



**Minutes of the
Millcreek City Council
September 15, 2022
5:30 p.m.
Special Meeting**

The City Council of Millcreek, Utah, met in a special public meeting on September 15, 2022, at the former Calvin Smith Library, located at 810 E. 3300 S., Millcreek, UT 84106.

PRESENT:

Council Members

Jeff Silvestrini, Mayor
Silvia Catten, District 1
Thom DeSirant, District 2
Cheri Jackson, District 3
Bev Uipi, District 4

City Staff

Mike Winder, City Manager
Alex Wendt, Deputy City Recorder
Francis Lilly, Assistant City Manager

Attendees: Wayne Niederhauser, Christine Johnson, Mayor Jenny Wilson, Chief DeBry, Ilama Raslanel, Kara Cope, Lee Aller, Leslie Motley, Kerri Nakamura, Samara Hayes, Shawn McMiller, Marcus Stevenson, Sherri Wittwer, Michelle Flynn, Laurie Hopkins, Dan Cable, Katie Zimmerman, Jennifer Omiste, Alvaro Omiste, Jim Oshust, Sarah Montes, Joseph Montes, John Robandt, Sophie Dasano, Erin Wistret, Patricia Barton, Pegasus Collonge, Craig Swett, Michele Rivera, James Stewart, Alecia Dittmore, Susan McKeever, Brad McKeever, Kay Winder, Anette Lyden, Christina Larsen, Mary Gallagher, Sharon Hayes, Bart Gallagher, Connie Connelley, Janet Simpson, Peggy Sprouse, Mia Barth, Lionel Trepanier, Lynette Saccomano, Heather Church, Hope Jenkinson, Duane Phillips, Dellene Vincent, Julie Shara, Brianne Johnson, Kat Kirk, John Waltman, Kelly Roemer, Jillana Webbs, Dennis Thomas, Saba Eslami, Nannette Larsen, John Boswell, Greg Kirby, Trae Eller, Shelley Brown,

REGULAR MEETING – 5:30 p.m.

TIME COMMENCED: 5:40 p.m.

Minutes by Alexander Wendt.

1. Welcome, Introduction and Discussion of Temporary Winter Homeless Shelter

Mayor Silvestrini opened the meeting and explained the facility be a temporary winter homeless shelter from October to April. Millcreek has done this before and held a temporary winter shelter two years ago. There was one police call the last time. Mayor Silvestrini introduced Salt Lake City Mayor Jenny Wilson, Switchpoint representative Christine Johnson, and Director of Utah Homeless Services, Wayne Niederhauser. Mayor Silvestrini continued and explained that the Millcreek Promise Program has been helping with a food bank on 3300 S. Every Saturday volunteers help give out food at a local church. Mayor Silvestrini explained he got to speak with

many people in the cars who came for food. One woman named Jill was living in her car and she was very appreciative she could get food from the foodbank. She has always been a Millcreek resident; a schoolteacher and she developed a medical problem that caused her to be disabled. She is getting by on disability payments and lives in her car. Mayor Silvestrini said this is the humanitarian reason why this temporary shelter is so important. This is a state-wide and a Millcreek problem. It is a humanitarian moral imperative. No neighborhood wants a shelter in their area. There are legitimate concerns about safety and crime. A shelter must go somewhere. This was a public building that was vacant. It was the only building the mayors of Salt Lake County could find that could serve this function on this kind of a short-term basis. This is a meeting to discuss the important concerns of residents.

Salt Lake County Mayor, Jenny Wilson said this is not easy. Mayor Wilson explained that Covid caused some challenges for city government, and it helped cities come together. There were a lot of temporary homeless shelters during the height of the pandemic. Temporary sites in the community to address homelessness operated in the last two years and have worked well. Sugarhouse held an overflow shelter a few years ago. There were very few problems. The population moved to this site will be bussed in and bussed out. They will leave every morning. This is not a walk-in center. Mayor Wilson hopes that will be a reassurance. Homelessness is a big ongoing challenge; it is not an isolated problem. Mayor Wilson commended Mayor Silvestrini for stepping up.

