

**Pleasant Grove City  
City Council Budget and Planning Meeting Minutes  
Friday, February 7, 2025  
8:30 A.M.**

Mayor: Guy L. Fugal

Council Members: Dianna Andersen  
Eric Jensen  
Cyd LeMone  
Steve Rogers  
Todd Williams

Staff Present: Scott Darrington, City Administrator  
Deon Giles, Parks Director  
Tina Petersen, City Attorney  
Wendy Thorpe, City Recorder  
Denise Roy, Finance Director  
Drew Engemann, Fire Chief  
Sheri Britsch, Library and Arts Director  
Neal Winterton, Public Works Director  
Kyler Brower, Assistant to the City Administrator  
David Packard, Human Resources Manager  
Keldon Brown, Police Chief  
Megan Zollinger, Recreation Director  
Daniel Cardenas, Community Development Director

The City Council and Staff met at The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 401 South Pleasant Grove Boulevard, Pleasant Grove, Utah.

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**1. Open Meeting.**

- **Continental Breakfast.**
- **Mayor's Welcome.**

Mayor Fugal called the City Council Budget and Planning Meeting to order at 8:42 a.m. and welcomed those present. The meeting was held at The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater. He expressed appreciation to the theater for hosting the meeting. Mayor Fugal thanked everyone associated with the theater for their efforts and thanked the City Council for their support. Mayor Fugal took time to look back at the last year and all that has been accomplished. He believes the next year will be wonderful as well. It has been a privilege to serve as the Pleasant Grove Mayor.

- **Icebreaker: Quick Tour of the Back of House of The Ruth.**

City Administrator, Scott Darrington, reported that meeting attendees will participate in a tour. The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater Development Director, Jeffrey Fisher, shared details about the tour, which will include a walk on the catwalk, stage, and basement area. The tour took place at approximately 8:50 a.m. The City Council Budget and Planning Meeting continued at 9:13 a.m.

## **2. Year in Review – Staff.**

Staff Members were asked to share information as part of the Year in Review section of the meeting agenda. Fire Chief, Drew Engemann, reported that there is a full staff in place. The call volume for 2023 was 1,851, and it was 2,205 in 2024. Most of the calls are for medical and it is about a 60/40 split. As for whether there are similar increases in other cities, that is not necessarily the case. For example, the call volumes in American Fork went down slightly. Cedar Hills averages approximately one call per day. It is hard to tell what is causing the higher call volumes in Pleasant Grove in the last year. Chief Engemann noted that it is possible to share information based on specific locations or neighborhoods. The numbers are tracked to see how long it takes to reach different areas of the City. The call response times can vary widely based on the time of day and the traffic. He pointed out that between 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. there is a lot more traffic.

Chief Engemann shared call volume information with the City Council. The presentation slide included details about the number of fire stations in other areas. He explained that the call volume is divided by the number of stations. The average can be anywhere from 700 to 1,500 per station. For Pleasant Grove, there are 2,205 calls associated with one station. It is a busy station in comparison to the surrounding cities. The national standard is to have one public safety person per 1,000 people. If Pleasant Grove had one per 1,000 people, there would be between 38 and 40 full-time personnel, but there are between 15 and 18 full-time personnel. Pleasant Grove is still a bit behind in full-time personnel compared to the national standard and some surrounding cities. The employees do an excellent job handling the calls. Chief Engemann reviewed the response times for fire and medical. There is arrival on scene within four and a half minutes on most of the fire calls. There is arrival on scene for medical calls at an average of five and a half minutes.

The call type breakdown was reviewed. Chief Engemann noted that there was a little more loss this last year. He referenced the house that completely burned down on the Fourth of July. There was also a double fatal fire that occurred. Some significant fires have brought the numbers up higher than usual. Chief Engemann reviewed some of the inspection work that has been done. For citizen contact, there were over 11,000 contacts. Over the last couple of years, there have been some staff losses and a number of new staff members have had to be hired. Chief Engemann reported that the intention is to have something on the website quarterly so residents can receive CPR training for free at the station. There is a desire to benefit the community with that training.

During the year, there are seven shifts per day that are open. In 2023, there were 418 open shifts. The number in 2023 had to do with staffing issues and wildland work. In 2024, that number was reduced to 283. Chief Engemann explained that his goal is to always have two ambulances available. There is a good working relationship with American Fork and north end cities. All of the Fire Chiefs understand that the goal is to serve citizens. Chief Engemann reported that there

are a lot of new people in the department and there were 83 certifications. He shared images from one of the training days that took place. There is wildland training, normal fire training, and Emergency Medical Services (“EMS”) training. A lot of time and effort has been put into training employees and receiving certifications. Chief Engemann shared images of the wildland work that took place in California. Roughly \$220,000 billed for, which resulted in a \$65,000 profit. That work makes it possible to fund different tools and equipment that are needed.

Maintenance information was shared with the Council. Chief Engemann reported that Ladder 71 is almost 18 years old and \$31,000 was spent last year on repairs. Engine 71 is the newest and \$3,200 was spent. Over time, it costs more to handle the repairs and necessary maintenance.

Police Chief, Keldon Brown, shared an overview about the Police Department for 2024. He reported that 2024 was a bit different than 2023. Staffing remained the same, but in future years, there is a desire to grow the numbers to account for the growth in the City. This year, the numbers were supplemented with the reserve program. There were two reserves previously to fill in time off requests, but now there are six active reserves who are working. That will be built to eight. He explained that these are officers who work for other agencies and come here on the side. The reserves have to have a minimum of five years of experience, but there are some who have nine.

Employee shortages was one of the main challenges in 2024, so a lot of the year was spent hiring. There were three retirements and three other officers who moved on. A lot of time was spent last year posting about the available positions, conducting interviews, and performing background checks. Two new employees will start next month. Chief Brown noted that there are five or six officers with less than a year and a half of experience. As a result, there is a lot of training to be done. That being said, an officer with 20 years of experience will come back on March 1, 2025, which will make a difference. He stated that drug arrests have been down. With the return of the more experienced officer, he believes there will be an uptick seen in the drug related cases.

The critical incidents were reviewed. Chief Brown shared information about a violent person in Pleasant Grove and Ogden. There were high speed chases and there was also non-compliance during the attempted arrest. That individual was shot and killed. It was a difficult situation to deal with at the beginning of the year. Chief Brown reported that there were a number of sexual assault investigations in 2024. There is currently a trafficking case underway. These are troubling kinds of investigations. As for the Flock equipment, that has been instrumental in solving several crimes.

Chief Brown shared a story about a stuffed animal that was returned to a child thanks to the cameras. He mentioned the plate readers near Cook Family Park. It was instrumental in the stolen firearms case out of Lindon. As for retirements, there are one or two people who have indicated that they will postpone their retirements. There will be continued efforts made to remain fully staffed. He noted that the reserve program will continue to be built as well as the cadet program.

Some money has been saved by switching from some F-150 pickups to Explorers. There are seven of them that will be decaled and then out on the streets. Chief Brown explained that this switch saves some money on the front end, but those vehicles are also a little easier to maneuver. Accidents are a concern, as there is an average of 65 per month in Pleasant Grove. He would like to see the number of traffic accidents reduced. Information about traffic stops was shared. Chief

Brown explained that this is not a high citation driven department. The intention is not necessarily to generate revenue, but to increase safety. There were 29 vehicles reported stolen last year. As for the overall calls for service, there were 17,000 for the year. Mental health related calls are on the rise. Those kinds of calls are time-consuming and are more unpredictable. It is important to be careful in these situations, especially when there are young officers responding to the calls.

Chief Brown discussed the Major Crimes Task Force. Drugs continue to be an issue. For example, there was a kilogram of heroin taken out of an apartment complex as well as Fentanyl pills. Highway Patrol has petitioned the Legislature for a 10-person team to focus on I-70 and I-15 for these transports from the south. A question was asked about the discrepancy between the numbers in 2023 and 2024. Chief Brown explained that a lot of work was done in conjunction with other Task Forces. If there is an incident that starts here, but then there is a search warrant in Salt Lake City, then the Salt Lake Task Force might end up with the reported numbers. Council Member Dianna Andersen asked if drugs are a City-wide problem or if there are specific areas that tend to be more problematic. Chief Brown stated that it is an issue in all areas, including in family-oriented neighborhoods. There are challenges facing the Police Department, including drug issues and fraud issues. There was an arrest two days ago where someone purchased electronics with stolen credit cards. Approximately \$5,000 worth of electronics were seized. Chief Brown pointed out that a lot of departments in the County are short-handed. It is difficult to remain fully staffed.

