



## EMIGRATION CANYON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

**JANUARY 20, 2026, 7:00 PM**

UNIFIED FIRE AUTHORITY STATION 119

5025 E. EMIGRATION CANYON ROAD, SALT LAKE CITY, UT 84108

**\*\*DRAFT MINUTES – UNAPPROVED\*\***

### EMIGRATION CANYON CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES January 20, 2026

#### **Council Members Present:**

David Brems, Mayor  
Catherine Harris, Council Member  
Jennifer Hawkes, Deputy Mayor  
Robert Pinon, Council Member  
Nicholas Griffith, Council Member

#### **Council Members Absent:**

#### **Staff Present:**

Diana Baun, City Recorder  
Tamaran Woodland, Engineering Manager  
Cameron Platt, Legal Counsel  
Claire Gillmor, Legal Counsel  
Chief Jason Mazuran, Unified Police Department  
Det. Dawn Larsen, Unified Police Department  
Officer Luis Lovato, Unified Police Department  
Chief Christina Pettibrown, Unified Police Department  
Gary Bowen, SLCo Animal Services Liaison

#### **Others Present:**

##### **1. Welcome and Determine Quorum**

Mayor David Brems, presiding, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and determined a quorum was present..

##### **2. Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

##### **3. Recognize Visiting Officials**

Later in the meeting, Mayor David Brems recognized Unified Police Chief Jason Mazuran in attendance and thanked him for his comments.

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#### **EMIGRATION CANYON CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS**

MAYOR JOE SMOLKA, COUNCIL MEMBER DAVID BREMS, COUNCIL MEMBER JENNIFER HAWKES,  
COUNCIL MEMBER CATHERINE HARRIS, COUNCIL MEMBER ROBERT PINON

**4. Oath of Office**

- A. Mayor David Brems
- B. Council Member Robert Pinon

City Recorder Diana Baun administered the Oath of Office to Council Member Robert Pinon and Mayor David Brems.

**5. Filling of Mid-Term Vacancy**

- A. Interviews of Applicants for Mid-Term Vacancy

Applicants were interviewed in a per-determined order, based on the 2024 General Election Master Ballot Order published by the State of Utah. That order was Camille Erickson, Nicholas Griffith, Janet Haskell.

**Camille Erickson**

Mayor David Brems invited Camille Erickson to make an opening statement regarding her candidacy for the vacant council seat. Ms. Erickson thanked the mayor, council members, and community for the opportunity to interview. Camille Erickson gave her address in Emigration Canyon and noted she had been born and raised in Utah. She explained that she had lived in Emigration Canyon since 2015 and that her son represented the fourth generation of her family to live in their home in the canyon. She described her professional background as a licensed Certified Public Accountant holding both a CPA and an MBA, as well as a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree with an emphasis in painting and drawing. Ms. Erickson stated that she had more than 20 years of experience in accounting, finance, budgeting, policy writing, implementation, training, and leadership across multiple industries, including healthcare, retail, marketing, drilling, construction, architecture, and nonprofit work. She acknowledged that she had not held a government position but had worked with government entities in various professional capacities.

Ms. Erickson recounted her involvement during the 2023 flood, stating that her home had flooded and that she had worked alongside residents to sandbag and clean up in the canyon. She described observing residents' innovation in filling sandbags more efficiently and expressed gratitude for assistance from Unified Fire Authority, Salt Lake City, and Salt Lake County. She stated that she had worked with neighbors to mitigate invasive weeds, reduce fire risks during annual wood chipping days, and maintain septic systems, and she expressed concerns about the future of water resources in the canyon and the state. Ms. Erickson also described serving as board treasurer for the Utah-based nonprofit HEAL Utah, where she assisted in developing accounting policies and procedures and preparing for a full audit. She stated that this role provided experience in grassroots community engagement and policy alignment.

Ms. Erickson stated that as the city was in its early stages, it was important to preserve its quiet, small-town character while ensuring economic viability and sustainable planning. She emphasized establishing a tax base and budget while working directly with the Municipal Services District (MSD). She stated that she would bring financial and budgeting expertise as

well as representation for residents along the canyon road and creek area, noting that the current council did not include representation from that portion of the canyon. She emphasized fiscal responsibility, caution against overgrowth and overspending, and maintaining flexibility as a newly formed city.

Mayor David Brems thanked Camille Erickson and opened the floor for questions.

Council Member Catherine Harris thanked Camille Erickson for the statement and commented on the unusual circumstance of the council appointing a member after recently swearing in elected officials, expressing discomfort with the appointment process but acknowledging the necessity. Council Member Harris asked what Camille Erickson would bring specifically regarding issues in Emigration Canyon and also asked about the time commitment required for council service, noting that council members often worked 25 hours per week or more and served on multiple boards and committees.

Ms. Erickson responded that she would bring financial and budgeting expertise and acknowledged that budgeting was a significant responsibility for government entities. She stated that she understood the substantial time commitment, referencing her nonprofit board experience, and affirmed her willingness to commit the necessary time.

Council Member Catherine Harris asked about additional board service. Camille Erickson explained that as treasurer of the nonprofit, she had been recruited for her financial expertise and had helped the organization mature its accounting systems and prepare for an audit.

Council Member Robert Pinon asked what initiatives Camille Erickson might champion to enhance wellness in the canyon. Ms. Erickson suggested identifying community leaders from each neighborhood to improve communication, including creating contact lists to better disseminate information throughout the geographically dispersed canyon.

Council Member Jennifer Hawkes asked about Camille Erickson's current employment and flexibility for meetings that occurred during both daytime and evening hours. Ms. Erickson stated that she worked in public accounting, set her own client schedule, did not work full time, and therefore had flexibility to attend meetings. Council Member Jennifer Hawkes also asked whether Camille Erickson could remain neutral and consider both sides of issues without advancing a personal agenda. Ms. Erickson stated that professional accounting standards required independence and objectivity and that if she could not remain impartial on a matter, she would abstain from voting. Council Member Jennifer Hawkes further referenced confidentiality requirements in closed meetings, and Camille Erickson responded that client confidentiality in accounting similarly required discretion.

Mayor David Brems asked what Camille Erickson believed was the most important issue facing Emigration Canyon. Ms. Erickson responded that fire risk was the most important issue.

Mayor David Brems then referenced the council's prior decision to proceed with a feasibility study related to the canyon road and noted that Camille Erickson had spoken against the decision at a Municipal Services District meeting after the Emigration Canyon Community

Council had voted unanimously to approve the contract. Mayor David Brems asked Camille Erickson to address that opposition.

Ms. Erickson stated that the \$505,000 expenditure represented a significant fiscal decision, particularly if repayment might be required, and that alternative funding sources without restrictive conditions should be explored before proceeding. Mayor David Brems questioned when a council decision should be considered final, noting that the council had vetted the issue for years and voted unanimously. Ms. Erickson responded that as a resident she had not felt adequately informed about the plan and believed it was premature to proceed given the city's early stage, but acknowledged that if both the council and MSD voted in favor, that would be final.

