CLEARFIELD CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
6:00 PM WORK MEETING
April 14, 2026

City Building
55 South State Street
Clearfield City, Utah

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PRESIDING: Mayor Mark Shepherd

PRESENT: Mayor Mark Shepherd, Councilmember Nike Peterson, Councilmember Megan Ratchford, Councilmember Danielle King

ABSENT: Councilmember Karece Thompson, Councilmember Dakota Wurth

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager JJ Allen, Assistant City Manager Spencer Brimley, City Attorney Stuart Williams, Community Services Director Eric Howes, Community Services Deputy Director Curtis Dickson, Aquatic Center Manager Clint Warnick, Police Chief Kelly Bennett, Public Works Director Adam Favero, Finance Manager Rich Knapp, Finance Department Lee Naylor, Community Development Director Stacy Millgate, Community Relations Director Shaundra Rushton, City Recorder Nancy Dean, Deputy City Recorder Chersty Titensor

VISITORS: Greg Bisping and Erin Farr - EDCUtah

Mayor Shepherd called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENTATION BY EDCUTAH

Spencer Brimley, Assistant City Manager, opened the meeting by introducing Erin Farr and Greg Bisping from EDCUtah. Mr. Brimley reminded the Mayor and Council that the City had entered into a partnership with EDCUtah the previous year to support economic development efforts and noted that EDCUtah had already provided research and support for a business that had recently located in Clearfield. Mr. Brimley then turned the time over to the presenters.

Erin Farr explained that EDCUtah was a 40-year-old public-private partnership funded by the State of Utah, cities and counties, and private sector partners, with a mission to catalyze capital investment and strategic economic opportunities that created quality jobs in Utah. Ms. Farr described three main organizational "verticals": the business development team, which Farr led and which worked directly with companies expanding or relocating in or to Utah; the research and marketing team, which provided research, cost comparisons, and labor analyses to help companies make data-driven location decisions and which marketed Utah to corporate site selectors and existing EDCUtah investors; and the investor relations team, which was led by Greg

Bisping and which managed relationships with more than 260 partners statewide. Ms. Farr outlined the evolution of Utah's historically mining- and agriculture-based economy into one of the most diverse economies in the nation and stated that Utah consistently ranked within the top five to eight most diverse state economies. Ms. Farr listed the State's prioritized sectors as aerospace and defense (noting its importance in Clearfield), financial services, technology, life sciences, and advanced manufacturing.

Ms. Farr reported that, three quarters into EDCUtah's fiscal year, the business development team had added 65 new projects to its pipeline, with about 100 projects typically active at any given time. There had been 10 project "wins" year to date, which she characterized as fewer than usual due to tariffs and broader economic challenges. She emphasized that the quality of active projects was high, with companies showing clear timelines, job creation numbers, and capital investment commitments. Ms. Farr stated that EDCUtah's projects had already resulted in announcements of approximately 6,600 new jobs—about double the previous fiscal year—and that capital expenditures (CapEx) for the current fiscal year had significantly exceeded the prior year's $1.8–2 billion, due in large part to major projects such as Creek Stone Energy in Millard County (data center development) and Western Governors University relocating its headquarters from Millcreek to downtown Salt Lake City. She further explained that EDCUtah had hosted site visits for companies in multiple counties over the prior 18 months, demonstrating that interest extended beyond the Wasatch Front.

Ms. Farr described EDCUtah's work with professional site selectors, explaining that these corporate consultants assisted companies with site location and tax incentives nationwide. She said EDCUtah both attended national site selector conferences and hosted such consultants in Utah, including through an upcoming Destination Summit in June to which Clearfield was invited. She encouraged Clearfield to participate and referenced a monthly project update report that Mr. Brimley received, which listed all projects in EDCUtah's pipeline and their status. She invited councilmembers and staff to review that report and to contact her with questions or to provide information that might help position Clearfield for specific projects. Ms. Farr also cited EDCUtah's assistance with ACS Manufacturing, which had expanded into Clearfield, and emphasized that such successes were the result of multiple partnerships.

Greg Bisping then described the investor relations function. Mr. Bisping stated that EDCUtah's 260-plus partners included more than 40 communities and that their contributions allowed EDCUtah to offer its services to client projects at no cost. He emphasized that the effectiveness of EDCUtah's partnership with a community increased with active engagement and communication, noting that Mr. Brimley frequently contacted EDCUtah with questions and project information and that EDCUtah viewed itself as an extension of the City's team. Mr. Bisping outlined a new "soft landing" program designed to help companies that chose Utah to integrate and thrive in local communities through extended membership access and connections to resources, with the goal of retaining those companies long-term.

Mr. Bisping also highlighted the work of EDCUtah's research team, including a primary research project underway for a developable area in Clearfield in partnership with a local developer, coordinated with Mr. Brimley. He referred to previously completed major research projects, such as the 47G aerospace report (which noted aerospace comprised approximately 29% of Utah's GDP) and an innovation ecosystem report, and mentioned that EDCUtah periodically updated industry reports that supported Ms. Farr's targeted sector strategy. Mr. Bisping stated that these reports were generally available on EDCUtah's website and that the organization's marketing and events team promoted Utah's successes via events and social media, particularly LinkedIn. He encouraged the City to share newsworthy developments in Clearfield so EDCUtah could help broadcast those stories. He then announced that EDCUtah would host a group of site selectors in Utah from June 24–26, including a dinner on June 24 with invited Olympic athletes. He invited Clearfield's participation.