Council Member Andersen referenced the cadet program. Chief Brown explained that the program involves teenagers. It is not possible to become a Police Officer until 21 years old, but the program does plant a seed of interest. Currently, when there is an opening for a position, there are approximately 15 applicants. Council Member Andersen stressed the importance of experienced and knowledgeable employees. Chief Brown acknowledged that there are difficulties. The veterans have their hands full as do the supervisors. Everyone is doing their best to rise to the challenges. Council Member Andersen asked if there is an experienced officer for every rookie. Chief Brown denied this but noted that there is an experienced employee for every two newer employees. He reiterated that there were retirements last year and some are expected this year.

Chief Brown reported that the Legislature wants every school to have a guardian in place by the fall. A guardian would be someone who is armed and ready to confront an armed intruder. Council Member Steve Rogers asked if there are technological solutions being developed to fill some of the gaps. Chief Brown explained that tactics change over time, especially in situations like standoffs. There are also doorbell cameras and cell phone cameras that can be useful. American Fork has a similar population to Pleasant Grove but has 20 more officers. Pleasant Grove is a little bit behind, but everyone is doing their best. Additional discussions were had about the guardian program and whether or not the chosen individual would be able to engage in a situation. Council Member Todd Williams noted that it has been interesting to see the improvements made in the Police Department over the last few years. He expressed appreciation for the work done.

Council Member Williams left the City Council Budget and Planning Meeting at 9:50 a.m.

Parks Director, Deon Giles, shared information about Cook Family Park. It will be a wonderful amenity in the City. There have been a lot of people driving by and pulling into the parking lot already. It seems that there is a lot of excitement for it to open. As for the cemetery, there were

158 burials. The sales were down a little bit last year, but this year, the sales have already increased. There are 371 plots available. Generally, the average number is 154 sales per year. The headstone inspections started two years ago and there is a charge for that service. There were 88 of those inspections. There were 847 hours spent on trimming. Wi-Fi is available for the irrigation controller, which resulted in significant improvements. There was an incident with one of the vault companies taking out a power line and it took three months to return power there.

Director Giles reported that there was some vandalism in the cemetery on a weekend, but it was cleaned. There was also some windstorm damage. He shared information about new equipment. Administrator Darrington asked for details about when plots will be sold on the new site. Director Giles explained that it is all dependent on when it is seeded. The hope is to have seed in by the end of March or the beginning of April. He would like a year of growth before those areas are utilized. It is healthy to have the turf established before equipment is driven and there are burials. In the fall, once it is established, the survey company will come out to survey the lot. The first section of the cemetery will probably open next spring. The use will work towards the west. There will also be implementation of an upright headstone and a flat headstone layout. For example, there will be one upright and then two flat headstones. The uprights will be a little bit more expensive due to the maintenance costs. The flat stones make it easier to navigate the cemetery.

Administrator Darrington reported that there will be a rate study conducted. The lots in the new cemetery will be more expensive than the current cemetery. Part of that is an incentive to have all of the lots sold in the older area, but part of it has to do with the overall costs. Director Giles reported that there are between 2,000 and 3,000 spaces. There is uncertainty because some have been lost due to storm drain needs. He reported that there are 96 cremation niches. There are four cremains allowed in one lot, which will be an improvement in terms of the overall lot space used.

Custodial information was shared. There were 252 rentals and 184 hours were spent on events with 78 hours spent on projects. The paper products and supplies will likely increase with the new park. Director Giles shared information about the paper products used elsewhere. He also discussed the vandalism that has occurred. The brand-new Battle Creek restrooms were put in and within a week, all of the windows were taken out. However, the windows were left on site and were able to be reinstalled. He noted that since the camera was installed, there have been zero incidents. Discussions were had about vandalism whenever there is something new added to an area. Cook Family Park will have cameras installed to monitor what is happening there. There will be signs placed to inform visitors that there are cameras monitoring the park activities.

Director Giles reported that for tree maintenance, there were 706 hours spent on the work. The project numbers are still high as are the trails numbers. With the trails, there are not the same number of volunteers that there used to be, so a lot of that falls back on employees. Council Member Cyd LeMone asked if interested volunteers should reach out to the City. Director Giles confirmed this. He is also going to look into JustServe to see if that is effective. Information was shared about the Discovery Park batting cages, which have been heavily used. At the Lion Center property, some landscaping was done there. He discussed the shade covers and lighting at Discovery Park. Director Giles reported that employees participate in CPR renewal training.

Other projects in the City were reviewed. Director Giles reported that it has been interesting to look at the controllers and see what changes have occurred based on weather conditions. There were a lot of inspections conducted and repair work done on I-15 projects and others. The Discovery West playground was bid out and it will arrive on March 5, 2025. There were also some smaller landscape projects done and some tables were replaced. He reviewed some of the equipment that was received in the last year, including a new four-wheeler for snow plowing.

Director Giles reported that there was some flooding in Anderson Park this year. There was also a windstorm. Someone placed small plastic bats in the statue at Clock Tower, which he received some phone calls about. This last year, there were a lot of people cutting down trees. He shared some images to illustrate some of the issues that occurred. On the trails, there was a lot of brushing done this last year. There was also a reroute because of the fence. All of the kiosk maps were updated. Images were shared of the small trail loop. Director Giles added that there will be two cleanup days scheduled this year. The trails are heavily used, especially by different bicycle teams. It was noted that some who are not associated with those teams have expressed frustration that the teams essentially take over the trail system at certain times. It can be difficult to use the trail when those teams are there. Director Giles noted that the different coaches discuss which trails to use so there are not multiple teams there at the same time. He reiterated that the trails are well used.

Director Giles reported that there is an agreement with the Forest Service related to noxious weed treatment at the G. Last year, there was a lot of digging that was done. This year, there will be recruitment from the high school teams so there is assistance removing the thistle that is there. As for events, there were 124 events held and 13 volunteer projects. There were 74 non-scheduled events. Other accomplishments were reviewed, including the fact that there were 816 volunteers for a total of 1,300 hours. A lot of time was spent out at Cook Family Park for various meetings.

Community Development Director, Daniel Cardenas, shared information about Planning and Zoning. The numbers are similar to the previous year. When it comes to Building Permits, there was an increase last year due to the number of tenant improvements. The shells for some of the commercial buildings were already built, but then multiple Building Permit applications came in for the commercial units. The number of inspections increased last year, but it was not as busy as it was in 2021, which was one of the busiest years. Director Cardenas discussed Building Permits for new homes. In 2024, there were 61 new single-family dwellings added and 22 multi-family units. There will be an increase in multi-family units due to some upcoming projects.

Director Cardenas shared a graphic to illustrate commercial permits over the years. While there was a similar number of permits over the last two years, the valuation dropped. The reason is the difference between building the shells and the actual tenant improvements. Business License information was reviewed. The desire is to see a steady increase, which is what has been happening. There have been 40 to 50 brand new licenses per year. There are five to 10 businesses lost per year, but then new ones are added, so it balances out to an increased number. Director Cardenas looked at the number of Business Licenses in 2016 and compared it to what there is currently. He reported that the number is more than triple, which is good news.

In Code Enforcement, there was a drop in the total number of cases. Director Cardenas made note of the number of cases that are taken on per year and compared it to the number of cases that were

solved. There are usually 2% to 3% of cases that cannot be closed. Those are the more difficult and complicated cases. Every case is different, but there is a good ratio in place at this point. Director Cardenas shared an example image with the Council to illustrate enforcement efforts to address weeds. He expressed appreciation for the Code Enforcement Officer as it relates to these efforts. He shared before and after pictures of a dirt pile that existed. That matter has since been resolved. Another issue that can occur is when there are too many vehicles parked on a site. In cases like that, a neighbor might call with a complaint. There is then a meeting with the resident. Administrator Darrington noted that the language skills Director Cardenas brings to the table are a benefit to the City. He is a strong communicator and has been able to assist many residents.

Additional Code Enforcement examples were shared with the Council. It is possible to enforce in the backyard as well and there have been examples of neighbors filing complaints about those conditions. Director Cardenas shared information about a situation that occurred last year but was repeated again this year. There was a conversation with that resident. The Code Enforcement Officer position is a difficult one, but he is proud of all of the work that has been done to assist.

