



# Five Years of Progress: 2017-2021

In the wake of a state audit, the UFA rebuilt its leadership team beginning in January of 2017. The organization has been engaged in restoring the trust of the employees and the community ever since. The following accomplishments are key examples of the revitalization of the Unified Fire Authority into an exceptional organization dedicated to serving the community with kind and competent people.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING

Initiated community based strategic planning in 2017 and adopted the first three-year plan in 2018 and a new plan in 2021. Prioritizing resources and direction using data/intelligence driven tools.

## FIREFIGHTER WAGES AND BENEFITS

The Board established a goal of compensating Firefighters at the top 3 position on the Wasatch Front in 2018, achieving this in the 2019 budget process and maintaining the top three position ever since. Also successful was the effort to improve Tier 2 retirement in 2020.

## STAFFING LEVELS

Staffing 18 of the 24 engines and trucks with four personnel every day with a minimum staffing level policy. Ten of the ambulances are now staffed 24/7 with Firefighters (24 new FTE's) and five additional ambulances staffed with part-time EMS. In addition, the UFA began over-hiring positions to help maintain full staffing through the summer months.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Formalized career paths, promotional processes, and an employee evaluation system. Adopted the "PDP" in 2019 and established the policies in 2021. "Boot Camps" for Engineer, Captain, and Battalion Chief occur on a scheduled cycle and the Public Safety Leadership Course has graduated over 120 UFA leaders who have access to individualized coaching.

## FIREFIGHTER HIRING PRACTICES

Established an annual recruitment and hiring process that focuses on finding good humans who can be trained as Firefighters. UFA continues to find high quality people during these processes, using a diverse selection panel.

## MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Established a full-time counselor position, expanded the Peer Counselor Program, and entered into a new agreement with our EAP provider that focuses on first responder needs.

## LABOR MANAGEMENT RELATIONS

UFA enjoys an exceptional relationship between the IAFF and the leadership team, who together work to find the best solution for the employee while meeting the needs of the community.

## "DROPPED BORDER" RESPONSES

UFA partnered with eight other Salt Lake Valley fire agencies in 2020 to send the closest resource for Priority 1 calls, removing the political boundary for critical responses.

## UFA IS NOT OPERATING IN A "BUBBLE"

The leadership team is engaged with local, regional, and national organizations to help determine best practices. The UFA is no longer living inside the "bubble" of the organization itself and continues to speak to organizations across the country on best practices and leadership topics.

## BUDGET PROCESS

Initiated a budget process in 2017 that focuses on strategic planning and establishing value for the communities. The process re-defined the Member Fee System and increased accountability and transparency for the community, the Board, and employees. UFA has received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award each year since 2018.

## CAPITAL REPLACEMENT PLAN

Established the plan and funded the program beginning in 2018. The 2021 budget completed the adoption of three rotating capital leases, funding the purchase of apparatus and equipment within the life span of the \$65 million in assets needed to deliver fire and rescue services.

## RESTATED INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT

Revised the agreement that establishes the UFA as an independent entity in 2019. The new document better defined the services provided, establish weighted budget voting, and detailed the process for entities to join or withdraw.

## CONSTRUCTION AND SEISMIC RETROFIT

Evaluated all fire stations for seismic stability and established funding and planning to replace five stations, seismically retrofit five stations, and build one new fire station. When completed, all UFA fire stations will meet seismic requirements and be prepared for future community growth.

## LEGISLATIVE EFFORTS

Established a Legislative Committee focused on engaging in the legislative process to advance the UFA's ability to provide quality service for the communities. With new Lobbyists hired in 2018, and a close partnership with Utah Fire Chiefs, UFA is engaged.

## COMPLETED AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

All 126 recommendations were completed in 2018. A meeting was held with the state auditor and the investigators to review the accomplishments and validate completion of the work

## CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION

Improved organizational transparency through improvements with internal communication. Employees are free to express thoughts and suggestions without fear of retaliation, even when made directly to the Fire Chief. This shift in openness has evolved the culture to be more thoughtful and kind, with a focus on doing the right thing instead of loyalty over integrity.

## THE FUTURE...

- Continue community based strategic planning that establishes organizational priorities based on value for the community.
- Deliver service at a sustainable level, improving service and growing with our communities, including the transitioning of three-person heavy crews to four.
- Complete and adopt the "STANDARDS OF COVER"
- Increase Firefighter FTE's to maintain staffing and reduce overall overtime, particularly at the Paramedic rank.