Francis Lilly, Assistant City Manager, said he is a city liaison on this shelter. Mr. Lilly said he has received a lot of emails. This is a challenging issue. Mr. Lilly said that his role is to help this neighborhood absorb this impact because the city is strong. This facility will be open from 7pm to 7am. Clients who come to the shelter will be checked in and undergo a security screening. If contraband is encountered, it is confiscated, and Unified Police will be notified. Screening is going to happen at the other homeless shelters before they arrive. The expectation is that people will stay here at the shelter. No food is served here, no showers are here. This is a place to stay dry and sleep. Every morning at 6 am everyone will get up and leave in the morning. Switchpoint will be operating with the Unified Police and conduct random searches. There will be a curfew. An area on the property will be screened with a fence for smoking. From 10:30pm on the lights go out. Outdoor lights will be turned on all night long. The city is adding more streetlights. The staffing ratio will be one staff member per 20 clients. The maximum amount allowed is 100 people. The city will meet with Switchpoint and UPD weekly so that if a problem emerges the problem can be addressed quickly. The city will be posting "no camping" signs within 1,000 feet of the facility. The no camping signs give the police the latitude to take care of it immediately. There will be additional officers and patrols. Staff will do an hourly walking patrol of the facility. If someone is on the registered sex offender list, they will not stay at this shelter. The State will screen for known sex offenders. They will be at another shelter.

Mayor Silvestrini introduced Wayne Niederhauser, Director of Utah Homeless Services. Homelessness is a state-wide issue. Overflow shelters are an important element of homeless response in Salt Lake County. The state is giving \$500,000 of mitigation funds to ramp up the public safety effort. Overflow will go to another city next year until a permanent solution is found. Christine Johnson from Switchpoint, the operator of the homeless shelter, spoke. Switchpoint has a shelter in Tooele and St. George and operated in Millcreek two years ago. Switchpoint works very closely with the cities and law enforcement. People will not be able to come and go as they please. Ms. Johnson explained how there are many people who are working

full time jobs but have no place to live because housing costs are so high. She asked for open-mindedness regarding the winter shelters. Chief DeBry thanked everyone for coming. Ever since Mayor Silvestrini told Chief DeBry this will be happening; he has been working without ceasing. Mitigation funds are not coming from city taxes. Chief DeBry said there will be two additional officers working. The officers will be in the community interacting. People who show up with a weapon or drugs will be charged and taken to jail. There is a full-time mental health officer in the city who will be working. The Crime Suppression unit will be doing sweeps. Chief DeBry asked everyone to call if there is something suspicious going on, to articulate to the dispatcher what was going on. The police response is only as good as the description from people who call. Council Member Silvia Catten said she is in full support of the shelter. Council Member Catten said she knows this will be run well like it was two years ago. She asked for people to call to discuss what they need. Council Member Thom DeSirant explained that he believes there is a moral obligation to not let people freeze in the winter. Council Member DeSirant said we should take care of our neighbors.

Trae Eller said that it is insulting to demonize people for not wanting homeless people around. He said that he only found out two weeks ago. This is not enough time to prepare. This will cause stress for everyone here. Mayor Jenny Wilson asked Mr. Eller what else he would like. He said he wants to be more prepared. Mayor Silvestrini said that he only found out about the shelter at the end of August. As soon as was possible, Mayor Silvestrini wanted to hold a community meeting. There has been meeting after meeting. This is quick and has been quick for all of us. Another gentleman said that by increasing the amount of police in the neighborhood you are saying that the police will only be here to clean up the mess. Chief DeBry said there is a difference between being proactive and reactive. Chief DeBry said that the police work described is proactive to prevent problems. Mayor Wilson introduced members of her staff and shared her email and phone number for people to contact her.

Kara Cope, 1511 E. 3115 S., said she is a long-term resident. Unsheltered people are a big problem for the state. These people are human and not all of them are drug addicts. A lot of people need help. She asked for more compassion. She said she rarely agrees with the mayor but agrees on this issue.

A resident named Paul said he lives next door and asked how much time is the \$500,000 supposed to cover. Mr. Niederhauser said this is from October to April. The state will be providing another half million to the provider for staffing and other costs. Mayor Silvestrini said 2/3 of the \$500,000 will be spent on first responders. There may be a contractor to come up and clean debris. There may be a 50-50 program to help people buy security cameras if that will make them feel safer. Mayor Silvestrini said he is going to be giving UPD officers gift cards to come eat at Charlotte Rose.

A resident named Sarah said she sees a lot of people going through her garbage. She is worried they will see many more people. She and her friend asked if there is compensation for help. Mayor Silvestrini said the money is appropriated by the legislature. Sarah said there are plenty of places to hide drug paraphernalia. She asked if men and women will be separated. Mayor Silvestrini said yes and explained how the bathrooms will be portable trailers. Sarah was concerned that people can leave if they want. Ms. Johnson explained that people who do not follow the rules cannot stay.

