



ROY CITY
Roy City Council Work Session Minutes
March 17, 2026– 5:30 p.m.
Roy City Council
5051 S 1900 W Roy, UT 84067

Minutes of the Roy City Council Meeting held in person in the Roy City Council Chambers and streamed on YouTube on March 17, 2026, at 4:00 p.m.

Notice of the meeting was provided to the Utah Public Notice Website at least 24 hours in advance. A copy of the agenda was also posted on the Roy City website.

The following members were in attendance:

Mayor Jackson
Councilmember Hulbert
Councilmember Jackson
Councilmember Saxton
Councilmember Sphar
Councilmember Wilson

City Manager, Matt Andrews
City Recorder, Brittany Fowers
City Attorney, Matt Wilson

Excused: N/A

Also present were: Police Chief, Matthew Gwynn; Police Captain, Armando Perez; Fire Chief, Theron Williams; Parks and Recreation Director, Michelle Howard; Public Works Director, Brandon Edwards; Management Services Director, Amber Kelley. Kevin Homer, Glenda Moore, Leon Wilson, and Cindy Whinham.

A. Welcome & Roll Call

Mayor Jackson welcomed those in attendance and noted Councilmembers Hulbert, Jackson, Saxton, Sphar, and Wilson were present.

B. Discussion Item

1. FY26 and FY27 COLA and Wage-study

Councilmember Saxton presented the pros and cons of raising the COLA. He explained why he had proposed that the 2.5% COLA be reinstated for the City employees by drawing from the City reserves. Councilmember Saxton appreciated that if they chose to do this, it would obligate them to an 18% property tax increase in 2027. However, Councilmember Saxton noted that an 18% increase was still less than the original proposal of a 28% increase, which had been eliminated by the State. He further stated that the 18% increase could be mitigated by sales tax revenue, possibly. He stated that reinstating the COLA increase would show the employees that they were valued by the City.

Councilmember Wilson asked if the purpose of the COLA increase was only to make a gesture to the employees, or if there was another function to the increase. Councilmember Saxton said it would show the City employees that they were valued by the City, and he said it would allow them to use their reserve funds which had not been obligated for anything else. Councilmember Saxton added that it might help with employee retention as well. Councilmember Wilson asked if the raise would help get their employees to a competitive, livable wage and Councilmember Saxton replied that he was not sure of that, but reiterated that it would only help the employees' financial situation.

Councilmember Sphar said he was on the fence about the issue. He said that he liked the idea of doing a

base pay increase rather than a bonus, and he noted that this structure would help attract more employees to Roy City. He also noted that it was hard to predict what their taxes would look like since they had not yet made a decision about the fire district. He said he was okay with this plan based on what he thought was going to happen with the fire district, but said it was hard to say for certain since there were many unknown variables.

Councilmember Saxton said that people were not going to want to work for Roy City if there was no vision for the future. He acknowledged that a 2.5% increase was minimal, but stated that it could only improve the turnover situation. He appreciated that he had voted against the 28% property tax increase as he felt it was too high, but felt that an 18% increase could be justifiable if it aided the City employees.

Councilmember Wilson asked for Management Services Director Kelley's perspective, and noted it was difficult to spend money when they did not have all the information. Councilmember Hulbert interjected that her main goal was to increase the wages, as this would help them to take care of both their employees and their residents in the long term. Councilmember Hulbert worried that if they used money they did not yet have for the COLA, they would be committed to a plan that they might not be able to follow through on. Councilmember Hulbert said that they could not do much else until they took care of the wage issue, and noted that it impacted all the departments in the City. Councilmember Hulbert cautioned that using one-time funds to solve a problem seemed risky.

Councilmember Hulbert asked Management Services Director Kelley what happened to left over funds in Capital Expenditures. Management Services Director Kelley replied that any excess revenue was transferred to the Capital Projects Fund at the end of the year, keeping their fund balance around the same percent. Councilmember Hulbert clarified that left over money went to a purpose; it did not just sit around. Councilmember Hulbert discussed the fund balance and noted that Roy City's was on the low side compared to other cities in Utah. Councilmember Hulbert said that while Roy City had been careful with money, this put them in a difficult situation now.

