

**MOAB CITY COUNCIL MINUTES--DRAFT**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**September 14, 2021**

The Moab City Council held its Regular Meeting on the above date. An audio recording of the meeting is archived at <http://www.utah.gov/pmn/index.html> and a video recording is archived at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=paDDBZF6kAE>.

***Regular City Council Meeting:***

Mayor Emily Niehaus called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. Councilmembers Karen Guzman-Newton, Tawny Knuteson-Boyd, Mike Duncan, Rani Derasary and Kalen Jones attended. City staff participating included Acting City Manager Carly Castle, Sustainability Director Mila Dunbar-Irwin, Senior Project Manager Kaitlin Myers, Engineer Chuck Williams, Public Works Director Levi Jones, Finance Director Ben Billingsley, Parks, Recreation and Trails Director Annie McVay, Planner Nora Shepard, Communication Director Lisa Church and Recorder Sommar Johnson. Six persons were in the audience. Mayor Niehaus led the Pledge of Allegiance. There were no Citizens to be Heard.

***Administrative Reports:***

Acting City Manager Castle reported on the state of the organization since the departure of City Manager Joel Linares and City Attorney Laurie Simonson. She stated there would be no impact on the City's essential services and ongoing projects. She commended Council for developing a good team of department managers. Castle updated Council on three projects proposed for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. She announced the outdoor pool would close September 19. She mentioned the need for more publicity of the new noise ordinances with the recent influx of off-highway vehicle traffic. She mentioned the upcoming transfer of Hotspot funding from the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) for local transit and dispersed parking. Councilmember Derasary asked about committees and meetings covered by Linares.

Sustainability Director Dunbar-Irwin updated Council on sustainability initiatives, including an upcoming Water Conservation Plan Update public hearing, Streetlamp conversions, the draft Sustainability Action Plan, Utah Climate Week, City solar arrays, building code amendments, a proposed Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) position, a landscape ordinance and an electric vehicle letter of support.

***Mayor and Council Reports:***

Mayor Niehaus spoke about the City Manager's departure. She thanked him for his service and praised Castle for stepping up. She said the City's department heads constitute an awesome team. She noted the Matheson Wetlands ARPA project. She reported on meetings of the Utah Water Quality Board, the proposed timed-entry system at Arches National Park, and a meeting with Senator Mike Lee. She said she would be presenting at the upcoming Utah League of Cities and Towns (ULCT) conference. She also attended a meeting of the Utah Cultural Alliance at the Moab Museum, the September 11 commemoration at Swanny Park, the Rural Coordination Council Tribal Working Group, and noted an upcoming meeting regarding redistricting.

Councilmember Duncan reported on a ride-along with a law enforcement officer.

Councilmember Derasary reported she attended the August 25 ULCT meeting and also participated in a ride-along with law enforcement and noted she highly recommends it. She reported on her participation on a panel reviewing visioning consultants and mentioned the September 11 commemoration event. She thanked the Interfaith Coalition for hosting the event

and thanked the Public Works department for their front-line service. She said she attended the Red Sands Pow Wow and reminded residents to call law enforcement if they hear discharge of firearms in their neighborhoods. She brought up citizen allegations of staff bullying, retaliation and lack of accountability, among other claims. She called for a meeting to discuss the issues and stated she did not intend to deride staff but rather viewed the matter as something in need of improvement. She indicated the City's standards might not be high enough. She also brought up that she was not informed of the City Manager's departure until hours before he left and noted that, by law, the Mayor's conducts day-to-day oversight of the City Manager.

Councilmember Knuteson-Boyd spoke about a National Parks Conservation Association local assessment regarding tourism, workforce housing and issues with law enforcement. She said she was interviewed for *National Parks* magazine. She said Canyonlands Care Center had still not experienced a single positive case of COVID-19 among the residents. She said the Care Center's Special Service District meeting focused on budget and financials. She thanked former City Manager Linares for his service and praised Acting Manager Castle and the staff.

Councilmember Guzman-Newton reported on the Chamber of Commerce board meeting and noted the tepid local reception for the Rocky Mountaineer luxury train. She said she attended a meeting regarding timed entry at Arches National Park and announced the Chamber's annual dinner. She said she was participating in a series of webinars on federal highway safety initiatives. She reported on the Airport Board meeting at which lease agreements were discussed and noted the number of enplanements is ahead of 2019. Guzman-Newton stated she was not informed about the former City Manager's resignation. She asked if it was acceptable that the Human Resources (HR) Director did not inform the City's leadership. Acting Manager Castle stated it was protected HR communication. Guzman-Newton concluded by stating there was apparent dysfunction on the Council.