Recreation Director, Megan Zollinger, shared information about why recreation is so important to the community. She discussed the Wellness Wheel and noted that there are programs and events that hit different dimensions of wellness either directly or indirectly. Director Zollinger pointed out that there is an opportunity for growth when it comes to intellectual wellness. There are solid pre-school offerings in that area, but there is not anything focused on intellectual wellness for older age groups. Looking at what is available highlights where there are opportunities to grow and add to what already exists. Director Zollinger reported that increased Parks and Recreation spending is associated with decreased mortality rates. Access to Parks and Recreation facilities decreases healthcare costs for adults in the United States. There is a direct impact on the wellness of others.

In Utah, local Parks and Recreation agencies are estimated to generate \$1.25 billion in economic activity. In Florida, there is \$118 million in healthcare costs savings. There is not a social return on investment calculator for Utah at this time, but in the UK, for every one Euro that is spent, it generates four Euros in social returns. There is a great return on investment when it comes to Parks and Recreation. Director Zollinger shared some numbers that are specific to Pleasant Grove. 54% of residents in Pleasant Grove live within a 10-minute walk of a park. That number is expected to increase with Cook Family Park. 17,766 Pleasant Grove residents currently lack walkable access to parks. If Pleasant Grove provided the remaining residents access to a 10-minute walk to a park, it would reduce the annual healthcare expenses by approximately \$2 million.

Director Zollinger shared a purpose statement with the Council. It relates to the mission of the City and talks about connection within the community. She shared information about the senior programming that is available and showed pictures from the different activities. Director Zollinger reviewed the Recreation Center statistics. In 2024, there were 8,000 memberships sold and 26,000 day passes. There were 38,000 attendees to the fitness classes, but she noted that those are not necessarily unique attendees. There were 300,000 scans for those with memberships. For youth sports participants, there were close to 6,000. There were 12,700 childcare attendees. The pre-school program during the school year also serves approximately 200 children. It was noted that there are certain occasions where there is not a scan done, so the numbers might be higher. She shared a picture from a Foam Party. That party started two years ago and it continues to grow.

Discussions were had about the year over year numbers. Director Zollinger reported that the numbers were slightly lower last year. There has been a trajectory of growth at approximately 2,000 to 3,000 memberships and day passes. That was slightly down last year, but in the last five years, there is a clear pattern of growth. It was clarified that the numbers shown do not include pool passes. One of the biggest accomplishments of 2024 was the adaptive work. There will be an award received in March for the adaptive program. Disability fitness memberships and day passes have also been added. In addition, there are now disability fitness classes available. Director Zollinger shared information about the Jr. Jazz program. There is a professor from the University of Utah who has been part of the adaptive work and there is a lot of excitement.

Council Member Williams returned to the meeting at approximately 10:41 a.m.

Director Zollinger shared an image from the Day of the Dead event. The ofrenda had pictures from community members. She is not sure whether there will be a Day of the Dead celebration every year or every other year, but there was a positive response to the ofrenda. Director Zollinger next discussed the Run Like a Viking 5K event, which will be back again this year. There were 75 runners who participated in 2024. She shared information about the Special Events Coordinator and other employees. She expressed appreciation to everyone who handled the pool related work.

The City Council took a break from 10:46 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Library and Arts Director, Sheri Britsch, shared pictures and videos with the City Council to highlight what has been happening at the library in recent months. She shared a handout with meeting participants. When she started, the library was on par with the Recreation Center in terms of visits, but that is no longer the case. The library does not have the same capacity as the Recreation Center, but the library is doing well with almost 140,000 visits. She reported that there were 87 self-directed activities and 13,000 participants. It was clarified that self-directed activities normally involve a table that has an activity that can be done. For example, there is currently a Choose Kindness Month scavenger hunt activity that visitors can participate in. Director Britsch focused on what has been put into place this past year. One example is the Library of Things, which relates to items that can be used at home. There was also the puzzle exchange, which has received a positive response. The Library of Things currently has tools, a Cricut, Roku, weaving looms, projector, Blu-ray player, games, and ukeleles. All of these items can be checked out to use at home. The intention is to continue to grow the Library of Things to assist others.

Director Britsch reported that Kanopy has been added, which includes movies and television shows. There are also Yoto players, which have cards that play various audiobooks. A lot of people have their own players and check out the cards to listen to the books. The library purchased both the player and the cards, so those are available. The Yoto offerings have been very popular and are always on hold. There is not a contract in place with the company, as the Yoto players and cards have simply been purchased. As for Kanopy, a monthly fee is paid to offer that service to residents. Discussions were had about the current number of users. Ms. Britsch clarified that there is not unlimited access. There are certain tickets each library card holder can use in a month.

A lot of new programs have been introduced, including the Livestream program. A professor from Utah Valley University (“UVU”) was invited for the science related activities. Director Britsch shared some videos with the Council of the event. More tween programming has been added recently. There are teen programs and pre-school programs, but the tween programming is not as robust. As a result, there was a desire to add more for that age group. At one of the events, the tween group was taught how to do pottery. In addition, the library has been focused on programs for new adults, which includes individuals who are between the ages of 18 and 25. Director Britsch shared information about the TikTok videos that are filmed and posted. Council Member Andersen likes the creative process and all that goes into the videos that are shared.

There have been some bingo nights held, including one for the new adults age group. There are a lot of people who do not have opportunities to meet others, so these events are beneficial. It gives young adults without community a place to be. Director Britsch reported that the library has also started neurodivergent story time. There are normally not as many loud sounds and there is a quieter environment. The library has been trying to do more partnerships with people in the community. For instance, there was a music related activity and someone was asked to come in and teach drums to the participants. The Utah Screen Stars came in as well. The Fire Department helps out several times a year with events. The Police Department also comes for programs several times a year. It was noted that Stacy Martineau won Employee of the Year from Pleasant Grove. Director Britsch ended her Year In Review presentation with some library TikTok videos. She explained that everyone works hard to greet visitors and make sure all visitors are taken care of.

Council Member LeMone asked how the Pleasant Grove Library compares to libraries and programs in other cities. It seems like a lot is done in Pleasant Grove. Director Britsch confirmed that a lot is done at the library. The intention is to provide services for a variety of age groups. She likes that the library also focuses on underserved groups. It is National Library Lovers Month and someone recently shared a comment that stated this is the best library they have ever lived nearby. There are many wonderful activities for all ages and the library is a true gem in the City.

Human Resources Manager, David Packard, shared information about recruitment and payroll. There are 131 full-time employees. Within the last year or so, there were six retirements of employees with more than 20 years of experience. With the loss of those six employees, more than 150 years of service to Pleasant Grove was lost. There were 19 new or promoted full-time hires in 2024. The Police Department vacancies are difficult to fill with experienced employees. There were dozens of interviews conducted, but it is important to hire thoughtfully. The average number of employees for each payroll was shared. While there are 131 full-time employees, there are many part-time and seasonal employees. The average number is 371 employees paid every two weeks. Last year, there were 681 total W-2 forms issued. This is down from 798 with the pool closure.

As for benefits, there was an excellent medical loss ratio the last couple of years. The percentage for the last 12 months is 61%. There have not been increases over the last few years and PEHP has provided refunds. There was \$70,000 last year and \$106,000 the year before. Since there is a desire to increase training, there was harassment training pushed out to all employees last year. In addition, there was cybersecurity training provided for all employees. An employee wellness program was introduced. Some employees have taken advantage of this, which includes meeting

with a Financial Planner, reading books, going for a hike, and participating in a step challenge. Manager Packard reviewed the Compensation Analysis. Public safety is a lot more competitive than it was. There was an analysis conducted for Public Works and Parks last year.

Manager Packard reported that there were electronic performance evaluations last year to better automate processes and reduce paper use. The new hire paperwork will be electronic as well. He shared information about workers' compensation and employee health. Last year, there were not many claims. There were about 10 claims for workers' compensation and there was only one where an employee missed a significant amount of work. However, there were some employee health issues this past summer. There were some difficult circumstances. Council Member LeMone asked if those employees were referred to counselling services, which was confirmed. Manager Packard reported that there is a free employee assistance program that employees are encouraged to use. There is also a public safety focused program. The goal is to invest in employees.

Chief Engemann shared an additional update with the City Council. There have been two phone calls about insurance companies cancelling homeowners' insurance due to fire risks. Some insurance companies got hold of an old map the County had that shows some high hazard areas in Pleasant Grove. Those companies are now cancelling the insurance there as a result. Chief Engemann spoke to the U.S. Forest Service about that and was informed that the map cannot be changed for another year. He reiterated that the map being referenced is old and does not represent the current conditions. Anyone who contacts the City Council about this can be referred to him.