Council Member Catherine Harris expanded on the distinction between grassroots advocacy and governing responsibilities, explaining that elected officials must sometimes compromise and support decisions even when they initially disagreed. She cited former Mayor Joe Smolka as an example, describing how Mayor Joe Smolka had opposed the Green Energy Initiative but supported it once the council approved it. Council Member Harris stated that declining approximately \$6.5 million in federal and state funding, which required a match of under 4%, would be fiscally irresponsible and that a study was required by UDOT to determine how best to use the funds to address longstanding issues such as slope stabilization, creek erosion, and road safety concerns identified in prior studies dating back to 2015. She asked how Camille Erickson would reconcile personal opposition with a council decision already made.

Ms. Erickson responded that if the decision were truly strong, alternative funding could be available in the future. When pressed on how she would respond if appointed after a vote had already occurred, She stated that she did not believe she would have an opportunity to overturn a vote already taken.

An audience member questioned whether it was fair to ask how someone would vote in the future. Mayor David Brems directed the audience member not to interject. Council Member Catherine Harris stated that the question was reasonable and that elected officials were frequently asked similar questions. Camille Erickson reiterated that she would not have the opportunity to overturn a decision already voted upon.

Mayor David Brems concluded the questioning, acknowledged the difficulty of the questions, and thanked Camille Erickson for participating. She was asked to return to her seat while they brought the next applicant in from the side room and the council discussed the absence of the third applicant, Janet Haskell, noting their concern with her absence based on previously regular attendance at council meetings.

### **Nicholas Griffith**

Nicholas Griffith addressed the council and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to speak. Mr. Griffith stated that he and his family had moved to Utah approximately two years prior and had lived in Emigration Canyon for about 18 months. He explained that community involvement had been a consistent priority throughout his life, including during his adult career

in public service. He stated that upon moving to the canyon, he sought out individuals knowledgeable about how the community functioned, emphasizing the canyon's sense of family and interconnectedness. He expressed that although significant changes were not desired, change was inevitable, and it was important for the canyon's voice to be heard. Mr. Griffith stated that he had spent 25 years advising senior leaders, serving in leadership roles, managing multimillion-dollar budgets, and handling crisis management, and believed those skills would be applicable to council service.

Mayor David Brems asked Nicholas Griffith to elaborate on his career with the U.S. Department of State. Nicholas Griffith described his career as more than a job, characterizing it as a way of life and a significant personal blessing. Mr. Griffith stated that he was originally from Arkansas and had entered the State Department through a graduate school internship. He explained that he had served in multiple capacities, including intern, civil servant, and Foreign Service Officer, and had worked under five presidential administrations without political agenda, focusing on service to the department.

Mr. Griffith outlined five overseas tours, including assignments in Moscow, Oman, Budapest, Baghdad, Istanbul, and Geneva. He stated that in Budapest he served as a political-military officer; in Baghdad he volunteered alongside his spouse and served as an information officer; in Istanbul he again served as an information officer; and in Geneva he served as Public Affairs Counselor and advisor to four ambassadors to the United Nations. Mr. Griffith also described serving as a staff officer for Secretary Rice and as an advisor to the Under Secretary for Public Affairs and Public Diplomacy while stationed in Washington, D.C.

Council Member Catherine Harris asked what Nicholas Griffith valued most about living in Emigration Canyon and what he viewed as the canyon's most pressing issues. Nicholas Griffith stated that he valued the canyon's natural environment, wildlife, and proximity to both wilderness and urban amenities. Mr. Griffith described observing a bobcat on his back porch and emphasized quality of life as a primary reason for relocating to Utah and selecting Emigration Canyon. Regarding pressing issues, he expressed concern about balancing environmental preservation with inevitable development and change. Mr. Griffith stated that water quality in the creeks, forest health, electrification, natural resource management, and road infrastructure required serious evaluation. He emphasized the need to use data-driven decision-making to balance environmental protection with development pressures.

Council Member Robert Pinon asked what initiatives Nicholas Griffith might champion to enhance wellness in the canyon. Nicholas Griffith responded that before advancing specific initiatives, it would be important to engage residents to understand their priorities. Mr. Griffith identified public safety as a broad priority, including fire safety, traffic safety, enforcement of speed limits, and ensuring resident safety amid significant through-traffic from cyclists, motorcyclists, and other vehicles.

Council Member Jennifer Hawkes asked about Nicholas Griffith's availability and ability to dedicate time to council responsibilities and emergency response. Nicholas Griffith stated that he had retired from federal service after 25 years and was not currently employed in another professional capacity. Mr. Griffith stated that, aside from family obligations, he had sufficient

time to commit to council service and would prioritize emergency response when necessary. He referenced the 2023 flooding events and expressed admiration for the community's collective response, stating that such participation reflected the reason his family chose to live in the canyon.

Council Member Catherine Harris commented on the community's response during the flood, noting the strong sense of unity and describing the experience as one of the most cohesive periods in her 37 years of residency. Council Member Jennifer Hawkes added details about overnight emergency efforts during the flood response. Mayor David Brems also referenced extensive sandbagging efforts during that event.

Mayor David Brems then asked Nicholas Griffith how he would respond to a major wildfire crisis, describing a scenario involving high winds, extreme heat, and limited emergency vehicle access. Mr. Griffith stated that crisis management required advance planning, strong interagency relationships, and repeated preparedness exercises. He referenced experience in earthquake and terrorist response planning during his Foreign Service career. Mr. Griffith stated that effective crisis response required coordination with Unified Fire Authority, law enforcement, state agencies, the Forest Service, and community members. He emphasized the importance of tabletop exercises, pre-established communication channels, asset identification, and community readiness. He stated that planning and practice were essential because crises typically occurred unexpectedly.

Council Member Catherine Harris asked how Nicholas Griffith reconciled serving under multiple administrations with differing policies, particularly when personal views might differ. Mr. Griffith responded that foundational American principles remained consistent despite policy shifts between administrations. He stated that serving apolitically had shaped his worldview and that he believed most individuals occupied moderate positions rather than extremes. He stated that he entered the candidacy without a personal agenda and intended to seek balanced, middle-ground solutions reflective of community input.

Mayor David Brems asked if there were any additional questions. After concluding questions, Nicholas Griffith thanked the council for the opportunity.

The council then addressed the absence of another candidate, Janet Haskell. Mayor David Brems asked legal counsel how to proceed. City Attorney Cameron Platt stated that as long as proper notice had been given, the council could note her absence and move forward. City Recorder Diana Baun confirmed that Janet Haskell had signed the required public notice documents. Cameron Platt advised that the council simply acknowledge that Janet Haskell was not present and proceed. Council Member Jennifer Hawkes referenced efforts to check on Janet Haskell's welfare, and Diana Baun stated that local UPD officers had gone to her address just to make sure everything was alright. Cameron Platt advised against discussing details of that matter in the public meeting. Mayor David Brems concluded by stating that the council was ready to proceed with a decision.

## **B. Voting on and Appointment of Council Member At-Large**

After each council member submitting a written vote, the majority vote was for Nicholas Griffith.

**C. Oath of Office for Appointment**

City Recorder Diana Baun then administered the Oath of Office to Nicholas Griffith and he was invited to sit up front with the rest of the council to continue the meeting.

