

MOAB CITY COUNCIL MINUTES--DRAFT
REGULAR MEETING
March 10, 2026

Regular Meeting Attendance and Call to Order:

Moab City Council held its Regular Meeting on the above date in Council Chambers. Archived audio is at www.utah.gov/pmn and video is at www.youtube.com/watch?v=rs2bjAV8aYI. Mayor Joette Langianese called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Councilmembers Jason Taylor, Tawny Knutson-Boyd, Kaitlin Myers, Colin Topper and Miles Loftin attended. Also in attendance were City Manager Michael Black, City Recorder Sommar Johnson, Strategic Initiatives and Sustainability Director Alexi Lamm, Human Resources Director Dani Guerrero, Police Chief Lex Bell, Assistant Chief James Blanton, Jr., Community Development Director Cory Shurtleff, Public Works Director Levi Jones, Utilities Director Obe Tejada, Treasurer Marcy Mason, Engineer Mark Jolissaint, Attorney Lisa Watts Baskin and five members of the public.

Strategic Plan Review and Fiscal Year (FY) 2026/2027 Budget Workshop:

Strategic Initiatives & Sustainability Director Lamm presented organizational accomplishments based on Council priorities with the purpose of planning for the new year. She reviewed Council's top five goals: to improve downtown, explore Walnut Lane and affordable housing, facilitate public access to government, implement active transportation, execute the strategic plan and natural hazard mitigation. Discussion regarding downtown improvements included Councilmember Taylor stating his support for ongoing sidewalk improvements and Councilmember Myers asking about carryover from one year's plan to the next. Enforcement and safety concerns were deliberated and Councilmember Topper mentioned prioritization of the north corridor of Main Street. He said he wants to beautify the corridor, calm traffic, and make the area inviting to visitors. He added his appreciation of engagement with business owners. Discussion about Walnut Lane and housing broadened from final disposition of Walnut Lane to identifying housing priorities, deed restrictions for affordable housing, the future of the active employee household (AEH) ordinance, and the rent to own continuum. Councilmember Myers brought up action priorities to address housing, including a Council housing workshop, how to keep funding in the housing fund, and a review of the impact fee policy. Review of the Active Transportation goal included sidewalks, crosswalks, traffic calming, traffic enforcement and Moab Area Transit (MAT) grant funding, and pathway safety and maintenance. Discussion of the strategic goal of plan implementation centered on ballpark planning, the recreation and aquatic center, Swanny Park, and low water landscapes that tie into facility maintenance. Councilmember Topper mentioned the general plan update. Regarding natural hazard mitigation, discussion surrounded work on the stormwater master plan, continuing flood mitigation, defining the wildland-urban interface (WUI) corridors, and fire preparedness. Topics surrounding public access to government were discussed in the context of implementation and communication of plans, and included making City policies clear and accessible, scaling up public outreach, engaging the public in budget workshops, and adding opportunities for staff and Council to connect with residents. Mayor Langianese pointed out that the strategic goals and objectives tie to building the next year's budget.

City Manager Black transitioned the discussion to the budget. He said revenues are trending higher and expenditures are down. He went over enterprise funds and tax collections. Black detailed anticipated personnel expenditures and a proposed salary freeze on eight to 13 highly compensated City employees. Utilities Director Tejada spoke about enterprise funds and said water and sewer master plans will be moved into the capital fund. He said the 2027 water request budget is an 11 percent increase. He said office supplies and sample shipping costs increased. He highlighted other projected budget changes. Human Resources Director Guerrero stated the personnel budget is projected for each employee's status at the time of hiring, meaning, for example, if an employee gets married and their benefits increase, that is not accounted for in the budget. She said salaries will increase by 13 percent because there was a salary calculation error in the prior year's budget. She said there is a planned increase of 10 percent for dental and health insurance. Tejada continued with a presentation of sewer budget figures, including an overall operating budget increase of 10.9 percent. He touched on water and sewer capital projects.

Police Chief Bell presented his budget and explained that some police shifts are paid by the State. He said the total budget request is an increase of 3.65 percent and said victim advocates, code compliance, animal shelter, salaries and benefits went up 4.1 percent. Chief Bell went over equipment and training, and Councilmember Myers asked about increased costs, attributed to hiring bonuses and a full staff of 11 officers. A housing stipend rebranded as Line of Duty pay was discussed, and Myers stated that she wants stipends to be equitable across the City for lower wage employees. Discussion ensued regarding reducing costs and retaining staff. Councilmember Loftin stated he wanted salaries to reflect the desirable pay rather than augmentation with stipends. Mayor Langianese asked if there was a written policy. Councilmember Knutson-Boyd complimented Chief Bell on his leadership. City Manager Black offered to answer Council questions at any time. Mayor Langianese stated the next budget workshop would be March 24.

