

**MOAB CITY COUNCIL MINUTES  
SPECIAL JOINT GRAND COUNTY COUNCIL, MOAB CITY COUNCIL, AND CASTLE  
VALLEY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING  
May 29, 2020**

The Moab City Council held a Joint Meeting with the Grand County Council and the Castle Valley Town Council on the above date. Per Executive Order 2020-5 issued by Governor Gary R. Herbert on March 18, 2020, this meeting was conducted electronically. An anchor location was not provided. An audio recording of the meeting is archived at <http://www.utah.gov/p.mn/index.html>. A video recording is archived at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V-Tl-qpZoiY>

**Call to Order and Attendance:** The Moab City Council attended a Special Joint Grand County Council and Castle Valley Town Council meeting on the above date. Grand County Council Chair McGann began the meeting at 10:03 AM. Participating remotely were Mayor Emily Niehaus and City Councilmembers Rani Derasary, Mike Duncan, Kalen Jones, Karen Guzman-Newton, and Tawny Knuteson-Boyd. Grand County Councilmembers participating remotely were Mary McGann, Curtis Wells, Greg Halliday, Evan Clapper, and Gabriel Woytek, and Jaylyn Hawks. Castle Valley Town Councilmembers participating remotely were Tory Hill, Robert O'Brian, Pamela Gibson, and Harry Holland. Participating remotely from the National Park Service was Kayci Cook-Collins, acting National Park Service Superintendent for the Southeast Utah Group. City staff participating remotely were City Manager Joel Linares, Assistant City Manager Carly Castle, City Attorney Laurie Simonson, and City Recorder Sommar Johnson. Grand County staff participating remotely were County Clerk Quinn Hall, County Assistant Council Administrator Mallory Nassau, and County Attorney Christina Sloan.

**Council Member Disclosures:** Grand County Councilmember Clapper disclosed that he has a commercial use permit with Arches and Canyonlands National Parks. Grand County Councilmember Wells disclosed owning an interest in nightly accommodations. Mayor Niehaus disclosed her husband sells artwork with CNHA. City Councilmember Guzman-Newton disclosed owning a nightly rental and a business on Main Street.

**Citizens to be Heard:** There were no citizens to be heard.

**Presentations: Presentation on the phased reopening and visitor access strategies for Arches and Canyonlands National Parks (Kayci Cook-Collins, Acting Superintendent, National Park Service Southeast Utah Group):** Kayci Cook-Collins presented about reopening strategies for Arches and Canyonlands National Parks during the COVID-19 pandemic. NPS is attempting to implement a temporary timed-entry approach at Arches National Park. National Parks were closed on 28 March due to the pandemic. During the first phase of reopening the roads, trails and restrooms are open and commercial tours are allowed to operate. Some public areas like the visitors' center, etc. are still closed. Timed entry would allow more opportunity for visitor spacing and distance. Kayci noted visitation is increasing rapidly after the COVID-19 closure. Kayci described how a temporary timed entry system would allow Arches National Park and the NPS to adapt and allow visitation and public access while keeping the public and employees safe. Timed entry would slow and coordinate visitor entry throughout the day. NPS would only meter for entry – with no requirement for exiting the park. Cost of the timed entry system would be included in the entry fee – not added to it. This would be implemented as a temporary safety measure and revisited/reevaluated in the future.

- Visitors would be allowed to stay in the park as long as they like.

- Entrance fees will be reinstated in the near future.
- Fees are suspended temporarily to limit public/employee interaction.
- The timed entry system will be temporary and reevaluated as the pandemic proceeds and public spaces reopen
- It will require a large public information strategy to inform potential visitors - Controlled access/timed entry would only be during the busiest hours
- This is specifically to address the COVID-19 pandemic and the effort is a stand-alone attempt to mitigate safety, not a trial of a larger timed entry plan
- Kayci noted that visitation levels for summer could potentially be higher this year as folks are anxious to get out and travel
- Commercial Use Authorization (CUA) holders would likely not be subject to timed entry regulations/restrictions
- Canyonlands National Park is not seeking a timed entry system at this time
- Yosemite is looking at a similar system based on visitor numbers instead of entry times
- CUA holders have provided mitigation plans to keep visitors and clients safe
- Visitor data collection surveys have been delayed, but will likely move forward as visitation resumes – later in the year

***Action Items – Discussion and consideration of Approving Grand County, the Town of Castle Valley, and Moab City’s joint letter of support for the National Park Service’s visitor access strategy for Arches and Canyonlands National Parks, including a phased reopening plan and temporary timed entry system for Arches NP (Christina Sloan, Grand County Attorney)***

***Town of Castle Valley Motion and Vote:*** Bob O’Brien (Town of Castle Valley) moved to approve the joint letter of support for the National Park Service’s visitor access strategy for Arches and Canyonlands National Parks, including a phased reopening plan and temporary timed entry system for Arches National Park. Harry Holland seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0 with members Holland, O’Brien, Gibson, and Hill voting aye in a roll call vote.

***Moab City Council Motion and Vote:*** Councilmember Derasary moved to approve the joint letter of support for the National Park Service’s visitor access strategy for Arches and Canyonlands National Parks, including a phased reopening plan and temporary timed entry system for Arches National Park. Councilmember Duncan seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-1 with Councilmembers Derasary, Knuteson-Boyd, Duncan, and Jones voting aye and Councilmember Guzman-Newton voting nay in a roll call vote.

***Grand County Council Motion and Vote:*** Greg Halliday (Grand County Council) moved to approve the joint letter of support for the National Park Service’s visitor access strategy for Arches and Canyonlands National Parks, including a phased reopening plan and temporary timed entry system for Arches National Park. Evan Clapper seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-1 with Greg Halliday, Gabriel Woytek, Evan Clapper, Jaylyn Hawks, and Mary McGann voting aye and Curtis Wells voting nay in a roll call vote.

***Discussion Items:*** There were no discussion items.

***Future considerations:*** There were no future considerations.

***Adjournment:*** Grand County Council Chair McGann adjourned the meeting at 11:16 am.

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

Emily S. Niehaus, Mayor

Sommar Johnson, City Recorder