

MOAB CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
January 11, 2024

Moab City Council held a Special Strategic Planning Meeting on the above date at the Red Cliffs Lodge in Grand County, Utah. Archived audio is at www.utah.gov/pmn.

Special Meeting Attendance and Call to Order:

Mayor Joette Langianese called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m. Councilmembers Tawny Knuteson-Boyd, Luke Wojciechowski, Jason Taylor, Colin Topper and Kaitlin Myers attended. Also in attendance were City Manager Carly Castle, Chief Operating Officer David Everitt, Planning Director Cory Shurtleff, Community Development Director Michael Black, Recorder Sommar Johnson, Communications Director Lisa Church, Police Chief Lex Bell, Assistant Police Chief James Blanton, Public Works Director Levi Jones, Assistant Engineer Mark Jolissaint, Executive Administrative Assistant Sasha Scherzinger, Parks, Recreation and Trails Director Brianna Bowker, Sports and Aquatics Director Patrick Trim, Arts & Special Event Director Kelley McInerney, Human Resource Director Dani Guerrero, Building Official Barry Ellison, Parks Lead Mark Matzen, Treasurer Marcy Mason, Facilities Lead Chace Gholson, Fleet Mechanic Lead Chet Wareham, Streets Lead Lane Gilson, Public Utilities Director Obe Tejada, Sustainability Director Alexi Lamm, and one member of the press.

Strategic Planning Workshop:

After brief introductions by Councilmembers, the Mayor and City Manager, staff reported on each department's current and upcoming fiscal year objectives, current year top accomplishments, development of key performance indicators, and unfunded operational needs.

Facilities Lead Gholson reported on his staff responsibilities including cleaning, repairs and 21 acres of landscape maintenance, upkeep of Walnut Lane facilities, the City's rental home at 200 South, and other facility remodels; he noted repairs at the nearby County preschool and needed repair or replacement of the City Center elevator and heating/cooling system elements. He mentioned impending repairs of the swimming pool. He detailed upcoming needs including staff certifications, trucks, and additional grounds maintenance staff.

Fleet Mechanic Lead Wareham reported on his staff responsibilities for the maintenance of City vehicles and small engines, fabrication, repairs, and vehicle purchases. He mentioned assistance rendered to mitigate vandalized City properties and aging parks equipment. He introduced fleet and equipment needs including a grader, utility trailers, a field service truck, shop hoist, weld table, and an additional employee. He stated the City fleet currently included 121 vehicles.

Streets Lead Gilson reported his department is fully staffed. He detailed storm recovery projects, creek maintenance, and noted he has a dump truck with plow on order, as well as a street sweeper. He reported on work completed on Aggie Boulevard drainage, the golf course retention pond, bridge abutments, the Main Street bridge over Mill Creek, a retaining wall at Woody's Tavern, and storm recovery at 500 West and the bike skills park. He noted concrete projects and sidewalk repairs. For the upcoming year, he mentioned staff certification needs, ongoing flood cleanup and storm ditch work, concrete projects, street lamps, and requested a front loader, skid steer, and an additional employee. City Manager Castle noted the increased demands regarding stormwater work.

Public Works Director Jones reported on upcoming projects including a facilities assessment, ongoing public service demands and an asset management program.

Police Chief Bell introduced new Assistant Chief Blanton. Bell reported on staffing statistics, the department's strategic plan and policy manual update, and equipment updates. He mentioned ongoing discussions regarding dispatch services, the department's accreditation progress, and overtime spending.

He stated overtime decreased by 44 percent in the first half of the fiscal year. Bell detailed statistics for police activity, code compliance, victim advocacy, and animal control. He presented needs for the upcoming fiscal year including three new law enforcement officer positions, a part-time social worker, planning for emergency response, new vehicle leases, community engagement, and participation in regional task forces. Discussion ensued regarding a part-time social work position. Bell outlined needs at the animal shelter, including fencing, shade, and floor improvements, and signage for parks and streets regarding camping and dog prohibitions and semi-truck travel in the left lane on Main Street. He mentioned a recent change at the library to turn off the Wi-Fi at night to reduce illegal camping. He concluded with a request for an additional code compliance position.

