

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

2 **Thursday, January 22, 2026**

3 **at 7:00 p.m.**

4 **in the Council Chambers**

5 **19 South Main Street**

6 **Helper, Utah 84526**

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9 **ATTENDANCE:**

10 Mayor Lenise Peterman

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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: Absent

 Public Works Co-Directors:

 DJ Romero & Brittany Hansen – Romero absent

 City Attorney: Dominique Kiahtipes - Absent

 Museum Director: Roman Vega

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27 **CITIZENS:**

28 Kathy Fausett, Lori Barrett, Jeanann Zmerlikas

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30 **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF CDBG GRANT PROJECT.**

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32 Mayor Peterman explained that the council hosted a public hearing a couple of
33 months ago to gather ideas. The need at this meeting was to determine what project
34 would be identified to move forward with the application for the CDBG funding.

35 City Recorder Traci Bishop explained that she went through the minutes to list the
36 options and included the minutes from the public hearing as well. The mayor said
37 this grant does not require a match, and is federal dollars. She then asked how the
38 council would like to proceed. Resident Kathy Fausett questioned if Helper knew a
39 dollar amount yet, and the mayor explained that until the project was identified,
40 they would not know. Council member Bob Olson then asked if just one project had
41 to be chosen out of all of them, which the answer was yes. There is about \$600,000
42 left available and other communities are presenting a CDBG ask.

44 Council member Ruth Lee acknowledged all projects are important. The power grid
45 was one she put at the top of her list, then said the community utilized the Helper
46 auditorium often and upgrading and ensuring it was available for people of all
47 abilities is also at the top of her list. Council member David Palacios agreed on the
48 power grid upgrade, also listing the River Walkway being paved and lighted. From
49 there, Council member Ed Chavez agreed on the power grid, as well as bathrooms
50 and kitchens at the Locust St. Park. Mayor Peterman then suggested removing
51 some items and then talking about the ones that are left. Fixing parking spaces, the
52 unpaved area behind Main Street, transfer of engine from UP, the mausoleum,
53 sweeper for public works, crack sealing, the new fire truck, compressor and turn out
54 gear, the HVAC ceiling and damage repair of the museum were all removed.

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56 That left the upgrading of the Helper auditorium, repaving and lighting the River
57 Walkway, bathroom and kitchens at the Locust St. Park and upgrading the power
58 grid. Discussion started with the auditorium, with Public Works Co-Director
59 Brittany Hansen joining the conversation. A new vent, carpets, kitchen upgrade,
60 urinals, and an ADA accessible elevator were all mentioned, with the elevator being
61 the most voiced. Repaving and lighting the walkway, according to Mayor Peterman,
62 had been estimated at around one million dollars a few years ago. Phases and
63 options were discussed. Bathrooms and kitchen at the Locust St. Park would be an
64 easy project as there is already water, and the sewer line is close by. Community
65 Administrator Cole Stapley mentioned the shade structure over the all-access
66 playground equipment, which would fit in line with the other wants. For the power
67 grid, Mayor Peterman said two or three years ago, \$400,000 was the initial number
68 for an analyzation and a phased upgrade plan.

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70 The mayor then spoke on EPA funding, saying the analysis would provide a
71 number, and plan, for EPA. Mayor Peterman also said she's tried many avenues in
72 regard to the power grid. She is attempting to be proactive and has floated the grid
73 to every resource she can think of. Council member Tyson Damron asked how
74 realistic it is to choose dedicating the power grid to this grant if there isn't money to
75 proceed after the analysis. The mayor responded that the money is not readily
76 available and she does not want conflict in which area of Helper is chosen first. She
77 said she would like to see what the Director of Energy for Gov. Cox comes up with
78 in regard to funding rural electrical grids. The council members went back to the
79 auditorium upgrade, saying it is used a lot by the community. Council member
80 Damron said that something practical would be the best ask for the funds, rather
81 than something that is not readily achievable.

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83 Council member Palacios said he liked the thought of thinking more practical. The
84 council discussed the placement of the ADA accessible elevator in the auditorium,
85 before Council member Palacios made the first motion for the Helper auditorium
86 upgrade as the CDBG project.

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88 Council Member Palacios moved to approve the Helper Auditorium upgrade as the
89 primary CDBG project. Council Member Olson seconded the motion. Motion carried,
90 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>			

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92 Following this, Community Administrator Stapley and City Recorder Bishop
93 suggested that the council choose a secondary project as well. This was suggested in
94 case the initial project did not meet the CDBG requirements.

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96 Council Member Chavez moved to approve the Locust St. Park bathrooms, kitchen
97 and shading as the secondary project. Council Member Palacios seconded the
98 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>			

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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>
<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>			

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109 I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record
110 of the Helper City Council meeting held on Thursday, January 22nd, 2026.
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116 Lenise Peterman
117 Mayor



118 Traci Bishop
119 City Recorder

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Approved on February 5th, 2026

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