Finance Director, Denise Roy, reported that Pleasant Grove is considered a Triple Crown winner by the Government Finance Officers Association ("GFOA"). That means that all of the financial documents are all certified under the GFOA standard. It takes a lot longer to do the reports in a way that meets this standard, but it is beneficial. She visits with Staff on a weekly basis regarding the budget, grants, and bonds. Director Roy reported that in 2024, there was an audit of the credit card and fuel card monthly process. There were some policies implemented based on some of the findings. The State Auditor's Office changed the Impact Fee reporting again, so work is being done to address that. Something that started in 2024 but is still continuing in 2025, is work on an internal audit of payroll and time sheets. Interviews will start in the Recreation Department. The intention is for this to be done in all of the Departments. There will be discussions about how time is being reported. There will also be a questionnaire. This will help to shape some new policies.

Public Works Director, Neal Winterton, noted that the Public Works Department works hand in hand with many other departments. The department heads all work together well. Director Winterton shared some images of the work that has been done. The Public Works Department continues to emphasize the mission, vision, and values of the City. There was an egg drop for innovation and various activities were hosted to prioritize hard work and creativity. In 2023 and 2024, there was contractor and engineer training. While there were similar attendance levels, there were fewer contractors at the 2024 training. This indicates that information is being spread about the expectations in Pleasant Grove. Director Winterton referenced comments that were previously made to the City Council about a dangerous intersection near the junior high school. He went out and took some pictures of the area. The intersection on the right is the exit of the junior high

school. Some trees were blocking the sign. He spoke to the nearby homeowner about cutting back the trees. A new photograph of the area was shared to highlight the progress that was made.

Director Winterton shared additional images of the work done last year, including some work that was done along 900 West. There was a Storm Water Audit conducted. All of the records were reviewed over two days and then there was a full day of site inspections. The results are expected back around February 20, 2025. This will highlight the actions that need to be taken moving forward. He believes there were some areas where the audit went well, but there are areas of improvement as well for the long-term storm water management plans. The audit was conducted by the State of Utah with authority coming from the Environmental Protection Agency (“EPA”).

The shop and yard were cleaned last year. Director Winterton clarified that this was not due to the audit process, but because there was a desire to clean the area. He shared some example images with the Council and noted that there is more organizational work continuing to be done. A few meetings back, there was a question about Crestwood. He shared an image that he took with his phone last night to illustrate the lighting conditions. There is support to put in streetlights wherever necessary, but there needs to be funding to do so. There is not a streetlight installation budget. When directives come from the City Council, there is action taken to look into the area in question.

Council Member Rogers asked if he has marked locations where a streetlight might be appropriate. Director Winterton denied this. While there is a general sense of the spacing needed, a consultant is hired to do that work. It costs between \$4,000 and \$5,000, depending on the power source. Those streetlights are then added into the overall payment to Rocky Mountain Power. Some cities turn their streetlights into an Enterprise Fund and charge a few dollars a month. Administrator Darrington reported that a streetlight fee is not approved by the State Legislature. While there are some cities that currently charge something like that, it is not approved and could be challenged.

Council Member Williams noted that there are some lights that flicker. He asked if that is a maintenance issue that needs to be addressed. Director Winterton reported that Black & McDonald have been hired to perform routine inspections. If a Council Member sees a streetlight that is off or flickering, he asked that a member of Staff be informed so the issue can be fixed.

Director Winterton reported that there was a lot of construction last year. He collected some Facebook comments about the work that was done and shared several with the Council. Closing roads is disruptive and can be inconvenient, but it is also necessary so work can be done. Director Winterton shared information about the Transportation Utility Fee (“TUF”). Most of that was spent last year and there will be similar spending this year. He shared additional images of some of the work done last year, including the before and after of a new road. The shoulder was unfinished on the left, because to fix that area would cost approximately \$500,000. An image of a gateway to Grove Creek was shared to highlight improvements over the previous conditions. 200 West was discussed and a construction photo was shared. He next shared an image after the work was done. There was a complete reconstruction due to the previous condition of the road.

Director Winterton shared an image of Nathaniel Drive. There was a missing sidewalk and a resident came out and consistently asked that new sidewalk be put in. There was an image of the road before the work and after the work was done. However, the sidewalk was still not put in on

the left. In order to bring the sidewalk up and around one of the houses, there would need to be retaining walls. It would cost approximately \$100,000 to do that work. Since it costs that much to do an entire mill and overlay for a street, it does not necessarily make sense to add the sidewalk.

Photographs were shared of Orchard Drive and Locust Avenue. There was no sidewalk on either side, so the City applied for Safe Routes to School funding and received \$70,000. Director Winterton explained that right-of-way matters can be expensive, challenging, and difficult, but there were residents willing to work with the City. Pleasant Grove took the \$70,000 and added City funds to transform that intersection. He shared information about the 1100 North work and the associated closures. Additional images were provided to highlight the different projects done.

The meeting participants took a short lunch break from 12:01 p.m. to 12:20 p.m.

Director Winterton reported that a lot of precautions are taken during construction to mitigate issues. There is not a lot that can be done when certain storms occur, but the crews responded accordingly. The channel to the lake project is underway. He shared a slide to illustrate what it will look like. There will be a wider channel to carry more water and there will be all new culverts into the businesses. Images of the current condition were shared for comparison. At the end of construction, there will be almost 500 cubic feet per second (“CFS”). This is a great project and it will serve Pleasant Grove for a long time. Director Winterton next shared information about the Boulevard Well. The State inspection took place earlier that week and there should be an Operating Permit received in a month or so. There will be 2,200 gallons per minute (“GPM”) and it will provide operational options and redundancy to serve the residents. Director Winterton reported that there are some significant projects underway in the Public Works Department.

Information was shared about the meters. Approximately 6,000 of the 7,500 have already been done and that work should be complete by November 2025. That includes inputting the meter information into the billing software. Data will be collected during the spring, summer, and fall. There is engagement being done on a Rate Study on the Pressurized Irrigation (“PI”) and all of the other fees. There has not been a fee study conducted in seven or eight years, so a Rate Study makes sense at this time. As part of the Legislation that has been passed, there is a requirement to charge increasing block rates for water delivery. Director Winterton explained that this is a tiered rate structure. The Rate Study will be conducted and the findings will be available by November or December 2025. There will then be discussions about what the rate should be and then the rate can be implemented in April 2026 before the irrigation season starts. The intent is not to have a revenue windfall, but to meet the utility needs through a base rate and a consumption component.

Director Winterton shared an image of a meter after installation. An image of 2600 North was presented to the City Council. Director Winterton reported that the work there was completed this past year. In 2023, the Corrective Action Plan went from 380 to 60. In 2024, it was taken down to 30. That 30 will remain until the Battle Creek tank is removed, because there are some deficiencies there that cannot be remedied. The Gibson Well was discussed. He has asked that there be an entire Work Session dedicated to the changes and improvements made to the water system over the last several years. He offered to take Council Members on a tour to highlight some of the improvements that have been made. Employees take water quality very seriously.

There is continuous chlorine monitoring at seven sites. All of the wells have been updated to have continuous chlorine monitoring, distribution, and automatic dosing. 11 out of the 12 water employees are Grade 4 certified, which is an accomplishment. Director Winterton thanked the Council for listening to all of the Year In Review information ahead of the Public Works projects.

### **3. Public Works Projects – Neal.**

- **Roads.**
- **Projects – Utilities.**
- **Secondary Water Meters.**

Director Winterton shared presentation slides related to 2025 road rehabilitation. He discussed Murdock Drive and some drainage issues that needed to be determined. This has been bid out and it will be awarded at the next City Council Meeting. On Windsong Drive, the asphalt looks good, but the water line needs to be replaced. 1520 West needs a new water line and work needs to be done on the road. Director Winterton referenced 1550 East and Murdock Drive and noted that the work will cost \$500,000. Funds are being balanced to make that happen. He explained that there is a prioritized list of projects in the City. 600 West and 800 North is around the park. There is a water line that will be done before the road. 500 East is in rough condition and there is some funding available. Administrator Darrington reminded those present that a lobbyist was hired and that lobbyist was able to obtain almost \$900,000 in road funding. To do the full roadway with sidewalk, curb, and gutter, it is a \$9 million project. As a result, there will be some asphalt rehabilitation from 200 South to 1100 North. That will utilize the \$900,000 in road funding.

