HIGHLAND CITY

HIGHLAND CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING
Monday, April 29, 2024
Highland City Council Chambers,
5400 West Civic Center Drive, Highland Utah 84003
Approved May 21, 2024

8:00 PM SPECIAL MEETING
Call to Order – Mayor Kurt Ostler
Invocation - Scott Smith
Pledge of Allegiance - Ron Campbell

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Kurt Ostler as a special meeting at 8:03 pm. The meeting agenda was posted on the Utah State Public Meeting Website at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. The prayer was offered by Council Member Scott Smith and those in attendance were led in the Pledge of Allegiance by Council Member Ron Campbell.

PRESIDING: Mayor Kurt Ostler

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Brittney P. Bills – present
Ron Campbell – present
Doug Cortney – present
Kim Rodela – present
Scott L. Smith – present

CITY STAFF PRESENT: City Administrator Erin Wells, City Attorney/Planning & Zoning Administrator Rob Patterson, Planning Commissioner Secretary Heather White

OTHERS PRESENT: Jon Hart, Sandi Howe, Lowell Nelson, Rachelle Smith, Liz Rice, Wesley Warren, Dustin Topham

1. ALPINE SCHOOL DISTRICT RECONFIGURATION PRESENTATION

The City Council will hear a report regarding the feasibility of a potential reconfiguration of Alpine School District.

Mayor Ostler summarized the process that must be followed in order for a School District to change their boundaries; he invited Council Member Bills, who is the Council's liaison to the District, to provide a presentation regarding the matter.

Council Member Bills explained that tonight is the beginning of the discussion about the potential reconfiguration of the Alpine School District's boundaries; she emphasized that the City Council is not unhappy with the District, and she has personally had a very positive experience with the District, and she taught for the District for five years. She stated that she wants to discuss what is best for Highland. She then stated the District began a study a few months ago regarding District reconfiguration; their study team came up with six recommendations for possible reconfiguration and she presented each of the six options:

Option 1 – One District

- Orem, Vineyard, Lindon, Pleasant Grove, Alpine, Cedar Hills, Highland, Draper, American Fork, Lehi, Cedar Fort, Fairfield, Eagle Mountain, Saratoga Springs

Option 2 – Two Districts

- East: Orem, Vineyard, Lindon, Pleasant Grove, Alpine, Cedar Hills, Highland, Draper, American Fork
- West: Cedar Fort, Fairfield, Eagle Mountain, Saratoga Springs, Lehi

Option 3 – Two Districts

- East: Orem, Vineyard, Lindon, Pleasant Grove, Alpine, Cedar Hills, Highland, Draper, American Fork, Lehi
- West: Cedar Fort, Fairfield, Eagle Mountain, Saratoga Springs

Option 4 – Three Districts

- East: Orem, Vineyard, Lindon, Pleasant Grove
- West: Cedar Fort, Fairfield, Eagle Mountain, Saratoga Springs
- Central: Lehi, Alpine, Highland, Draper, American Fork, Cedar Hills

Option 5 - Three Districts

- East: Orem, Vineyard, Lindon,
- West: Cedar Fort, Fairfield, Eagle Mountain, Saratoga Springs
- Central: Lehi, Pleasant Grove, Alpine, Highland, Draper, American Fork, Cedar Hills

Option 6 - Three Districts

- East: Alpine, Highland, Draper, American Fork, Cedar Hills, Orem, Vineyard, Lindon, Pleasant Grove
- West: Cedar Fort, Fairfield, Eagle Mountain, Saratoga Springs
- Central: Lehi