Public Utilities Director Tejada reported on activity at the water reclamation facility (WRF), including maintenance and inspections, and construction of a storage building. He spoke about grease trap impacts and a proposed shift from non-compliance fines to a fee-based system. He said grease trap violations are expensive to mitigate. Mayor Langianese asked about grease traps in town and it was explained there are 80 in town, with 12 reported as noncompliant, and a failure rate of 50 percent. Tejada stated his staff inspects each City manhole, and cleared 40 percent of mains. He reported on participation in the Birch and Tusher projects, and noted there were no stormwater overflows in the current year, as well as no permit violations. He said a sludge pump failed and WRF flows remained flat over the prior year. He listed projects for the coming year including implementation of a supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) system, grease trap administration, flushing of hydrants and exercising of valves, assessment of water mains, and a survey of lead water lines. He reported on completed projects including the Mill Creek water line replacement, Well 12 work, generator installation, hydrant replacements and testing for harmful chemicals. He reported on water sales, and requested a shared backhoe and dump truck, as well as service and meter reading trucks, and replacement of a promoted staff member.

Community Development Director Black announced openings for the City Engineer, and noted the Housing Director position would remain vacant.

Communications Director Church reported on the City's website redesign and public engagement platform. She said she had oversight of community outreach for major projects. She reported on the hiring of a communications consultant and the update to the city communications plan. She suggested upcoming events for Councilmembers to engage with the public. She reported on public participation statistics at open house events and in surveys, and social media activity.

Sustainability Director Lamm reported on accomplishments including progress with the Community Renewable Energy Agency (CREA), Dark Skies, electric vehicle infrastructure, and certification for bike friendly communities. She said the sustainability action plan is now in place, municipal water audits are in process, and standardization of outdoor recycling receptacles are underway. Lamm discussed grants and outlined goals for the upcoming fiscal year for aforementioned programs as well as complete streets, a compost pilot project, water management, and waste diversion goals.

Assistant Engineer Jolissaint reported on progress on the water and sewer bond projects, right of way for dispersed parking and Kane Creek projects, completion of the Woody's Tavern wall improvements, emergency streambank protections, and review of bids for flood related repairs. He mentioned upcoming work on the WRF structure, deferred work on the pedestrian bridge near the Episcopalian Church, and work on the Grand Water and Sewer Service Agency (GWSSA) interconnect to provide emergency access in case of fire or similar circumstances. He mentioned upcoming participation in the Water Utility Resource Management Plan (WURMP), management of the transportation program's bus service, upgraded Geographical Information Systems (GIS) equipment, work on a detention basin inventory, and ongoing review of development plans, impact and connection fee analysis, and an overview of grant-funded initiatives. Planning department work on developing grading and floodplain development permits were discussed. Jolissaint mentioned the contributions of a high school intern. Discussion

concluded with the need for stabilized staffing in the engineering department. Councilmember Topper asked about implementation of a transportation impact fee.

Planning Director Shurtleff and Building Official Ellison presented statistics on building permits and inspections, business license inspections, and an overview of the development cycle. Shurtleff said new development takes 1.5 to three years from initial inquiry to certificate of occupancy. He said all of his department's performance indicators were trending up, the building permit technician was certified, and flood repairs were on track. He said all departmental objectives had been accomplished. He briefed Council on the affordable housing plan and his group's representation at water and housing meetings across the community. He said goals for the upcoming fiscal year included staff training, a shortening of plan review time, a focus on code enforcement and standards, affordable housing at Walnut Lane, ensuring flood zone construction is built to standard, and ongoing work to digitize planning document archives. He outlined a need for upgraded planning and zoning software, the major project of the municipal code rewrite, a master fee schedule update, planning priorities update, and review of the framework for new initiatives such as planned area development (PAD) and similar. He presented statistics on development activity, stating there were 1,879 residential units in progress, including 241 affordable employee-housing units, 59 employer-provided units, and 66 units at Walnut Lane. He explained there are currently 2,284 residential units within City limits for a population of 5,317; he said that, with the in-progress units, there is a potential for the City population to grow to 9,600. Mayor Langianese recognized the City is interacting with less experienced developers, which has resulted in more staff contact, more attorney involvement, conflict with rejections, and hostility. Community Development Director Black brought up the need for full time employees to support the potential for growth through construction management and inspections and administrative assistance. He mentioned the move to initiate paperless forms and a digital review of planning documents.

Chief Operating Officer Everitt introduced reports by administrative services managers.

