

1 **MINUTES OF THE HELPER CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

2 **Thursday, January 8, 2026**

3 **at 6:00 p.m.**

4 **in the Council Chambers**

5 **19 South Main Street**

6 **Helper, Utah 84526**

7
8
9 **ATTENDANCE:**

10 Mayor Lenise Peterman

11
12
13 **Council Members:**

14 Tyson Damron

15 Robert Olson

16 Ruth Lee

17 David Palacios

18 Edward Chavez

13 **City Staff:**

Community Administrator: Cole Stapley

City Recorder: Traci Bishop

Deputy Recorder: Shaley Vasquez - Absent

Police Chief: Sean Draper

Police Officer: Garrett Newman

Public Works Co-Directors:

DJ Romero & Brittany Hansen – Hansen absent

City Attorney: Dominique Kiahtipes

Museum Director: Roman Vega

19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27 **CITIZENS:**

28 Kathy Fausett, Jeanann Zmerlikas, Nancy Elkins, Roman Vega, Kristi Mingus,
29 Christie Wilde, Roegun Wilde, Laska Hayes, Jerri Burgess, Angel Vila, Richard
30 Pasmann, Aidan Mortensen, Debbie Davis, Charlene Burnham, Gary Burnham,
31 Jared Haddock, Susanna Watts, Kristi Telbou

32
33
34 **PUBLIC COMMENT**

35
36
37 **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE DECEMBER 4, 2025 MEETING.**

38
39 Council member Ed Chavez asked for one request: from now on, where citizens are,
40 Roman Vega is listed and Council member Chavez asked for him to be moved up to
41 where the staff are listed, as he is a member of staff.

43 Council Member Chavez moved to approve the minutes from December 4, 2025 with
44 the mentioned change. Council Member Palacios seconded the motion. Motion
45 carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Lee</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Damron</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

46
47
48

49 **PRESENTATION OF AWARD TO OFFICER GARRETT NEWMAN FOR**
50 **EXEMPLARY SERVICE – CHIEF DRAPER.**

51
52 When Chief Draper was appointed, one of his goals was to acknowledge the staff for
53 exemplary service. Chief Draper spoke on spam phone calls, texts, emails, etc.
54 targeting all individuals in the community, as well as businesses. Chief Draper said
55 law enforcement has had a tremendous obstacle in stopping citizens from losing
56 their money. In Sept. 2025, Officer Garrett Newman was dispatched where the
57 individual called Dale was needing assistance. Dale had become a victim of a scam
58 from a rogue bank employee, who convinced him to mail a large sum of money to
59 “look into a corrupt bank manager”. Chief Draper did not disclose the amount of
60 money to protect Dale. After initial information, Officer Newman was able to track
61 the package and find it was in transit to an address in Florida. Normally, that
62 would work, but the mail service continued having the package sent to the
63 destination.

64
65 Officer Newman did not stop there. He made contact with the county sheriff’s office
66 in Florida and coordinated with them. With that assistance, they intercepted the
67 package and prevented the scammer from receiving anything. Ultimately, the
68 money was returned to Dale. In law enforcement, it is rare to be able to recover the
69 money that is lost due to a scam. Officer Newman was presented with a plaque for
70 going above and beyond. Angel Vila then presented Officer Newman with a gift
71 certificate from Dale.

72
73
74

75 **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF SETTING TIMES FOR THE**
76 **MOUNTAIN VIEW CEMETERY TO BE OPENED – DENNIS ARDOHAIN.**

77
78 Mr. Arдохain said that the cemetery gates being locked is a thorn in a lot of people’s
79 sides. He also said it is the only cemetery in two counties with the gates locked. He

80 and many family members visit, and he's talked to other people that visit, and they
 81 have the same issues with why it is always locked. He said he would like to see a
 82 time set for the gate to be open to enable driving within the cemetery. Mayor
 83 Peterman asked the Cemetery Sexton and Public Works Co-Director, DJ Romero,
 84 why it was locked before. He said damage and disrespect were the reasons. The
 85 mayor said she heard both concerns and opened it to council for discussion. Council
 86 member Tyson Damron asked on the width of the roadway, which is 8 to 10 feet
 87 wide. The sprinklers and the headstones are the biggest concerns in regard to being
 88 run over. In the older sections, there is no way to expand the roads.

