

**MURRAY CITY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETING**

Minutes of Tuesday, June 3, 2025

Murray City Hall, 10 East 4800 South, Council Chambers, Murray, Utah 84107

Attendance:

Council Members:

Paul Pickett	District #1
Pam Cotter	District #2 – Council Chair
Scott Goodman	District #3
Diane Turner	District #4
Adam Hock	District #5 – Council Vice-Chair

Others:

Brett Hales	Mayor	Jennifer Kennedy	City Council Executive Director
Craig Burnett	Police Chief	Pattie Johnson	Council Administration
G.L. Critchfield	City Attorney	Brenda Moore	Finance Director
Emily Barton	Finance	Brooke Smith	City Recorder
Julia Pehrson	Murray Library	Kim Sorensen	Parks and Recreation Director
Kate Hoag	Murray Library	Chad Wilkinson	Community and Economic Dev. Director
Cody Giles	Murray Library	Greg Bellon	Power Director
Rob White	IT Director	Isaac Zenger	IT
Citizens			

Call to Order: 6:30 p.m. – Council Member Pickett

Approval of Minutes: Council Meeting, May 6, 2025 and May 13, 2025.

MOTION: Mr. Hock moved to approve both sets of minutes and Ms. Turner SECONDED the motion.

Voice vote taken, all “Ayes.” Approved 5-0

Citizen Comments:

Michelle Kruger – Murray Citizen

Ms. Kruger expressed gratitude to the City for paving her parking strip last fall. She explained the strip was difficult for her to garden on 1300 East, which borders the property line of Woodstock Elementary.

Karen Summerhays – Murray Citizen

Ms. Summerhays encouraged every senior to attend the Murray Senior Recreation Center, described various activities and expressed gratitude to the City for meeting needs of Murray’s low income seniors at the center.

Marshall Smith – Murray Citizen

Mr. Smith suggested the City consider implementing a reduced rate, or a one-time fee for seniors who need to license animals.

Special Presentation:

Presentation of an Award of Financial Reporting Achievement to the Finance Department. Mayor Hales commended Finance Director Brenda Moore and Finance Controller Emily Barton for great leadership and expressed appreciation to all finance staff.

Consent Agenda:

1. **Consider confirmation of the Mayor’s appointment of Daniel Cody Giles to the Library Board for a term beginning July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2028.**

2. **Consider confirmation of the Mayor's appointment of Kate Hoag to the Library Board for a term beginning July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2028.**

MOTION: Mr. Hock moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Mr. Goodman SECONDED the motion.

Council Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Cotter	Aye
Mr. Goodman	Aye
Ms. Turner	Aye
Mr. Hock	Aye
Mr. Pickett	Aye
Motion passed:	5-0

Public Hearings:

1. **Consider an ordinance adopting the transfer of monies from enterprise funds to other city funds.** Ms. Moore explained that transferring reserves money from the Water, Wastewater and Power Funds were necessary for providing revenue to the GF (General Fund). The total in transfers out was approximately \$5.24 million to cover all administrative costs associated with the operations of each enterprise fund. She explained how the money subsidizes services that would otherwise require a 39.8% property tax increase to cover costs and shared a chart reflecting all GF revenue. She presented the State required cost breakdown showing how enterprise funding would pay for the City's administrative services and overhead expenses.

The public hearing was open for public comments. No comments were given, and the public hearing was closed.

MOTION: Mr. Goodman moved to approve the ordinance. Ms. Turner SECONDED the motion.

Council Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Cotter	Aye
Mr. Goodman	Aye
Ms. Turner	Aye
Mr. Hock	Aye
Mr. Pickett	Aye
Motion passed:	5-0

2. **Consider an ordinance approving and adopting compensation increases for the Executive Municipal Officers of the city for Fiscal Year 2025-2026.** Ms. Moore reviewed State Code requiring the public hearing for compensation increases, noting that pay increases have always been discussed as part of the City's budget. She outlined details and benefits of the Step Plan and confirmed that all employees would receive a 2.5% COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment), all employees would receive the appropriate step increase on their next step date and some employees would receive a market adjustment. A chart was displayed reflecting compensation increases for FY (Fiscal Year) 2025-2026.

The public hearing was open for public comments. No comments were given, and the public hearing was closed.

MOTION: Ms. Turner moved to approve the ordinance. Mr. Hock SECONDED the motion.

Council Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Cotter	Aye
Mr. Goodman	Aye
Ms. Turner	Aye
Mr. Hock	Aye
Mr. Pickett	Aye
Motion passed:	5-0

3. **Public Hearing for the proposed Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget.** Ms. Moore said the GF budget was balanced

with no use of reserves, but with using \$4.7 million of the .2% optional sales tax revenue. The tentative budget included a 5% Property Tax revenue increase. Employees would receive a 2.5% COLA and the Step program would be fully funded. The budget proposed an insurance increase of net .25% on existing employees, dental increase of 1.3% and the City would continue the 85%/15% split on premiums. Full-time employee requests are one police lieutenant, one wastewater technician and one arborist. Pay ranges would be increased to be within 5% of average market for 85 positions, affecting 162 employees.