Recorder Johnson reported on her certification as a Master Municipal Clerk and mentioned her staff. She reported on her work with Information Technology (IT) training, education, and equipment replacement. She discussed the City's record storage and digitization of records. She spoke about the decrease in records requests, which totaled 65 in 2023, down from 102 in 2022. He said she facilitated 19 bid processes and 2,187 payments, and satisfied record requests within six days. For the upcoming fiscal year, she outlined needs for cross training staff, required certifications, storage vault organization, an updated vendor approval policy, and a general ledger code audit.

Treasurer Mason reported work on the City archives and scanning, storage vault cleanup, digitization of records, and an audit for all 832 business licenses. She brought up paperless billing and said customers who utilize auto pay is at 39 percent. She said she aimed for more personal responses including via email and paper notifications for past due accounts and impending shutoffs of services. She discussed the loss of funding for the low-income water bill assistance program. She reported a Request for Proposals is in process for banking services. The Treasurer's goals for the upcoming fiscal year were listed as increased business license compliance, paperless billing, vault organization, and online business license renewal. Mayor Langianese praised the staff for adjusting their workloads when the Finance Director left.

Human Resource Director Guerrero reported on hiring statistics, including 660 applications received, up from around 250 in the prior year, and resulting in the hiring of 20 full-time and 74 part-time employees. She described utilization of a consultant for upper management hiring and software to manage the hiring process. She reported on employee benefits, certifications and trainings, and work on the employee handbook and a salary review. She described her department workload with regard to recruitment, payroll, benefits administration, insurance and other personnel management. She stated the requested new positions would have a budget impact of about \$1.5 million. The Human Resource goals for the upcoming fiscal year included projects involving pre-employment testing, employee training, digitization of records, a new salary survey, and administration of the wellness program. Everitt added department-

wide functions including administration of grants and loans, financial advising for departments, succession planning, oversight of the budget process, upkeep of City department web pages and continuing work with the Pelorus software.

Parks, Recreation and Trails Director Bowker announced the recent adoption of the Parks Master Plan, with \$22 million in capital projects identified. She mentioned upgrades underway at Swanny Park and noted the pedestrian bridge reconstruction near the Episcopal Church, which was damaged in the 2022 flood, was on hold due to the funding being used for the Kane Creek Boulevard reconstruction project. She mentioned an all-abilities playground project and the upcoming release of funds from the Recreation, Arts and Trails (RAP) tax. She reported on work to refine the mission and vision of the department. She mentioned ongoing efforts regarding consistent branding of the department divisions, streamlined processes for program registrations and scholarships, administrative tracking, planning for capital maintenance, sponsorships, and cross training. She identified capital needs, including ongoing riparian restoration, a non-motorized trails master plan, and replacement of the pedestrian bridge.

Arts and Special Events Director McInerney spoke about diversification of program attendees, increasing utilization of facility rentals and co-work spaces, and increased focus on community relations. She stated work ensues regarding formalizing and refining processes for rentals and contracts. She outlined several projects and areas of focus, including the agricultural market, public art, summer camp and artist residencies. She mentioned administrative goals such as restructuring job descriptions and updating the department's web page. McInerney presented statistics regarding program attendance and public art installations, and presented goals for the upcoming fiscal year, including diversification of offerings, bridging between artists and businesses, accommodating survey fatigue, and training event staff, development of an emergency action plan and long-term arts funding and maintenance, curating murals and portraits, producing tiny desk concerts, and mitigating Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance issues at the Moab Arts and Recreation Center.

Parks, Recreation and Trails Director Bowker presented a report on the Recreation and Aquatic Center (MRAC) and stated the manager's position was open. She addressed the aim to increase open swim hours and swim lessons, fund capital repairs and equipment replacement, and explore increased facility hours. She stated accomplishments included increasing fees, automating communication and scheduling, expanding hours for the fitness center, greater attendance at classes, lifeguard expansion, and launch of a user survey. She reported 48,849 visitors to the MRAC along with other statistics. Bowker detailed goals for the upcoming fiscal year, including improved marketing and training manuals, more community events and movie nights, review of the fee schedule, and upgrades to diving boards and the outdoor pool slide. She mentioned staff intensive offerings such as the inflatable pool feature, and brought up work on nonprofit discounts, updating the emergency action plan, and revision to the employee training system. She spoke about MRAC infrastructure issues and a plan to purchase new gym equipment, based on survey feedback. Mayor Langianese asked about the ratio of nonresident visitors and Bowker did not yet have data on this. Eighty percent out-of-state license plates recorded at Swanny Park were discussed.