89
 90 Council member Ruth Lee asked what the hours were before, which were random.
 91 Council member Lee thought that having it open for longer than just receiving calls
 92 to open it would prevent rushing and these accidents. The mayor said there was
 93 nothing that prohibits council from changing the opening of the cemetery if it is
 94 discovered that visitors are not treating the cemetery with respect and care. Council
 95 member David Palacios asked about starting 3 days a week, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. and
 96 monitoring it. The question of surveillance came up, to which the council assured
 97 that is a consideration. The final suggestion was Monday through Friday from 8
 98 a.m. to 3 p.m. as a trial period to see how successful it is.

99
 100 Council Member Palacios moved to open the Mountain View Cemetery Monday
 101 through Friday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. excluding holidays. Council Member Chavez
 102 seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Lee</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Damron</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

103
 104
 105
 106 **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF UPDATED GENERAL PLAN FOR**
 107 **HELPER CITY WITH RECOMMENDED AMENDMENT.**

108
 109 Mayor Peterman clarified the recommended amendment was the mis-spelling of
 110 Todd Thorne's name. Mayor Peterman informed the council they received a digital
 111 copy and that strategic plans are updated every 5 years. They're important as they
 112 show that the city has a direction and are thinking ahead. Planning & Zoning held
 113 a previous public hearing for the plan. Gary Burnham with Planning & Zoning said
 114 that the county is also involved in the process for the plan to ensure all bases are
 115 covered. Mr. Burnham said it looked really good and like everything was in place, so
 116 Planning & Zoning approved it to move on. Photos being updated was one of the

117 changes, as well as reflection of the USU baseball/softball partnership. The council
118 went over smaller portions that were or were not included, like the Transportation
119 Master Plan and events for the museum.

120
121 Council Member Palacios moved to approve the updated Helper City General Plan.
122 Council Member Olson seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call
123 vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Lee</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Damron</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

124
125
126
127 **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF POSITIVE RECOMMENDATION**
128 **FROM PLANNING & ZONING FOR RE-ZONING OF PROPERTY 1377 NORTH**
129 **FRONTAGE ROAD BY CHRISTIE & ROEGUN WILDE.**

130
131 Mr. Burnham of Planning & Zoning also spoke on this. Before he spoke, City
132 Recorder Traci Bishop clarified that the signed recommendation from Planning &
133 Zoning and a document from UDOT that the Wilde's had turned in were added last
134 minute. The zoning currently, according to Mr. Burnham, is residential, though it is
135 narrow with everything else on the sides of it are already Industrial. There were
136 citizen concerns during the public hearing where opinions were heard. The proposal
137 in regard to the crushing plant was stated, though Mrs. Bishop made a point of
138 order that this item was just for the zoning and was not to approve anything
139 business-wise. Mr. Burnham said Planning & Zoning also had a brief closed session
140 and spoke on the environmental impact. This re-zoning went through the process
141 and received a majority of positive votes.

142
143 Mr. Roegun Wilde went over the property, which he had discussed multiple times
144 previously during the Planning & Zoning meetings. He has owned it for some time
145 and wants to utilize it to give back to the community while creating a business. He
146 did state that they have a few ideas for the property and that the crushing business
147 is the first one. Mr. Wilde engaged in conversation with the council regarding the
148 road, possible placement of trees for appearance and noise control, and taking tree
149 trimmings from all over Helper, which would help the citizens and the city itself.
150 Crushing would only take place once or twice a year, as needed. It will not be a
151 massive commercial operation. Council member Bob Olson asked if the trees being
152 placed were a condition of the re-zone and the answer was not at this time, though
153 Mr. Wilde was willing to make it part of the business application.