Between sidewalks, trip hazards, striping, crack sealing, road sealing, and ADA ramps, approximately \$550,000 is spent annually. Director Winterton shared a slide from last year and explained that this is now under construction. There are two separate National Resources Conservation Service (“NRCS”) projects. There have been some challenges with the funding, as some funding has not come through. 4000 North and Harvey Boulevard was discussed. Last year, it was 20% and it is now at 90%. It is almost time to talk to residents and receive signatures so a new estimate can be sent back to the Mountainland Association of Governments (“MAG”). The project can be bid in April or May and then built in the summer. This was originally the roundabout and is now envisioned to be a four-way stop with a couple of turn lanes. Director Winterton reported that the amount paid to contractors in 2024 was approximately \$38 million. The team has been incredible to navigate \$38 million of expenditures. As for his predications for 2025, less will be spent on roads and it is anticipated to be around \$6.5 million. Director Winterton shared a list of projects and explained that not all of the road projects and utility work can be tackled in 2025. However, almost all of the roads that do not require utility work will be completed this year.

There is a lot that happens within Public Works. Director Winterton shared a list of additional projects and example images. He discussed 500 North and explained that the same day the road was paved, there was a water leak. The employees work hard to address issues that arise in the City. Director Winterton reported that there is a red curbed street and that work was done yesterday. There are warning tickets being issued there currently. Discussions were had about Parking Enforcement Officers. It was noted that those officers can be sworn in, similar to an Animal Control Officer. For the red curbed area, Administrator Darrington stated that it will be

patrolled fairly regularly. The City Council discussed the new development that is taking place and the associated needs. There are limited officers available, so it might be worth looking into some specific enforcement officers. City Attorney, Tina Petersen, reported that there is some Legislature that will require cities to consider tandem parking as two spaces. In addition, garages cannot be required for certain types of development. There are new regulations to keep in mind.

Administrator Darrington likes the idea of having a part-time Parking Enforcement Officer who can patrol at set times. The officer could issue warnings or write tickets for the red curbed area, as needed. Director Winterton shared photographs to highlight more work from Public Works.

- **Cook Family Park.**
  - **Storytelling Competition.**

Director Winterton discussed Cook Family Park. He shared an image of the area during the demolition and compared it to the latest construction image. There is work being done for curb, gutter, and sidewalk with the property that has the pine tree. Some drone footage was shared from late December 2024. The restrooms should be completed at the end of this month. For the soft opening, there will need to be some fencing around the splash pad. There is still a large pavilion that needs to be installed. Work needs to be done on 600 West and 800 North and there will be some associated road closures there. It is not possible to close 600 West and 800 North at the same time, because 800 North will be a detour route for 600 West and vice versa. If there is a soft opening, there will be times when the north access or west access will need to be closed. In some cases, the park will need to be closed altogether to accommodate certain work. This includes the installation of the pavilion and pouring the splash pad. There needs to be a discussion about logistics. Most of the amenities will be available to use during the soft opening with the exception of the splash pad and the large pavilion. Administrator Darrington explained that the park could be opened in mid-March, but there will be times when the park needs to be closed down. Opening something and then needing closing it down every now and then could be a challenge.

Administrator Darrington reported that the splash pad will not be done until late May or early June. Until that time, it would be nice to allow residents to use the park, but there are some concerns about logistics. There could be resident frustrations if the park is open for a week and is then closed down for a week. Council Member Williams asked whether it would be preferable to skip a soft opening and focus on having everything done for the grand opening. Director Winterton clarified that the splash pad is weather dependent. It is six to eight weeks from the first pour. If there is comfort to start that process in April, then it could be open in mid-May, but it all depends on the weather. As for when everything could be completed, including the roads, that would be the first part of June. The opening date is currently scheduled as June 14, 2025. Council Member LeMone suggested roping off the splash pad area and having everything else open. Director Winterton reminded Council Members that the roads will be open and closed at various times. There will need to be some shifts back and forth between 600 West and 800 North.

Council Member Rogers is in favor of allowing access to the park as soon as it is safe. Council Member Williams believes it is possible to communicate clearly with residents to let them know about the road work that needs to be done. For now, it is possible to tell members of the public that some of the work is weather dependent. Council Member Andersen suggested having

appropriate signage to communicate with residents. Administrator Darrington thought it made sense to perform an analysis on March 1, 2025. Council Member LeMone believes members of the public will want to know what is happening before then. Administrator Darrington pointed out that it is possible to inform residents that the work and timeline is weather dependent. Additional discussions were had about access to the park. Director Winterton clarified that Staff can start to figure out the logistics, but it might be difficult to communicate the closures.

The timeline of the pavilion depends on whether or not there will be a soft opening. That decision will impact when the pavilion work is scheduled. Director Winterton reported that the park will need to be shut down for a few days to finalize the large pavilion. He offered to find out how quickly that work can be done and then share that information with the City Council. Director Winterton stated that the first Saturday of Strawberry Days is a good date for the grand opening. This is not intended to only be a ribbon cutting, but a celebration with food trucks and DJs. Council Member LeMone pointed out that there is a lot happening that Saturday. The following week is the parade. She wondered if it would be possible to have the grand opening the week before Strawberry Days instead. Director Winterton explained that he would need to double check. He reiterated that he is not able to predict the weather, which is what dictates the splash pad work.

Administrator Darrington pointed out that the City does not need to announce any specific date for the grand opening. It is possible to wait until there is clarity about the splash pad work. Council Members thought it made sense to aim for an opening date that is before Strawberry Days. Administrator Darrington reported that in mid-May, there will be clarity about when the splash pad work will be done. There can then be an announcement made about the grand opening date.

Council Member LeMone noted that once the warmer weather arrives, residents will start to ask about the park. It is important to have a general idea of when the park will be open. It was stated that on March 1, 2025, there will be information brought back about a soft opening. Staff will work towards a June 7, 2025, date and inform the City Council whether that is possible. Administrator Darrington explained that there can be an analysis conducted by May 15, 2025. There was no support from the City Council to hold the grand opening during Strawberry Days.

There will be a Storytelling Competition. Administrator Darrington explained that there are nine animals that are part of the playground. The competition will involve naming the animals and creating a backstory for each of those animals. The theme is kindness and the competition will start to be advertised shortly. First prize is \$2,500 and the story will eventually be published.

- **Swimming Pool.**

Director Winterton shared an image of the swimming pool demolition and the current conditions. The 5-foot ribbon is the first section of concrete and that goes all the way around the pool. He explained that this was needed to level it out. The deck was added around that. Discussions were had about the swimming pool layout and how to enter and exit the pool. Director Winterton reported that there is a good general contractor and an excellent Project Manager handling the pool work. The Project Manager is responsible for coordinating a number of different tasks. The pool is anticipated to be open during the fourth week of May. The parking lot may be paved if the budget allows for that additional work. Administrator Darrington reported that this project cost

approximately \$3 million, which includes the addition of a play structure, shade structure, and some lighting work. Director Winterton shared a list of the tasks associated with this project, which includes the pool and deck, chlorine and storage room, dumpster enclosure, and parking lot.

Administrator Darrington commented that the swimming pool area will look nice. Council Member LeMone asked about holding a grand opening. Administrator Darrington confirmed that this can be scheduled. Closer to the completion date, there will be something planned.

- **Discovery Park Pickleball Courts.**

Director Winterton discussed Discovery Park. He reported that the project ended with a two-year warranty and the warranty ends on October 1, 2025. There is a right to replace the slab if necessary. There will be some conversations with the contractor. Administrator Darrington explained that there are cracks in the pickleball and tennis courts. Director Winterton stated that the construction method is not performing as anticipated. Administrator Darrington reported that the north courts were done by a different contractor and those are fine. As for the pickleball and tennis courts on the south side, the general contractor hired All-Courts, but that company has since gone out of business. That being said, the contract is with the general contractor and not with All-Courts. The issues and concerns have been shared with the general contractor and there will be negotiations. He explained that the courts are playable right now, but the cracks will need to be addressed.

Director Winterton presented the Draft Road Plan for 2025. The reason that there is a bit of a wait to finalize this is because projects need to be bid out. The plan is almost finalized, but at this point is still in draft form. He displayed a list of the projects for the year. Once a few more projects are bid, there will be solid numbers. There are 115 roads listed, which is in addition to the more than 100 roads that were worked on last year. There is a lot of road work happening in the City. Numbers will be determined for the road work and then the projects will be prioritized.

