



CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Mayor Trevor Olsen

Mayor Pro Tempore Cheryl Bowers

Council Member Chris Ewald

Council Member Charlie Taylor

Council Member Erik Grover(absent)

Council Member Kellen Nielson

December 9, 2025 - 6:00 pm - Work Session

December 9, 2025 - 7:00 pm - CDBG Public Hearing

December 9, 2025 - 7:15 pm City Council Meeting

50 West 100 South Street, Blanding Utah 84511

Meetings live streamed when available at:

<https://meet.google.com/ymf-jwqo-rjs>

Work Session

1. Tony Wojcik - Veterans Memorial Update

- Mr. Wojcik provided an update on the veterans memorial, noting delays due to weather. The facing rock is being installed, with changes to use smaller rock. The completion of the memorial will likely go past Christmas and into next year. Mr. Wojcik suggested a spring ribbon-cutting ceremony for the memorial. He hopes to involve the community, including having the Mayor make remarks, and having different entities and having blessings from different native american tribes. He plans to involve the local schools, with students walking over to the visitor center for the event.

2. Downtown Plan Review

- Mr. Redd initiated the review of the downtown plan, clarifying that it provides recommendations but nothing in it is mandatory. The plan aims to improve Main Street's front edges in the short term, with long-term ideas for better parking, slower traffic, more green space, and updating dilapidated buildings. Mr. Redd expressed concern about some suggestions in the plan, such as those that might infringe on businesses like CBs by making parking spots which would block the pull through option at fuel pumps. Mr. Redd supported the idea of creating more walkable areas, emphasizing that they want to be creative with new spaces and unused spaces. They discussed specific unused spaces for potential parking, such as behind the flower shop, suggesting that it could also include a rear entrance to the pharmacy. They noted that the city currently owns a prime piece of real estate downtown that could be utilized.
- The council discussed concerns about the downtown plan's suggestion to reroute the highway from the downtown area to 100 or 200 East. The council previously removed a truck traffic bypass from a 2008 master plan. Council members suggested removing the specific location for rerouting



consideration and instead generally mentioning the long-term possibility of rerouting US 191.

- The plan suggests a road diet for the downtown core, proposing one lane of traffic in each direction with a center turn lane, instead of the current four lanes. Councilmember Taylor expressed that while slowing traffic is a desired goal, he does not think any measures will fix the speeding problem. Some oppose the idea of a stoplight, some do not. The proposal does include having turn lanes and a center turn lane for the core area.
- Concerns were raised about pedestrian safety, particularly with four lanes of traffic and at crosswalks. Mr. Redd suggested looking into permanent flashing lights at crosswalks to increase visibility and safety. More sidewalk creation and visibility improvements were also supported.
- The council discussed strategies for funding the downtown plan's recommendations. The hope is that making downtown more accessible, desirable and realistic will increase traffic and potentially pay back the city's investment. They also mentioned seeking grants. The council aims to bring the downtown plan back for approval in January after making modifications based on the current feedback.

CDBG First Public Hearing

1. Public Input for Projects

Councilmember Bowers made a motion to enter a public hearing for the CDBG grant. Councilmember Nielson seconded the motion. Mayor Olsen repeated the motion and asked for discussion or questions. Hearing none, he called for a vote.

Those voting aye:

**Councilmember Taylor
Councilmember Nielson
Councilmember Ewald
Councilmember Bowers**

Those voting nay:

None

Constituting all members thereof, Mayor Olsen declared the motion carried.

- Mayor Olsen opened the public hearing for the CDBG program and stated that the purpose of the public hearing is to provide citizens with pertinent information about the Community Development Block Grant program and to allow for discussion of possible applications for the 2026 funding cycle. It was explained that the grant money must be spent on projects benefiting primarily low and moderate-income persons. Southeast



region, in which Blanding City is a member, is expecting to receive approximately **\$504,284** in this new program year. All eligible activities that can be accomplished under this program are identified in the CDBG Application Policies and Procedures Manual and interested persons can review it at any time. Mayor Olsen read several of the eligible activities listed including examples, such as Construction of public works and facilities, fire stations and fire safety, acquisition of real property, and other projects. Mayor Olsen indicated that in the past Blanding City has received two grants for the shade structures and pickleball courts. The city has handed out its capital investment plan as part of the regional “Consolidated Plan”. This list shows which projects the city has identified as being needed in the community.

- No comments were made from the community.

