd, sure. Mr. Rynearson, as long as you understand that. Mayor Hibberd, but educate us. Mr. Rynearson, been trying. Mayor Hibberd, but doesn't it in the contract say that there will be a presentation to the City Council? Mr. Rynearson, I have seen people out in the public and have offered to come and share, give fire truck tours, anything and everything. Mayor Hibberd, item 6.3 says that you'll come to the City Council and make a presentation. Mr. Rynearson, did you invite the fire district? Mayor Hibberd, we shouldn't have to. Mr. Rynearson, why not, was the fire district ever on one of your agendas? We report to you every month. Mayor Hibberd, no you do not. Mr. Punkoney, my point being, the process cuts both ways. If there is a failure it's on both parties, essentially equally. It's not on the fire district, it's not on the city, it's on both. That's an issue that I think breaks both ways. I keep trying to cut to the bottom line here, what is it that you want, do you want fire service for less, because we may not be able to offer that.

**7:40:22 PM** – Nick Rynearson, we provide the number of calls per month, year to date and the number of fire inspections done each month and it's provided to the Safety Committee because that's where we were instructed to send it. Mayor Hibberd, I guess I don't see it every month. Larry Hogg, we do get it. Can I say something here because I'm feeling a lot more like the weakest link, not by desire, but in practice. Mostly because I'm not sure I was 100% sure of my role. What Nick is saying is right, we have had discussions about some of these things...Mr. Rynearson, our downfall was that we didn't document them. Larry agreed. It's been more of a discussion, frankly I'm sitting here thinking that maybe meetings like this are the solution to that, rather than having a liaison from each group meet. I think that is one of the short falls of our agreement. Mr. Rynearson, I guess I was never under the impression that we were getting dictated to, I thought we were just having a conversation saying, this is kind of what we are doing, and this is what we are struggling with in the budget this year. We were just communicating; we were talking about opening up the services that we provide outside, that in the contract it says that we remove the costs, we don't do any profit sharing. That's fine, it was all done in conversation and when I didn't hear from you, when I reached out and said that if you had any questions, that was my downfall.

**7:43:20 PM** – Herb Haun, what is your budgeting process and how many meetings do you have a year, do you have monthly meetings? Nick Rynearson, monthly meetings, the second Tuesday of every month, the day after your meeting. Dennis Cooper, and anybody can get on the agenda. Herb, I would like to be at your meetings just so we don't have a surprise in the future and to know what's going on. I think we need this communication, and I think we need it regularly.

**7:44:04 PM** – Sterling Blackwell, I think we can't have too much communication. Herb, this is too big an issue not to have communication. Sterling, I don't want Larry to think this is all on his shoulders either. I think all of us as Council Member's take responsibility and this is in truth

the first year I haven't met with Chief Attwood, normally I go, and he gives me a tour and tells me what they are looking at and I'm sorry I haven't taken that step this year. I just assumed things were going smoothly and I didn't need to. But I can see that we need to, we need to have those communications, so we don't feel like we are in the dark for things and then surprised by frustrations. It's a procedural and policy breakdown and this is the result of it. We need to clarify, maybe not right now, what that looks like. We need to come up with something that is a clear plan, but the true problem right now, for tonight is how do we make up this \$19,000.00 difference. What are we willing to do on either side and how do we move forward.

**7:45:20 PM** – Mayor Hibberd, I don't think we can do that because it's not an action item. Sterling Blackwell, it would mean reopening the budget of course. Reece Hrizuk, we could agenda that for the next regular meeting.

**7:45:36 PM** – Reece Hrizuk, city attorney. The biggest thing from my viewpoint, that both sides probably feel like there hasn't been the level of communication that there should have been, and that's an easy fix moving forward. I think as a Council you should make a decision one way or another on this difference. You can't do it tonight because you don't have it on the agenda as an action item. As a Council think about what you want to do moving forward, how you want it to look, not putting everything on Larry's shoulders, maybe streamline the process a little bit to have more of a Council type meeting or that sort of thing, so you don't end up having to have these meetings this time of the year where everybody feels like they've been kind a not playing together and it gets to the point where someone feels left out. The more long-term thing is figuring out how we are going to make this thing work.

**7:46:59 PM** – Bill Punkoney, I see your point, this is way late in the game. Ideally, moving forward we need to be meeting early in the year, February, March, April. Reece Hrizuk, February 15<sup>th</sup> is the first meeting. Mr. Punkoney, the idea with having the committee was we didn't want to add more meetings to a group that already has lots of meetings. We thought if we could just get a representative on either side and then make recommendations that might speed the process along. That's broken down for a series of reasons and so if we want to have joint meetings, is that what we think it's going to take. We can amend the agreement to do that sort of thing, easily.

**7:47:42 PM** – Sterling Blackwell, I think because fire services are so pivotal to what we are, I think it is worth meeting as a committee. The last thing I want is another meeting to attend, however, I want to know that our citizens are safe, and I want to be in the know so that when I'm stopped on the street and asked why we approved this or why aren't you doing that, I have an intelligible answer. For me, I prefer to be on the informed decision, especially when it's dealing with the safety of our community.

