

Minutes of the Workshop of the Daggett County Commission, Town of Manila and Town of Dutch John held on **Tuesday, March 19, 2019** in the Commission Chambers at the Daggett County Courthouse. Commissioner Matt Tippetts was present, Commissioner Jack Lytle, and Manila Councilwoman Gretchen Northcott and Councilman David McDonald of Dutch John were also present. The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. by Commissioner Tippetts.

Also present: Sgt. Travis Dupaix, Butch and Pamela Johns, Woody Bair, Ross Catron, Yvonne Long and Clerk/Treasurer Brian Raymond

Commissioner Tippetts began the meeting and said about a month ago they invited LeGrand Bitter of the Utah Association of Special Districts (UASD) to come and explain the differences between creating a Local District or a Special Service District as it pertains to the County, the Town of Manila and Dutch John in an effort to perhaps not duplicate services and personnel in a Special Service District, and Gretchen Northcott said that they would be more willing to explore the idea of a Local District rather than a Special Service District. Manila feels that its Fire Department is working okay, and they are here to learn more about this for EMS purposes. Mrs. Northcott explained what they were balking at with the Special Service District where the County was the ultimate governing body. In a Local District, you have a Board and you can either elect or appoint, and go through a truth in taxation hearing to charge taxes. This is the route the Town of Manila and Dutch John would like to explore. They wanted to see what a group of all these representatives would do because of all the work to do as it involves a number of things. It's very important that the citizens have a voice in this matter. We all need to see if this is what we actually want to do. One of the big things Gretchen Northcott spoke about was the fact that if we did have a Unified Fire and EMS, the tax structure would change and that would be something we'd have to talk about.

Commissioner Tippetts spoke about the Daggett County Special Service Area #1 which was created by the residents of the Mountain View Subdivision, consisting of 44 lots, for the specific purpose to have funds to maintain the roads in this specific area. On the Property Tax Bill, there is an area of our taxes where we pay a certain percentage to fund this Special Service Area. In this particular case of EMS and Fire, it would be funded through property taxes as well for the County, Town of Manila, and the Town of Dutch John.

Commissioner Lytle said that this would be a way to fund it better for all entities. Commissioner Tippetts talked about three areas that he sees this could be beneficial to creating a Local District. The first would be working together and possibly reducing redundancies in Administration rather than buildings. The second is another avenue to generate funds for Fire and EMS. The third issue is to be able to go after Grants as a group of fire and EMS which could generate more funds. Sgt. Dupaix said that grouping EMS and Fire would open up opportunities for EMS that aren't available for EMS alone. Mrs. Northcott, in her opinion, said that she believes the County might do better to go over their Budget and fine tune it to find some more funding for EMS and a more equitable funding for Fire. Mrs. Northcott said that if the Town joined they would reallocate finances to other things that need doing that are currently underfunded, and asked if the County would do the same. The County was hoping to do the same, but would hold off until later to say for sure how it would affect them. Ross Catron asked if the Town of Manila joined the district they would only reallocate current monies to other things like roads as the funding for fire is just a part of the general fund where all the taxes go. Woody Bair thought the nice thing about this is that a local district would have its own governing board and not be at the whim of the elected officials that could affect people like the choices made this year that affected unincorporated areas of the County. Mr. Catron asked what the County sees for the future if just maintaining or even declining support and Commissioner Tippetts said that he is cautiously optimistic that revenues will increase in the

future and allow for support. Mrs. Northcott said she could see some benefits of going with this and asked what Dutch John was thinking.

Butch Johns of Dutch John said they have hooked in with Uintah County for fire and said they are changing the way they do things because Uintah County supports them. They are moving in a different direction than they have in the past, as they now have an Agreement with Uintah and train with them. Butch said he has an open mind about all of this towards unification. Mr. Johns reminded them that Manila is farther along and so more funding would need to be allocated towards Dutch John to get it up to speed. EMS is a whole different thing and Uintah said they feel like an ambulance can respond quicker from Vernal than Manila. How do you get that support for EMS in Dutch John? Dutch John plans on charging for each call to insurance or the entity where the response is located. Gretchen said she could see how a Local District would benefit Dutch John. Mr. McDonald said that the Town has been working with Vernal (Uintah Special Service District) and it is basically out of the goodness of their hearts, but it doesn't require mutual aid and they will train the people and bring equipment up that doesn't even exist in Manila.

Mrs. Northcott said that EMS is a big need for the area as we just never know what could happen to any of us and she thought it could be a good thing for us. Mr. McDonald asked what the tax base is that we are running at the maximum .0008 tax rate and so maybe it might generate \$125,000 to 150,000 per year. Is that enough to go through the hassle to do this. That is a lot more money than we are currently spending, so it's worth looking into. Commissioner Lytle said that the tax base is just under \$300,000,000 and so that would generate approximately \$240,000, but it wasn't known if that was Market Value or the Tax Value and was ag included?

Mr. Catron suggested that we develop a specific proposal that everyone could review and then people could suggest options. He could see fire going either way, but EMS needs some help. There is some interest in pursuing this and get some firm numbers. Mr. McDonald suggested getting a number from Gold Cross to service our area. Mayor Rogers has been talking with them and so has Sgt. Dupaix. Gold Cross would come, but they need a place to base here, and with the changes going on with the Forest Service there might be some opportunities.

Commissioner Lytle said it would be a good idea to look at the agreement Uintah County has for unified fire to see how they created it and make it function. Jeremy Raymond would be a good contact. We need the net assessed value for property, and contracting out costs, insurance costs. Sgt. Dupaix said that he would call Mayor Rogers and Gold Cross to see what the options might be. Mr. McDonald suggested looking into doing more life flights, but who do people call for EMS (serious, catastrophic events, minor events) and how to prioritize it. Gretchen needs to know if we look at more pros and cons. The code needs to be read through to see what the difference is between a Local District and a Special Service District. Mr. McDonald said he would do that. Ambulance service will be looked at as a whole and do Dutch John separately so they could decide what would work best for them. Doing the initiative next year would be best. Sgt. Dupaix will follow up with Gold Cross. Gretchen Northcott asked Commissioner Tippetts to work on the money matters and she was going to give Randy Browning an assignment to find out what language is working in other areas and why was there a Fire District created.

Mrs. Northcott asked when they could get together again and April 23rd looked like it would work for the next meeting at 6:00 pm here at the Courthouse. She also said that she would contact Randy Browning to make sure he could attend. There was no name for the Committee at this time.

The discussion finished and the meeting was adjourned.

Excused
Jack Lytle

/s/ Brian Raymond

/s/Matt Tippetts

/s/ Randy Asay