Councilmember Ewald made a motion to exit the public hearing. Councilmember Nielson seconded the motion. Mayor Olsen repeated the motion and asked for discussion or questions. Hearing none, he called for a vote.

Those voting aye:

**Councilmember Taylor
Councilmember Nielson
Councilmember Ewald
Councilmember Bowers**

Those voting nay:

None

Constituting all members thereof, Mayor Olsen declared the motion carried.

POLICY MEETING

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. A Prayer was offered by Councilmember Nielson.
4. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all in attendance.
5. Consent Agenda & November 18th City Council Minutes Approval

Councilmember Ewald made a motion to approve the consent agenda and minutes from November 18, 2025. Councilmember Bowers seconded the motion. Mayor Olsen repeated the motion and asked for discussion or questions. Hearing none, he called for a vote.

Those voting aye:

**Councilmember Taylor
Councilmember Nielson
Councilmember Ewald
Councilmember Bowers**



Those voting nay:

None

Constituting all members thereof, Mayor Olsen declared the motion carried.

6. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest - None

Public Input

- Bret Hosler was present at the meeting representing the Legacy trust and he noted that there is an agenda item regarding the legacy trust, he asked that they table the item as he wasn't informed of it.
- Kenydi Cane was present at the meeting and she asked what the marathon was and why it has the same budget as the 4th of July. Her information was collected and there will be follow up with her on her question.

Reports

1. Mayor

- Mayor Olsen read an email from the former City Manager, David Johnson, sharing sincere appreciation for the exceptional dedication and service of Council Member Grover and Councilwoman Bowers to the city. The City Manager's words highlighted their leadership, collaboration, and unwavering focus on what mattered, noting that their contributions strengthened the community and laid a strong foundation for future work. Mayor Olsen, on behalf of the city, thanked Councilmember Bowers for her service and presented her with a going-away gift. The same will be extended to Councilmember Grover.

2. City Council

- Councilmember Nielson gave some feedback on the Christmas on Main Street event. There was a discussion on how to do things better next year. He recommended that stamps for the cards only be obtainable on the day of the event and perhaps only during specific hours, as downtown Main Street was reported to be dead after 6:00 PM, with most people gathering at the park. Mr. Redd agreed that attendance could be doubled next year with better ideas, and another council member suggested moving the event to first south to draw more people closer to businesses.
- Councilmember Bowers expressed her appreciation for everyone that she has worked with for the past 9 years. She expressed appreciation for the service and the dedication of every council member, mayor, and city official she worked with. She acknowledged the challenges of being slowed down by COVID-19 but stated they enjoyed working with everyone and loved the city and its people.

3. City Manager



- Finance report: They looked over the finance report, it was stated that the marathon was not over budget and it was considered a successful event.
- Mr. Redd announced the upcoming League of Cities and Towns meeting, noting that they would be streaming it and invited council members to attend in person or remotely.
- Mr. Redd also informed the council that Sylvia Stubbs was interested in approaching the state about redistricting and changing how voting takes place, as San Juan County is the only one held to a standard that may be outdated due to a previous lawsuit. The council agreed to give Commissioner Stubbs a favorable word back on the matter.

4. Fire Report - Corey Spillman

- Blanding Fire Department had
 - 35 total Callouts Q-3
 - 9- Fire alarm activation
 - 1- Fire works Outside Fire
 - 1-Outside Fire (Controlled burn)
 - 2- Vehicle Accidents
 - 4- Carbon monoxide/ gas leaks
 - 4-Vehicle Fire
 - 8- Medical Assist's (lift assist / CPR Assist)
 - 3- Wildland Fires (Lightning Strikes. Open Field Fires)
 - 3- Smoke Report
 - 13- Trainings total 30 hours
- Chief Spillman talked about the importance of the CWPP. He talked about the fire break that will be established between the 3rd and 4th reservoir. He noted that having this plan in place allows the city to access county, state, and federal help and significantly reduces the city's financial burden during major fire events.

5. Building Department and Airport Report - Taylor Francom(absent)

October:New permits issued

- 4 Permits
 - Addition-1
 - Remodel-1
 - Repair-1
 - Single Family Dwelling-1
- Inspections Completed
 - 30 Inspections completed
 - 23 Residential
 - 5 Commercial
 - 2 Monticello



Notes: Active issued permits-29

November: New permits issued

- 3 Permits
- Electric Meter Set-1
- Remodel-1
- Repair-1

Inspections Completed

- 34 Inspections completed
- 23 Residential
- 10 Commercial
- 1 Monticello

Notes: Active issued permits-26

- The new roof on the visitor center is complete, and work at the airport includes the completion of a new fuel system and ongoing progress on the wildlife fence. Mr. Redd mentioned that the airport committee recently met and provided good suggestions.