Discussions were had about funding for road projects and some of the limitations at the State. Director Winterton shared a map that highlights the road work completed between 2019 and 2024. Administrator Darrington asked Council Members about any feedback they have received on the road work. It was noted that Council Members hear about speeding concerns most often. Council Member LeMone pointed out that some of the more recent complaints relate to the inconvenience of road construction. There were discussions about the information shared on social media.

The City Council took a break from 1:20 p.m. to 1:32 p.m.

#### **4. Budget – Scott and Denise.**

- **Review FY24 Budget Outcomes.**
- **FY 2026 Kickoff.**
  - **Budget Timeline.**
  - **Budget Items.**
    - **Public Works and Parks Wages.**
    - **Depreciation Fund for Cook Family Park.**
    - **Recreation Fees Study.**

Director Roy shared budget timeline information with the City Council. The hope is there will be meetings with the Directors this week to review the narratives and prioritize budget requests. There is information out to GBS Benefits, who negotiates the medical and dental. During the first meeting in March, there will be the one pager document presented. For the General Fund, it will show all of the new revenue. Most of that will be sales tax, property tax, and franchise tax. There will also be the uses listed, which includes items like salary increases, positions, and operational increases. On March 18, 2025, there will be additional budget discussions. In April, there will be two sessions. By April 22, 2025, the budget should be largely ready. The Tentative Budget needs to be adopted by May 6, 2025. There can be additional budget discussions in May. The public hearing will be held at the first City Council Meeting in June. The Final Budget needs to be adopted at the meeting on June 24, 2025, as the State Code requires budget adoption by June 30. The July and August timeline is based on Truth In Taxation Hearings. Director Roy noted that the budget must be submitted to GFOA in August.

Director Roy shared information about the Fiscal Year 2024 audit. The same audit firm was used, but there was a different Audit Manager. There was some training involved there, so the process took a little bit longer than usual. Director Roy is still working through what the revenue over expenditures will be, but it is looking positive. That will be included in the one pager summary. At the end of this month, the December sales tax will be received. That will provide more clarity on the revenues. In November, the entire State of Utah was down for sales tax. It is possible that there was a reporting anomaly. The final property tax distribution will be received in March.

Administrator Darrington reported that the market analysis was conducted for Public Works and Parks. There will be a mid-year adjustment for some departments. He wants to set up a Depreciation Fund for Cook Family Park to ensure that it does not deteriorate. When it comes time to replace something in the park, the future City Council will not need to find the funding for that. Administrator Darrington shared information about the former intern and her responsibilities.

Administrator Darrington informed the Council that Timpanogos Special Service District (“TSSD”) will increase their fees again. Last year, the increase was 40% and this year, the increase will be 15%. Council Member Andersen asked about the reason for the increase. Director Winterton reported that for approximately 12 years, TSSD did not increase the rates. TSSD was not keeping up with their own operational increases during that time. There are also State mandated discharge requirements to take into account. The increases are related to project costs. During the second meeting in March, there will be a recommendation for the utility rate increases.

Council Member Rogers asked for additional information about TSSD. Administrator Darrington reported that TSSD does the sewer treatment for all of north Utah County. The idea of the district is to have shared services, but there are shared costs as well and the City does not control the costs. There is a Board representative for TSSD and in the City that representative is Director Winterton.

## **5. Working Lunch.**

- **Open and Public Meetings Training – Tina.**

There was no Open and Public Meetings Training conducted due to time constraints.

## **6. Future Items/Issues.**

- **Downtown – Scott.**
  - **Update on Current Development.**
    - **Drew Armstrong Project.**
    - **Noel Vallejo Project.**

Administrator Darrington shared information about the downtown area. The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater and Cook Family Park have dominated a lot of the discussions over the last few years. Both of those are now coming to completion. The downtown needs will be higher on the priority list in 2025. He is seeking feedback from the Council on some of the downtown items.

Administrator Darrington provided an update on some current development. He reported that TestOut was sold, but that owner still owns the west side of Main Street, with the exception of the Rexall Drug. When the Mayor was elected seven years ago, there was a meeting about the plans on the west side. At the time, TestOut was using the buildings and their intention was to remodel or rebuild. Once the COVID-19 pandemic hit, there was a shift to work from home. Since 2020, most of those buildings have become vacant. His point of contact for that property is Bryce Hardy, who is the property manager. Their proposal was to take the wall down, finish the space, and put a storefront on it. The good news is that this section of Main Street will be remodeled. There was a concept presented approximately a year and a half ago, but it did not make a lot of sense for the area. Administrator Darrington reported that the old barber shop at the top of Main Street will be remodeled. There is a new tenant who will go in there, which is someone who sells stained glass. As for the old post office, there is a non-profit organization there that sells quilts. In his discussions with Mr. Hardy, it was communicated that the City would prefer to see sales tax generating businesses. Right now, there is uncertainty about what will happen with the development there.

Council Member Eric Jensen asked about the timeline for the wall. Administrator Darrington reported that something was supposed to be submitted by October 15, 2024. Initially, the intention was to tear down the mural. At some point, it was determined that the space would be finished with a storefront. An extension was then granted and the plans needed to be submitted by December 31, 2025. Partial plans were submitted with a commitment that full plans would be submitted. The full plans were submitted in late January and are currently being reviewed. Daniel Cardenas explained that this is for the Building Permit. Once that is obtained, there will be another discussion with the applicant. He has visited the site several times and different options were

explored. Administrator Darrington noted that once the storefront is built, it will be code compliant. That does not guarantee there will be a retail store there. According to the zone, there does not need to be a retail use. Additionally, there is nothing in the code that requires the building be occupied. The definition of blight was discussed as well as the current conditions at the site.

Council Member Rogers wants to be a good partner, but pointed out that partnership goes both ways. When he was running during the election, something he ran on was the downtown area. There have been some discussions, including ideas about enforcement and potential code changes. While there are now plans, there is no commitment, and he is uncertain what the submitted plans look like. Council Member LeMone pointed out that the code could be updated. The City has been patient, but the whole west side has been blighted for years. Administrator Darrington reported that ordinances that force occupancy were looked into, but the ones that were reviewed were residential in nature. Attorney Petersen explained that there were some in Illinois and in the Midwest where there were a lot of projects that became vacant. The language was largely to deal with rats, infestations, and disrepair. Most of the example ordinances did not apply to commercial buildings. There were various mechanisms, such as fines, but the fines were fairly minimal.

Attorney Petersen is willing to look into ordinance changes, but it is difficult to force a business owner to rent their space. Council Member Rogers clarified that the ordinances discussed would not necessarily impose a fine but would force commercial spaces within the City to have to apply for a Vacancy Certificate. As long as it remained vacant, that certificate would need to be renewed unless certain projects or improvements were proposed. The City has viable economic districts that are relied on to fund various services. It is fair to expect those areas to produce income by being occupied. If those areas are not occupied, then there should be formal registration as a vacant property. The City has been patient and has extended different deadlines, but Council Member Rogers does not want to have the same conversation a year from now. It was noted that residents have previously expressed interest in renting there but have been denied. Council Member Andersen wondered if it might make sense to write a letter to the property owner to express their feelings about the downtown properties. It might be beneficial to hear from the City Council.

Administrator Darrington made note of the Vacancy Certificate that was mentioned earlier. Attorney Petersen referenced the ordinances that Council Member Rogers provided. It would be an administrative registration similar to a Business License. The code could be amended to state that commercial businesses that are vacant for longer than a specific period of time need to obtain a Vacancy Certificate. There could be a fee associated with that certificate. The issue is that enacting this for the whole City means that someone would need to be hired to administer the program. The question is whether that is worthwhile. Administrator Darrington noted that hard deadlines and fines can be pursued instead of a Vacancy Certificate. He explained that in this case, extensions were granted because there was progress being made. Council Member LeMone wants something to move forward and suggested looking at what cities have done in similar situations. There should be some consequences, because the west side of Main Street currently looks blighted.

Council Member Rogers would be in favor of Staff proposing language based on some of the discussions the City Council has had. Pleasant Grove is starting to catch up commercially and these are existing problems that need to be dealt with. Certain decisions that are being made by property owners are economically hurting the City. If there is anything that can be done to protect

the rest of the residents and businesses that choose to do business in Pleasant Grove, then that should be pursued. He would like Staff to come back with language that encourages occupancy in the commercial districts. Mayor Fugal noted that the property owner is aware of the concerns. Council Member Andersen does not understand why there has not been a sense of urgency.