The School Board met last week and narrowed the six options down to two: options, three and four. The Highland Council has decided to be an active participant in the discussion of these two options, which includes development of an interlocal agreement that will govern the reconfiguration and creation of a new 'west' District. The Council wants to preserve local control and as many options as possible for residents with school-aged children. Representation is important and anyone elected to serve as a School Board Member must understand the needs of Highland and what makes it unique and different from other cities. If the Council chooses not to pursue an interlocal agreement, the decisions regarding the future of the District will be left to other entities to decide and the Council does not want others making decisions for Highland. The interlocal agreement route also preserves the City's ability to allow more public input than would otherwise be available if the District and other communities are allowed to decide for Highland. She prefers option four for many reasons, but the greatest reason is that it provides for greater cooperation and representation locally. She concluded by discussing the possible timeline for continued study of the matter and negotiations of the interlocal agreement; there will be 12 public hearings held regarding the matter over the next 45 days, and a public vote can be held this November. If the measure passes, a new School Board would be created in June of 2025.

Mayor Ostler then invited public comment.

Lowell Nelson stated that in the past, the legislature and school boards have decided school district boundaries and he asked what has changed and why this process is different. Council Member Bills stated this has actually been an option for long time; State legislation allows cities to enter into interlocal agreements to create a new district. There is also new legislation that will go into effect May 1, 2024 that will make the process easier and provides more opportunities for public input. Mayor Ostler added that only the citizens living in the cities that have entered into an interlocal agreement with one another will be able to vote on the matter. Mr. Nelson stated that he welcomes this development because he feels the Alpine School District is currently way too large and splitting it into multiple districts – perhaps three – is great and will give parents a greater say in what is happening in the district responsible for educating their children.

Dustin Topham stated that he has lived in Highland since 2012 and has taught in the District for two decades, currently teaching at Lone Peak High School. He is grateful that cities have gotten involved in this issue as there has been some murkiness since the COVID-19 pandemic relative to education. He is thrilled Highland is representing itself in a stronger way. He does hope that people will consider the impact of creating smaller districts will have on high school administrators, in terms of networking opportunities and salaries. He has heard that the State of Utah wanted Alpine School District to be smaller, but he has not heard the reasoning why.

Liz Rice stated she is a former teacher, and she has always felt the Alpine School District was well-run. She stated that she believes that this issue was first raised by Orem City, and now it cannot be stopped. She worries about the impact the split will have on students and she likened the district divide to a divorce in that it will have a financial impact on administrators, teachers, and students. However, she is not opposed to the reconfiguration, but it is important to focus on balance for the schools that will be included in the newly created district.

Briana Hew stated she is a Highland resident and a teacher; there are creative solutions that have been considered in order to make sure that the teachers are taken care of in terms of their compensation and benefits. The new School Board will need to address those issues. She stated it is important to emphasize that most employees are not dissatisfied with the Alpine School District and the reconfiguration is not based on any discontent. The most important goal should be allowing students and educators to thrive.

Wesley Warren stated he has a friend who is a superintendent of a large school district in Utah and 20 years ago they went through a large split. He has commented that those involved in the reconfiguration of the Alpine School District seem to be handling the matter with grace. He was intrigued by the interlocal agreement option, but expressed concern about the students who will be impacted. He feels the most important thing for all involved to consider is taking care of administrators and teachers, since they have the largest impact on students. He thanked Council Member Bills and the entire Council for being proactive.

Rachelle Smith stated she is the President of the Parent-Teachers Association at Ridgeline, and she has attended the School Board meetings where this issue has been discussed. She stated she is not opposed to what has been proposed tonight, but asked for reasoning behind the support for three districts rather than two. She also agreed with the previous comments about the need to support administrators and teachers in this process.

There were no additional persons appearing to be heard; Mayor Ostler closed the public comment period.

Council Member Rodela inquired as to the action that must be taken to place an initiative on the ballot. City Attorney Patterson stated that once the partner cities have negotiated the interlocal agreement, their respective governing bodies must vote to place the matter on the ballot and the initiative can pass with majority vote of the residents. Theoretically, Highland residents could vote in opposition to the initiative, but if all other cities' residents vote in favor, the measure would pass.

Mayor Ostler presented a map and identified the cities that are interested in participating in negotiation of an interlocal agreement; if the residents from that collective area vote in support of the initiative, the district would be created. If the initiative does not pass, the default will be option three.