**6. Public Comments**

A member of the audience stood up to make a public comment, asking whether they could share a couple of slides. Mayor David Brems stated that he did not know whether there was time given the schedule that night. City Recorder Diana Baun explained that slides or other materials would have needed to be submitted to the City Recorder before the meeting in order to be displayed during public comment, and that the speaker was welcome to submit materials in advance of the next meeting. The speaker stated they would return another time and provide their public comment then. Diana Baun identified herself as the recorder, handed her card with contact information to the audience member, and told the speaker to send any public comment materials to her so the items could be included in the meeting packet posted on public notice for residents to review ahead of time.

**Lyska Emerson** provided public comment, stating that she was a resident of the Canyon. Ms. Emerson stated that the agenda showed a potential action on the planning commission issue and noted that Brian from the Municipal Services District was present and that Claire and herself had attended a recent meeting on the matter. Ms. Emerson stated concern that the council might be moving too fast without enough public time to review the changes, and said residents whose homes were on the road could be negatively affected. Lyska Emerson stated she was not an attorney and asked for guidance and help in understanding the adjustment. She referenced discussion from the prior meeting about modifying measurements from the center line and stated that the outcome she understood the mayor wanted had not been accomplished. Ms. Emerson stated that the issue concerned changing zoning setback requirements from the right-of-way and that changing ordinance language could render existing properties nonconforming. She stated that such a change could create major complications if a property needed to be rebuilt after a fire, because a previously compliant home could become nonconforming and require a significant process to address. Mayor David Brems responded that there would be a presentation on the topic that night that would clarify the questions raised, and stated the council would talk the issue through. Ms. Emerson reiterated that the council should be cautious and stated the situation was challenging.

**Joe Smolka** then spoke during public comment noting he was a resident of the Canyon. Mr. Smolka raised a question about a zoning ordinance amendment, referencing a section of Title 19 the city code and stated it could allow possible "rehabilitation facilities." Council Member Jennifer Hawkes stated she had questions on that topic as well. Mayor David Brems acknowledged Joe Smolka's comment and asked whether there were additional speakers.

**Michelle Henrie** then provided public comment, noting she was a resident of the Canyon. Michelle Henrie stated she wanted to share a story related to the zoning ordinance amendment, explaining that she had previously been paid to research the history of development in another city with both historic neighborhoods and newer subdivisions. Ms. Henrie stated the initial premise had been that pollution and fear drove why some areas flourished and others did not, but her conclusion in the report was that zoning was the key factor. She stated that when zoning changes were imposed on existing development—referencing zoning first being instituted in that city in the 1950s—properties could suddenly become nonconforming. Ms. Henrie stated that even when demolition was not required, nonconformity created additional hurdles for rebuilding, expansions, or changes, and complicated financing, lending, and insurance. She stated that, in her conclusion, imposing one-size-fits-all zoning on existing development destabilized and eroded neighborhoods over time. She echoed Lyska Emerson's concerns and asked the council to be mindful of unintended repercussions for existing development.

**Jessica Steed** then provided public comment and stated she had emailed her comment and would summarize it. Ms. Steed stated concern that, despite reassurances that the changes would apply only to new construction, there were precedents in Boulder and Asheville where similar language changes tied setbacks to new roadway measurements, and residents later found that homes built under prior rules were labeled nonconforming when pavement edges shifted. She stated that while such changes did not necessarily require demolition, they could restrict owners from routine improvements, small additions, garage replacements, or certain repairs without variances. Ms. Steed stated that variances could be costly and time-consuming and could place owners in conflict with local government in order to maintain their homes. She urged caution.

Mayor David Brems thanked Jessica Steed, asked if anyone else wished to speak, and then stated that public comment would be closed.

## **7. Stakeholder Reports**

### **A. Unified Police Department**

Detective Dawn Larsen reviewed the December statistics report (Attachment A) for Emigration Canyon. She stated that there were 27 calls for service during the month. Among the more significant incidents, She reported a trespassing incident in Emigration Oaks. She explained that surveillance cameras were available, allowing officers to obtain a license plate number from the suspect vehicle, contact the individual involved, and take appropriate action.

Detective Larsen also reported that a search warrant had been approved and executed in connection with a drug distribution case. She Larsen stated that small amounts of drugs were found and that charges were currently pending. She further advised residents about a recent scam involving a lost cat. Detective Larsen explained that a resident received an email claiming that the sender had found the cat and demanded payment for its return. She stated that this was a common scam and warned residents not to send money in such situations. She clarified that legitimate organizations, such as the Humane Society, would not require payment

in that manner to return a lost pet. Detective Larsen concluded by stating that these were the major incidents for December.

### **B. Unified Fire Authority**

No updates at this time. After Chief Case's retirement the Unified Fire Authority is working on his replacement and will update the council when that replacement has been hired.

### **C. Salt Lake County Animal Services**

Gary Bowen reported there had been no meeting in the last 30 days so there was nothing to report.

### **D. Land Use Updates**

Claire Gilmor noted that they were still working on ordinance updates and that they would get to the latest update shortly, a little further down on the agenda tonight.

## **8. Project Updates**

None at this time.

## **9. Consent Agenda**

### **A. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

1. December 15, 2025

Council Member Jennifer Hawkes noted some spelling errors in the draft notes, mainly the misspelling of a resident's last name (Leick) and a local street name (Margarethe). The changes were made on the final version of the notes being signed since they were simple spelling errors and when signed that version will be the version uploaded as approved for the future.

**Council Member Harris moved to approve the December 15, 2025 Council Meeting Minutes with the spelling corrections noted above. Council Member Hawkes seconded the motion; vote was 5-0, unanimous in favor.**

## **10. Presentation Items**

### **A. Emigration Canyon Road Improvement Project**

Tamaran Woodland began reviewing her presentation (Attachment B). She stated that following the previous meeting, additional information had been gathered, including safety data that had not been available during the earlier presentation. She also introduced Richard Stephens as one of three Assistant City Engineers now serving at the Municipal Services District. At the request of Council Member Catherine Harris, Ms. Woodland provided a brief overview before proceeding through the full presentation. She explained that the presentation would cover road improvement project details, the project timeline, safety analysis, funding,

and the three available options related to the grant funding and feasibility study. The project area was identified as the section of roadway highlighted in green on the map. The road classification was a major collector and the grant application had originally been submitted in 2022. The purpose of the project was to increase safety.

