

MOAB CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
September 22, 2020

The Moab City Council held its Regular Meeting on the above date. Consistent with provisions of the Utah Open and Public Meetings Act, Utah Code Ann. § 54-2-207(4), the Moab City 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 ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and considering public health orders limiting in-person gatherings, the Moab City Council will continue to hold meetings by electronic means. An audio recording of the meeting is archived at <http://www.utah.gov/pmn/index.html>. A video recording is archived at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sVCSMO_xigI.

REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING 7:00 P.M.

Regular Meeting—Call to Order and Attendance: Mayor Niehaus called the Regular City Council Meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. Participating remotely were Councilmembers Karen Guzman-Newton, Tawny Knuteson-Boyd, Rani Derasary, Kalen Jones, and Mike Duncan. City staff participating remotely were City Manager Joel Linares, Assistant City Manager Carly Castle, City Attorney Laurie Simonson, and City Recorder Sommar Johnson.

Proposition 8: Recreation, Arts, and Parks Tax (RAP) Public Comments

Sara Melnicoff said she is very sad to say she strongly opposes this tax and the reason being is that she has lost all faith completely in this Council's ability to properly spend money based on the heart-wrenching and horrific desecration of the parkway against the will of many in the community and without the input of many in the community and with an ulterior plan. She does not feel like there is a lot of reason to trust the process that the funds won't be used to turn the entire parkway into a thrill area and do more damage to the natural areas and for that reason she is opposed to it. She said she remains opposed until there is some way of being assured that the funds are not going to be used to create more horrific damage to the natural lands of the parkway.

Theresa King said she is in support of this particular tax wanted individuals listing to know that she has been an advocate of this as a private citizen and as an arts advocate for over 15 years. She said she has known this tax was available and has been trying to get somebody's attention to pursue it. She said she is thrilled that the City Council has taken the active stance to do this and it amounts to one dollar on one thousand dollars spent in town. She said she is happy to talk with anybody personally about why she feels this way. She said she is not a pro-tax person, but she has been very involved with the arts and recreation and loves doing stuff in the parks.

Cassie Paup said she thinks city rec sports are kind of the heart of our community certain times of the year and are well worth supporting. She also said she represents an arts organization that has been fortunate enough to receive funding from the city for the Moab free concert series and she believes that has been a beneficial event for our community. She said she thinks the RAP tax is a fabulous idea for the community and believes it is not only going to benefit our city but also our county members. She thinks this can help build a legacy for arts and culture for our parks and recreation department and be something to look back on and be proud of.

Written public comments:

Jenifers Evers said, "Tourists take a great deal from this community & its resources. There should absolutely be a cost for that & it should be paid for by those degrading it most. As a local, I think tourism is well out of hand & resent it much of the time. If the community's RESIDENTS

(not just business owners) benefitted more directly from the onslaught of tourists, it would go a long way.”

Jennifer Wenzel said, “We live on Old City Park and run a b&b. We do not want any additional taxes being imposed or any current ones increased more than you have. Moab needs to start handling its budget and planning process better before asking for or carelessly spending funds. Now is not the time to make spending more expense for tourists if you’d like them to keep coming. More tax is not an incentive to help tourism. Plan & spend better and smarter.”

Liz Holland said, “It is important for us as a community to support our youth programming and city facilities. It's time to invest in our city facilities and parks that are due for some major up grades. A lot of the playground equipment at Swanny Park is at least 30 years old, it has been there since I was a kid. Having up grades to the ballpark where we spend a lot of our summer nights is something I would love to see. Even if that means just having working lights on the ball fields. I enjoy having a gym to play co-ed volleyball, taking my kids to the swimming pool, attending community events and all the amazing programs that proposition 8 would support.”

Sandra Hultgren said, “Please! No more taxes! Funds raised from yet another tax will benefit a very small number of Moab residents for things we will never use. There are so many recreational opportunities here already. Do we REALLY need more? I don't think so yet we all be stuck paying for even more. No thank you. Too many of us are already being priced out of living here.”

Serah Mead said, “I am commenting in favor of Proposition 8, otherwise known as the RAP Tax. Although this is a financially difficult time for many residents in our community, I believe that a tax such as this is a great implementation of smallest change for greatest good. I am also comforted knowing that nearly 80% of annual spending is from non-residents, so while locals and visitors alike will pay the tax equally, the programs that benefit from the tax will be more supported by the folks who enjoy our culture as a vacation, simply because they are doing more buying. I think public parks, recreation programs, and especially the arts are an integral part of a community's culture. Moab, as a place and a culture, is more than extraction (both by tourists and oil and gas industries) and development and I see this tax as a gesture of acknowledgement of that fact, along with direct action to support it.”

Cassie Paup said, “I am writing in support of Prop 8, or the RAP tax. This type of tax has been successfully implemented in 34 cities and 7 counties in Utah alone. My organization, Friends of the Moab Folk Festival, is a recipient of City funds to support the popular and community building Moab Free Concert Series. As a parent whose child participated in City Recreation Softball, I believe this tax would be beneficial to City and County residents. The burden of funding will be primarily on visitors. Culture, arts and parks are some of my favorite things about this community. Let's keep them vital in these times of Covid budgetary shortfalls.”

Marc Thomas said, “I favor passing Prop 8, the "RAP" Tax, provided the council establishes a RAP Advisory Board to oversee the guidelines and process for receiving funding applications. This advisory board should also be charged with making recommendations to the Council on approval of "RAP" fund disbursements. With input from this board and the general public at council meetings, I feel this is an effective way to help fund the city's cultural & recreational amenities.”

Deb Klaes said, “I'm a property owner in Moab City and I would like you to please consider approving the RAP tax. There is a great need for pickle ball courts in Moab. It's the fastest

growing sport in the USA right now and would greatly benefit Moab residents and would also help attract tourist in the winter months.”

Theresa King said, “Dear City Council: As you know I am an advocate for the Recreation, Arts & Parks sales tax. Theresa King”

Adjournment: Councilmember Knuteson-Boyd moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Jones seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Mayor Niehaus adjourned the meeting at 7:48 p.m.

APPROVED: _____
Emily S. Niehaus, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Sommar Johnson, City Recorder