Mayor Jackson asked if the 2.5% COLA increase would be enough to keep employees in Roy City. City Manager Andrews replied that employees would appreciate any kind of increase, but said that they needed to ensure that the raise did not feel like a slap in the face. He said that for his lowest paid employees, the 2.5% increase would be a raise of 50 cents. City Manager Andrews discussed how many employees he was losing because of low wages, even though they liked their jobs here. City Manager Andrews summarized that a 2.5% increase might not be enough on its own, but said that if the City also indicated that they were working on the wage issue and there was hope for the future, that might incentivize people to stay.

Fire Chief Williams concurred with City Manager Andrew's comments and said that he lost many employees because they were not being paid enough, even though they felt loyalty to the City. Fire Chief Williams agreed that the City needed to communicate to the employees that they were going to resolve the wage issue and catch up to what other cities could offer. Fire Chief Williams noted that there was a risk if they only offered the 2.5% increase without also indicating that there would be more increases down the road. He said he was in favor of the COLA raise.

Councilmember Jackson brought up the risk of the 2.5% COLA increase. She noted that using one-time money posed a risk, but she was willing to consider it regardless. She said the greater risk was the possibility that the City would not be able to deliver on their promises. Councilmember Jackson said that having to backtrack would be a huge letdown for the employees and felt that was a greater disservice than not offering a raise in the first place. Councilmember Jackson summarized that the core of the issue was the fact that Roy had been facing wage discrepancy issues for years without acting on it. She said that she could see everyone wanted to solve the issue, and hoped that this meeting helped signal to the employees

that they were taking this issue seriously. She concluded that there were issues with all of their options, including the option of doing nothing, and said that whatever they chose to do, they needed to focus on a long-term solution.

Councilmember Sphar thought there was a difference between promising a raise to their employees that they could not actually pay versus what happened last fall when the State had vetoed their proposed property tax raise. He noted there was going to be a risk no matter what they did, and their only choice was to think about mitigation options if they chose to move forward with the COLA raise. He said that while he was generally risk-adverse in his own financial life, he was in favor of this COLA raise despite the risks because he thought it would bring the greatest benefit to the City overall.

Councilmember Wilson added that there were several commercial developments on the horizon for Roy City that had the potential to attract sales tax revenue to the City. She expressed she was in favor of the COLA increase despite the risks as well because she thought it would help the City employees.

Councilmember Wilson said that they had been working hard on the wage study and said that she wanted to help the department heads in the City to retain their employees, and she felt the COLA raise would serve as a morale boost and a good faith gesture to show that the City valued their employee's labor.

City Manager Andrews said that it was hard to dedicate one-time monies that they did not actually have. He explained that if this plan failed, it was he and Management Services Director Kelley who would have to answer for that. City Manager Andrews appreciated the intention behind the COLA raise and agreed that employees deserved raises, but he did not feel that it was sufficient to resolve the turnover issue on its own. He also noted that Roy City's reserve was not very big given the size of their organization and said that he did not feel comfortable pulling money out of that fund. He added that he was not the one who was in charge of raising taxes, it was the Council's decision.

Councilmember Hulbert reiterated that her main goal was wages. She worried that jobs could be cut in the future if they did not take care of the wage issue. She said that if they were not willing to go beyond an 18% property tax increase, they should not vote in favor of the COLA raises because they could not be certain at this point about how much they would cost. Councilmember Jackson asked for clarity about what would happen if they were unable to pay for next year's COLA raises and City Manager Andrews replied that their only options were to cut jobs or services in the City, and said that they would not be able to cut the COLA raises. City Attorney Wilson commented to this point as well and confirmed that they could not undo the COLA raise. Councilmember Hulbert opined that she would not want to cut people, and in fact there were many departments in the City that had open positions now that they were not able to fill with their current budgets.

Councilmember Hulbert said she was willing to fight for their employees and said she would be okay using one-time funds if everyone was on board for that plan, but noted that she would rather use the funds to raise base pay instead of doing the COLA raises. Parks and Recreation Director Howard agreed that a COLA raise would be wonderful and a step in the right direction, but she similarly thought the priority should be a wage adjustment. Parks and Recreation Director Howard discussed that she had lost some employees due to low wages.

City Manager Andrews asked the Council for direction. Councilmember Wilson summarized that it seemed they were discussing either doing a small COLA raise or beginning to work on their long-term wage correction. Councilmember Wilson discussed how much they would have to raise property taxes in order to get their employees up to competitive wages. Councilmember Saxton asked why the Council could not use monies that had not been allocated to offer COLA increases. Councilmember Saxton appreciated that doing so could be a political risk, but he felt confident that the City would be able to bring in enough sales tax revenue to mitigate the risk. Councilmember Saxton pointed out that the COLA

increase would bring them closer to closing their wage gap. Councilmember Hulbert said she was worried about the future of the employees and the City from a financial standpoint; not necessarily a political one.

