

1 **MINUTES OF THE HELPER CITY COUNCIL MEETING**
2 **Thursday, April 13th, 2026**
3 **at 6:00 p.m.**
4 **in the Council Chambers**
5 **19 South Main Street**
6 **Helper, Utah 84526**

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9 **ATTENDANCE:**

10 Mayor Lenise Peterman

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12 **Council Members:**

13 Tyson Damron
14 Robert Olson
15 Ruth Lee
16 David Palacios - Absent
17 Edward Chavez

12 **City Staff:**

13 Community Administrator: Cole Stapley
14 City Recorder: Traci Bishop
15 Deputy Recorder: Shaley Vasquez - Absent
16 Police Chief: Sean Draper
17 Police Officer: Absent
18 Public Works Co-Directors:
19 DJ Romero & Brittany Hansen
20 City Attorney: Dominique Kiahtipes - Absent
21 Museum Director: Roman Vega - Absent

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26 **CITIZENS:**

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28 None in attendance.
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32 **DISCUSSION ON 2027 FYE BUDGET.**

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34 Mayor Lenise Peterman said that, hopefully, each council member has been able to
35 meet with their department heads and Community Administrator Cole Stapley to
36 go over the budgets, and that way there will not be any surprises. Mr. Stapley
37 explained that health insurance premiums have gone up, and are updated in the
38 spreadsheets now. They are at a projected 9% increase right now. The insurance
39 broker has taken renewal rates and sent them out to shop the rates and possibly
40 find a different one. Last year, the renewal was 5% and he was able to get them
41 down, so hopefully the 9% will also come down. From there, Mr. Stapley went over
42 the budget by department with the council, including possible places to trim the
43 budget, such as in Admin if Helper does not participate in the election.
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45 Adjustments were made as needed, such as phone options for the police department,
46 grant deadlines, etc. Conversation also went to possible processing fees for
47 customers when utility bills are paid with a debit card. This was suggested by
48 Council member Tyson Damron after Mr. Stapley explained that Helper City eats
49 the costs of those processing fees. It was said that it is possible Helper City is the
50 last in the state that is taking on the fees. Council member Damron also stated that
51 he hears that people want raises, and by cutting costs in various places, there would
52 be money for the raises that have been requested. Mr. Stapley said another
53 discussion will be had before the council moves to adopt a tentative budget. The
54 final budget must be approved in June, with a tentative budget adopted before then.
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56 Mr. Stapley said that if the council goes through Truth in Taxation, a tentative final
57 budget would be adopted. Mayor Peterman reminded the council of the budget
58 training they would participate in on April 17th. The trainer has Truth in Taxation
59 down and would do a deep dive with the council on it. Mayor Peterman then asked
60 if a 3% increase is going to be something that the employees would be excited about,
61 and asked if the council is comfortable thinking about a 3% increase. The mayor
62 acknowledged that they have been working on fixing wages for years. The council
63 discussed more on Truth in Taxation briefly and said that exploring options, and
64 participating in the training, will be necessary before meeting again. The museum
65 possibly beginning to charge admission was discussed as well.
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67 Police Chief Sean Draper then informed the council that he had a “big ask” for the
68 fiscal year. He said there are a lot of reasons behind it, including that the state of
69 Utah is requiring heavier training for online cases. Sexual assault cases are on the
70 rise, as well as domestic violence, and Chief Draper is requesting a detective.
71 Council member Ruth Lee voiced her support, and then asked about getting officers
72 from Carbon County working swing shifts. Chief Draper said that he believes that
73 is going down a steep path, as departments would be getting mixed and may cause
74 sticky situations. Numbers were crunched and options discussed, such as an officer
75 currently employed that could step into the detective position, then hiring another
76 officer.
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80 **ADJOURNMENT:**

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

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

Lee	X		
Damron	X		
Palacios	X		
Chavez	X		
Motion passed			

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I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Helper City Council work meeting held on April 13, 2026.

Lenise Peterman
Mayor

Traci Bishop
City Recorder

Approved on May 7, 2026