Administrator Darrington noted that Mr. Hardy told him a few months back that someone had an offer on the table to purchase the block, but then the deal fell through. Council Member Rogers believes the City can do something. He would like Staff to come back with some ideas. Additional discussions were had about the area and what can be done. Attorney Petersen is not sure how to legally force an owner to do something with their property. As long as it has not fallen into disrepair and is not an attraction for rodents, then the owner can choose to leave it vacant. Council Members discussed the current conditions of the buildings. Administrator Darrington reported that Staff will revisit the vacancy ordinances and will come back with some possible solutions. As for the letter that was suggested by Council Member Andersen, he does not feel that it will make a difference. Council Member Andersen wants to be able to tell residents that all possibilities have been exhausted. It would be meaningful to share Council Member concerns about the vacancies.

Administrator Darrington confirmed that it is possible to draft a letter from the City Council for Council Members to sign. He reviewed the action steps moving forward, which are as follows:

- Look into options related to vacancy;
- Enforce completion of the building with a hard deadline and no more extensions;
- Craft a letter from elected officials to Noel Vallejo.

Council Member Andersen would like information from the first two action items to be shared. From there, the City Council can craft a letter to the property owner. It was also suggested that Staff find out whether there are other cities that have dealt with this kind of issue in a main commercial location. Administrator Darrington offered to do some outreach. Another suggestion was made to focus on the commercial code language in order to be proactive. Council Member LeMone thought it made sense to review the code and update it wherever necessary.

A recommendation was made to talk about potential codes for neglected or derelict buildings. Attorney Petersen clarified that there are already codes in place for abandoned, neglected, and rundown buildings. The issue is that without a finding from Building Inspectors, Code Enforcement, or Community Development, that a building is derelict, there are limitations. It was noted that the white tile building is losing tiles and paint is coming off. A request was made for a dedicated presentation during a future City Council Meeting about some of the relevant codes. This is a transitional period for Pleasant Grove, so the codes might need to be updated to reflect certain changes. The City Council depends on Staff to bring forward relevant code information.

Administrator Darrington reported that he has made some notes about potential action items for Staff. There should be some information ready for the City Council in March. Staff wants to see success in the downtown area. He will make this matter more of a priority moving forward based on the City Council direction. The reason the wall is still there is because of the extensions that have been granted. It was reiterated that suggestions will be brought forward to the Council.

- **City Lead Downtown Committee.**

Administrator Darrington mentioned the possibility of a Downtown Committee and noted that it might be worthwhile to have something City driven. He would like to see business owners and property owners serve on the Committee. There can be discussions about potential scenarios. The individuals who own the most property on Main Street are Noel Vallejo and Drew Armstrong, but there are other property owners who could be involved in a Downtown Committee. Council Members expressed support for the Committee. It was noted that two Council Members can be involved. Council Member Rogers and Council Member Williams expressed interest in this.

- **Potential Grant.**

The City has applied for a grant with MAG for up to \$75,000. It would allow the City to bring on a consultant to review the downtown plans and meet with business owners and developers. Administrator Darrington explained that the focus of this would be implementation. For instance, ideas to assist business owners with remodels and redone facades. Council Member LeMone asked if the grant funding could be used for signage to improve the look and feel of the downtown area. She is not sure that a consultant will be able to tell the City anything that is not already known. Director Cardenas clarified that this is a planning grant that would be used for implementation. Assistant to the City Administrator, Kyler Brower, noted that there is uncertainty about whether or not the City will actually receive the grant. That should be known by the end of the month.

Council Member Rogers noted that in American Fork, there is a Qualified Opportunity Zone along State Street, but there is not one in Pleasant Grove on Main Street. Administrator Darrington believes the State has to designate opportunity zones. He offered to look into that further.

- **Permanent Lights.**

Administrator Darrington reported that the Mayor approached him about permanent lights. Instead of hanging the Christmas lights off of trees, it might be possible to have permanent lights installed instead. Director Giles explained that there could be 20-foot-tall permanent poles that would replace the existing light poles. The poles would be strong enough to hold the lights as well as larger banners. The budget request for that is \$180,000. The Mayor wondered whether it was possible to have this work done before Strawberry Days. Administrator Darrington explained that he is not certain what the contractor timeline would look like. Additionally, it is important to consider the other capital requests. It might be best to see the other requests before a decision is made on the light poles. Council Member LeMone pointed out that this would be an investment in Main Street. What is proposed could improve the overall appearance of the area.

Administrator Darrington asked if the City Council wants to consider the installation of the light poles this year or if there is a desire to look at all of the capital requests before making a decision. Council Members expressed a desire to look at the other requests before making a decision. However, if it is possible to review those and make a decision so the light poles could be installed before Strawberry Days, that would be ideal. The Council review will take place on March 4, 2025. Council Members requested that an estimate for the light poles, fixtures, and banners be

shared. Administrator Darrington offered to obtain the full costs. It was noted that approximately 16 light poles are needed. The proposed poles are not standard and would have a stronger base.

- **Other Ideas (Revolving Loan Fund).**

Administrator Darrington reported that some cities have a Revolving Loan Fund. Businesses can use it and borrow at a low interest rate with specific criteria. For example, it could be used to update a storefront or façade. The idea is that it would be paid back over time. It would not be a revenue generator, but a tool to help businesses and improve the look of the downtown area. It is a possibility to consider. It can also be discussed once the Downtown Committee is established.

Council Member Andersen shared information about Evermore. She reported that there are people who are interested in the property, so she does not believe it will be vacant for too long. Director Cardenas reported that he has walked the property and it has been gutted. Everything inside of the buildings are gone. Something needs to happen soon or it could be a nuisance within the year.

- **School District Update – Scott.**

Administrator Darrington discussed the Army Reserve property next to the high school. It is owned by the Federal Government and has been vacant for some time. He initially had conversations with them about an interest in purchasing that property. The Federal Government had to do environmental cleanup, but was told that governmental agencies would have the first option to consider the property before it went out to the public for sale. Jason Poulson in the Public Works Department has been engaged in a conversation with them recently to let them know that the City is still interested in a discussion. The environmental cleanup work is still not done. The initial idea was to have that property for additional parking, but Pleasant Grove High School is losing enrollment. As a result, the parking needs have become less of an issue than before.

Assistant Administrator Brower handed out a pamphlet to those present. It was explained that this is a year-end review. He asked if this is something the City Council would like sent to residents. If a copy is sent to every address, the cost will be approximately \$5,400. Alternatively, it can be shared on social media platforms. Council Member Andersen would like it to be mailed out. Other Council Members preferred that it be shared on social media platforms rather than through the mail. Council Member LeMone noted that it can be shared on the City website as well. It was proposed that the information be consolidated to a postcard instead to save on some of the costs.

Council Members discussed important dates that could be included on the distributed information. For example, estimated dates for the park and the swimming pool. There could also be information about the economic impacts. It was noted that an ad could be purchased in the Strawberry Days Periodical. Administrator Darrington offered to find out what the cost would be for an advertisement. Council Member Andersen suggested including the grand opening date for the park. The timing might not work with the Strawberry Days Periodical due to the uncertainty about the opening dates. It was suggested that Staff present some options and the costs associated with each. From there, the City Council can determine which option makes the most sense. Additional discussions were had about the best way to distribute information. It was noted that social media can be used to share information. In addition, there is the marquee outside of the library.

Assistant Administrator Brower reported that there can be a social media blast and information on the City website. It can be included in the newsletter as well and Staff can look into the cost for an ad in the Strawberry Days Periodical. There can also be printouts available at the front desks. There will be more information on the online version since the physical copy is more condensed.

Information about the school district was shared. Administrator Darrington explained that he has spent more time addressing the school district matters recently than any other individual issue in the City. The school district issue has been extremely difficult since there are a lot of moving parts. He was invited to a meeting yesterday with the Superintendent and the Business Manager to discuss the south district and what the future holds financially. Mayor Fugal shared information about the meeting and noted that some are baffled by the level of involvement expected by the cities. He believes each new School Board will need to work with one another to make determinations. At the meeting, he was told that there is a plan in place to address the \$20 million deficit. Administrator Darrington reported that the third iteration of this bill was released on Tuesday. In this iteration, it talks about what can and cannot be done administratively until the new School Boards take effect. The bill addresses what will happen between May 7, 2025, and whenever the election is certified. As soon as the new School Board is elected and the results are certified, it is possible for them to take office the next day. The City has been focused on language that states the west and the central would need to help with implementation costs. That was not in the first, second, or third draft, and he does not believe that he has a chance of being part of a bill.