Ms. Woodland outlined the proposed project components, including replacement of substandard guardrails, evaluation of stopping sight distances, addressing drainage issues, slope stabilization, and culvert evaluation for replacement or extension. Due to resident feedback regarding bike lanes, the team had worked with UDOT and the Wasatch Front Regional Council to evaluate downhill bike lanes rather than mandating them. Phase One consisted of a feasibility study, which would include public involvement, environmental evaluation, topographic and right-of-way analysis, mapping of utilities, identification of project needs, and preliminary solutions. Limited public information had been available thus far because no design work had yet begun and the effort to date had focused on securing funding. Ms. Woodland stated that Phase Two would include final plans, construction documents, right-of-way plans, and continued public involvement, and would follow completion of Phase One if the council elected to proceed. Phase Three would involve construction. The anticipated timeline was four months for Phase One following notice to proceed, eight months for Phase Two after completion of Phase One if pursued, and approximately 12 months for construction. She noted that the original timeline document referenced April but would be modified to reflect current timing. She then presented safety analysis data obtained from the Wasatch Front Regional Council transportation master planning process. The data reflected a five-year period. She explained that while Emigration Canyon had a lower total number of crashes compared to other municipalities, the percentage of severe crashes relative to total crashes was significantly higher. Most municipalities reflected severe crash rates between approximately 2% and 3.67%, whereas Emigration Canyon's rate was 10.11%. Active transportation crashes were also identified, with four bicycle-related crashes noted. Two of the severe crashes within the highlighted project area involved bicyclists. She clarified that Brighton's severe crash rate was also elevated but involved a UDOT-owned roadway, whereas Emigration Canyon's road was municipally owned.

Ms. Woodland presented historical bicycle count data. Data from a 2015 technical memorandum showed approximately 1,300 bicycles on weekends and approximately 660 on weekdays. She also referenced personal bike counts conducted in 2006, showing 47 and 43 bicycles during measured morning and afternoon periods. In April 2025, 119 bicycles were counted within a five-minute period prior to the council meeting, indicating increased bicycle activity over time. She referenced a 2019 article identifying Emigration Canyon Road as the fourth most popular Strava cycling segment. Ms. Woodland then reviewed funding. The total grant funding included approximately \$3 million in federal funds through the Wasatch Front Regional Council and approximately \$3.1 million in state funds through UDOT, with a local match of approximately \$361,000 from the Municipal Services District. Grant funds could only be used for the prescribed scope of the project and would be returned if declined. She outlined three options: returning the funds immediately; proceeding with the full project without complete information; or proceeding with the Phase One feasibility study to obtain data before making a final determination regarding the full project. Ms. Woodland explained that by budgeting an additional \$144,000 during the upcoming fiscal year, the city could fully fund the

feasibility study independently, allowing the option to withdraw from the larger project after Phase One if the findings were not favorable. She stated that the feasibility study would provide environmental review, 30% design, public meetings, and detailed impact analysis, allowing informed decision-making regarding property impacts and overall benefits.

Council Member Robert Pinon asked whether the funding purposes had been divided into specific budget categories. Ms. Woodland responded that allocation into specific buckets would occur during the feasibility study.

Council Member Nicholas Griffith asked whether the feasibility study would include public input and updated safety statistics. Ms. Woodland confirmed that the study would include three public meetings—one open house and two council presentations—and stated that recent crash data had already been obtained through the active transportation study. She stated that crash statistics were recent and anticipated that increased traffic likely corresponded with higher safety risks.

Council Member Jennifer Hawkes stated that it was important for the council to continue updating active and safety data in order to base decisions on current information. Ms. Woodland acknowledged the importance of updated data for informed decision-making.

## **11. Council Business**

### **A. Discussion and Potential Action on **Resolution R2026-01**, Appointment of Representative to the Greater Salt Lake Municipal Services District (MSD) Board of Trustees**

City Attorney Cameron Platt explained that under state law governing special service districts, including the Municipal Services District (MSD), each member municipality was required to appoint a representative from its legislative body to serve on the MSD board. Mr. Platt stated that the municipality could also appoint an alternate representative at its discretion. He noted that previously Mayor Joe Smolka had served as the city's representative, with Council Member Jennifer Hawkes serving as the alternate. Mr. Platt explained that both positions had ended with the conclusion of Mayor Joe Smolka's term and that replacements needed to be appointed.

Mayor David Brems asked whether both appointments needed to be made that evening. Cameron Platt responded that the primary representative must be appointed, but appointing an alternate was optional. He clarified that if no alternate were appointed and the primary representative could not attend an MSD meeting, the city would not have a vote. The alternate position had been established previously because the board was important to the city and the city had wanted to ensure consistent representation.

Mayor David Brems stated that he would prefer to review all board appointments at the next meeting and make new appointments collectively, allowing time for consideration, including the alternate position. Mayor David Brems indicated he planned to attend the next MSD meeting and suggested the alternate could be addressed later.

Cameron Platt noted that the agenda allowed for appointment of one or both positions and that the proposed ordinance could be amended to appoint only the primary representative if desired.

Council Member Catherine Harris stated that she was comfortable waiting one month to appoint an alternate but agreed that appointing the primary representative was necessary to ensure the city maintained voting representation on the MSD board.

**Council Member Hawkes moved to approve Resolution R2026-01, Appointing Mayor David Brems as the city's representative to the Greater Salt Lake Municipal Services District Board of Trustees, noting that an alternate representative would be appointed at a future meeting. Council Member Harris seconded the motion; vote was 5-0, unanimous in favor.**

**B. Discussion and Potential Appointment of up to three Representative(s) to the Utah League of Cities and Towns Legislative Policy Committee**

City Attorney Cameron Platt explained that the Legislative Policy Committee operated through the Utah League of Cities and Towns and was responsible for reviewing and providing feedback on legislation during the legislative session. He stated that the city was permitted up to three voting representatives on the committee and recommended appointing three members if there were sufficient volunteers. Mr. Platt emphasized that the position required timely engagement, as draft legislation could be distributed early in the week, heard in committee the same day, and potentially move to the legislative floor by the end of that week.

Mayor David Brems asked whether there were three volunteers and stated that he would like Council Member Nicholas Griffith to serve in one of the positions. Council Member Nicholas Griffith stated that he would be willing to serve unless another member preferred the role.

Council Member Catherine Harris stated that she had served on the committee the previous year but felt she had not been an effective representative because notices sometimes arrived after actions had already occurred. Council Member Catherine Harris added that her responsibilities with Unified Fire Authority and UFSA had increased and stated that she preferred not to serve this year.

Council Member Robert Pinon stated that the meetings were time-consuming and often held during the middle of the day, which made attendance complicated.

Mayor David Brems stated that he was willing to serve but also noted that he had numerous existing commitments.

Cameron Platt clarified that the city needed to notify the Utah League of Cities and Towns of its representatives by the 26th and that appointments could not be changed after that deadline.

Council Member Catherine Harris asked Council Member Jennifer Hawkes directly whether she was willing to continue in the lead role. Council Member Jennifer Hawkes stated that she

was willing to serve as able but noted that legislative meetings were often scheduled with short notice, sometimes within an hour of a vote, which created scheduling challenges. She stated that meetings were posted on the League's website and required advance registration and that she had already registered; the meetings would begin on the 26th and continue through March, with approximately six or seven meetings anticipated. Council Member Catherine Harris acknowledged the scheduling difficulties and stated she would do her best to remain informed.