Mayor Shepherd asked whether manufacturing remained the predominant sector in EDCUtah's site selection pipeline. Ms. Farr responded that manufacturing represented about 60% of the pipeline and that that share remained consistent. Council requested access to EDCUtah's updated industry reports, including the aerospace (47G) and innovation ecosystem reports. Mr. Bisping advised that the reports were on EDCUtah's website, and Mr. Brimley stated that links could be sent to the Council. He also noted that, while EDCUtah did not focus on retail recruitment, it maintained a booth at the ICSC retail conference and could assist communities by hosting meetings with retailers and creating community profiles, thereby extending Clearfield's capacity and connections.

Councilmember Peterson asked about any economic development impact tied to the announcement of the 2034 Olympic Games. Ms. Farr responded that it was still too early to see measurable effects, though EDCUtah expected interest to grow. MR. Bisping added that EDCUtah had hired consultant John Hopkins, who had experience with Olympic planning, to help communities, including Clearfield, prepare for potential Olympic-related opportunities, with the intent that Hopkins would work directly with cities on "Olympic preparedness."

DISCUSSION ON AN INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT DAVIS COUNTY FOR THE HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

Stuart Williams, City Attorney, briefed the Council on a Davis County CDBG–related housing rehabilitation interlocal agreement. Mr. Williams reminded the Council that the prior year the City had signed a document allowing Clearfield residents to qualify for the County's CDBG-funded low- and moderate-income housing rehabilitation program, even though Clearfield and Layton were entitlement cities. Mr. Williams explained that the current item was essentially a re-signing of the existing agreement to confirm the City's continued participation. He stated that staff would reach out to determine whether any Clearfield residents had benefitted from the program to date and planned to report back at a future meeting.

DISCUSSION ON THE FISCAL YEAR 2027 PROPOSED BUDGET

Rich Knapp, Finance Manager, provided a detailed budget and decision-scenario presentation, stating that staff sought direction on several items: (1) finalization of green waste and recycling rates, considering updated diversion data; (2) allocation of $100,000 in funds from the Larry H. Miller/Wilcox Farms agreement; (3) allocation of CDBG funds for FY 27; (4) desired property tax levels and related Property Tax Impact Schedule (PTIS) decisions; and (5) operational adjustments to improve sustainability (operational revenues minus operational expenses) and security (cash and fund balance levels).

Mr. Knapp first revisited the green waste and recycling rates, noting that new information about monthly diversion savings (approximately $2,600 per month) had been fully applied to recycling and green waste rather than to garbage, which changed the City's direct costs. He displayed two sets of rates: the rates previously agreed upon and a slightly reduced set that reflected the updated diversion savings while still including about a five-cent margin above direct cost for each service to provide modest "breathing room" for possible changes in diversion. Councilmember Ratchford expressed support for rates set close to actual cost so the City would not profit from residents nor subsidize service. Mayor Shepherd confirmed that, under the revised scenario, the City remained slightly above direct cost (by about five cents) and found that acceptable as a cushion given that the diversion figure was an estimate rather than a full year of actual data. Other councilmembers agreed. The Council directed staff to proceed with the lower revised recycling and green waste rates that incorporated the diversion savings and maintained an approximate five-cent buffer above direct cost.

Mr. Knapp then turned to the $100,000 from the Larry H. Miller / Wilcox Farms arrangement, which the City had previously discussed as potentially supporting America 250–related Fourth of July activities and other projects. Mr. Knapp displayed a list of Fourth of July activities and related ideas, including additional fireworks, entertainment, VIP amenities, and event decor. Councilmember Peterson asked whether the City had received any additional Fourth of July funding tied to the America 250 initiative. Mayor Shepherd and Curtis Dickson, Deputy Community Services Director, indicated the City expected approximately $1,500 in separate America 250 funding, planned primarily for events such as painting the bridge and similar celebratory activities.

Mayor Shepherd recalled that he and staff had preliminarily discussed adding $5,000 for fireworks to enhance the show for America 250, but the Mayor suggested reallocating that amount to support two large parade floats anticipated to be more expensive than usual. He also asked about the entertainment budget, and Shaundra Rushton, Communications Manager, reported that current entertainment commitments totaled approximately $17,000, about $7,000 above the historical level of $10,000, due in part to securing a more expensive band that required the City to supply instruments. Mayor Shepherd and JJ Allen, City Manager, agreed that an additional $7,000 line for entertainment should be reflected.

