

**MINUTES OF MORGAN CITY
COUNCIL WORK MEETING**

May 13, 2025; 6:24 P.M.

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS
PRESENT:**

**Mayor Steve Gale, Tony London, Jeff Wardell, Eric
Turner and Dave Alexander**

STAFF PRESENT:

**Ty Bailey, City Manager; Gary Crane, City Attorney,
and Janet Pace, City Recorder**

EXCUSED:

Jeffery Richins

OTHERS PRESENT:

**Janell Walker, Morgan County Assessor,
Lindsey Wilde, Avery Wilde**

This meeting was held in the Council Conference Room of the Morgan City Offices, 90 West Young Street, Morgan, Utah. The meeting was streamed live on YouTube and available for viewing on the City's website – morganutah.org.

This meeting was called to order by Mayor, Steve Gale.

**1. PRESENTATION – MORGAN COUNTRY HISTORICAL BUILDING PROPERTY TAX
CREDIT**
Morgan County Assessor- Janell Walker

Janel said that last year we created a homestead exemption to help seniors with low income pay property taxes. Now, we're looking at a new proposal to support the preservation of historic homes and businesses. Cherril Gross from the Morgan Valley Preservation Society suggested a tax credit to help maintain historic properties, which can be expensive to restore. The idea is to offer tax credits for about 100 qualifying properties in the city, mainly those built before 1940. Homes must maintain above-average historical quality, and modern alterations could disqualify them. The Morgan Valley Preservation Society would recommend properties, and I would assess them. Homeowners could get up to \$1,200 (or 20%) in credit; businesses up to \$2,000 (or 50%). This hasn't been presented to county commissioners yet—we're first seeing how the city feels about moving forward.

Tony asked Janel to explain what Marshall & Swift was. Janel explained that Marshall & Swift is a national cost guide used by assessors and appraisers across the United States. Janel said that assessors rely on Marshall & Swift to determine how much a building should be worth based on its structure and materials. It's a trusted resource that ensures everyone is using the same standards, no matter where they are.

Dave added that, as an appraiser, you can use Marshall & Swift to cross-check your own evaluations and make sure they align with typical values across the country. It's a reliable reference for fair assessments.

The mayor asked about how condition is ranked, and Janel explained that a property ranked as "average" would be a Rank 2—meaning it's in decent, livable condition. If it's falling apart, it would be rated "low," or Rank 1. So, if you're evaluating a property, rank 2 is your baseline for what's considered acceptable.

Tony then asked if Marshall & Swift assigns those rankings. Janel confirmed that it does—by looking at building features, materials, and condition. If someone upgrades their property (like improving finishes or structure), they could move from "average" to "good" or even "excellent."

Janel explained that properties would be reviewed annually to stay eligible. Dave suggested a longer review cycle to reduce the burden, which Janel agreed is worth considering since the program is still new and may influence future state policy.

Steve asked if preservation is ongoing, and Janel said yes—especially for commercial buildings, which require heavy investment just to maintain. She notes that commercial property owners in historic areas often struggle and could benefit most from the credit.

The mayor asked if the city could move forward with the historical tax credit on its own. Janel explained that while the city can approve it, county commissioners still need to sign off because the credit affects broader tax revenues, including the county and school district. She suggested involving the school district early, since they receive about 40% of property taxes.

Janel explained it will take yearly work to evaluate historic homes, and she's willing to check a list of about 100 properties. Ty said homeowners must apply to participate.

2. CHICKEN ORDINANCE

Ty followed up on a public request for a chicken ordinance like Layton's but suggested a simpler approach: if you have over half an acre, you can keep up to 25 chickens (no roosters); under half an acre, limit it to 4-6 chickens. The mayor agreed it's simpler than Layton's sliding scale.

Eric asked about max numbers and containment, emphasizing chickens should be fenced in and noting roosters often sneak in despite rules. Ty agreed and wants clear rules.

Gary advised keeping the ordinance simple for easier enforcement since the city has limited staff. He stressed chickens must be contained to avoid neighborhood issues.

Dave asked if it needs a public hearing; Gary confirmed Planning would hold one before the Council votes.

This meeting was adjourned at 7:02 p.m.


Janet Pace, City Recorder


Steve Gale, Mayor

These minutes were approved at the June 24th 2025 meeting.