

**MOAB CITY COUNCIL MINUTES**  
**SPECIAL MEETING**  
**April 20, 2021**

Moab City Council held a Special Meeting on the above date. Consistent with provisions of the Utah Open and Public Meetings Act, Utah Code Ann. § 54-2-207(4), the Council Chair has issued written determinations supporting the decision to convene electronic meetings of the Council without a physical anchor location. Due to the health and safety risks related to the COVID-19 pandemic, Moab City Council held this meeting by electronic means. An audio recording is at <http://www.utah.gov/pmn/index.html>; a video recording is archived at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HR3yNmAwfwM>.

Mayor Emily Niehaus called the Special Meeting to order at 6:06 p.m. Participating remotely were Councilmembers Rani Derasary, Tawny Knuteson-Boyd, Mike Duncan and Kalen Jones. Councilmember Karen Guzman-Newton was not in attendance. City staff participating remotely were Manager Joel Linares, Assistant Manager Carly Castle, Attorney Laurie Simonson and Recorder Sommar Johnson. Guests in attendance included staff from the Utah County Elections Department and others who presented information regarding ranked-choice voting: Josh Daniels, Andrew Haun, Audrey Wood, Kory Holdaway, Rozan Mitchell and Karlee Jarvis.

***Presentation on Ranked Choice Voting***

Mr. Daniels introduced ranked-choice voting for the Council's consideration regarding its upcoming municipal election. He spoke about the ease with which voters understood the process. He described equipment and software needs to conduct such elections and he explained the tallying process. Mayor Niehaus asked about costs and it was explained that eliminating the need for a primary election reduced overall expenses, and the cost for Utah County to administer the election would be less costly than having Grand County administer the election.

Recorder Johnson reviewed costs incurred utilizing Grand County as the election administrator, which, she pointed out, are substantially higher than Utah County's estimate. Signature verification was discussed. Councilmember Duncan asked if an entire ballot would need to be ranked-choice or if it could be a combination; Mr. Daniels explained it could be a mixture. Further discussion encompassed the tabulation process, multiple winners and costs. Recorder Johnson pointed out state funding available for public education regarding ranked-choice voting.

***Proposed Fiscal Year End 2022 Budget Workshop***

The workshop shifted to a discussion of the proposed budget. In addition to the above-referenced staff, in attendance were Finance Director Ben Billingsley, Acting Finance Director Rachel Stenta, Public Works Director Levi Jones, Human Resources Director Danielle Guerrero, Engineer Chuck Williams, Police Chief Bret Edge, Wastewater Reclamation Facility Superintendent Obe Tejada and Planner Nora Shepard.

Finance Director Billingsley presented budget priorities for the water and sewer departments. Discussion ensued about sewer costs not covered by expected revenues. Alternate funding sources for the sewer department were examined. The public safety budget was briefly presented. Billingsley pointed out a new part-time animal control officer position has been proposed. The high cost of housing as a recruitment impediment was discussed including the prospect of reserving some Walnut Lane units for staff. The Planning Department budget, including staffing needs, was deliberated. It was agreed that the Visioning Process expense would be moved to the Administration budget, and expenses related to transportation planning

would move to Engineering. City Manager Linares asked if funds should be reallocated from other departments in order to increase the Planning staff. Councilmember Jones pointed out all departments were already operating on lean budgets. Councilmember Derasary suggested that, optimally, the Planning Department would have adequate staffing to be proactive rather than reactive.

Human Resources Director Guerrero announced a proposed 1.8 percent Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for personnel.

**Adjournment:** Councilmember Jones moved to adjourn. Councilmember Knuteson-Boyd seconded the motion. The vote to adjourn was unanimous. Mayor Niehaus adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

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

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