

CITY OF OREM
SPECIAL JOINT OREM / LINDON / PLEASANT GROVE / VINEYARD
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
56 North State Street Orem, Utah
May 7, 2024

3:00 P.M. WORK SESSION - OREM LIBRARY HALL

ELECTED OFFICIALS OREM - Mayor David Young, David Spencer, LaNae Millett, Jeff Lambson, Chris Killpack and Jenn Gale (Absent Tom Macdonald)

LINDON - Mayor Carolyn Lundberg, Jake Hoyt, Van Broderick, Cole Hooley, and Lincoln Jacobs (Absent Steve Stewart)

PLEASANT GROVE - Mayor Guy Fugal, Cyd LeMone, Eric Jensen, Steve Rogers and Todd Williams (Absent Dianna Anderson)

VINEYARD - Mayor Julie Fullmer, Amber Rassmussen, Jacob Holdaway, Mardi Sifuentes, Sara Cameron

APPOINTED STAFF OREM - Brenn Bybee, City Manager

LINDON - Adam Cowie, City Manager

PLEASANT GROVE- J. Scott Darrington, City Manager

VINEYARD - Eric Ellis, City Manager

NOTE: The referenced report and presentation documents for each discussion may be viewed at [orem.org/meetings](https://www.orem.org/meetings) under “City Council Presentations”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VATVi5_ousA&t=0s

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Mayor Young welcomed the Mayors and City Council Members from each of the cities and those in the audience who attended. He turned the meeting over to Molly Wheeler with the Utah League of Cities and Towns as facilitator. Ms. Wheeler gave an outline of the meeting and asked each of the mayors to introduce their cities. Mayor Lundberg, Mayor Fugal, Mayor Fullmer and Mayor Young each introduced themselves and those in attendance with them.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VATVi5_ousA&t=343s

ALPINE SCHOOL DISTRICT (ASD) REORGANIZATION SUMMARY PRESENTATION

Ms. Wheeler invited the ASD Superintendent, Shane Farnsworth, to speak to the four City Councils. Mr. Farnsworth spoke about the process that Alpine School District (ASD) is currently engaged in to consider possible district reconfiguration. ASD began a study of possible reconfiguration last summer by contracting with MGT, an outside entity. Over the past eight months MGT has been reviewing data from ASD and has come back with six recommendations for options to reconfigure. It was later decided to move two options forward to the county for possible certification. First, is a two-way configuration which would be Saratoga West and Lehi East. Second, is a three-way configuration which would be Saratoga West, American Fork North and Pleasant Grove South. The timeline for ASD is to hear back from the county on May 14th and then to present information to the board regarding those options that have been certified by the county and provide the feasibility results to the public. This will begin the 45 day public hearing process. The scheduled public hearings are June 11 and June 25. On July 12, the ASD board will make the final determination of what, if any, initiative to put on the ballot for November. He explained that he is aware of the interlocals that have been signed by other cities and that the legislation affecting possible competing initiatives will need to be clarified.

Ms. Wheeler asked the cities if they had questions for Superintendent Farnsworth. Mayor Lundberg asked what is the feeling of ASD currently in regards to interlocals. Mr. Farnsworth explained that there are differing opinions among the board on this issue. He believes that ASD is able to continue to fit the needs of the district, but he does understand why entities might want to consider that option. Mayor Fuller asked about the pros and cons of forming interlocals. He answered that Ms. Wilson and Ms. King have prepared comments on this. He explained that the interlocals could preempt the school district from taking action or become competing initiatives. The Board of Education will need to make these decisions. Mr. Farnsworth advised the Orem City Council to engage in this conversation, because this may get out of ASD's control. The pros for an interlocal are that there are diverse needs across the district and reconfiguration could get the problems closer to the people who have those challenges. He advised all cities to look at their current student population, the direction the student population is heading and what is the taxable value to determine the best possible education for their students. Mr. Jensen asked if ASD feels comfortable moving forward with the process or are interlocals taking ASD options away. Mr. Farnsworth believes the board does feel comfortable moving forward but that it will be taken into consideration during the 45 day period. Ms. Millett asked about the possibility of this group signing two interlocals, one with four cities and one with three cities to preserve the timeline. Mr. Farnsworth advised the cities to ask their legal counsel on this matter. Mr. Farnsworth clarified that you have to go through the process to put an initiative on the ballot, but you can go through the process and opt not to put the initiative on the ballot. There are many variables in play that make it difficult for Mr. Farnsworth to speak about possible outcomes.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VATVi5_ousA&t=2322s

Ms. Ada Wilson, ASD school board member, is one of three charged with the governance of schools in Pleasant Grove, Lindon, Orem and Vineyard. Ms. Wilson believes that a united Alpine is in the best interest of the students, families and employees. She recommends that this group not form an interlocal agreement for four reasons. First, she believes that a three-way split is taking resources from our kids, increasing the tax burden on citizens and compromising the services that teachers and families receive. Second, she would like to keep politics out of the process. She says that ASD is the most qualified to put the best options on the ballot. Third, she wants all of ASD to have a vote on whether ASD stays together or if they should split in a recommended way. Fourth, she would like to see a simple, easy to understand ballot. Her position is to advocate for a unified ASD with an option of a two-way split on the ballot.