The Mayor and Council then engaged in philosophical discussion about the implications of the district reconfiguration; each of them voiced their support for option four and providing their own reasoning for why they have reached that conclusion.

2. RESOLUTION: SCHOOL DISTRICT CREATION INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT

The City Council will consider approving a resolution directing the Mayor and staff to negotiate and execute an interlocal agreement with entities within the current boundaries of the Alpine School District for the creation of one or more new school districts.

Council Member Brittney P. Bills MOVED that the City Council approve the resolution directing the mayor and city staff to negotiate and execute an Interlocal and Cooperation Agreement between Alpine City, American Fork City, City of Cedar Hills, Draper City, Highland City, and Lehi City, and to submit a request to the Utah County Clerk for the creation of a new school district.

Council Member Kim Rodela SECONDED the motion.

The vote was recorded as follows:

Council Member Brittney P. Bills	*Yes*
Council Member Ron Campbell	*Yes*
Council Member Doug Cortney	*Yes*
Council Member Kim Rodela	*Yes*
Council Member Scott L. Smith	*Yes*

The motion carried 5:0

Mayor Ostler then noted that all five cities that are involved in this matter have voted unanimously to pursue the interlocal agreement; he stated he is pleased that all cities are invested and in agreement on this matter .

ADJOURNMENT

Council Member Scott Smith moved to adjourn the meeting. Council Member Ron Campbell SECONDED the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.

I, Heather White, Planning Commission Secretary, hereby certify that the foregoing minutes represent a true, accurate and complete record of the meeting held on April 29, 2024. The document constitutes the official minutes for the Highland City Council Meeting.

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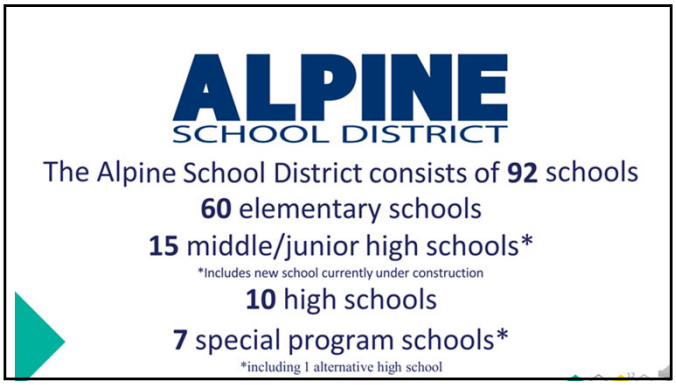

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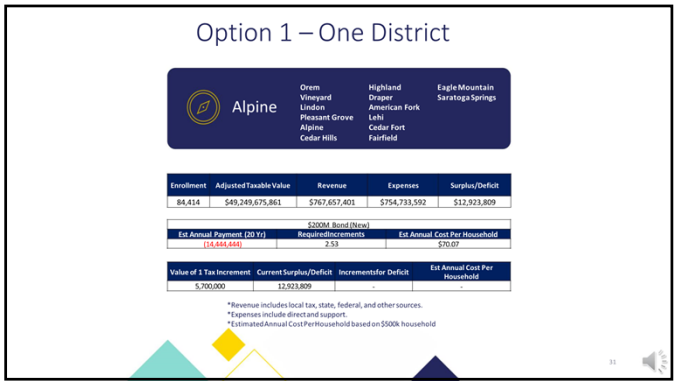

Option 1 – One District

Alpine

Orem, Vineyard, Lindon, Pleasant Grove, Alpine, Cedar Hills, Highland, Draper, American Fork, Lehi, Cedar Fort, Fairfield, Eagle Mountain, Saratoga Springs

Enrollment	Adjusted Taxable Value	Revenue	Expenses	Surplus/Deficit
84,414	$49,249,675,861	$767,657,401	$754,733,592	$12,923,809