**Council Member Pinon moved to appoint Council Member Griffith, Council Member Hawkes and Council Member Harris as the city's representatives to the Utah League of Cities and Towns Legislative Policy Committee. Mayor Brems seconded the motion; vote was 5-0, unanimous in favor.**

**C. Discussion and Potential Action on Ordinance 2026-O-01, An Ordinance of the Emigration Canyon City Council ("The Council) Repealing Chapter 19.12 FR-0.5, FR-1, FR-2.5, FR-5, FR-10, FR-20, FR-50, And FR-100 Forestry and Recreation Zones and Enacting Chapter 19.24 Forestry and Recreation Zones**

Claire Gillmor thanked the residents who had commented and attended the prior Planning Commission meeting and acknowledged that the prior discussion about the ordinance had been confusing. Ms. Gillmor stated that she intended to provide clarity by beginning with background and history of the ordinance and the broader effort to update the city code. She noted that a handout was available (Attachment E) containing the material she was referencing and that Brian Tucker would present afterward on the ordinance language itself and review his presentation (Attachment D). She stated that the ordinance under discussion was primarily a consolidation and clarification effort rather than the creation of new standards, and said that recent land use direction from the legislature had reinforced the importance of clarity for enforcement and implementing the city's development vision. When Emigration Canyon City incorporated, it inherited outdated Salt Lake County ordinances, including 1998-era provisions, and staff had been tasked with updating and clarifying Title 18 (subdivisions) and Title 19 (zoning). The proposed new chapter, 19.24, was first heard by the Planning Commission in a public hearing on August 14, 2025, and then refined through subsequent Planning Commission discussions, with the council considering those materials that evening. The Utah Public Notice website contained agendas and recordings from prior meetings that documented the drafting process and discussions. She explained that the city's Foothills and Canyon Overlay Zone (FCOZ) applied across the entire city and had created a confusing structure where some setback requirements were defined indirectly by stating that if an underlying zone lacked a setback requirement, then a default setback applied. The goal of Chapter 19.24 was to place forestry-zone standards into a single chapter so applicants and the public could more easily determine the applicable development standards. The only new setback in Chapter 19.24 was a 20-foot setback from Emigration Canyon Road, and that all other setbacks in the chapter already existed in the code. She also stated that another change was procedural: where staff previously could approve a waiver, the Planning Commission would instead be the body that could approve a waiver under specified conditions.

Council Member Catherine Harris questioned why there historically had not been a front setback in the FCOZ structure. Brian Tucker stated that he did not know why the 1998 ordinance was drafted that way, and explained that the FCOZ provided a default 10-foot setback where a zone did not otherwise establish setbacks, and that waivers had historically been available, with the proposed ordinance continuing a waiver process but shifting waiver authority to the Planning Commission. Council Member Catherine Harris asked whether the planning commission's reasoning for the 20-foot requirement and related changes would be explained, and Claire Gillmor stated that the reasoning would be addressed.

Ms. Gillmor then addressed former Mayor Joe Smolka's earlier comment about residential facilities for persons with disabilities. Claire Gillmor stated that residential facilities for persons with disabilities were already a permitted use in the existing code and that the proposed ordinance did not change that status. Council Member Jennifer Hawkes asked Joe Smolka to clarify whether the concern was disability-related or drug-related. Joe Smolka stated that the phrasing "educational and residential accommodations" could be interpreted broadly. Ms. Gillmor responded that addiction qualified as a disability under state law and that this may have been the basis for the concern, and she stated that educational facilities would not be interpreted to include treatment in the same way. She then summarized changes in the use table within the forestry zones. She stated the following uses were eliminated from the forestry zones: minor ski resorts; bed and breakfast; homestay; commercial recreation; dwelling groups; horses, animals, and fowl for family food production; logging and lumber processing; mineral extraction and processing; short-term rentals; ski resorts; and underground record storage vaults. Wireless telecommunications facilities moved from permitted to conditional use. She stated that the following uses moved from conditional to permitted: residential facilities for elderly people; home daycare; preschool centers; offices incidental to main use; public and quasi-public uses; temporary buildings incidental to construction work; and other temporary buildings. She also listed classifications for additional uses, including water pump plants and reservoirs, water treatment and storage facilities, educational facilities with residential accommodation, public and private parks, amateur radio antennas and support structures, public utilities, minor public utilities, and small-scale outdoor recreation. She invited council feedback regarding the classifications.

Council Member Catherine Harris asked whether removal of "commercial recreation" would affect activities such as heli-ski operations associated with Powderbirds. Ms. Gillmor responded that it would no longer be a permitted use. Brian Tucker clarified that the city did not regulate activities occurring solely on U.S. Forest Service land, meaning the city could not control what occurred on that property. Council Member Catherine Harris asked how camp uses such as "Camp Kostopoulos" would be treated and stated concern about inhibiting existing uses or future expansion. Mr. Tucker stated that definitions for many terms were being assembled in a separate chapter (Chapter 19.04) that had not yet come before the Planning Commission or council. He stated that staff had deliberately ensured that Camp Kostopoulos would not be inhibited and would be able to continue operations and expand without issue. He added that short-term rentals had been included earlier in the proposed ordinance but were eliminated by the Planning Commission at the August meeting, and stated that short-term rentals had been allowed under inherited county rules but would be removed under the

proposed update. Council Member Catherine Harris asked how short-term rentals were defined, and Brian Tucker stated that the definition was rentals of 30 days or less.

Council Member Catherine Harris asked whether the Planning Commission had explained its rationale for removing short-term rentals. Mr. Tucker stated that there had not been a specific reason provided beyond general deliberation. Ms. Gillmor stated that the Planning Commission was generally concerned about impacts such as traffic and preserving the rural character, natural resources, and natural environment of the canyon, and that these concerns likely informed the view that short-term rentals should not be allowed.

Council Member Catherine Harris asked whether the 20-foot setback increase had been a Planning Commission recommendation or staff recommendation, and also expressed appreciation for having a waiver process rather than a variance. Brian Tucker stated that the intent was for new houses to be set farther from the road while acknowledging that some parcels would be difficult to build on, which was why the waiver mechanism existed. He stated that the Planning Commission could grant waivers, including potentially reducing setbacks substantially, if the request did not adversely affect public safety or neighboring properties' use and enjoyment.

Council Member Catherine Harris asked whether the changes would affect only new development and what effect they would have on remodeling or rebuilding after damage such as fire. Mr. Tucker stated that a remodel that expanded or moved a structure closer to the road in violation of applicable setbacks would require a waiver. He stated that, aside from Emigration Canyon Road, setbacks remained the same, meaning existing nonconformities would generally remain unchanged. The main change affecting existing conditions would be along Emigration Canyon Road, where the front setback would change from 10 feet to 20 feet and could result in additional nonconforming situations. He stated that nonconforming status did not make a use illegal and that maintenance and repair were allowed. If a structure was destroyed by an act of God, it could be rebuilt if the building permit application was made within a year. He stated that the city's nonconforming use provisions, which he identified as unusually permissive based on his experience, could allow rebuilding even in a nonconforming location in some circumstances and stated that waivers would likely be available when meeting the front setback was impractical.

Council Member Jennifer Hawkes stated that, despite the effort invested, she believed there were gaps in the ordinance that needed to be addressed before approval. She raised concerns that cross-references to other chapters and overlays made the ordinance difficult to evaluate as a standalone document and asked which standards controlled when restrictions differed between the overlay and the proposed chapter. Brian Tucker stated that a long-term goal was to eliminate the separate FCOZ framework by consolidating standards into a single set applicable citywide, reducing the need to consult multiple sections. Council Member Robert Pinon asked whether the intent was ultimately to remove the FCOZ and incorporate the standards into one chapter, and Brian Tucker confirmed that was the intent.