Councilmember Jones reported on the Travel Council and announced Howard Trenholme had resigned and Jason Taylor was the incoming chair. Jones said budgetary concerns were discussed and a funding request for visitation data analysis was tabled. He reported that Arches National Park had closed every other day due to overcrowding. He said that hotel occupancy had fallen in July and the Labor Day visitation to Moab was lower than expected. Jones reported on a meeting of the renewable energy group, noted Moab City is on the communications committee, and implored Communications Director Church to participate. Jones reported he attended meetings of the housing task force and the Colorado Association of Ski Towns, at which workforce housing was discussed. He mentioned that several bills were passed in Colorado to curb greenhouse gases. He concluded with a mention of a recent County meeting to discuss rebuilding Kane Creek Boulevard between 500 West and the BLM border.

### ***Approval of Minutes:***

***Motion and Vote:*** Councilmember Jones moved to approve the minutes for the August 24, 2021 Regular Meeting. Councilmember Knuteson-Boyd seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0 with Councilmembers Derasary, Jones, Guzman-Newton, Knuteson-Boyd, and Duncan voting aye.

### ***Presentation—School District:***

Grand County School District Community Coordinator Amanda Knill spoke about the school's 30-day mask mandate to combat COVID-19. She mentioned the new middle school principal and a community-wide initiative to encourage students to stay in school. She brought up upcoming family and community engagement nights and school-sponsored YouTube channels. Mayor Niehaus requested that the high school internship program at City Hall be reinstated.

**Old Business:**

**Walnut Lane Phase I Bid Preparation—Approved  
Presentation and Discussion:**

Public Works Director Jones detailed maintenance operations at the exiting Walnut Lane site. Council was invited to tour the site. Senior Project Manager Myers briefed Council on the timeline for new units since Indie Dwell failed to cure issues with the contract. Finance Director Billingsley provided budgetary updates and discussed bond issue costs and options including reissuance of the bonds. Councilmember Derasary brought up the assistance provided by ULCT staff to assist with ARPA funds for Walnut Lane. Myers and City Engineer Williams discussed and fielded questions regarding options including Design-Build or Design-Bid-Build procedures to move forward. Councilmembers Jones and Guzman-Newton asked about potential changes to the scope of the project and Councilmember Duncan asked for a pro-forma for modular units.

**Motion and Vote:** Councilmember Duncan moved to pursue a Design-Bid-Build package for completion of Phase I of the Walnut Lane project. Councilmember Knuteson-Boyd seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0 aye with Councilmembers Jones, Derasary, Knuteson-Boyd, Duncan and Guzman-Newton voting aye.

**2021 Class C Roads Map—Approved  
Presentation and Discussion:**

Engineer Williams briefly presented the Class C Roads update, which concerns funding from the State of Utah for maintenance of city roadways, curbs, gutters, and sidewalks.

**Motion and Vote:** Councilmember Derasary moved to adopt the 2021 Class C Road Map dated September 8, 2021. Councilmember Guzman-Newton seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0 aye with Councilmembers Jones, Derasary, Knuteson-Boyd, Duncan and Guzman-Newton voting aye.

**Approval of Bills Against the City of Moab:**

**Motion and vote:** Councilmember Knuteson-Boyd moved to approve the bills against the City of Moab in the amount of \$197,599.91. Councilmember Jones seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0 with Councilmembers Jones, Duncan, Guzman-Newton, Derasary, and Knuteson-Boyd voting aye.

**Executive (Closed) Session:**

**Motions and Votes:** Councilmember Jones moved to enter an Executive (Closed) Session to Discuss Reasonably Imminent and/or Pending Litigation and to Discuss the Character, Professional Competence, or Physical or Mental Health of an Individual or Individuals. Councilmember Guzman-Newton seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0 aye with Councilmembers Jones, Derasary, Knuteson-Boyd, Duncan and Guzman-Newton voting aye. Mayor Niehaus convened the Executive Session at 9:30 p.m. Councilmember Duncan moved to end the Executive Session. Councilmember Knuteson-Boyd seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0 aye with Councilmembers Jones, Derasary, Knuteson-Boyd, Duncan and Guzman-Newton voting aye. Mayor Niehaus ended the Executive Session at 10:38 p.m.

**Adjournment:** Councilmember Knuteson-Boyd moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Jones seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and Mayor Niehaus adjourned the meeting at 10:39 p.m.

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Emily S. Niehaus, Mayor

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sommar Johnson, City Recorder