Councilmember Jackson commented that the COLA raise idea may or may not fail and acknowledged there were a lot of unknown variables. Councilmember Wilson asked if they should have an Open House or some kind of public forum to educate the public about the pros and cons of raising the property taxes. Councilmember Wilson also asked if the department heads felt that the 2.5% raise would be sufficient to keep employees in the City. Public Works Director Edwards replied that while it would not solve all of the problems, it would certainly help and would give the City some time to work on the wage gap issue in the long term. Public Works Director Edwards added that the raise signalled to the employees that the Council was taking the issue seriously and might incentivize people to stay with the City while they worked on the problem. Fire Chief Williams made a similar comment.

Councilmember Hulbert noted that it was expensive to constantly have to hire and train new employees. She appreciated that long-term employees were valuable because of the knowledge that they had about the City. Councilmember Jackson said they needed to determine if this 2.5% raise was enough to make a dent in the wage problem, and she commented on how large the wage problem was. Councilmember Jackson asked the department heads if they felt that the 2.5% raise would be enough to make a measurable difference in the issue, and she said if it was not enough to make a substantial difference then she did not think they should do it because it required the use of one-time monies. The department heads indicated that the 2.5% COLA raise would be helpful and would make a difference for their employees.

Mayor Jackson expressed concern that Councilmember Saxton was not thinking about the wage disparity. Councilmember Saxton replied that the COLA raise would be the start of correcting the wage issue. Councilmember Saxton said that the COLA raise signalled to the employees that more increases would come in the future. Mayor Jackson noted how much the property tax would need to increase in order for them to accommodate COLA raises. Councilmember Saxton replied that he was concerned about property tax increases as well but felt that they needed to do something about the employees' wages. Councilmember Jackson summarized that Councilmember Saxton's position was that the COLA raise was the first step in a longer process of correcting the wages in the City. Councilmember Wilson said that Councilmember Saxton's commitment to a higher property tax increase made her feel that the Council was more of a team and she appreciated hearing his openness to raising property taxes in order to fix the wages in the City.

City Manager Andrews said that while the 2.5% increase was not substantial on its own, it would help with overall culture and morale within the City, as it indicated that the City was dedicated to working on this issue. City Manager Andrews elaborated that the raise signposted that the Council wanted to be transparent with their employees. Fire Chief Williams concurred and elaborated that his goal as the fire chief was to ensure that Roy City residents had access to life-saving services, which they would not be able to do if they continued to lose valuable employees. Councilmember Sphar agreed it was important to be transparent with both the City employees and the residents, and he expressed that he was feeling more comfortable with the COLA raise based on this conversation. Councilmember Sphar commented on the importance of educating the public.

Mayor Jackson thanked Councilmember Jackson for prompting this conversation and thought it was a good way to show the City departments that the Council was dedicated to working on the wage issue and that the Councilmembers were united on this front. Mayor Jackson hoped that the City employees would feel hopeful based on this conversation. Councilmember Jackson said that she wanted to have a clear plan about how to move forward, even if they did not have all of the information at this stage. Fire Chief Williams said their plan would depend on what they learned the residents wanted to do, and he said they

would have to get input from the residents from an Open House before they could move forward with a specific plan. The other Councilmembers agreed they needed to reach out to the residents.

Councilmember Wilson recalled that the previous year, they had debated raising wages by a small percentage. She thought they could look back to that conversation to get a more detailed sense about what an increase would look like. Councilmember Wilson added that they needed to have resources and information available for residents who struggled to pay their property taxes. She said that people would want to know what dollar amounts they were looking at when they talked about property tax increases, rather than percentages. The Councilmembers continued to discuss next steps and timeline for fixing their budget. Management Services Director Kelley noted the requirements for the budget process.

Councilmember Jackson summarized that while their main overall focus was wage correction, the Councilmembers were willing to move forward with looking into the COLA raise as they felt it was a valuable first step in addressing the wage gap for City employees.

C. Adjournment

Councilmember Hulbert motioned to adjourn the meeting, Councilmember Saxton seconded the motion, all present Councilmembers voted “Aye” and the meeting adjourned at 5:53 p.m.

Ann Jackson
Mayor

Attest:

Brittany Fowers
City Recorder

dc: