

**MOAB CITY COUNCIL MINUTES**  
**SPECIAL MEETING**  
**January 12, 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](http://www.utah.gov/pmn).

***Special Meeting Attendance and Call to Order:***

Mayor Joette Langianese called the meeting to order at 9:06 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, Building Official Barry Ellison, Treasurer Marcy Mason, Public Utilities Director Obe Tejada, Sustainability Director Alexi Lamm, Attorney Nathan Bracken, and one member of the press.

***Strategic Planning Workshop Day Two:***

City Manager Castle introduced a session to discuss infrastructure and capital improvement projects, several of which are funded by grants or bonds. Some items included approximate budget impacts. The list included items that carry over into the next fiscal year and are on track for completion, or are new or disrupted projects. Infrastructure projects presented included: dispersed parking construction (\$7.3 million), Kane Creek Boulevard reconstruction (\$10.5 million), permanent retaining riprap under bridges, completion of the Water Utility Resource Management Plan, well #12, Spring #2 (\$150,000), Wastewater Reclamation Facility (WRF) outfall design and construction (\$2 million), green infrastructure projects (\$1.9 million), well generators (\$350,000), stream bank stabilization projects (\$400,000), Tusher sewer line replacement (\$2.75 million), WRF garage (\$500,000), supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) system (\$500,000), water storage tank spot repairs (\$50,000), stormwater detention basin repairs and analysis, water storage tank construction (\$1.7 million), Swanny park playground upgrades (\$600,000), pedestrian footbridge near the Episcopal church (construction disrupted due to funding needs for Kane Creek Boulevard reconstruction project), ball field redesign, flood warning system analysis, aquifer modeling, water monitoring, and a recreation center structural investigation.

Rising costs were discussed, including for landscaping contractors and premiums for construction in Moab's remote setting. Mayor Langianese stated costs were rising across the region, and Councilmember Taylor expressed his concern that costs were hard to trust after several project overruns. Staff clarified that some bids came in as estimated and some were underbid. Councilmember Topper asked about construction administration and Councilmember Myers voiced concern that some expenses might appear superfluous, such as green streets, so messaging is important. Mayor Langianese asked about new equipment requests and whether they are considered capital expenses or line item budget expenses. City Manager Castle stated the administration's recommended budget would outline the differences. Councilmember Taylor brought up the proposed property tax and the City's need for immediate needs and huge capital projects. Councilmember Knuteson-Boyd mentioned the capital projects are a fraction of the City budget, yet the public does not see it. Councilmember Wojciechowski brought up the burden of deferred maintenance. Mayor Langianese stated the need for a public education campaign. Councilmember Taylor spoke about the dichotomy of the controversial raising of taxes contrasted with the public desire for paving roads. City Manager Castle mentioned the incomplete chip seal project was already budgeted. Councilmember Taylor mentioned the 300 South bridge design and Public Works Director Jones said the list as presented only recorded the top ten percent of projects.

Discussion shifted to revenue enhancement. Existing sources of revenue were mentioned, including sales and use taxes, which are variable, and are included in the general fund, as well as restricted enterprise funds. The Recreation, Arts and Parks (RAP) tax was discussed, and the Class C Roads fund. Unrestricted revenue streams were mentioned, including sales and resort taxes, and the Transient Room Tax. Fees such as business license fees, plan review fees, and finds were described. Franchise agreements, grants and loans were mentioned as designated income.

Potential new sources of revenue were presented, including police department disproportionate impact fees, transportation impact fees, transportation utility fees, and property tax. The advantages of budgeted payments versus debt financing for one-time projects were discussed. Potential revenue scenarios with a property tax were presented. The first scenario would generate \$1.5 million. Bonding against this amount would equal \$20 million with a 20-year maturity at 4 percent interest. Because this is a more stable source of revenue than sales tax, it provides a better interest rate. The tax impact for a \$500,000 home would be about \$295.63 if a primary home or \$537.50 for a business or second home. This amount would limit the City's ability to get projects done in a timely fashion. The second scenario would set a tax rate that would generate \$3 million of revenue, which would stabilize the budget for maintenance and operations and would provide for capital projects. A \$500,000 home would pay \$590.98 while a second home or business would pay \$1,074.54.

City Manager Castle explained that a property tax would generate income from users that otherwise do not pay, such as second homeowners and nightly rental property owners. About 30 percent of residences are second homes. Discussion ensued about the transit system fixed route and including hotels on the route to offset costs. Councilmember Taylor pointed out Moab is the only municipality in Utah without a local property tax. He noted no one spoke against the recent library and fire district tax hikes but anticipated pushback for a City effort.

City Attorney Bracken noted it is harder to deal with deferred maintenance without a revenue stream. Mayor Langianese asserted the proposed tax requires Council advocacy. Bracken stated that, without a property tax, Moab moves to the bottom of the State's funding priority list. Councilmember Topper brought up the burden placed on businesses and expressed concern that employees would suffer the consequences, and spoke of the specter of an economic downturn. Councilmember Wojciechowski stated the State structure makes sales tax increases difficult and a property tax is the last option on the table. Councilmember Knuteson-Boyd said a property tax would be unpopular but the results without it would be worse. Councilmember Myers spoke of the community sentiment that the City should tax others, although locals impact City infrastructure the most. She said annexation does not provide more revenue without a property tax. Discussion ensued about the tourist economy. Councilmember Wojciechowski pointed out many City staff members are local residents. Councilmember Taylor expressed a need for a more stable financial footing, and defended the use of a property tax to pay employees. Councilmember Myers stated a new property tax could burden needy families. Councilmember Taylor suggested a shovel-ready project should be ready as soon as a property tax goes into effect, such as repaving Uranium Avenue. Mayor Langianese contended the property tax should be implemented this year. She requested clarification of the process and timeline. Councilmember Wojciechowski suggested it is the role of the Council to set up future Councils for success.

After a break for lunch, City Attorney Bracken conducted a workshop on Open and Public Meeting Act rules and the Utah Government Records Access and Management Act (GRAMA). Mayor Langianese adjourned the meeting at 1:30 p.m.

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Joette Langianese, Mayor

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