

WORK SESSION – Thursday, January 30, 2025

Minutes of the Huntsville Town Council Work Session held at the Huntsville Town Hall 7474 E. 200 S., 7:00 p.m.

The work session was scheduled to discuss Huntsville Culinary Water Sources, Rights, and Sustainment

Attending: TC Members Bruce Ahlstrom, Artie Powell, Mayor Richard Sorensen, Sandy Hunter, Nikki Wolthuis–Clerk, Melissa Knowles-Treasurer, Shannon Smith-Clerk, Bill White, citizen and former attorney specializing in water law, Blake Bingham-citizen and Deputy State Engineer at the Utah Division of Water Rights, Jeff Keeney, citizen.

Mayor Sorensen turned the time over to Ron Gault, Water Board Chair, to make a presentation. Ron began his presentation (**See attachment #1**) by asking Bill White to define some important water terms to help in the discussion. Bill White spoke about the difference in water shares and water rights. He explained that water rights are owned by a company like a piece of property and water shares are leased from the company by someone else to use. The Huntsville secondary water company works in this way. Huntsville Town is paying \$11,000 a year to lease water shares from Weber Basin Water. (**See Attachment #2**) The shares were transferred to them when the developer of the Monastery Cove subdivision asked to connect to Huntsville Town's culinary water system over 20 years ago. The Town code required the developer to come up with water rights equal to the amount of water that the Town would provide to them. Instead of water rights, the developers transferred water shares to Huntsville Town. Huntsville has been paying for these shares ever since.

The question is what to do with the shares. The TC continued their discussion with Bill White and Blake Bingham about this and a few important points surfaced. These are included below.

- Huntsville Town has enough water rights to provide for their culinary water system and does not need the shares they are leasing from Weber Basin Water.
- In addition to the primary source from a spring, Huntsville Town has rights to a secondary water source of a well at the Monastery farm.
- Though the shares are not needed, and the Town is paying for them year after year, they are paying well below the current rate of water shares being leased by Weber Basin Water today.
- There's a possibility that Huntsville Town could sublease their shares to another entity so that they can profit off of them instead of paying for them.
- One possibility is to sublease the shares to the Monastery Farm that is starting a pilot program to lease some of their water back to the State of Utah to return water to the Great Salt Lake.
- If this pilot program fails and the Monastery Farm doesn't need the water shares, then Huntsville could sublease the shares to someone else.

- To sublease the water shares there would need to be public hearings and approval at top levels. In addition, the Town would have to declare a surplus and apply for an exchange application.
- The first thing to do is locate a contract through Weber Basin Water.

After the discussion about water shares Ron Gault spoke briefly about his water system task list. They are backfilling holes left from the "Great Water Leak." In addition, there is an upcoming water shut off lasting 8 hours that will be required to install the valves that will help the Town avoid another massive leak.

TCM Powell motioned to adjourn the Work Session. TCM Sandy Hunter seconded the motion. All votes Ayes. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 P.M.



Nikki Wolthuis, Huntsville Town Clerk