Ms. Wheeler asked for questions for Ms. Wilson. Mr. Hoyt asked if this group enters into an interlocal, as a board member, would Ms. Wilson interpret that as a discouragement to the two district split. Ms. Wilson worries what message an interlocal sends to each city's community. Ms. LeMone suggested all four cities send out the same surveys to their cities to compare results; she wondered if the school board could facilitate that.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VATVi5_ousA&t=3356s

Ms. Julie King, ASD school board member, represents the west side of the district. Tonight she is offering her opinions and is not speaking for the board. She believes that an interlocal has a higher level of transparency due to how many public hearings are required. She assured the group that all cities she has met are working toward what is best for students, employees and communities. She explained that the district has said there are three reasons to consider a split: finances, academics and representation. She thinks there are two other reasons to consider a split: failure of a bond and inequity in different areas.

Ms. King asked if there were any questions from the group. Mr. Williams asked Ms. King which option to split she prefers. Ms. King is in favor of a three-way split because she believes representation should be fair and is more likely in a three-way split. Ms. Millett asked about the MGT results and areas it may be lacking in data. Ms. King did confirm that the MGT survey could be taken more than once by an individual and that there was a discrepancy found by the ASD business team. This will be explained in the ASD meeting tomorrow. Mr. Rogers asked if a split will improve finances and academics. Ms. King believes that the teachers will remain good teachers regardless of their boss but that expenses are a complex matter. She believes that expenses may increase in a split for a little while.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VATVi5_ousA&t=4406s

DISCUSSION OF SCHOOL DISTRICT CONFIGURATION

Ms. Wheeler opened the discussion with the following question: Would it be in your city's best interest to enter into an interlocal agreement with other cities to create a new school district?

Mayor Fugal explained that Pleasant Grove met as a council and they have decided they are not interested in signing an interlocal agreement. They are not in favor of a three-way split of the school district. Ms. Sifuentes believes that Vineyard council is split on the decision to sign an interlocal agreement, but that the majority would like to see a two-way split of the district. She believes an interlocal is creating a narrative that a three-way split is preferred. Mayor Young believes that there are compelling reasons for a three-way split and he would like to keep the option to explore this further. Mr. Broderick is in favor of not signing the interlocal agreement and would prefer to vote on what ASD puts on the ballot. Mr. Williams likes the idea of not splitting ASD but understands that the east and west sides of ASD have different needs. He believes that the two-way split is best for his community. Mr. Holdaway expressed some concerns that ASD would not put an option on the ballot. He is in support of citizens making this decision. Ms. Gale believes a two-way split would be in the best interest of Orem citizens. She is concerned that putting a three-way split on the ballot gives the impression that this is the preferred recommendation. Mr. Jacobs is in support of a two-way split and would like these four cities to not sign an interlocal agreement. Mr. Jensen's perspective is to support ASD and option three, the two-way split. Ms. Sifuentes encourages ASD to put their best option on the ballot. Ms. Millett is in favor of signing an interlocal and encourages the need for more information. Mr. Hooley values maximizing resources and minimizing tax increases on residents. This leads him to believe a two-way split is the best option. Ms. LeMone wants the ASD board to lead out on this issue. She would like the ASD board to take a stand. Mr. Spencer is in favor of an interlocal because it allows for the time to study the split and does not require a decision now. He expressed that many cities want the split because they feel under represented. Mr. Hoyt believes that a two-way split is what his community prefers and he stands with his council in not signing an interlocal agreement.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VATVi5_ousA&t=5655s

POTENTIAL TIMELINE OVERVIEW

Mr. Steve Earl, Orem City Attorney, explained the interlocal timeline for this group to sign an interlocal agreement, if they choose. He explained that if these four cities choose to move forward, they would need to do a feasibility study and that would need to be built into the timeline. Assuming that a feasibility study would need 30 days, Mr. Earl's calculations are that an interlocal draft agreement would need to be finalized by May 14. The cities would need to vote on the agreement by May 17. The 45 day public hearing time starts once the feasibility study is complete. Each city would need to hold two public hearings during that 45 days. After the 45 day period then each city council would then need to vote to decide if the initiative is put on the ballot.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VATVi5_ousA&t=6257s

CLOSING STATEMENTS FROM MAYORS

Mayor Fullmer expressed the desire to give the students the best and give the residents the largest voice. She is grateful for this opportunity and encourages ASD to continue to lead discussions. Her council will plan to meet and discuss their path forward.

Mayor Young believes that representation is a leading reason that other cities have signed an interlocal agreement. He would like these four cities to sign an agreement, to be proactive in the decision making process.

Mr. Hooley, who is speaking in place of Mayor Lundberg, expressed Lindon council's desire to meet and discuss the political viability and fiscal viability of signing an interlocal agreement.

Mayor Fugal thanked the school district for their efforts. He explained that Pleasant Grove does not need nor will they sign an interlocal agreement.

MEETING ADJOURNED

These minutes were prepared by the Orem City Recorder Teresa McKittrick

MINUTES APPROVED BY VINEYARD CITY COUNCIL ON: May 22, 2024

CERTIFIED CORRECT BY: 
TONY LARA, DEPUTY CITY RECORDER

