

MOAB CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
July 27, 2021

The Moab City Council held its Regular Meeting on the above date. Audio recordings of the workshop and regular meeting are archived at <http://www.utah.gov/pmn/index.html>.

Pre-Council Workshop:

Mayor Emily Niehaus called the Pre-Council Workshop to order at 5:31 p.m. Councilmembers Karen Guzman-Newton, Tawny Knuteson-Boyd, Mike Duncan and Kalen Jones were in attendance. Councilmember Rani Derasary attended via electronic means. City staff participating included Manager Joel Linares, Assistant Manager Carly Castle, Planner Nora Shepard, Senior Project Manager Kaitlin Myers, Attorney Laurie Simonson, Finance Director Ben Billingsley and Recorder Sommar Johnson. One member of the public was in the audience. A video recording is archived at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=htKOUp4JmRA>.

Mayor Niehaus opened the workshop to discuss workforce housing opportunities. Planner Shepard described the issue of business owners being unable to hire employees to serve residents and visitors due to the lack of employee housing supply and high costs for land and new development. She reported that businesses are reducing hours of operations and are providing lower quality service due to being short-staffed. She cited examples of the police department, the hospital and the planning department as institutional examples of a reduced workforce due to housing issues. Shepard gave a brief overview of steps the City has taken in recent years to address the shortage of workforce housing including a now-outdated economic study, the Planned Area Development (PAD) ordinance, the Workforce Assured Housing Ordinance (WAHO), the Walnut Lane land purchase and a simplified accessory dwelling unit (ADU) process. Shepard described the proliferation of expensive townhome developments in the R-3 zone that do not serve the community with regard to solving the workforce housing crisis while increasing density downtown. She described the target beneficiaries of potential City action as those members of the workforce who need temporary housing including seasonal employees, local homeless persons and year-round residents whose earnings disqualify them for most affordable housing avenues yet who cannot afford home ownership in the local market. Possible projects, policies and strategies were described by Shepard including possible emergency recreational vehicle (RV) camp parking, expansion of Walnut Lane, and creating a working group with Realtors and developers. Changes to code that were proposed include adding ADU provisions for tiny homes, revising the Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) code, allowing four-story buildings and bunkhouses, including PAD provisions in the R-2 zone, easing on-site parking requirements, initiating affordability requirements with regard to R-3 density, allowing RVs as temporary housing units, enforcement of illegal nightly accommodations, creating a workforce housing replacement program tied to new development, and employer-owned homes providing accommodation for employees.

Councilmembers provided feedback on the proposed projects. Several expressed opposition to the consideration of four-story buildings. Tiny homes or seasonal modular units and temporary RV camping were viewed favorably, with one Councilmember suggesting that temporary RV parks should be restricted to commercial properties and not residential sites. Reworking the PAD and PUD ordinances, relaxing parking requirements, incentivizing workforce units in mixed-use developments, and mixing nightly rentals with long-term workforce housing were all considered. The Real Estate Transfer Assessment (RETA) was brought up as well as setback requirements for ADUs. Planner Shepard affirmed that she would work with Senior Project Manager Myers to create a summary of the suggestions along with proposed timelines and

decision points.

Regular Meeting Call to Order and Attendance: Mayor Niehaus called the Regular City Council Meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. In attendance were Councilmembers Guzman-Newton, Knuteson-Boyd, Duncan and Jones. Derasary attended via electronic means. City staff in attendance included Manager Linares, Assistant Manager Castle, Attorney Simonson, Recorder Johnson, Senior Project Manager Myers, Finance Director Billingsley, Engineer Chuck Williams, Planner Shepard, Public Works Director Levi Jones and Assistant Planner Cory Shurtleff. A video recording is archived at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xmJvzU3Zu4c>. Mayor Niehaus led the Pledge of Allegiance. There were five members of the public and press in the audience.

Citizens to be Heard:

Helene Rohr spoke in favor of allowing van dwellers to occupy space as an affordable housing solution. She stated she didn't see the need for water and sewer hookups in a temporary solution situation, and pointed out most vans have greywater systems only. She said employers and landowners are not interested in messy solutions and that many people choose to live in small spaces. She stated that the expectation of needing a lot of space is a luxury.

Sara Melnicoff advocated for a widespread installation of recycle bins throughout Moab.

Brooke Massick stated she lives in her van and noted that tiny home and van dwellers want to comply with code. She cited other communities that have embraced small dwellings as a housing solution. She stated that space for parking is a luxury.

Administrative Reports:

City Manager Linares reported on activities related to the proposed property tax increase and announced the public hearing to be held August 4. Linares also mentioned a review of other recreation and aquatic centers to find ways to reduce costs at the Moab Recreation and Aquatic Center (MRAC). He brought up imminent work to be done regarding redistricting and said the City would advocate for keeping all of Moab and all of Grand County in one legislative district. With regard to COVID-19, Linares stated new federal mask guidelines do not yet affect Moab.

Public Works Director Jones reported on the recent flood event and noted damage near a pedestrian bridge and footpath. He mentioned there was no water gauge on Pack Creek and suggested one would help. Councilmember Guzman-Newton asked about the gauge and Councilmember Jones asked about the fiscal impacts of the storm damage.

Finance Director Billingsley discussed future American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding and allowable local expenditures.

Senior Project Manager Myers gave a Walnut Lane update. She stated Indie Dwell had until Monday, August 2 to cure the contract issues. Myers and Attorney Simonson outlined some options the Council could consider in the coming weeks.

Mayor and Council Reports:

Mayor Niehaus thanked staff for hosting the open house regarding the proposed property tax. She mentioned an upcoming event on September 11 to celebrate emergency medical services and first responders. She thanked Public Works Director Jones for the flood response. She also mentioned an upcoming Town Hall with Congressman John Curtis on August 11 and concluded with an announcement regarding a free pool day and barbecue also on August 11, hosted by the

police department. It was noted Moab Brewery was donating food.