Ms. Moore reviewed Internal Service Funds regarding the Central Garage Fund and the Retained Risk Fund where spending would be reduced. The Library Fund would continue to save for a new facility or remodel. The Water Fund would spend \$2 million of reserves to complete scheduled projects, the Wastewater Fund would use \$1.3 million and the Power Fund would use \$2.8 million. With no capital in the Solid Waste Fund reserves would naturally spend down until a rate increase was determined by Trans Jordan Landfill for garbage services. The Storm Water Fund anticipated that once a new Master Plan was completed significant project spending would occur.

Highlights of the GF were noted as the Ending Fund Balance at \$16 million, the 5% property tax increase providing \$618,387 in revenue for contributing to one police lieutenant position and running the Murray Theater that is estimated at \$.9 million annually. Sales Tax Revenue was budgeted at FY2024 actual less 1% to help control costs. Personnel costs increased 4% or 1.5 million, operations costs decreased 4% or \$472,432. Ms. Moore reviewed sources that provide revenue to the GF and all GF expenditures by function. All one-time Capital Improvement Program Fund projects totaling \$18.5 million were outlined.

Ms. Turner asked if a property tax increase was really needed this year and what the budget impact would be if a 5% property tax increase was not implemented. Ms. Moore explained instead of the tax increase two simple solutions were possible. First was to increase the .2% Optional Sales Tax budget by \$510,000 and allocate new property tax growth and return all unspent money back to reserves at the year end. Second solution was to draw money from the GF reserves, which would then remain at 25% of revenue an equivalent to \$15.4 million instead of \$16 million. Ms. Moore said if the property tax increase was delayed one year, next year's budget would be fine.

The public hearing was open for public comments. No comments were given, and the public hearing was closed. Mr. Pickett clarified the public hearing did not include a vote on the budget, that would occur after Ms. Moore made final budget adjustments.

Ms. Turner preferred the .2% Optional Sales Tax revenue increase and not use GF reserves. Mr. Hock noted the .2% revenue would end in 2030 and questioned whether the City should rely on it. Mr. Pickett expressed concern that without an increase now, a higher tax increase would eventually be needed. He asked if the City was weaning itself from the .2% revenue source since it would end in 2030. Ms. Moore said that was the hope, but costs were rising at the same rate.

Mr. Pickett felt without a property tax increase the City would fall behind. Ms. Moore noted that this year each department was required to cut budgets by 1% to prepare for the loss of revenue in the future, but the savings was used for salary increases. She felt a 3% tax increase would not make a difference one way or another. Mr. Pickett said the numbers didn't add up for him. He felt that as costs kept rising on everything, avoiding a property tax increase now seemed more like a token gesture than a practical solution, because in reality prices were going up. He expressed concern that whether GF reserves were used or other adjustments were made they were painting a picture that shouldn't be painted. He clarified he wanted to be sure they were making the right move and he was not necessarily saying no to removing the tax increase.

Mayor Hales said unless the budget was short millions of dollars, he would never agree to avoiding the property tax increase because the shortfall was roughly \$600,000. Ms. Moore confirmed the amount she would draw from reserves would be approximately \$400,000. Mayor Hales said citizens were promised that a 20% to 30% increase would not happen again and at the most a 5% increase would occur. He supported eliminating the property tax increase because using \$400,000 from reserves wouldn't harm the reserves or impact next year's budget.

Mr. Goodman said if all unspent money was returned to reserves anyway why not just use reserves. Ms. Moore said that was the easiest choice for her and reserves would still remain at 25.9%. There was consensus to use GF reserves to balance the budget. Ms. Moore would calculate new property tax growth, make other financial adjustments, then present new figures and the addendum at the June 17, 2025 council meeting when the Council would consider the final budget.

Business Items:

1. **Consider an ordinance amending Section 2.66.020 of the Murray City Municipal Code relating to elections.** City Recorder Brooke Smith recapped about the request to implement four amendments to be in compliance with State Code.

MOTION: Ms. Cotter moved to approve the ordinance. Mr. Hock SECONDED the motion. the need to update City Code regarding Elections. The

Council Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Cotter	Aye
Mr. Goodman	Aye
Ms. Turner	Aye
Mr. Hock	Aye
Mr. Pickett	Aye
Motion passed:	5-0

2. **Consider a resolution amending the Murray City Municipal Council Guidelines and Policy relating to Municipal Elections.** City Council Executive Director Jennifer Kennedy presented changes to the Municipal Elections Section of the City Council Policy and Procedures Handbook regarding elections and council office staffs interaction with Council Members during a municipal election. Ms. Kennedy clarified that council staff should remain completely neutral during a municipal election. Council staff shall not engage in any election campaign related activities while fulfilling their duties as a Murray City employee. Staff may not assist with conducting research, discussing campaign issues, scheduling appointments, holding campaign related meetings or events and organizing fundraising activities.

MOTION: Mr. Hock moved to approve the ordinance. Ms. Cotter SECONDED the motion.

Council Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Cotter	Aye
Mr. Goodman	Aye
Ms. Turner	Aye
Mr. Hock	Aye
Mr. Pickett	Aye
Motion passed:	5-0

Mayor's Report and Questions: Mayor Hales said the grand opening of the Murray Armory was a great success and reported about the Light Up Navajo project thanking linemen and the City Council for their support.

Adjournment: 7:25 p.m.

Pattie Johnson
Council Office Administrator III