

MOAB CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
January 9, 2026

Special Meeting Attendance:

Moab City Council held a Special Meeting on the above date at the Fairfield Inn in Moab, Utah for the purpose of a strategic planning retreat. Archived audio is at www.utah.gov/pmn. Mayor Joette Langianese called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. Councilmembers Kaitlin Myers, Jason Taylor, Colin Topper, Miles Loftin and Tawny Knuteson-Boyd attended. Also in attendance were City Manager Michael Black, Recorder Sommar Johnson, Attorney Nathan Bracken, Public Works Director Levi Jones, Strategic Initiatives and Sustainability Director Alexi Lamm, Parks, Recreation and Trails Director Patrick Trim, Utilities Director Obe Tejada, Assistant Police Chief James Blanton, Jr., Communications Director Lisa Church, Treasurer Marcy Mason, Human Resources Director Dani Guerrero, Community Development Director Cory Shurtleff, Recorder Assistant Eve Tallman and one member of the press.

Capital Improvement Priorities and Bonding:

Mayor Langianese pointed out the Council's mandate to use municipal property tax funds specifically for capital improvement projects. City Manager Black described priority projects, including stormwater and flooding mitigation, roads, and City infrastructure. He presented funding needs for the projects, for a total of \$30 to 40 million. He presented bonding options and payoff schedules with prevailing interest rates. He described expected property tax revenues and current bond debts. Utility Director Tejada brought up the water and sewer elements of proposed road projects, and enterprise funds for water and sewer were discussed. Use of Recreation, Arts and Parks (RAP) tax funds was discussed, as well as the RAP tax expiration date in 2030. It was explained that Council would determine which projects to fund with bonds. The ability to procure adequate bids was considered.

Personnel Strategies:

Human Resources Director Guerrero brought up equity evaluation in lieu of a salary survey and explained there were a small number of high-earning individuals whose longevity and high salaries compounded their earnings when combined with cost-of-living adjustments (COLA). A proposal was presented to freeze increases for those earning double the area median income (AMI) to reduce the fiscal impact of salaries and to increase sustainability. Mayor Langianese brought up a review of the City's employee benefits and discussion ensued regarding the housing stipend and hiring bonus for law enforcement officers. Line of duty incentive pay was discussed, as well as longevity pay. Guerrero stated she would prepare a personnel proposal in the coming months for Council review.

Policies:

An overview of existing City policies from the last five years was presented, and potential new or updated policies were discussed, including Community Contributions, annexation, general plan, storm water, downtown plan, water master plan and wildfire protection plan. Councilmembers and staff proposed other potential policies including bid approvals, easement requests and dark sky. Management and tracking methods for all the City policies were deliberated.

City-wide Property/Asset Review:

The City's properties were reviewed, including well sites, parks, buildings, vacant land and parking lots.

Community Outreach Strategies:

Councilmember Topper brought up that information voids are filled with angry social media voices. He said he wants to be proactive and to have the Council accessible to residents to learn about and discuss issues. Booths, meetings, videos and other methods for engagement were mentioned. Mayor Langianese pointed out that there was little drama at the City government, and she wanted to find ways to publicize the excellent work of the staff. Councilmember Taylor talked about meeting directly with business owners and Mayor Langianese concurred that meeting face to face was better than social media. Councilmember

Loftin said there were many ways to approach community connections and included text messages and meet-ups beyond campaign seasons. Councilmember Knuteson-Boyd brought up a troubled former attempt with drop-in meetings with council members. She described low attendance and little productive outcome. She offered that meetings with seniors at the Grand Center were often productive. She also brought up public comment opportunities, a monthly newsletter and neighborhood meetings. Councilmember Myers expressed her interest in getting more residents to attend meetings.

Annexation Policy Plan:

Community Development Director Shurtleff and City Manager Black presented potential new boundaries for the annexation map. Discussion ensued regarding passive versus more aggressive annexation of islands and peninsulas within City limits, as well as areas for future annexation. Expanding the boundaries to the San Juan County line and north of the Colorado River were mentioned among other expansion areas. City Manager Black stated that the City was not likely to exceed the standard for receiving resort community taxes, which is a significant revenue stream for the municipality. He said that the tax is based on a ratio of lodging rooms compared to the number of residents, and the current number of rooms is 215 percent more than the population of Moab. It was proposed that Council would be presented with a new boundary map for adoption by June.

Budget Process and Overview:

City Manager Black presented a timeline for adoption of the budget including public hearings, Council workshops, state-required meetings and adoption of a tentative budget and a final budget. Financial expertise as contract work in lieu of a finance director was mentioned.

Open and Public Meetings Training:

Attorney Bracken presented training for staff and elected officials regarding state statute regarding open meetings as well as Council rules of order and procedure.

Executive Session:

Councilmember Knuteson-Boyd moved to enter an executive (closed) session for the purpose of discussing the purchase, exchange or lease of real property and pending or reasonably imminent litigation. Councilmember Topper seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Mayor Langianese convened the closed session at 1:52 p.m. Councilmember Topper moved to end the closed session. Councilmember Knuteson-Boyd seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Mayor Langianese ended the closed session at 2:50 p.m.

Adjournment:

The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 2:50 p.m.

APPROVED: _____ ATTEST: _____
Joette Langianese, Mayor Sommar Johnson, City Recorder