

**MINUTES OF THE
THE WASATCH COUNTY COUNCIL
JUNE 29, 2022**

The Wasatch County Council met in a special session live and by Zoom at 6:00 p.m. and the following Public Hearing was held.

PRESENT: Chair Mark Nelson
Marilyn Crittenden
Kendall Crittenden
Jeff Wade
Spencer Park
Steve Farrell
Danny Goode via Zoom

STAFF: Dustin Grabau, Wasatch County Manager
Heber Lefgren, the Assistant Wasatch County Manager
Natalie Foster, the Wasatch County Manager
Wendy McKnight, from the Clerk's Office
Scott Sweat, the Wasatch County Attorney
Mike Davis, the MIDA Coordinator
Rick Tatton, Court Reporter via Zoom

PRAYER: Councilman Jeff Wade

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by Councilman Spencer Park and repeated by everyone.

**PUBLIC HEARING
JUNE 29, 2022**

**SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE #22-14 IMPLEMENTING THE COUNTY
OPTION TRANSIT SALES TAX.**

Staff:

Dustin Grabau, the Wasatch County Manager, presented a power point presentation with regard to the Option Transit Sales Tax and addressed the Wasatch County Council and indicated that the Wasatch County Council has expressed an interest in adopting the County Option Transit Tax as described in Utah Code 59-12-2217. This transit tax is eligible to increase transportation capacity including roads or transit. The County Option Transit Tax is no longer eligible to be implemented

after June 30, 2022. Wasatch County hosted an open house to share with the public the transit study and information about the transit sales taxes. The comments that came forth from that open house was positive. Dustin Grabau then showed a graphic that was shown at the open house.

This transit tax would be a 0.25% or one penny for every four dollars spent on things that has a sales tax on with the exception of taxable services for gas and groceries. It is estimated that the transit tax will generate \$2.5 million over the course of 2023. There has been a study done by L.S.C. and this was done in conjunction with the Mountain land Association of Governments, UDOT, UTA, Park City, Heber City, and Midway City that provided a study of traffic demands. Another study was done in conjunction with High Valley Transit. VIA Consulting was to look at the transit demands and have recommended a bus route which covers from Heber City to Park City and gave some cost estimates regarding that. Also estimates about a forty-five minute commute via bus and estimates that it would service a significant amount of population to make it a viable transit route. One of the things that I looked was Micro Transit. Micro Transit functions similar to private ride sharing. This would be managed by a Transit District and services an area that typically doesn't get a lot of coverage by those private programs. The Jordanelle area is not anticipated to be in the near future and that is one that is coming at us and why they included it was an estimate what it would cost to provide service in that area. The transit system would pertain to the valley floor of Wasatch County. The Micro Transit cost between \$1.6 and \$2.8 million based on the utilization.

This public hearing is considering this third quarter and in Utah there are five portions of the transit sales taxes and the fourth one is actually split into three pieces. The portion that is being considered tonight would fund about the average cost of a Micro Transit Zone that covers the entire valley floor. Also it is specifically for increasing capacity of roads or transit services.

Almost half of Wasatch County's sales tax is generated by tourists and would take away some of the burden that they place on our community. We can tell how tourists contribute to this is by the State Tax Commission data that is provided. Another source is done by an institute located at the University of Utah which produces a regular tourism impact study. The majority of the properties in the MIDA Project Area would be subject to the tax with the exception of any hotel which MIDA has ownership.

Councilman Steve Farrell asked if this could be repealed at any time. Scott Sweat, the Wasatch County Attorney, indicated that he would have to look into the matter further with regard to this being repealed at any time.

Mike Davis, the MIDA Coordinator indicated that he thinks that it can. MIDA will generate a lot of sales tax. The tax would come in other ways rather than coming from property taxes. Also this tax would come from tourism. This Option Transit Sales Tax is an opportunity that we have right now and may not have in the future. The State Legislature has been pushing to make communities more viable on their own for these types of taxes when it comes to housing for homeless and things such as that and push it into the communities to provide on their own rather than the state

supporting them. Wasatch County in the last few years has put a tremendous amount of effort into planning for our community.