Parks Lead Matzen spoke about digitizing irrigation locations in parks, and creating a tree succession plan at Old City Park (OCP). He reported on prioritizing the Parks Master Plan capital projects list for the RAP tax cycle and continuing the Mill Creek Parkway flood mitigation. He said his department was fully staffed and reported on staff training and certifications, work with TrailMix, BMX track construction, and more. He reported on digital locks installed at the park restrooms, a new stage floor and roof at OCP, installation of a water line for a drinking fountain and hydrant at OCP, cameras at City facilities, restroom repairs and removal, installation of a water feature and tree work at Rotary Park, sprinkler updates and weed removal. He presented statistics on park rentals totaling 243. He brought up goals for the upcoming fiscal year, including completion of a parks capital maintenance plan, a tree succession plan, working toward compliance with the new sustainable landscape ordinance, planning for flood and fire resiliency, upgrading the parkway bridge decks, converting holiday lights for Dark Sky compliance, replacing equipment such as mowers, sweepers, a skid steer, dump truck, lift truck, and service vehicles.

Parks, Recreation and Trails Director Bowker stated her priority is to replace aging equipment.

Sports and Aquatics Director Trim reported on sports and recreation programs. He shared statistics regarding use of the Center Street Gym, scholarship programs, enrollment in recreation programs, incorporating survey results and adapting the new Parks Master Plan. He described work with schools and efforts to complete a Master Plan gap analysis. He mentioned the disc golf course, pool staffing, and robust use of the gym for pickleball. He said community sponsorships increased, with 36 at \$400 each. He said work would continue regarding communications, training for referees, the fee schedule, streamlined and digital registration, and updating the emergency action plan. Trim presented goals for the upcoming fiscal year capital improvements, including ball field improvements to include events and alternative sports. Discussion ensued regarding community resistance to converting one ballfield, although soccer has far more registrants than baseball and softball programs. Redesign and remodel, or relocation of the gym was mentioned, as well as replacement of the ballpark utility vehicle (Gator). Mayor Langianese brought up that the entire County participates in the City's recreation programs and the City foots the entire bill. City Manager Castle praised staff for stepping up.

After a break for lunch, the City's strategic planning pillars were discussed, as follows:

Tourism Trajectory and Economic Diversification: parking, transit, a downtown master plan, and intergovernmental policies and collaboration.

Affordability and Equity: utility discounts, RAP community grant distributions and social services, police training and school programs, low-income discounts for Dark Sky compliance and similar programs, planning and zoning translation services, community education, and fractional ownership issues.

Leadership and Decision-Making: asset management, revenue opportunities, impact fees for transportation, disproportionate public safety fees, law enforcement transparency, emergency planning, hazard mitigation planning, property tax implementation, development of a financial sustainability master plan, implementation of the Parks Master Plan, municipal code revision, departmental performance, agenda presentation and citizen engagement.

Environmental Stewardship: green infrastructure policy, Dark Skies implementation, renewable energy, Sustainability Action Plan implementation, water consumption reduction, consideration of solid waste and waste reduction, increase of local food production, work on the Forest Service management plan, compost pilot, electric vehicle infrastructure, and compliance with the landscape ordinance.

Workforce and Housing: Walnut Lane, PAD amendments, deed restrictions, property inventory, alternative dwellings, and living wage solutions.

Community Fabric and Well-Being: noise management including commercial vehicle enforcement, social services, robust law enforcement, community engagement, backflow compliance, wood chipper, lead pipe inventory, dispatch services, vandalism reduction, loitering on Parkway and sign defacement. The move from complaint-based policing to proactive engagement was discussed, along with neighbor-to-neighbor communication, recreation programs, a community well-being survey through the university, and collaboration with community resource providers.

Accomplishments and aspirations regarding each pillar were discussed in detail, followed by a ranking exercise for objectives proposed or ongoing for each pillar. Mayor Langianese adjourned the meeting at 4:15 p.m.

APPROVED: _____
Joette Langianese, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Sommar Johnson, City Recorder