$200M Bond (New)		
Est Annual Payment (20 Yr)	Required Increments	Est Annual Cost Per Household
(14,444,444)	2.53	$70.07

Value of 1 Tax Increment	Current Surplus/Deficit	Increments for Deficit	Est Annual Cost Per Household
5,700,000	12,923,809	-	-

*Revenue includes local tax, state, federal, and other sources.
*Expenses include direct and support.
*Estimated Annual Cost Per Household based on $500k household

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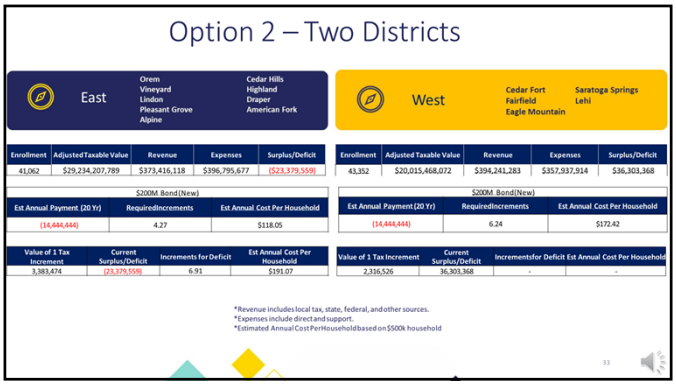

Option 2 – Two Districts

East

Orem, Vineyard, Lindon, Pleasant Grove, Alpine, Cedar Hills, Highland, Draper, American Fork

Enrollment	Adjusted Taxable Value	Revenue	Expenses	Surplus/Deficit
41,062	$29,234,207,789	$373,416,118	$396,795,677	($23,379,559)

$200M Bond (New)		
Est Annual Payment (20 Yr)	Required Increments	Est Annual Cost Per Household
(14,444,444)	4.27	$118.05

Value of 1 Tax Increment	Current Surplus/Deficit	Increments for Deficit	Est Annual Cost Per Household
3,383,474	(23,379,559)	6.91	$191.07

West

Cedar Fort, Fairfield, Eagle Mountain, Saratoga Springs, Lehi

Enrollment	Adjusted Taxable Value	Revenue	Expenses	Surplus/Deficit
43,352	$20,015,468,072	$394,241,283	$357,937,914	$36,303,368

$200M Bond (New)		
Est Annual Payment (20 Yr)	Required Increments	Est Annual Cost Per Household
(14,444,444)	6.24	$172.42

Value of 1 Tax Increment	Current Surplus/Deficit	Increments for Deficit	Est Annual Cost Per Household
2,316,526	36,303,368	-	-

*Revenue includes local tax, state, federal, and other sources.
*Expenses include direct and support.
*Estimated Annual Cost Per Household based on $500k household

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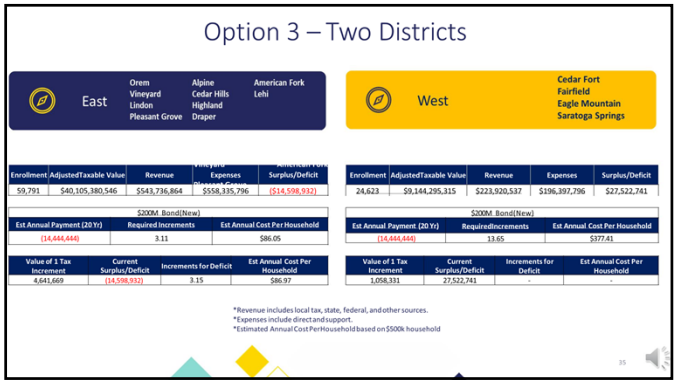

Option 3 – Two Districts

East

Orem, Vineyard, Lindon, Pleasant Grove, Alpine, Cedar Hills, Highland, Draper, American Fork, Lehi

Enrollment	Adjusted Taxable Value	Revenue	Expenses	Surplus/Deficit
59,791	$40,105,380,546	$543,736,864	$558,335,796	($14,598,932)