Also Dustin Grabau indicated that the groups that this would help the most are youth, minorities, seniors, people with disabilities and those in poverty. The summary is that the studies have demonstrated that we have a current need. That we can put these funds to good use. It will have an impact on our community but the policy direction is it worth the cost because there is one.

Public Comment:

Chair Mark Nelson then opened the public hearing for public comment and there was none so the public comment period was closed.

Council Comments:

Councilman Jeff Wade indicated that this can be used to expand traffic transit and would be in favor of implementing this Option Transit Sales Tax. The Micro Transit System would be great and we need this funding from the Option Transit Sales Tax to help implement this.

Councilman Danny Goode indicated that whatever the Council decides this evening would be fine with me because they will make the correct decision for the right direction for Wasatch County to go.

Councilman Kendall Crittenden indicated that he is in favor of implementing this Option Transit Sales Tax this evening because down the road it can help with the traffic congestion. We have studied this matter and the studies have indicated that we should look into this. The public has had a say in this tax being implementing because we had an open house and presented it to them. This Option Transit Sales Tax will benefit the whole county.

Councilman Steve Farrell had a concern about why the State Legislation is doing away with this Option Transit Sales Tax. Dustin Grabau indicated that there is no definitive answer on why the State Legislation is doing away with this Option. Councilman Steve Farrell was also concerned about any tax being added to the taxpayers. The positives for implementing this tax are: can help improve the transportation plan. Can help improve the air quality. Sixty percent of it is going to be paid by outside dollars coming from outside of Wasatch County. Can help alleviate some of Wasatch County's transportation problems, shows the State and the Federal that Wasatch County is proactive in funding for it. A lot of renters in our area don't pay property tax and with regard to sales tax those type of people will be paying this tax which will help our community. The negative concern is that we are implementing a tax that the public has not had a say in voting yes or no if they want to implement this tax. The open house gets some input but most people are so busy they don't pay attention to things such as open house meetings. I will vote for this because the positives outweigh the negative concerns.

Councilwoman Marilyn Crittenden indicated that she has thought through this Option Transit Sales Tax a lot and have mixed feelings regarding it. Right now am just not convinced that the County should implement this tax. When any tax is added I am concerned about the burden that is placed on the taxpayer.

Chair Mark Nelson indicated that he is in favor of implementing this Option Transit Sales Tax because it is absolutely critical to look at our transportation issue. It is time that we start this investment and also in favor of the RAP Tax also.

Councilman Spencer Park indicated that we will be able to find some collector roads and stuff that we can use this tax money on and so I am in favor of implementing this Option Transit Sales Tax.

Chair Mark Nelson made a motion that we approve Ordinance #22-14 implementing the County Option Transit Sales Tax. Councilman Kendall Crittenden seconded the motion and the motion carries with the following vote:

AYE: Danny Goode via Zoom.

AYE: Spencer Park

AYE: Steve Farrell

AYE: Chair Mark Nelson

AYE: Jeff Wade

AYE: Kendall Crittenden

NAY: Marilyn Crittenden

Steve Farrell I voted yes because the positives outweigh the negatives. The biggest negative is the public not having a vote in this but there are a lot of positives that come out from implementing this Option Transit Sales Tax.

Councilman Kendall Crittenden indicated that the inter local meeting is coming up and if there are any matters that the Council would like to have discussed please contact me with what they are or contact Midway City so that those matters can be put on the agenda.

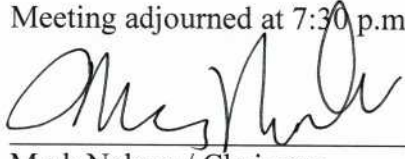
ADJOURNMENT

Councilwoman Marilyn Crittenden made a motion to adjourn. Councilman Spencer Park seconded the motion and the motion carries with the following vote:

AYE: Chair Mark Nelson
AYE: Jeff Wade
AYE: Marilyn Crittenden
AYE: Steve Farrell
AYE: Danny Goode via Zoom
AYE: Spencer Park
AYE: Kendall Crittenden

NAY: None.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.


Mark Nelson / Chairman


Joey D. Granger Clerk / Auditor