Public Comments:

Randy Day asked if the ballpark redesign is taking away 25 percent of the ballparks. He said he wants a tournament to come here and needs different fields for kids under age 13. He said a practice field is needed and he wants to name the fields after Glen Richeson.

Sophia Fisher thanked Team Rubicon for their upcoming eighth operation for a fire break campaign and invited staff and Council to meet the team and learn about the volunteer operation.

Police Department Update:

Police Chief Bell updated Council on the Citizen's Police Academy. He said his department will host six weeks of nightly courses for residents and Council members. He said the course is for residents over age 18, with background checks because firearms will be used at the range. Bell said he wants class sizes at 20, and he said he will get application information out to residents.

Consent Agenda—Approved

Councilmember Knutson-Boyd moved to approve the consent agenda, as follows: approval of minutes of the February 24, 2026, regular meeting and approval of bills against the City of Moab in the amount of \$1,178,396.22. Councilmember Loftin seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0 with Councilmembers Topper, Taylor, Knutson-Boyd, Myers and Loftin voting aye.

General Business:

Sand Flats Road Improvements Letter of Support—Approved

Presentation and Discussion: Andrea Brand, Director of the Sand Flats Recreation Area, presented a request for a letter of support for Grand County's application to improve Sand Flats Road and develop a separate multi-use pathway. She noted she had already obtained letters of support from stakeholders including the Grand County Commission, the Bureau of Land Management and the Governor's Office for Economic Development. She explained that the Sand Flats Road improvements are mentioned in the County and City's 2022 Unified Transportation Master Plan. Brand explained there are 400 vehicle trips daily and in peak season there are 800-1200 trips daily, which is well above the recommended travel load for a gravel road. Councilmember Topper spoke in favor of safe bike access to Sand Flats, and Councilmember Taylor concurred and encouraged paving the road. It was explained the current letter of support is for a planning and design grant.

Motion and Vote: Councilmember Taylor moved to approve a letter of support for Grand County's application to improve Sand Flats Road and develop a separate multi-use pathway. Councilmember Topper seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Center Street Ballpark Redesign Project Contract Award—Approved

Presentation and Discussion: Parks, Recreation & Trails Director Patrick Trim participated via electronic means to answer questions about the project entailing redesign of the Center Street ballparks. City Manager Black stated the bid came in under budget and the City plans for public involvement. Councilmember Taylor noted the proposed firm had worked with the City for several years.

Motion and Vote: Councilmember Taylor moved to approve a contract award to Civil Science for the

Center Street Ballpark Redesign Project in the amount of \$144,600.00 and authorize the Mayor to sign it. Councilmember Knutson-Boyd seconded the motion. Councilmember Myers asked about a non-awarded firm. The motion passed 5-0 with Councilmembers Taylor, Knutson-Boyd, Topper, Myers and Loftin voting aye.

AMASA Apartments Phase I Impact Fee Waiver Request—Approved

Councilmember Loftin recused himself from the discussion and consideration.

Presentation and Discussion: City Manager Black presented the impact fee waiver request from AMASA Apartments Phase I. He said it was based on the policy recently adopted by Council and said the requested amount was \$43,750. He recommended approval and stated the applicant met all the criteria established for low-income housing for the community. Councilmember Myers stated that her understanding of the code is that the waiver is based on a per unit amount and not an average. She proposed a waiver for an amount difference of \$625, amounting to \$44,375. City Manager Black said the intent of the policy was based on averaging, and said that was how the adopted policy was presented to Council. He said it could be resolved going forward with an amendment to Moab Municipal Code Section 6-C-1. Councilmember Topper stated averaging is mentioned twice in the language of the Code. He said he looked forward to amending the language in the future. He said this type of housing addresses the need for workforce housing for large hotels that contributed to the fee-in-lieu to satisfy requirements of the Active Employment Household (AEH) ordinance. Councilmember Knutson-Boyd stated her support for the method and wants it to be malleable.

Motion and Discussion: Councilmember Topper moved to approve the AMASA Apartments Phase I Impact Fee Waiver Request with the condition that the applicant shall provide proof of recording of the required declaration of restrictive covenants prior to the issuance of any fee waivers or credits and authorize the City Manager to execute the required waiver contract. Councilmember Knutson-Boyd seconded the motion. Councilmember Myers stated she would support the motion, yet she strongly disagreed with the interpretation and said that language needs to be revisited because of the importance of prioritizing the most subsidy to the units that need it most. She emphasized her disagreement with the final amount.