$200M Bond (New)		
Est Annual Payment (20 Yr)	Required Increments	Est Annual Cost Per Household
(14,444,444)	3.11	$86.05

Value of 1 Tax Increment	Current Surplus/Deficit	Increments for Deficit	Est Annual Cost Per Household
4,641,669	(14,598,932)	3.15	$86.97

West

Cedar Fort, Fairfield, Eagle Mountain, Saratoga Springs

Enrollment	Adjusted Taxable Value	Revenue	Expenses	Surplus/Deficit
24,623	$9,144,295,315	$223,920,537	$196,397,796	$27,522,741

$200M Bond (New)		
Est Annual Payment (20 Yr)	Required Increments	Est Annual Cost Per Household
(14,444,444)	13.65	$377.41

Value of 1 Tax Increment	Current Surplus/Deficit	Increments for Deficit	Est Annual Cost Per Household
1,058,331	27,522,741	-	-

*Revenue includes local tax, state, federal, and other sources.
*Expenses include direct and support.
*Estimated Annual Cost Per Household based on $500k household

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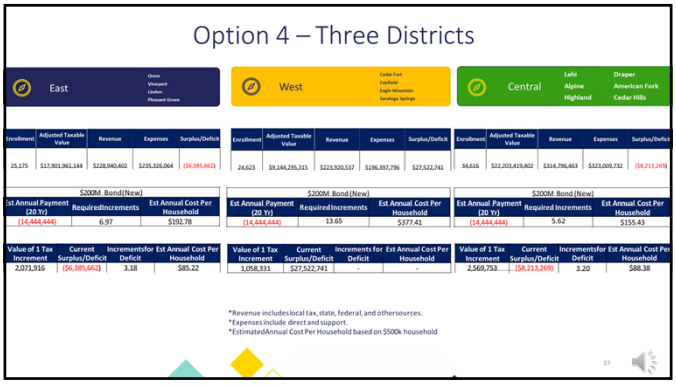

Option 4 – Three Districts

East

Orem, Vineyard, Lindon, Pleasant Grove

Enrollment	Adjusted Taxable Value	Revenue	Expenses	Surplus/Deficit
25,175	$17,901,961,144	$228,940,402	$235,326,064	($6,385,662)

$200M Bond (New)		
Est Annual Payment (20 Yr)	Required Increments	Est Annual Cost Per Household
(14,444,444)	6.97	$192.78

Value of 1 Tax Increment	Current Surplus/Deficit	Increments for Deficit	Est Annual Cost Per Household
2,071,916	($6,385,662)	3.18	$85.22

West

Cedar Fort, Fairfield, Eagle Mountain, Saratoga Springs

Enrollment	Adjusted Taxable Value	Revenue	Expenses	Surplus/Deficit
24,623	$9,144,295,315	$223,920,537	$196,397,796	$27,522,741

$200M Bond (New)		
Est Annual Payment (20 Yr)	Required Increments	Est Annual Cost Per Household
(14,444,444)	13.65	$377.41

Value of 1 Tax Increment	Current Surplus/Deficit	Increments for Deficit	Est Annual Cost Per Household
1,058,331	$27,522,741	-	-

Central

Lehi, Alpine, Highland, Draper, American Fork, Cedar Hills

Enrollment	Adjusted Taxable Value	Revenue	Expenses	Surplus/Deficit
34,616	$22,203,419,402	$314,796,463	$323,009,732	($8,213,269)

$200M Bond (New)		
Est Annual Payment (20 Yr)	Required Increments	Est Annual Cost Per Household
(14,444,444)	5.62	$155.43

Value of 1 Tax Increment	Current Surplus/Deficit	Increments for Deficit	Est Annual Cost Per Household
2,569,753	($8,213,269)	3.20	$88.38

*Revenue includes local tax, state, federal, and other sources.
*Expenses include direct and support.
*Estimated Annual Cost Per Household based on $500k household

