



EMIGRATION CANYON CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING

May 27, 2025, 6:00 PM

UNIFIED FIRE AUTHORITY STATION 119

5025 E. EMIGRATION CANYON ROAD, SALT LAKE CITY, UT 84108

EMIGRATION CANYON CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES ****DRAFT MINUTES – UNAPPROVED****

Council Members Present:

Joe Smolka, Mayor
David Brems, Council Member
Catherine Harris, Council Member
Robert Pinon, Council Member

Council Members Excused:

Jennifer Hawkes, Deputy Mayor

Staff Present:

Marla Howard, MSD General Manager
Cameron Platt, Legal Counsel
Diana Baun, City Recorder

Others Present:

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Joe Smolka, presiding, called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM.

2. COUNCIL DISCUSSION TOPICS

A. Discussion on MSD Services and Budget Processes

Marla Howard presented a detailed financial overview comparing Emigration Canyon's finances to those of other municipalities in the Municipal Services District (MSD). She reviewed financial figures from January to June 2024, highlighting that the figures did not fully represent the year's total expenditures since most road maintenance occurs from June through October. For the first half of 2024, Emigration Canyon generated approximately \$325,000 in operating income from sales tax, road funds, grants, and interest, along with an additional \$326,000 from bond-funded capital projects, totaling around \$651,000 in revenue. She explained that a significant portion of Emigration Canyon's expenses stemmed from services provided by both county entities and third parties, including administrative overhead, animal services, indigent

EMIGRATION COUNCIL MEMBERS

MAYOR JOE SMOLKA, DEPUTY MAYOR JENNIFER HAWKES,
COUNCIL MEMBER CATHERINE HARRIS, COUNCIL MEMBER ROBERT PINON,
COUNCIL MEMBER DAVID BREMS

legal services, justice court, code enforcement, engineering, and Public Works operations. She emphasized that while some expenses are allocated based on population rather than usage, others, like engineering and public works, are billed directly based on tracked time and equipment use in the jurisdiction. Emigration Canyon's direct expenses during the six-month period reached nearly \$1.1 million, leading to a budget deficit of approximately \$904,000 for the period. The deficit was described as a subsidy rather than a debt, covered by surplus funds from unincorporated areas within the MSD. Howard clarified that the MSD was legislatively established to allow unincorporated areas to financially support smaller municipalities like Emigration Canyon, and changing this arrangement would require legislative action. A historical financial review showed that in 2023, Emigration Canyon's total income was nearly \$1.2 million with expenses around \$1.1 million, resulting in a smaller deficit of about \$700,000. In 2022, the Canyon incurred higher expenses due to extensive public works, including an overlay project, resulting in \$1.4 million in expenditures.

Council Member David Brems inquired about the breakdown and justification for various expenses, particularly for Public Works operations.

Marla Howard explained the billing mechanisms and noted the complexity of accessing detailed backup data.

Council Member Robert Pinon highlighted that Emigration Canyon serves not only residents but also a large volume of external traffic, contributing to infrastructure wear and tear, which Howard agreed was a valid justification for financial support.

Marla Howard also noted that Emigration Canyon is not currently utilizing the Municipal Energy Tax (MET), which other municipalities have implemented. There was a discussion about the differences between the MET and franchise taxes and how they are applied and collected. Cameron Platt clarified the distinctions and processes for implementing each tax. The council discussed the potential to implement these taxes to reduce reliance on MSD subsidies and build a local fund for future projects.

Council members emphasized the need to strategize around tax implementation and possible legislative outreach. Marla Howard suggested seeking funds through tourism and state legislation, noting that other municipalities have successfully done so. Council members requested a memo outlining steps to pursue such funding, and Marla Howard indicated she had already communicated some of this to legal counsel. Toward the end of the meeting, discussions turned to fund balances, with uncertainty about how current balances were reflected in budget documents.

B. Discussion on Commercial Dog Walkers

This council agreed to move this discussion to the next Workshop meeting.

3. Adjourn

Council Member Brems moved to adjourn the May 27, 2025 Emigration Canyon Council Workshop Meeting. Council Member Pinon seconded the motion; vote was 4-0, unanimous in favor with Council Member Hawkes absent from the vote.

The April 22, 2025 Emigration Canyon Council Workshop Meeting adjourned at 6:50 PM.

The May 27, 2025 City Council Meeting Workshop Minutes were Approved by the City Council on the 24th day of June 2025:

ATTEST:

Joe Smolka, Mayor

Diana Baun, City Recorder

DRAFT