Vote: The motion passed 4-0 with Councilmembers Taylor, Knutson-Boyd, Topper and Myers voting aye.

Cooperative 1581 Phase 1, LLC Impact Fee Waiver Request—Approved

Presentation and Discussion: Mayor Langanese explained the request was for the same fee waiver request program with a different developer, the Cooperative 1581 Phase 1, LLC. Councilmember Myers explained that the difference between averaging and a per unit calculation was more significant for the proposed waiver, and her computation added up to \$109,625, with a difference of \$16,375, which she said could be used for down payment assistance. She said that over time, with bigger projects, it makes a bigger difference. Councilmember Loftin stated the policy was developed prior to his tenure on Council. He said it is not well-spent money and the Workforce Affordable Housing Units (WAHU) fund could benefit residents better rather than adjust a developer's bottom line. He stated the housing task force is in favor of down payment assistance and impact fees are needed to develop infrastructure. Councilmember Myers thanked the developers for their efforts to provide affordable housing in Moab. City Manager Black said the application is for 144 units, rather than 50 units, and the developer had met all requirements and had already recorded the 50-year deed restrictions. He recommended the fee waiver request for \$126,000 was based on the interpretation of the prior motion. Councilmember Taylor concurred.

Motion and Discussion: Councilmember Taylor moved to approve the impact fee waiver request submitted by the cooperative 1581 phase 1 LLC based on staff's findings of compliance with the affordable housing partnership policy and authorize the City Manager to execute required waiver contract. Councilmember Knutson-Boyd seconded the motion. Councilmember Knutson-Boyd said this program has been in development for many years and she expressed her sentiment that it was never intended to be a down-payment assistance program and expressed a hope to rewrite the policy in the future.

Vote: The motion passed 4-1 with Councilmembers Taylor, Knutson-Boyd, Topper and Myers voting aye

and Councilmember Loftin voting nay.

City Manager Updates: City Manager Black reported on a meeting regarding the Glen Canyon Recreation Area water levels and went over the costs to improve or replace boat ramps and talked about low water levels and the future of power production at risk. He said he has been working on the budget proposal, along with internal policies and procedures. He said he is open to discussion.

Mayor and Council Reports:

Councilmember Topper spoke about the upcoming Spring Spruce Up trail maintenance event.

Councilmember Knutson-Boyd reported that she attended a meeting of the Canyonlands Health Care Special Service District as well as a meeting of the City's audit committee. She praised the clean audit and attributed the success of the audit to City Manager Black and his team.

Councilmember Loftin reported on a meeting of the housing authority. He said all the cottages at Arroyo Crossing had been rented. He noted the County had increased impact fees. He said he attended the City housing task force meeting with Councilmember Myers. He mentioned AEH deed restricted accessory dwelling units (ADUs). He also stated he attended the most recent meeting of Utah Renewable Communities.

Councilmember Taylor reported he visited Washington DC to lobby for the North Wash boat ramp. He met with the Utah Congressional delegation, which was receptive about flood mitigation. He said timed entry and the tailings pile funding were discussed. He reported on essential air service and said four airlines seek a contract award for Canyonlands Field. He said he attended a travel council meeting.

Councilmember Myers reported that the City's housing subcommittee has provided recommendations for priorities. She said the legislative session ended on Friday. Myers reported on a courthouse open house and a housing task force meeting.

Mayor Langianese reported on her visit to Washington DC. She said she asked for \$10 million in federal funding for the 300 South bridge reconstruction and predicted there would likely be an appropriation later in the year. She also reported she is requesting funding for transit. She mentioned a discussion with the Congressional delegation regarding timed entry at Arches National Park. She said she met with the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California regarding the tailings pile and a large event is being planned. She concluded by mentioning the post office museum in Washington DC.

Executive (Closed) Session:

Councilmember Knutson-Boyd moved to enter a closed strategy session to discuss the purchase, exchange, or lease of real property and to discuss reasonably imminent and/or pending litigation. Councilmember Loftin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Mayor Langianese convened the closed session at 7:58 p.m. Councilmember Knutson-Boyd moved to end the closed session. Councilmember Topper seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Mayor Langianese ended the closed session at 8:38 p.m.

Adjournment:

Councilmember Loftin moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Topper seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 8:39 p.m.

APPROVED: _____
Joette Langianese, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Sommar Johnson, City Recorder