Council Member Jennifer Hawkes identified multiple examples of what she viewed as open-ended provisions or insufficiently defined use standards, including living quarters for

employees, home businesses, daycare capacity, and the scale of residential facilities for persons with disabilities. She stated that larger facilities could create staffing, deliveries, parking, and traffic impacts, and stated that some uses appeared to have impacts comparable to or greater than short-term rentals. She also cited areas she believed lacked sufficient clarity, including watershed considerations for water treatment facilities, fire and wastewater standards for camps or temporary buildings, time limits for temporary structures, and broader issues such as density, clustering, wildfire and defensible space, and ridgeline or fuel modification protections. Brian Tucker responded that many of the specific standards Council Member Hawkes referenced existed elsewhere in Title 19, including specific use standards and temporary use standards, and stated that additional chapters—such as Chapter 19.42 and other existing provisions—were intended to supply the conditions and limits not repeated in Chapter 19.24. Claire Gillmor stated that the difficulty was that the council was reviewing one part of a larger Title 19 “puzzle,” and that much of the detail Council Member Hawkes requested was contained in other sections, although Ms. Gillmor acknowledged the need to more clearly tie the pieces together for readability and comprehension. Ms. Gillmor stated that staff would provide better summaries showing what “permitted” or “conditional” meant in practice, where standards were located, and how the code sections worked together, and cautioned against eliminating provisions before other coordinating sections were finalized, to avoid gaps that could allow applications to proceed without desired standards.

During the discussion, an audience member attempted to add information about extensive Planning Commission debate regarding the 20-foot setback language. City Attorney Cameron Platt stated the council would get to that topic. Mayor David Brems directed that the presentation continue and asked that there be no further interruptions until the presentation concluded.

Claire Gillmor then addressed another concern raised in public comment: confusion between the zoning ordinance setback discussion and the separate Emigration Canyon Road improvement project. She stated that zoning setbacks were planning tools designed to shape development patterns and that referencing the “right of way” in a zoning setback was intended as a measurement reference point, not a mechanism to establish or change right-of-way boundaries. Ms. Gillmor stated that determining the actual location of right of way required separate legal and surveying work involving title reports, easements, surveys, and applicable Utah law. An audience member stated they were confused about the measurement point, and Ms. Gillmor reiterated that the right-of-way reference served as the starting point for measuring the required setback on a lot.

An audience member then asked for the definition of “right of way” in the ordinance. Claire Gillmor responded that right of way was not defined by zoning and instead fell under public infrastructure law and policy. Council Member Catherine Harris provided an example that a property line could extend into the roadway while a public right of way existed within that property, limiting building in that area. An audience member stated that along Emigration Canyon Road the blacktop could be narrower than the right of way and expressed concern that measurement from right of way would cut into yards and homes. Council Member Robert Pinon clarified that right of way was a legal description rather than a physical feature, and was defined by civil drawings rather than existing pavement conditions. As the audience member

asked whether measurements were from the center of the road, Ms. Gillmor stated the proposal was to measure from the edge of the right of way. Council Member Robert Pinon reiterated that the right of way was based on a legal centerline and offsets rather than pavement edges. Ms. Gillmor acknowledged that, due to the canyon's age and development patterns, there were places where the right of way was closer to homes than would be ideal under modern standards, and stated that planning for future construction should aim for improved standards even if existing conditions were tight.

Mayor David Brems described right-of-way variability within his subdivision and stated that residents had hired a surveyor to resolve right-of-way boundaries and establish a road association, rather than relying on the city to resolve those issues. Mayor Brems stated that the city would need to address right-of-way matters on a case-by-case basis and reach reasonable decisions. Brian Tucker stated that in some cases right-of-way determination was straightforward, but in other cases—particularly along Emigration Canyon Road—determining right of way required a survey. An audience member stated that many residents had right of way within their front yards and that a road association approach would not work for Emigration Canyon Road. Mayor Brems stated the city would need to find solutions collaboratively and described his own experience with setbacks and approvals, stating that his home would not have been buildable without a reduced property-line setback that was conditioned on maintaining sufficient clearance from the road for parking without impeding traffic. Mayor Brems stated that the city could not plan for every hypothetical and had historically found solutions through cooperation. A public comment speaker emphasized that existing properties were in a different situation than new construction. Council Member Catherine Harris stated that existing properties would not be impacted by the ordinance. A speaker responded that impacts could arise if owners needed to add structures such as a dog house. Mayor Brems stated that future construction likely could not move closer to the road but indicated that building would still be possible under the system.

Council Member Catherine Harris expressed general support for the ordinance and appreciation for the Planning Commission and staff work, but stated concern that unresolved right-of-way uncertainties made it difficult to use right-of-way boundaries as a zoning measurement reference and questioned whether the council was rushing. Claire Gillmor responded that right-of-way issues should be treated separately from zoning setbacks and stated she was not aware of evidence that would limit the city's authority regarding public right of way. Ms. Gillmor stated that the city's ability to achieve desired outcomes in future land use decisions depended on updating ordinances, referencing a recent subdivision application that had to be approved because it met existing administrative requirements despite public dissatisfaction. She stated the ordinances should reflect what the council wanted for the city and offered to continue refining them.

Brian Tucker then directed the discussion to the specific setback language that had consumed significant time at the prior Planning Commission meeting. Mr. Tucker stated the main debate centered on whether setback measurement should reference the edge of a public right of way only, or the edge of a public or private right of way, with a specific carve-out for Emigration Canyon Road as public right of way. He stated that the Planning Commission had developed a robust waiver system tied to factors including snow storage and removal, drainage, access,

parking, fire protection, view corridors, stream corridors, water quality, septic system location and viability, traffic safety, and building code considerations. A major procedural change was shifting waiver authority from staff to the Planning Commission, noting that historically staff had granted waivers under the FCOZ framework. Mayor David Brems asked whether waivers should be handled by staff or the Planning Commission. Brian Tucker stated that Planning Commission review created a public forum and record, allowed neighbors to participate, and shifted decisions from staff discretion to an appointed public body, though staff-level waivers could be easier for applicants. Mayor Brems stated that as an architect he would prefer quick counter approvals, but as a former Planning Commission participant he appreciated the public process. Council Member Catherine Harris stated that the Planning Commission consisted of local residents familiar with canyon constraints and that this local understanding was an advantage. Mayor David Brems acknowledged staff expertise and stated he was comfortable with Planning Commission review.

Ms. Gillmor summarized the proposal as adopting the ordinance with two key elements emphasized: adding “private right of way” to the setback measurement language to account for the canyon’s private roads, and using the enhanced waiver language with waivers granted by the Planning Commission.

Council Member Jennifer Hawkes then asked to make a motion to table the ordinance so edits, questions, and recommendations could be exchanged before approval. Claire Gillmor stated that was acceptable. City Recorder Diana Baun reminded residents that any additional public comment materials for the next meeting should be emailed to her in advance. A public commenter asked whether the council would receive proposals before minutes and agenda packets were published so members would have time to review them. Ms. Baun stated that council members received materials as they came in, prior to final publication of the packet, which was assembled at the end of the process.