**7:48:23 PM** – Clerk McDaniel asked Mayor Hibberd, isn't there a Safety Committee already in place of three Council Members? Mayor Hibberd affirmed. Clerk McDaniel, so those three Council Members could meet with however many you want of your Board or your staff and have more meeting than just a representative. Reece Hrizuk, just a suggestion, you don't have to decide tonight how you want to do this, next time you meet or as you think about it as a Council you could certainly come up with what you would like to see then Bill and I can get together and



I can share what the city would like to see in an amendment to the contract for the meeting process as we work through the budget and they can decide if they like that or not and we can go from there.

**7:49:10 PM** – Dennis Cooper, I have a couple things I need to get out. Number one, it's a homework assignment, I would like somebody to go back to when Steve Patterson was mayor, Bud Fisher was fire chief for the City of Weiser and look at the budget for that period of time and carry those numbers forward with the 3%, you will find that we are cheaper. The other point I have, we can talk all we want, but right now the City of Weiser is in violation of a contract that you (Mayor Hibberd) signed. It's pretty simple.

**7:50:02 PM** – Reece Hrizuk, you don't have the authority to change the budget, that's the key. That's where the Council has to decide how it wants to deal with that.

**7:50:14 PM** – Sterling Blackwell, I think what I need to know before our next council meeting, I need to understand what it looks like on both sides. If the city decided, we are going to absorb this, what are the steps we need to do to reopen the budget and go through the approval process and so forth. I also want to know what happens to the fire department if we don't approve that, what are the things they have to do if we don't approve that.

**7:50:45 PM** – Dennis Cooper, our taxpayers in our district are going to pay those expenses. Bill Punkoney, I've been asking the same question in a couple of different ways, which is, where does this lead. I think there are two outcomes, and I want to share some advice I gave to the fire board, which is, when governments fight everybody loses. I don't think fighting or lawsuits are the right answer for this community, I do not. Reece and I would be the only ones that win and everybody else loses and that's not what I signed up for, that's not why I do what I do. I think there are two options, (1) Part ways, and the City of Weiser figures out how it is that you're going to respond to 911 calls and what the deployment looks like as between the entities or (2) We figure out how to equitably apportion the cost of responding to fire and EMS calls in both the fire district and the city. That's the two options, there's no other way for it but those two options. We are committed to working with the city to the extent possible, but what we can't do, is place additional costs on our taxpayers, it's not fair to them. So that's where we are at. Council, can we answer any questions for you?

**7:52:12 PM** – Katie von Brethorst, what percentage of calls are based in the city verses outside the city? Nick Rynearson, that's on the report we send you each month. Last year it was 55% city and 45% rural and so far, this year, as of the end of August, it's 51% rural and 49% city. August 2024 specifically, it's 52% rural and 48% city. Bull Punkoney, one of the reasons we went with the 50/50 factor was because when we negotiated the contract, we looked at what the models would look like if we just did a per call. First, it's an accounting nightmare and secondly you get big peaks and valleys, and we wanted to cut those off. Essentially over the years it's been 50/50 more or less and we wanted to cut that off so everybody could reasonably anticipate what costs are going to be. Mr. Rynearson, and it's easier to budget for you guys.

**7:53:27 PM** – Herb Haun, is the expense per call on a rural or city call pretty much equal, a rural fire verses a city fire? Nick Rynearson, if we started breaking it down, there are a lot of different

factors because on a call we might have more resources respond in the city than in the rural, but the rural is usually further distance. Secondly, the other service we are providing the city is all the fire inspections and there are way more fire inspections in the city than in the rural. Bill Punkoney, it really does pencil 50/50. We went around and around with the mayor for quite some time over all these different metrics, but it pencils at 50/50.

**7:54:18 PM** – Herb Haun, I think most of us would love to see you annex us in and have one fire department. Nick Rynearson, we would love that too. Herb, we've been working with legislatures and trying to get that done and we don't want to continue that unless you guys want the same. Mr. Rynearson, we want that. Bill Punkoney, that's our joint problem. Dennis Cooper, annexation would be the obvious way and this agreement in our eyes and minds was temporary, hoping that they would fix the broken legislation. Mr. Rynearson, the 20% revenue hit we would take just makes it unworkable. Mayor Hibberd agreed. Herb, I don't think we are the only area in Idaho that's trying to do this. Mr. Punkoney, I represent over 100 fire districts, and many are just waiting, and the only answer is this kind of agreement. This is the private ordering contract solution to the problem, there is also the political solution which is the annexation. Right now, the political solution is just not working.

**ADJOURNMENT - Action Item.**

**Motioned by** Herb Haun and seconded by Sterling Blackwell to adjourn the meeting.

AYES: Herb Haun, Larry Hogg, Sterling Blackwell, Mike Hopkins, Marg Chipman and Katie von Brethorst.  
NAYES: None.  
ABSTRAINED: None.  
MOTION CARRIED.

**THIS SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 7:56:18 PM**

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**Randall Hibberd, Mayor**

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**Natasha McDaniel, City Clerk**