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Option 5 – Three Districts

East: Orem, Vineyard, Lindon

West: Cedar Fort, Fairfield, Eagle Mountain, Saratoga Springs

Central: Lehi, Pleasant Grove, Alpine, Highland, Draper, American Fork, Cedar Hills

Enrollment	Adjusted Taxable Value	Revenue	Expenses	Surplus/Deficit
18,462	$13,792,468,661	$167,892,659	$181,297,235	($13,404,576)

$200M Bond(New)

Est Annual Payment (20 Yr)	Required Increments	Est Annual Cost Per Household
(14,444,444)	9.05	$250.22

Value of 1 Tax Increment	Current Surplus/Deficit	Increments for Deficit	Est Annual Cost Per Household
1,596,296	($13,404,576)	8.40	$232.20

Enrollment	Adjusted Taxable Value	Revenue	Expenses	Surplus/Deficit
24,623	$9,144,295,315	$223,920,537	$196,397,796	$27,522,741

$200M Bond(New)

Est Annual Payment (20 Yr)	RequiredIncrements	Est Annual Cost Per Household
(14,444,444)	13.65	$377.41

Value of 1 Tax Increment	Current Surplus/Deficit	Increments for Deficit	Est Annual Cost Per Household
1,058,331	$27,522,741	-	-

Enrollment	Adjusted Taxable Value	Revenue	Expenses	Surplus/Deficit
41,329	$26,312,911,885	$375,844,205	$377,038,561	($1,194,356)

$200M Bond(New)

Est Annual Payment (20 Yr)	Required Increments	Est Annual Cost Per Household
(14,444,444)	4.74	$131.16

Value of 1 Tax Increment	Current Surplus/Deficit	Increments for Deficit	Est Annual Cost Per Household
3,045,372	($1,194,356)	0.39	$10.84

*Revenue includes local tax, state, federal, and other sources.
*Expenses include direct and support.
*Estimated Annual Cost Per Household based on $500k household

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Option 6 – Three Districts

East: Alpine, Highland, Draper, American Fork, Cedar Hills, Orem, Vineyard, Lindon, Pleasant Grove

West: Cedar Fort, Fairfield, Eagle Mountain, Saratoga Springs

Central: Lehi

Enrollment	Adjusted Taxable Value	Revenue	Expenses	Surplus/Deficit
41,062	$29,234,207,789	$373,416,118	$396,795,678	($23,379,559)

$200M Bond (New)

Est Annual Payment (20 Yr)	RequiredIncrements	Est Annual Cost Per Household
(14,444,444)	4.27	$118.05

Value of 1 Tax Increment	Current Surplus/Deficit	Increments for Deficit	Est Annual Cost Per Household
3,383,474	($23,379,559)	6.91	$191.07

Enrollment	Adjusted Taxable Value	Revenue	Expenses	Surplus/Deficit
24,623	$9,144,295,315	$223,920,537	$196,397,796	$27,522,741

$200M Bond(New)

Est Annual Payment (20 Yr)	Required Increments	Est Annual Cost Per Household
(14,444,444)	13.65	$377.41

Value of 1 Tax Increment	Current Surplus/Deficit	Increments for Deficit	Est Annual Cost Per Household
1,058,331	$27,522,741	-	-

Enrollment	Adjusted Taxable Value	Revenue	Expenses	Surplus/Deficit
18,729	$10,871,172,757	$170,320,746	$161,540,119	$8,780,628

$200M Bond (New)

Est Annual Payment (20 Yr)	RequiredIncrements	Est Annual Cost Per Household
(14,444,444)	11.48	$317.46

Value of 1 Tax Increment	Current Surplus/Deficit	Increments for Deficit	Est Annual Cost Pe Household
1,258,195	$8,780,628	-	-

*Revenue includes local tax, state, federal, and other sources.
*Expenses include direct and support.
*Estimated Annual Cost Per Household based on $500k household

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