**Council Member Hawkes moved to table a decision to a future meeting on Ordinance 2026-O-01, Repealing the chapters of City Code listed above and enacting Chapter 19.24 Forestry and Recreation Zones. Council Member Pinon seconded the motion; vote was 5-0, unanimous in favor.**

**D. Discussion and Potential Action Regarding Process for Official Responses to Emails from the Public**

Council Member Catherine Harris stated that she was seeking clarification about how the council should handle letters and emails sent to the full council. Council Member Harris referenced prior criticism the council had received for not responding to group correspondence and said that after that criticism, she concluded the council should respond more consistently. She stated that when an email was sent directly to her, she felt compelled to respond, but when messages were sent to the entire group, it was easy for everyone to assume someone else would reply. She proposed formalizing a practice where a designated person would acknowledge receipt of messages sent to all council members, including thanking the sender and confirming the council had received the message. She also stated that the designated person should verify addresses and distribution because several emails had included incorrect

addresses and some council members had not received messages that others had received. Council Member Harris offered to take on the responsibility, but said she wanted the council's direction so it was clear that she was acting in that role. She emphasized that this would not replace or diminish City Recorder Diana Baun's responsibilities.

Mayor David Brems agreed with the proposal and stated it would be helpful if Council Member Catherine Harris took primary responsibility for acknowledging group correspondence. Mayor David Brems added that if Council Member Harris recognized a sender or if a message related to something Mayor Brems knew about, he was willing to respond as well.

Council Member Harris stated that when responding with personal comments, she consistently clarified that she was not speaking on behalf of other council members, but she wanted to ensure that at minimum the council acknowledged messages and conveyed that the council was reading them. She characterized this as a matter of common courtesy and also as a way to keep better track of incoming communications.

City Recorder Diana Baun stated that if residents wanted correspondence included in the minutes or tied to a meeting record, they needed to make sure she was included and received a copy, because if she was not included as the City Recorder she would not know about the message, it could be missed, and it would not be incorporated into public comment materials.

Council Member Harris stated that with the city's separate systems in place, she did not want to assume she could speak for the council without explicit direction, but she intended to send acknowledgements on behalf of the council and mayor simply confirming receipt and appreciation. Mayor Brems stated that Council Member Harris consistently clarified her role when responding. Council Member Harris stated that she would continue doing it as long as she had direction from the council to do so.

City Recorder Diana Baun asked whether the council had seen the email regarding a scheduling conflict with the Emigration Oaks HOA meeting occurring at the same time as a city council meeting.

Mayor David Brems confirmed that the council had discussed the matter. He stated that although he did not object to potentially moving to the fourth Tuesday, there was a conflict that week and the council would remain on the third Tuesday schedule. Mayor Brems stated the city would need to coordinate with Emigration Oaks to resolve the overlap.

Council Member Catherine Harris stated that she had spoken with the HOA president and explained that changing the council's meeting date would require formal action, including public notice and a vote. She had suggested the HOA consider moving to the fourth Tuesday, since that date was currently open for the city. Council Member Harris stated that the HOA would review its options and determine what adjustments could be made and clarified that the scheduling issue arose because the HOA's management had not yet finalized its reservations.

Diana Baun stated that she had deliberately confirmed the 2025 calendar with the UFA facility scheduling department, and wanted to ensure the conflict had been addressed. Council Member Catherine Harris assured Diana Baun that the scheduling had been handled correctly on the city's end and that the HOA was exploring alternatives, which might include moving to a different day of the week. Ms. Baun noted that if the council were to change its meeting dates, she would need advance notice in order to ensure proper coordination with other scheduling requirements and public notice obligations. Council Member Harris stated that it would be more difficult for the city to change its meeting date than for the HOA to adjust, and that the HOA would determine whether it could make changes.

Mayor David Brems concluded that the city's published calendar would remain in place. Diana Baun stated that she simply wanted confirmation that the matter had been discussed.

City Attorney Cameron Platt provided further clarification regarding communications involving council members. He explained that there were three types of communications council members might engage in. First, he stated that individual council members could respond in their individual capacity to constituents or other government entities. Mr. Platt clarified that when acting in this capacity, a council member was speaking personally as an elected official and not on behalf of the full council. Second, He stated that if the council wished to communicate an official collective position, that communication must be formally adopted through a motion or resolution. Mr. Platt explained that any statement representing the council as a whole required formal action and approval in an open meeting. Third, He stated that responses made on behalf of the executive branch typically fell to the mayor. Mr. Platt explained that in the mayor-council form of government, the mayor generally handled executive communications in response to public comments or input. He concluded by advising council members to be deliberate and clear about which capacity they were acting in when responding to communications, to avoid confusion about whether a response reflected an individual opinion, the council's collective position, or the executive branch.

#### **E. Healthy Utah Designation Updates**

Council Member Robert Pinon did not have an update this month due to the holidays, but would like to keep it on the agenda for potential updates next month.

#### **F. City Design Standards and Design Guidelines**

Council Member Jennifer Hawkes stated that she was initiating an ongoing project and had recently included the city's Legal Counsel Polly McLean and Cameron Platt in the discussion so the three of them could work through it collaboratively. Council Member Hawkes explained that the project would establish standards applicable to city-owned property, including roadways and other municipal property. She outlined preliminary guiding principles that would be developed further before being presented for formal review. The proposed standards would address roadway surface treatments, including material selection for micro paving, milling, and overlay, particularly in light of the roadway's heavy use by cyclists. She also identified retaining walls and slope stabilization, plant materials and landscaping, drainage standards, signage and roadway features, cycling signage, trailhead and trail infrastructure such as wayfinding

and maintenance, cycling amenities, and construction coordination with other agencies as areas to be addressed. She stated that the document would be collaborative and iterative, and that once the draft reached a more developed stage, it would be brought to the council for review and additional input.

## **12. City Attorney Updates**

None at this time.

## **13. Council Member Reports**

### **A. Council Member Brems**

- 1. Unified Police Department (UPD) & Salt Lake Valley Law Enforcement Service Area (SLVLESA)**
- 2. Emigration Canyon Planning Commission**
- 3. Community Renewable Energy Program**

Mayor David Brems stated that he attended the Municipal Services District (MSD) meeting with former Mayor Joe Smolka and that a significant portion of the meeting focused on personnel policy at the MSD. He reported that, with respect to matters affecting Emigration Canyon, there was a vote to table approval of the road improvement project, and he anticipated that the matter would return for a vote at the next MSD meeting. He reported that he attended the Unified Police Department meeting the previous week, there was a new chair and operations appeared to be going well. Mayor Brems further reported that Unified Police was close to being fully staffed. He stated that the SLVLESA was entering its preliminary budgeting process.

Mayor David Brems concluded by noting that the council had already heard extensive discussion regarding the Planning Commission earlier in the meeting and no further reporting was needed.