Councilmember Derasary reported the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) department had experienced its busiest three months on record. She said call volumes increased and stress levels for local residents have increased due to town being busier, thereby triggering more EMS response. She also noted local EMS staff had served on wildfire crews as line medics. She noted a tour of the new EMS building. Derasary also mentioned the System of Care advisory board which assists agencies to keep children within the community for families in crisis. She brought up a statistic regarding COVID-19 and stated she had learned from the health department director that while it appears more cases involve women than men, it was also the case that more women were tested for the disease. She stated we'd had about 0.3% breakthrough COVID cases in our area (positive cases among people already fully vaccinated), and that she had asked the health department director at what percent he'd be concerned about our level of breakthrough cases; he said about 5.0%. She reported that the Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action (UMTRA) Moab project had moved 70 percent of the material. She expressed optimism regarding additional federal funds to continue the cleanup. She concluded with a mention of the upcoming luxury passenger train, which would use the same track as the tailings train. She said that freight trains take precedence over passenger trains.

Councilmember Duncan reported on a large expenditure by the Grand Water and Sewer Services Agency (GWSSA) to purchase water rights involving a well that collapsed. When a nearby replacement well was drilled a mistake was made that may have also plugged up the aquifer locally damaging the potential capacity of both wells. He stated he had visited the site of the new City well.

Councilmember Knuteson-Boyd thanked Public Works Director Jones and his staff. She also noted a solution to a problematic parking issue on 400 North between 500 and 600 West.

Councilmember Guzman-Newton reported she attended the property tax open house and that she had been meeting with constituents. She said the airport board meeting had been cancelled. She reported she participated in Land Use 101 training and concluded with a mention of a meeting she had with City Manager Linares regarding camping and the C-2 zone.

Councilmember Jones reported on a meeting of the Dark Skies committee and noted a "barn light" swap project with Rocky Mountain Power. The topic of swapping City street lights for LED lights was briefly discussed. Jones stated he had met with Salt Lake City solid waste personnel to discuss sustainability as well as the City's plastic bag ban. He said he was interested in follow-up on Moab's bag ban. Jones concluded with a mention of a U.S. Senate subcommittee on congestion in the national parks and suggested forwarding the City's recent letter in favor of timed entry to the Senate.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion and Vote: Councilmember Guzman-Newton moved to approve the minutes for the July 13, 2021, Regular Meeting. Councilmember Jones seconded the motion. Councilmember Derasary stated she had sent corrections to the Recorder. The motion passed 5-0 with Councilmembers Derasary, Jones, Guzman-Newton, Knuteson-Boyd, and Duncan voting aye.

Old Business:

Highway Widening Project—Presentation

City Engineer Williams updated Council on progress regarding reopening all lanes of Highway 191 north of downtown. He also mentioned work was due to be completed in October. Williams

also noted the Highway would be under construction in 2022 from the Colorado River bridge to the Postash Road and then as far north as Highway 313. He also mentioned the addition of a passing lane in the six miles south of Interstate 70. He listed other projects related to the Hotspot funding, including dispersed parking, work on Emma Boulevard, and a roundabout at the corner of 400 North and 100 West.

New Business:

Unified Transportation Master Plan—Presentation

Engineer Williams briefed Council on the public engagement process regarding the local area transportation plan. Brent Crowther spoke to Council about the outreach efforts of consultants Kimley Horn to obtain public input. He spoke about determining the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders and a technical advisory group.

West Care Campus Drive Plat Amendment and ROW Realignment—Approved

Presentation: Assistant Planner Shurtleff presented Moab Regional Hospital’s requested plat amendment and right-of-way realignment. Discussion ensued about the unusually narrow street and proposed new health care amenities. Councilmember Guzman-Newton asked about the future methadone clinic and a hospital update was requested at a future meeting.

Motion: Councilmember Jones moved to approve proposed **Resolution #26-2021** – A Resolution Approving the Plat Amendment of property located at 382 West Care Campus Drive, and 356 West Care Campus Drive, Moab UT 84532, and Right-of-Way Realignment. Councilmember Guzman-Newton seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion passed 5-0 aye with Councilmembers Jones, Derasary, Knuteson-Boyd, Duncan and Guzman-Newton voting aye.

Grantwell Partnership Proposal—Approved

Presentation: Finance Director Billingsley reported that \$320,000 in initial annual proceeds are expected as a result of the voter-approved Recreation, Arts and Parks (RAP) sales tax. He announced the Grantwell Partnership proposal, which would utilize the skills of public administration graduate students to propose a citizen advisory committee framework as well as an application process for the disbursement of the RAP tax funds. If approved, the Grantwell product would be delivered in December. Councilmember Jones asked if there were references for other projects undertaken by the student group. Councilmember Derasary asked for an update on the citizen committee element.

Motion and Vote: Councilmember Guzman-Newton moved to approve the partnership between the City of Moab and Grantwell, and authorize the execution of the letter of intent. Councilmember Duncan seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0 aye with Councilmembers Jones, Duncan, Derasary, Guzman-Newton and Knutson-Boyd 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 \$315,941.76. Councilmember Jones seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0 with Councilmembers Jones, Duncan, Guzman-Newton, Derasary, and Knuteson-Boyd voting aye in a roll call vote.

Adjournment: Councilmember Jones moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Knuteson-Boyd seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and Mayor Niehaus adjourned the meeting at 9:01 p.m.

APPROVED: _____

ATTEST: _____

Emily S. Niehaus, Mayor

Sommar Johnson, City Recorder