154
 155 Mr. Wilde assured he would wait until all of the steps are complete until any
 156 equipment was placed on the property or any work began. Community
 157 Administrator Cole Stapley said this property is already surrounded by Industrial
 158 Zoning and the Plan that was just adopted had a goal to capitalize on available
 159 commercial and Industrial Development properties. Council member Ed Chavez
 160 stated that he did not believe that the noise would be a big issue, and Council
 161 member Olson stated that it was a good location for Industrial Zoning. Council
 162 member Olson asked Mr. Burnham what his reservations were. The dust impact
 163 and possible impact of crushing were listed, as well as it being the first sight coming
 164 in to Helper. Mr. Burnham also stated that he believed it would be a good
 165 opportunity for Helper.
 166

167 Mr. Wilde spoke on dust control, bringing up the secondary water line and the
 168 possible installation of a water tank. Mr. Wilde also stated that there are a lot of
 169 unknowns in regard to the business that he can't possibly know until they get
 170 started. He also said that, where there are already many murals in Helper, they
 171 would like to have a local artist paint a mural on a building on the property as well.
 172

173 Council Member Olson moved to approve the re-zoning on 1377 North Frontage
 174 Road. Council Member Damron seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council
 175 roll call vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Lee</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Damron</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

176
 177
 178 **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF LOCAL AREA CONSENT FOR**
 179 **THE RIO THEATER.**
 180

181 Mayor Peterman said this is for the February 14th event hosted by Cindy Curri. She
 182 would like to sell beer and wine, and this is a standard action by council as people
 183 have to ask for special event permits to do that. Council member Chavez said he
 184 had an application that was not filled out. Mayor Peterman said it would be filled
 185 out and Mrs. Bishop stated that she included the standard application to look over.
 186

187 Council Member Chavez moved to approve the local area consent for the Rio
 188 Theater. Council Member Lee seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll
 189 call vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
-----------------------	------------	-----------	---------------

Olson	X		
Lee	X		
Damron	X		
Palacios	X		
Chavez	X		
Motion passed			

190
191
192
193
194
195
196
197
198
199
200
201
202
203
204
205
206
207
208
209
210
211
212
213
214
215
216
217
218
219
220
221
222
223
224
225
226
227

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF USU EASTERN CIVIC AUDITORIUM USE RATES.

Mayor Peterman said the baseball and softball teams would like to use the upstairs of the auditorium for throwing, warm-ups, etc., but no batting. The use would be during the winter months, January and February specifically, making it about 40 days. If the usual rates are charged, it would be a couple of thousand dollars to use. Kirk Haney, Head Baseball Coach, met with the mayor to discuss options that they wished to bring to the council to possibly entertain something unique. Mr. Haney said they really have enjoyed their time in Helper and as soon as there is not snow on the ground, they will be outside. They wanted to look at the auditorium to be creative as possible. Though USU has a gym, it is very heavily utilized. They would use it during the business hours and it would be helpful to have a facility two blocks away from where they typically practice.

Mr. Haney talked about possibly placing nets to block the doorways to avoid damage. Mr. Haney spoke on placing the agreement; however it turns out, placed in the Memorandum of Understanding that is already in place. He said that he is open to discussion on cost and that USU tries to be a great partner. Discussion was held regarding no fee, but assisting local youth by hosting training camps, versus an agreed-upon fee. Balancing schedules with events that have already been booked was requested by Council member Chavez, and Haney assured that it would be done. Council member Palacios suggested possibly charging \$50 a day. Coach Haney said that they are not opposed to a fee, though he would have to take the amount to his boss to see about approved coverage. The mayor asked the council if they wanted an MOU drafted and presented to the team.

Mr. Romero assured the council that there would be plenty of tasks the city could come up with for the team to assist with, if that is the avenue that is taken.

This motion was tabled by Mayor Peterman upon council agreement.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF PROPOSED HELPER CAR SHOW.

228
 229 Council member Olson reflected on the many years of the Butch Cassidy car show,
 230 which left a vacuum when it was removed. He attends many car shows and wanted
 231 to bring one back to Helper City. He said people love the location of the City Park
 232 for the car show due to its size and shade. Council member Olson proposed putting
 233 together a committee and volunteers, saying the event itself would have minimal
 234 cost. He wanted to propose creating the official Helper City Car Show at a time
 235 designated by the committee to take place in the City Park. Discussion also came up
 236 regarding the show being a fundraiser for city departments, such as the Helper
 237 Museum first, then the fire department, police dept., etc.