Discussions were had about the bill and language was read aloud that was removed. “If a new school district is created, the new district shall reimburse the reorganized new district's documented costs to study and implement the proposal in proportion to the student population of each school district.” Council Member Rogers reiterated that the language was removed and language was added to state that everyone pays their own way. Administrator Darrington explained that outside of the financial issues, one of the concerns was about forcing the south district to hire a Director. The Director would take care of everything required a from May 7, 2025, until the new School District Board Members take office. That has been changed and instead of a “shall” it is now a “may,” so it is not something that is required. However, there are other requirements, such as a transition study. The cost of a Director would be high for a few months of work. Administrator Darrington does not believe there will be major financial decisions made until the new School Board takes office. No one really has authority to make final decisions before that point. Council Member Rogers noted that the Council has previously discussed the inconsistency of the allocation of resources. In one section, it states that the vote in the new districts will be divided by the tax. In another section, it states that certain funding will be based on student population. Administrator Darrington believes the three districts will need to sit down and negotiate all of the details. The bill outlines certain items, such as startup costs.

Administrator Darrington noted that a question was asked about the \$20 million deficit. According to Shane Farnsworth, who is the Alpine School District Superintendent, Alpine had a tax increase last year. For the south district, that is generating between \$10 million to \$12 million per year. That money can now be used against the \$20 million deficit. It is new revenue that will be going to the district. That money has not been considered in any of the financial projections that LRB has done or that Alpine School District has put out. Instead of a \$20 million deficit, there is more

likely a \$10 million one. Another comment was made about the consolidation and closing of schools. Through those measures, the rest of the \$10 million can be saved. There is a path forward that addresses the deficit. That being said, if the new School Board is not interested in consolidation, then the taxes could be raised. The Council discussed consolidation and seismic needs. Administrator Darrington explained that during the meeting, some potential scenarios were shared, but no decisions have been made. There are avenues available to address the deficit. The School Board will have a lot of important decisions to make in the first two years. This includes whether certain schools will close down or not, whether there will be a tax increase, and so on.

- **City Council Items/Issues for 2025 – Elected Officials.**

Administrator Darrington asked Council Members if there is anything they would like Staff to look into. Council Member Rogers mentioned the budget and noted that he is concerned about increasing utility rates. He lives in an area where there are a lot of retired people who have set incomes. Increasing utility rates at intervals that are higher than the social security yearly increases could make matters difficult. He is concerned about that issue and wants the City to mitigate this where possible. While he recognizes that it is not typical for the General Fund to be used to level increases out over time, this is a serious concern. Council Member Rogers is also interested in communication efforts with residents. He wants residents to be more aware of what is happening. There could be an active push to share information rather than simply posting something online.

Administrator Darrington explained that on March 4, 2025, there will be a lot of information presented to the City Council. On March 18, 2025, there will be an opportunity to further discuss what is proposed. At that time, the City Council can state whether there is a desire to make changes to what has been recommended by Staff. He asked for additional feedback from Council Members.

Council Member LeMone would like to see the pricing for a marquee at the Recreation Center. She envisions something similar to what is at the library. There could also be an inquiry about another marquee across from Walgreens where there is always a banner. She pointed out that marquees are effective when it comes to communicating information. The Council discussed potential locations for marquee signs. Administrator Darrington offered to look into the pricing.

Council Member LeMone was also interested in receiving a bid to replace the grates around the trees. A lot of them are heaving upward and it is becoming a safety issue. Administrator Darrington pointed out that replacing the grates will likely not address the problem. Council Member LeMone believes there was a way to address the issue and increase safety. There are different options that can be pursued. Administrator Darrington offered to look into marquees and the issue raised by Council Member LeMone. Some options can be brought back to the Council.

Director Britsch reported that it is somewhat complicated to program the marquee sign, but the same messages could be placed on all three signs. Council Member LeMone explained that she would not want the same messages on all of the signs. She would like to have information shared specifically to the location where the marquee is located. For instance, there could be items that were related to the Recreation Center at that marquee. Director Britsch explained that someone at the Recreation Center would need to learn how to program the sign, which there was support for.

Administrator Darrington reported that there will be a future Work Session with an Economic Development update and the Open and Public Meetings Act training. The latter is required by law and needs to take place on an annual basis. The next meeting is planned for February 18, 2025, and will take place at 5:00 p.m. It is a Special Meeting and there will be one item on the agenda. Attorney Petersen explained that it is considered a Special Meeting because it is not on the annual meeting schedule. She believes the State Code calls for that wording since it is unscheduled.

Administrator Darrington noted that the Judge interviews will be rescheduled. Those will likely take place on the fourth Tuesday in February. One of the candidates will be out of town on the originally planned date. He will send out an email appointment for the interview date. Technically, a quorum is not needed, and if there is a quorum, it must be noticed appropriately.

A question was asked about the pool of tickets that the City is receiving from The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater and whether there could be a public draw so some tickets were available to residents. Administrator Darrington explained that his concern has to do with logistics and how that would be handled. There is not a system in place for that kind of draw within the City. It was noted that The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater might have the necessary ticketing software for that. Administrator Darrington does not want to ask the theater to administer that kind of draw or lottery system on behalf of the City, as he does not feel that is fair to them. The way it is being handled currently with the employees is that there are two nights and there are 10 tickets for each night. The tickets are printed and picked up. When an employee signs up, it is possible for that employee to obtain two tickets from the City Recorder. Administering tickets to the general public could involve something similar, where the City houses the tickets and the recipients can pick them up at City Hall. The question is how to handle the draw in order to determine who will receive tickets.

Administrator Darrington reported that employees have the opportunity to sign up for tickets to attend Ragtime and Cinderella. The idea was to test out how that system will run for those shows. He will pick up the 20 tickets for each show and those will be brought back to City Hall to be administered. He is not sure how many employees will be interested in taking advantage of this. If the City Council wants all 20 tickets put into a draw for residents, that is fine with him, but the logistics need to be determined. However, for Ragtime and Cinderella, it is probably too late to do something for the public. It was pointed out that there are only 10 sets of tickets available for each show. There might be complaints from residents who are not selected. Council Member Andersen shared information about the ticket booths in New York City. If there are shows at the theater that are not sold out, it might be possible to have last-minute tickets available. Pleasant Grove residents could potentially receive a discounted ticket. Administrator Darrington noted that this is something that The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater could think about rather than the City.

Administrator Darrington explained that his preference is to leave the tickets as a thank you to employees for their dedication to Pleasant Grove, but ultimately, the City Council can decide who is able to access the available tickets. There are things that the City does from time to time to express appreciation to employees. In his view, this is a simple way to say thank you to employees for their efforts in Pleasant Grove. Administrator Darrington suggested that there be another discussion about this after the Ragtime and Cinderella performances. There has been transparency so far that the theater tickets are being used as a thank you to employees. If there are Council Members or residents who feel this should change, there can be another conversation.

**7. Economic Development Update – Scott and Daniel.**

- **St. John’s Development.**
- **Dave Runnells Project.**
- **McKay Christensen Project.**
- **Jared Osmond Project.**
- **Grove Cove Project.**
- **New Hotels.**
- **Other Projects.**

It was noted that the Economic Development update would place during a future Work Session.

**8. Final Thoughts.**

Administrator Darrington shared some final thoughts with the City Council. He expressed appreciation for The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater for the ability to hold the City Council Budget and Planning Meeting at this location. When the ribbon cutting ceremony took place, it was a meaningful experience, because the community was able to come together. Council Member Williams noted that he has heard positive comments about the quality of the performances at the theater. This facility is a draw and there are a lot of economic impacts associated with it as well.

Administrator Darrington thanked Staff for all of their efforts and contributions. Pleasant Grove is well served and a lot of impressive work is done. There is a clear mission and vision that the City employees talk about often. He explained that the mission is to provide exceptional services and the vision is to make the community better. Administrator Darrington also expressed appreciation to the elected officials for all of their efforts. Council Members took a moment to thank Administrator Darrington for his dedication to Pleasant Grove.

**9. Adjourn.**

**MOTION:** At 4:00 p.m. Council Member Andersen moved to ADJOURN the City Council Budget and Planning Meeting. Council Member Williams seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously with Council Members Andersen, Jensen, LeMone, Rogers, and Williams voting “Yes”.



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Wendy Thorpe, MMC  
City Recorder

*(Exhibits are in the City Council Minutes binders in the Recorder’s office.)*