6. Police Report - Chief JJ Bradford

- Sgt. Hillhouse and Officer Stewart attended a tactical first aid course.
 - Other officers have been working on some online training towards the new years requirements.
 - We got through Homecoming and Halloween without any issues.
 - Cadets Spillman and Laws have started the academy with a graduation date at the end of February.
 - The three trucks are getting upfitted and we are just waiting for the go ahead to start taking cars up to have the radios pulled out and put in the trucks.
- Chief Bradford thanked councilmember Bowers and Grover for their time and work on the council.

7. Public Works & Engineer Report - Patrick Parsons

- Mr. Parsons thanked Council Member Bowers for her service and reported on current water conditions. The report included new snow depths as the mountain is getting some snow as well as the snow water equivalency data. The graph is showing precipitation at 10 inches which is great, that is 196% of the median, with snow depth at 7 inches which is right at the median, indicating a good start for runoff preparation.

Business Items

1. Resolution 12-9-2025-1 Approval of Rural Economic Development Plan

- WHEREAS, the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity (GOEO) launched the Rural Economic Blueprint Program to support rural communities in developing



actionable, community-driven economic development strategies; and Blanding City was selected as one of the inaugural participating communities; and WHEREAS, throughout 2025, GOEO staff conducted stakeholder interviews, reviewed the 2024 General Plan, analyzed economic data, and facilitated multiple working team and steering committee meetings, including contributions from elected officials, City staff, institutional partners, and local industry representatives. to prepare the Blanding City Rural Economic Blueprint; and WHEREAS, the completed Blueprint includes:

- A comprehensive SWOT analysis,
- An ideal community-defined vision for Blanding’s future economy, and
- A Strategic Plan establishing five major goals focused on economic diversification, workforce development, infrastructure improvement, quality of life enhancements, and long-term implementation; and WHEREAS, having an adopted economic blueprint strengthens the City’s eligibility for state and federal funding, improves alignment among regional partners, and provides a unified framework for long-term community and economic investment; and WHEREAS, the Blanding City Council has reviewed the Blanding City Rural Economic Blueprint (2025) and finds it to accurately reflect local priorities and to be in the best interest of Blanding City’s future development.

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Councilmember Ewald made a motion to approve Resolution 12-9-2025-1 approval of the rural economic development plan. Councilmember Bowers seconded the motion. Mayor Olsen repeated the motion and asked for discussion or questions. Hearing none, he called for a vote.

Those voting aye:

**Councilmember Taylor
Councilmember Nielson
Councilmember Ewald
Councilmember Bowers**

Those voting nay:

None

Constituting all members thereof, Mayor Olsen declared the motion carried.

2. Resolution 12-9-2025-2 Approval of the Community Wildfire Preparedness Plan

- WHEREAS, Blanding City participates in the Utah Cooperative Wildfire System (CWS), which requires ongoing wildfire prevention, preparedness, mitigation, and maintenance efforts as outlined in the State of Utah’s Cooperative Wildfire System Policy and Procedures Manual; and WHEREAS, Blanding City Fire Department has prepared an updated Community Wildfire Preparedness Plan (CWPP) for FY2026 in coordination with the Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands (FFSL), and other key stakeholders; and WHEREAS, the CWPP identifies wildfire risks, vulnerable community assets, fuel conditions, evacuation considerations, and high-priority mitigation areas, including the primary treatment area between the 3rd and 4th reservoirs, as shown in the project maps contained in the Plan; And WHEREAS, the CWPP establishes Blanding City’s goals and actionable strategies for Prevention, Preparedness, Mitigation, and Maintenance in alignment



with the National Cohesive Wildfire Strategy and Cooperative Wildfire System (CWS) requirements, including public education, defensible-space efforts, fuel reduction, community mitigation projects, evacuation coordination, and long-term vegetation management—and adoption of the CWPP is required for continued participation in the CWS, including eligibility for state-funded wildfire suppression cost coverage, mitigation assistance, and compliance with annual Participation Commitment reporting obligations; and WHEREAS, adoption of the CWPP is required for continued participation in the Cooperative Wildfire System, including eligibility for state-funded wildfire suppression cost coverage, mitigation assistance, and compliance with annual Participation Commitment reporting obligations; and WHEREAS, the Blanding City Council has reviewed the proposed CWPP and finds that it enhances community safety, strengthens interagency coordination, and represents the best planning practices for wildfire risk reduction.