238
 239 Council Member Olson moved to approve the Helper City Car Show, date to be
 240 determined. Council Member Chavez seconded the motion. Motion carried, the
 241 council roll call vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Lee</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Damron</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

242
 243
 244
 245 **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL TO SURPLUS PUBLIC WORKS**
 246 **MINI-EXCAVATOR.**

247
 248 Mr. Romero said the old mini-excavator went down and is just sitting in the yard
 249 and going to waste, thus the desire to surplus it. Going through costs, it was
 250 determined cheaper to buy a new one. It will be surplussed through the usual site
 251 that is used. Council member Damron questioned if there was any cost to
 252 transporting it after the sale. Mr. Romero said that is all on the buyer. Council
 253 member Damron then asked about a minimum bid, and it was stated that it could
 254 be started wherever the city feels comfortable. Council member Damron suggested a
 255 starting point and Mr. Romero said he could start it at \$2,000. That amount was
 256 deemed fair by Council member Palacios.

257
 258 Council Member Chavez moved to approve the surplus of the mini-excavator.
 259 Council Member Damron seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call
 260 vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Lee</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Damron</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>

Palacios	X		
Chavez	X		
Motion passed			

261
262
263
264
265
266
267
268
269
270
271
272
273
274
275
276

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF A TOTAL OF \$5,000 TOWARD STREET LIGHTS.

Mr. Romero talked about the street lights around town. The supplier only guarantees them for 3 years and they have been in place since 2017. Mr. Romero wanted to switch to TR Electric as the brand they sell has a 10-year warranty and they also sell parts for the lights instead of just replacing them. The amount would give roughly 14 lights, but they might be able to get even more of a deal as they are purchasing a large amount. This amount is coming out of the Electric budget.

Council Member Chavez moved to approve \$5,000 toward street lights. Council Member Palacios seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

Council Member	Yes	No	Absent
Olson	X		
Lee	X		
Damron	X		
Palacios	X		
Chavez	X		
Motion passed			

277
278
279
280
281
282
283
284
285
286
287
288
289
290
291
292
293
294

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF BOILER ESTIMATES FOR PUBLIC WORKS BUILDING.

Mr. Romero explained that they recently went to switch it on and it would not work. Right now, they are running on space heaters to keep it 50 degrees in the building. They do not want pipes freezing or bursting. Public Works Co-Director Brittany Hansen has been working with Air Temp and there was a handful of bids on it. The options include replacing a section on the boiler, but there is no guarantee that it will last, removing the boiler (which the city can do to save money), and more. Options 2, 3 and 5 were recommended by TJ with Air Temp. Council member Damron said he does not believe it is a bad idea to get away from boilers, as they are so outdated and there are limited people in the area qualified to work on them. Upgrading it brings more options. Mr. Romero assured that Public Works feels comfortable removing the old boiler themselves.

295 Council member Palacios asked the additional cost for a gas furnace both up and
 296 down stairs, which would include option 3. 2, 3 and 5 would be \$20,550 total, though
 297 with Public Works able to remove the boiler themselves, all 3 options may not be
 298 needed. Mr. Stapley said that the buildings budget does not have that much to
 299 spend at this time, so the city would need to find and allocate the funds. The
 300 possibility of using some of the leftover money from Wildcat was presented as an
 301 option.

302
 303 Council Member Chavez moved to move forward with boiler estimate options 3 and
 304 5 with Air Temp. Council Member Damron seconded the motion. Motion carried, the
 305 council roll call vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Lee</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Damron</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

306
 307
 308
 309
 310
 311

REPORTS ONLY FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS AND DEPARTMENT HEADS.

312 Council Member Palacios moved to move into a closed session for property. Council
 313 Member Olson seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as
 314 follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Lee</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Damron</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

315
 316
 317
 318
 319

CLOSED MEETING – A CLOSED SESSION WAS HELD REGARDING PROPERTY.

320 Council Member Chavez moved to move out of a closed session for property. Council
 321 Member Olson seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as
 322 follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>

Olson	X		
Lee	X		
Damron	X		
Palacios	X		
Chavez	X		
Motion passed			

323
324
325
326
327
328
329

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, Council Member Palacios moved to adjourn.
Council Member Chavez seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call
vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Olson	X		
Lee	X		
Damron	X		
Palacios	X		
Chavez	X		
Motion passed			

330
331
332
333
334
335
336
337
338
339
340
341
342
343
344
345

I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Helper City Council meeting held on Thursday, January 8th, 2026.

Lenise Peterman
Mayor

Traci Bishop
City Recorder

Approved on February 5th, 2026