An unnamed gentleman asked how many other facilities there were like this in Holladay, Sandy, Herriman etc. He feels that this area is getting more than their share.

A resident name John said he lived up the street. He said no one knows what this will cost and wants a source and use statement to give to people and he wanted a date for it. Mr. Niederhauser said a budget has been submitted from Switchpoint. Previous experience has shown how much these shelters cost. Mayor Silvestrini said \$500,000 to Millcreek is just for mitigation. Mayor Silvestrini said that he is willing to look at other solutions for security.

Andrew Gruber said he wishes this was not needed but is happy to support it. No one gets here involuntarily; they are asking for shelter. Think about the experience of being bussed in at 7pm and then bussed out at 7am. He said he is proud to help. To the neighbors that live even closer, we stand with you as your Millcreek neighbors that the city and UPD will take this seriously.

Dan Miller said he works in the office two doors down. He understands this is temporary and wondered about the plans for the building in the future and would like assurances that they will not have this happen again in a few years. Mayor Wilson said that this building will be transferred to the county from the library fund and then at some point this parcel of land will probably be available for purchase. Mayor Silvestrini said he is interested in obtaining this property to house the Art Council.

Jan Larsen said during the last shelter she said her garage and car was broken into. Earlier this year she called dispatch and was on hold for ten minutes. She explained how she was harassed at 3900 S. There are big issues here. Members of her family have been homeless but with addiction and trauma comes crime. She would like an officer to call her back. There needs to be better streetlights. Chief DeBry asked Ms. Larsen to call him personally. There is a homeless problem right now. Chief DeBry said this helps make the situation that already exists better. UPD will be taking, and tracking statistics related to the winter shelter.

A person named Brienne said their handyman is escorting people out of the building who are doing drugs. The police are exasperated, and people just go in and out of jail. She said that people are not concerned about the homeless, but they are concerned about the drug addicted homeless. She is worried about the people here during the daytime. She would like crime statistics kept on people who commit crimes and then go to the homeless shelter. Mayor Silvestrini said that he hears that people are concerned about homeless and the drug addicted that already exist in the community. Mayor Silvestrini said that there is an intersection with drugs, homelessness, and crime. Mayor Silvestrini said finally there is a state leader that can see this problem from an overhead perspective. Treatment and housing do not work alone. There is an element of society that can be helped and those that will not be helped. They are trying to measure and get data to find what works and what does not work. Breanne said she appreciates Code Compliance doing what they can.

Cal, who lives on Elgin Avenue, asked if people bused here will be checked prior to coming into the community or upon entering Millcreek. Whether people like it or not there will be problems. Mayor Silvestrini said people will be checked at the other centers and in Millcreek. Ms. Johnson said their bags will be locked up, not at their cot where they sleep. If paraphernalia is found law enforcement is called. Cal said then you created a new form of transportation to the community. There should be higher enforcement prior to getting into Millcreek. Mayor Silvestrini explained

that if someone does leave the facility that UPD is called. The shelter where people come from outline the expectations of where they are going. Mayor Silvestrini said that the people coming here are coming here to sleep. It is not hard to get to Millcreek if they chose that under normal circumstances. Mr. Niederhauser said that he spent nights in shelters last year. People come in, they come in to sleep and, in the morning, they get up and are transported elsewhere. Individuals have a community, and they will go back to the community they were in. They just want a warm place.

A person named Pat said one problem is that the new Granite Library is close by. People will sneak out and go to the library. That is why people do not go to the library downtown. She said people will sneak out of the shelter and go hang out in the new library on 3300 S. She would have liked to vote on this.

Pegasus Collonge, 777 E Jepsen, thanked all his neighbors and for using the empty library to save lives.

A resident named Mark lives in Millcreek but not near the temporary shelter. He said, if you build it, they will come. These people have been called clients, and campers but these people commit crime, they have addiction. This does not have to be a Millcreek problem. It sounds like other mayors voted and people were cut out. He asked, "do we want Millcreek to be excellent or go along with everything else going on." He said that Millcreek does not invite the problems that homeless bring. Make decisions that make Millcreek excellent. Mark said he would like to keep Millcreek homeless free.