Councilmember Bowers made a motion to approve Resolution 12-9-2025-2 approval of the community wildfire preparedness plan. Councilmember Ewald seconded the motion. Mayor Olsen repeated the motion and asked for discussion or questions. Hearing none, he called for a vote.

Those voting aye: Councilmember Taylor
Councilmember Nielson
Councilmember Ewald
Councilmember Bowers

Those voting nay: None

Constituting all members thereof, Mayor Olsen declared the motion carried.

Advice and Consent Items

1. Kelly Smith - Approval to Implement Compensation Recommendation

- Mr. Redd requested the council's advice and consent to implement a compensation recommendation for Kelly Smith, the part-time IT Director, which involved a raise of over 10%. This raise was brought before the council as required by bylaws, and with the council's agreement, the raise will move forward to retain him, with future raises being based on merit and standard cost-of-living increases. Mr. Redd noted that it has been a good partnership, particularly because the contractor, Kelly, has been available after hours and on weekends and he lives locally.

2. Rainmaker Funds

- Discussion centered on whether to move forward with the Rainmaker cloud seeding initiative, with the county recommending a \$5,000 contribution, aiming for a total of \$25,000 from multiple entities. Mr. Redd clarified that



cloud seeding extracts more out of existing clouds rather than creating new rain, which requires specific atmospheric conditions. He recommended contributing no more than \$5,000 at this time if the council decided to participate, noting that the county intends to move forward regardless.

- Concerns were raised about the measurable results of cloud seeding, with one participant stating that they think there are better ways to spend \$5,000, such as long-term water projects like improving the reservoirs or other improvements for water storage and water systems. Mr. Redd suggested that the city might have the opportunity to participate in cloud seeding next year and stated that it could be tabled until more information, results, or participation from other entities become available. The council advised and consented to table the item until they could reconsider it when more information comes to light.

3. Legacy Trust Donation Funds

- The council discussed the Legacy Trust Fund, noting that the city currently collects funds on utility bills for the trust from five or six donors, acting as a middleman, and asked whether the city should maintain this involvement. It was pointed out that the Legacy Trust holds about \$150,000 and is governed by its own nonprofit board, but the city is listed in the bylaws as the principal operating location, and the council must approve any bylaw amendments. A major concern is the lack of visible activity from the trust, despite the city's name being attached to it, including the mayor's role in appointing board members.
- It was noted the lack of city representation on the Legacy Trust board since the departure of a former city official, and that the board has existing openings. Some of the bylaws were read out loud, it was stated that upon the organization's dissolution, all remaining assets would be returned to the city. Concerns were raised that the bylaws were not being followed, including not holding regular meetings, and the lack of a proper board, which could be grounds for dissolving a 501c3. The mayor expressed that the lack of transparency and minimal use of funds over 25 years were significant concerns, which they attributed primarily to the executive director of the trust.
- Bret Hosler, the executive director of the Legacy Trust, clarified that the trust was set up as a separate 501c3 to allow the community opportunities not available if the city managed the funds directly. Mr. Hosler argued that the



city does not have the right to dissolve the trust; that decision belongs to the board. Brett also stated that the board is actively seeking a new member and intends to reinvest the money into the stock market to promote growth and provide more community resources, which was voted on by the current board.

- The council agreed that the partnership should continue but only if the Legacy Trust addresses transparency and governance issues. Mr. Redd recommended a three-month remediation plan, starting with completing the board within two months, or sooner, and then reworking the bylaws in the third month. The plan also included establishing a long-term outlook for the funds and quarterly reporting. A deadline was set for February 10th to make the appointment for the fifth board member and to start looking at recommended bylaw changes.

Discussion Items

1. White Mesa Water Transmission Update

- The mayor updated the council on the White Mesa water transmission, stating that there have been no formal discussions with White Mesa, as their new board is not expected to make any decisions regarding water until January 20th. The city remains open to listening to any ideas White Mesa or the mill might have concerning water access, infrastructure, or water rights.

Adjournment

Councilmember Bowers made a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Nielson seconded the motion. Mayor Olsen repeated the motion and asked for discussion or questions, hearing none, he called for a vote.

Those voting aye:

**Councilmember Taylor
Councilmember Nielson
Councilmember Ewald
Councilmember Bowers**

Those voting nay:

None

Constituting all members thereof, Mayor Olsen declared the motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:48pm