### **B. Council Member Harris**

- 1. Unified Fire Authority (UFA) & Unified Fire Service Area (UFSA)**
- 2. Watershed Plan**

Council Member Catherine Harris delivered her report regarding the Unified Fire Authority (UFA) and the Unified Fire Service Area (UFSA). Council Member Catherine Harris announced that she had been elected Chair of UFSA as of that day. She was looking forward to the role despite the increased workload and noted that the compensation remained unchanged. She reported that the Unified Fire Authority and UFSA continued to perform strong work and highlighted several current issues. She reiterated that Liaison Chief Case had taken early retirement a few months earlier and that a replacement liaison had not yet been appointed. She had met with Chief Burchette and Assistant Chief Robinson and that she hoped the new liaison would have expertise in wildland firefighting and prevention, including defensible space, community hardening, and emergency management. Council Member Harris explained that Chief Case had significant emergency management experience and had worked with residents

on evacuation planning, but that there was limited documentation of that work, and she was attempting to reconstruct the status of evacuation planning efforts. She stated she might seek assistance from residents to help piece together those efforts. Council Member Harris reported that the upcoming budget season would be challenging due to the addition of five new board members who were new to government service. She stated that rising costs were presenting significant financial pressures and specifically cited the legislature's funding of cancer screening for firefighters and noted that approximately 10% of firefighters screened had positive cancer findings. She stated that while the screening itself was funded, cancer treatment was currently being paid through firefighters' private insurance plans, which had caused UFA health insurance costs to increase substantially and were projected to nearly double in the coming year. Council Member Harris stated that there was ongoing legislative discussion regarding whether cancer treatment should be treated as a workplace-related illness due to exposure risks associated with firefighting. She stated that the budget would also need to address capital needs such as vehicle replacement, other capital improvements, and cost-of-living adjustments, while maintaining a commitment not to raise taxes in the coming year.

Council Member Catherine Harris reported on House Bill 48 and the recently released wildfire structure risk map. Council Member Harris stated that it had been assumed Emigration Canyon would be entirely designated as high structure risk, but that was not the case. She stated she did not have additional detail regarding how the designations were determined and noted that discussions with state officials had not yielded clarity. She explained that properties designated as high risk above a structure risk score of seven would be assessed the highest annual fee for three years, approximately \$100 per year, though the process for reducing that assessment had not yet been released. Council Member Harris stated that the rulemaking authority rested with the Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands and that she hoped to meet with that agency to obtain further information. She expressed concern that insurance companies were permitted and required to use the wildfire risk map in underwriting decisions, which could affect homeowners' insurance availability and cost. She concluded by stating there had been no progress on the watershed plan.

### **C. Council Member Pinon**

- 1. Wasatch Front Waste and Recycling District (WFWRD)**
- 2. Utah Broadband**
- 3. Update on Possible High-Density Development**

Council Member Robert Pinon delivered his report regarding the Wasatch Front Waste and Recycling District (WFWRD). She stated that the board meeting was scheduled for the following week and that there had been no meeting in December. He reported that he had spent time with Evan Tyrell, the new manager and CEO of the district, and confirmed that Emigration Canyon continued to serve as the test location for a community dumpster cleanup program planned for later in the year. He also reported that he replaced a failed lock at the Pinecrest dumpster location. Council Member Pinon stated that the new lock used the same access code as before and that he had visited the site multiple times in recent weeks and found it to be clean and functioning properly. Council Member Pinon concluded by stating that

he had no additional updates from Utah Broadband and no updates regarding the high-density development.

#### **D. Deputy Mayor Hawkes**

1. **Website ([www.emigration.utah.gov](http://www.emigration.utah.gov))**
2. **CodeRED**
3. **Association of Municipal Governments**
4. **Utah League of Cities and Towns (ULCT)**

Council Member Jennifer Hawkes asked council members to notify her if they identified any errors on the city website and stated that she had already corrected several issues that were brought to her attention in the previous week. She then raised the topic of CodeRED emergency notifications. She stated that because it was the beginning of the year, she recommended sending out a mailer to residents explaining how to sign up for CodeRED, particularly since it had been several years since a mailer had last been sent and some residents might not be aware of the system. Council Member Hawkes requested approval to proceed prior to the next meeting. Mayor David Brems and other council members expressed agreement. Council Member Hawkes stated she would move forward with the mailing. She also reported that there had been a smooth transition to the new CodeRED platform and that she had been training on the updated system, which she believed would be beneficial.

Council Member Jennifer Hawkes reported that there were no updates from the Association of Municipal Governments. Activity with the Utah League of Cities and Towns would increase shortly and referenced several legislative matters under consideration. She described House Bill 161, which proposed increasing the primary residential property tax exemption from 45% to 60%. She explained that the proposal would likely function as a tax shift rather than a net loss to municipalities, potentially lowering taxes for primary homeowners while increasing the burden on second homes and commercial properties. Council Member Hawkes also reported that the League was discussing concepts related to the Great Salt Lake Integrated Basin Plan, which addressed water management for the Great Salt Lake through collective participation. Additionally, She noted proposed legislation regarding a transportation utility fee, which could establish a flat fee per resident to support public infrastructure. She stated that the League's first meeting would be held on January 26 and concluded by noting potential grant opportunities. She referenced a maintenance-related grant opportunity for the restroom facility in the middle of the canyon and stated that the Outdoor Recreation Grant was open until March 13. Council Member Hawkes indicated that if the council intended to pursue restroom improvements or related infrastructure, that grant might be an option to consider.

Mayor David Brems additionally reported that he attended his first Salt Lake County Council of Governments meeting, which included all mayors in the county. He stated that, following a suggestion from former Mayor Joe Smolka, he was appointed to the Active Transportation Committee of the Wasatch Front Regional Council. Mayor Brems noted that this committee is connected to funding sources for the city's road improvement projects and stated that the appointment was beneficial.

#### **14. Future Agenda Items**

Council Member Catherine Harris commented that Council Member Nicholas Griffith might be interested in becoming involved in additional assignments.

Mayor David Brems stated that he intended to review all current board and committee assignments over the next month and suggested making potential adjustments. He stated that he would like to meet individually with each council member to discuss their interests, availability, and preferences before bringing forward proposed changes to assignments at a future meeting.

#### **15. Closed Session(s) if Needed as Allowed Pursuant to Utah Code §52-4-205**

- A. Discussion of the Character, Professional Competence or Physical or Mental Health of an Individual
- B. Strategy Session to Discuss Pending or Reasonably Imminent Litigation
- C. Strategy Session to Discuss the Purchase, Exchange, or Lease of Real Property
- D. Discussion Regarding Deployment of Security Personnel, Devices, or Systems; and
- E. Other Lawful Purposes as Listed in Utah Code §52-4-205

No Closed Session Needed Tonight

#### **16. Adjourn**

**Council Member Hawkes moved to adjourn the January 20, 2026 Emigration Canyon City Council Meeting. Council Member Harris seconded the motion; vote was 5-0, unanimous in favor.**

The January 20, 2026 Emigration Canyon Council Meeting adjourned at 9:44 PM.

**The January 2026 City Council Meeting Minutes were Approved by the City Council on the 17<sup>th</sup> day of February 2026:**

**ATTEST:**

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David Brems, Mayor

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Diana Baun, City Recorder