Alicia Dittmor, 2267 Gregson Avenue, related that homeless people are vulnerable and she has deep empathy and compassion, but this is across the street from a school. She hopes that the city will find a different place for the shelter. Mayor Silvestrini said that the former Roosevelt Elementary is not an elementary school at this point. It is a special secondary school operated by Granite School District. The school is also closed when people arrive and does not open until after the people at the shelter leave.

Jennifer Jessop said she lived close to the last shelter, and explained she did not feel unsafe, saw lots of police cars, and felt good. She asked that the building can be something worthwhile afterwards.

Jackie Smith, 836 E. 3300 S., explained she worked in mental health and has compassion, but a woman came into their store, smashed a statue, and a customer was terrified. She called the police, and they never came. Chief DeBry said that is untrue and UPD arrested the perpetrator. She would like to have her customers reassured.

Paul spoke again asking if people are running for state office. Paul said that housing prices are up 60% and asked who benefits from this. Paul wanted to know if the state can charge banks money to help with budgets.

John Boswell, 1450 Highland Cove Lane, said his car has been broken into twice. Boswell asked how people will be vetted on the sex offender registry. Mayor Silvestrini said that people will be screened at other centers before they get on the bus. Boswell asked how the providers were selected to provide services at the shelter. Mayor Silvestrini said they are not selected at random,

but he is not sure how the state selects the provider. He is pleased with the job Switchpoint did last time. Mr. Niederhauser said that only Switchpoint applied.

A resident named Erin said she lives near Scott Avenue Park. She explained that she wanted to provide another perspective as a social worker at a homeless shelter downtown. There was not another overflow shelter until January last winter. Her patients had nowhere to go. She had to tell people that they had to sleep outside. This was devastating. She felt so much relief that the burden will be helped. Patients had frostbite and injuries from spending one night outside. This is unbearable. They had to memorialize 117 people in 2021 that died while homeless.

A resident name Robbins owns property across the street and is concerned that homeless people come on his property now and if surveillance increased, he would like more help on his property across the street. Homelessness is already here. Mayor Silvestrini said he would like to connect this resident with Chief DeBry to help.

Marcus Stevenson, Midvale Mayor, gave his perspective on their full-time shelter. Shelter systems are not perfect. Midvale has a 300-bed shelter in a community of 36,000. They need other communities to step up. Having a shelter comes with challenges but he trusts this will go well in Millcreek.

A resident named Rick exclaimed that he was won over tonight and the more he hears the more impressed he is. The key word, this is a temporary shelter during non-business hours. He said he is more supportive to make the best in a bad situation.

A resident named Kelly said she lives near Cactus and Tropical. She explained her car has been broken into. There is a problem in her neighborhood. She is here to speak in support of this temporary shelter. She works as a social worker who gets calls from newly homeless people who have nowhere to go because the shelters are full. Thank you for doing this. Call your legislators and tell them that they need to support low-income housing.

A resident named Susie, Highland and 3300 S., explained she has been following the conversation on homelessness since 2008 and is proud of Mayor Silvestrini for stepping up. She wonders about this location if there is a way for people to donate items like clothing and bedding to help. Mayor Silvestrini said that Switchpoint was not going to operate the shelter but when they found out it was in Millcreek, they said they would operate. Christine Johnson from Switchpoint said she will give her number and email out to help with clothing donations.

An unnamed gentleman asked how long the no camping policy would be in place. Mayor Silvestrini said Millcreek has a no camping ordinance in public spaces and of course on private property because that is trespassing. Please call UPD, always report camping. At one point this gentleman said he heard about putting small houses in for the homeless and wanted to know what happened to that idea in Salt Lake County. Mayor Silvestrini said that the Other Side Academy has a tiny home project in Salt Lake City, this is still ongoing. City, county, and state leaders are working on this. Mr. Niederhauser said the prior week the state homelessness council approved \$55 million in grants for affordable housing and \$4 million is going to funding tiny home projects. The answer to homelessness in Utah is housing and services. They are working hard to incentivize deeply affordable housing because this will not happen without help. Please reach out to your legislators and elected officials.

Mayor Silvestrini said he is putting the police force and staff on these issues and will make this temporary shelter as good as he can.

The meeting ended at 7:33 p.m.

ADJOURNED:

APPROVED: _____ **Date**
Jeff Silvestrini, Mayor

Attest: _____
Elyse Sullivan, City Recorder

DRAFT