Councilmember Peterson expressed concern that one-time expenditures, particularly for a single Fourth of July event, should be capped and that the City should, where possible, direct those funds toward more long-term or permanent benefits rather than solely a "party." Mayor Shepherd agreed and proposed an informal cap of $25,000 total of the Wilcox funds for America 250–related Fourth of July enhancements, with the remaining $75,000 reserved for longer-term or more tangible projects to be determined later. Councilmember Peterson supported that framework, recommending $25,000 be designated "TBD" for Fourth of July/America 250, with the $75,000 addressed separately. Mr. Allen confirmed that, for accounting purposes, staff could assign $25,000 of the Wilcox funds to the America 250 celebration and restrict the remaining $75,000 for later Council allocation. The Council reached consensus on that approach.

The Council and staff then discussed specific VIP and event experience ideas for the Fourth of July. Mayor Shepherd described the current VIP arrangements, including a dinner and a reserved viewing area for fireworks, which hosted base leadership and invited airmen from Hill Air Force

Base. He expressed interest in improving the VIP experience, noting that VIPs currently were asked to bring their own chairs and blankets, which did not feel "VIP." The Mayor suggested the City explore acquiring branded seating or larger "family" blankets that would remain City assets and be reused each year, potentially through an in-kind sponsorship from Lifetime (e.g., Adirondack-style chairs with Clearfield or "Utah's Military City" branding). Councilmembers debated the merits of storing and maintaining such items and discussed the need for realistic cost estimates and clear parameters. Councilmember Peterson raised concerns about long-term storage and maintenance responsibilities (such as washing blankets) and reiterated that the use of Wilcox funds should emphasize visible, lasting value rather than solely one-time consumables.

Mr. Allen and Eric Howes, Community Services Director, noted that there was a Fourth of July committee meeting scheduled for the next day and an upcoming Fourth of July presentation to the Council on April 28. The Council agreed that staff would return with specific proposals and cost estimates for America 250 enhancements, including possible VIP decor, chairs/blankets, and unique America 250-branded swag items. Mr. Howes stated that the Community Services team was already designing special America 250 swag to be earned by residents who attended all of the City's Fourth of July events—for example, pieces of a magnet "puzzle" that, when fully collected, formed a complete America 250 design. The Council generally supported the concept. Mr. Allen confirmed that staff would prepare a Fourth of July/America 250 event plan and detailed budget within the agreed $25,000 limit and bring it back at the April 28, 2026 meeting for Council review and direction.

Mr. Knapp next addressed the allocation of FY 27 CDBG funds, stating that the City expected approximately $198,000 in available CDBG funding and that staff recommended using these dollars for capital projects which was consistent with the past couple of years,. He presented a list of projects already in the draft budget, explaining that if the Council selected a project not currently in the budget, staff would need to cut another expense or find new revenue. The list included a sidewalk program line of $150,000 (classified as operational and thus helpful to the City's operational sustainability calculation), ADA pool lifts at the Aquatic Center, backstop material replacement, and open space improvements. Mr. Knapp also noted that a portion of CDBG historically was set aside for administration and community partners, and that that structure would continue.

Councilmembers discussed the relative appropriateness of CDBG funding for various projects. Mayor Shepherd and Councilmember Peterson expressed reservations about using CDBG funds for the backstop material and open space enhancements in the absence of a clear benefit to low- and moderate-income areas, whereas sidewalk improvements and ADA pool lifts were viewed as more closely aligned with CDBG's accessibility and neighborhood improvement goals. Mr. Allen pointed out that CDBG-funded construction projects triggered additional federal requirements, such as Davis-Bacon wage rules, which could reduce the amount of physical work completed for the same dollar amount, particularly for landscape/open space and similar projects.

The Council also briefly considered using CDBG funds for street lighting in certain areas. Councilmember Peterson cited Island View Park and the back side of Barlow Park as areas where residents had expressed concern about lighting along walking paths and in neighborhood "bowls," but Curtis Dickson, Deputy Community Services Director, explained that those areas fell outside CDBG-eligible tracts due to the way eligibility boundaries were drawn. Councilmembers noted that CDBG funds might be used for lighting in eligible neighborhoods but acknowledged that such use in the specific areas mentioned would not qualify.

The Council then addressed unallocated CDBG funds that would remain after choosing priority projects. Stuart Williams, City Attorney, clarified that federal rules allowed the City to carry over a portion of CDBG funds to future years, which could help avoid the need to force projects that were not ideal fits simply to use the money. Mr. Knapp cautioned that the draft budget assumed the full $198,000 in CDBG as non-operating revenue and had corresponding expenses; if the City did not allocate the full amount, staff would need to adjust the budget and fund balance accordingly.

Mr. Allen summarized the intent would be to use CDBG funds for the sidewalk program and the Aquatic Center ADA pool lifts, with the bulk of the remaining CDBG balance—beyond the amount needed for ADA lifts, allocated to sidewalk work, recognizing that the City had a significant backlog of ADA ramps and sidewalk deficiencies. Adam Favero, Public Works Director, explained that past sidewalk/ADA ramp assessments had estimated that a full correction would cost several million dollars and that the previously suggested $150,000 annual level was an arbitrary figure that fell short of actual needs. He indicated that a comprehensive ADA sidewalk correction program could require in the range of $2 million if done in one effort.

Mr. Allen mentioned that other cities, such as Salt Lake City, operated street lighting programs that allowed residents to participate directly by having city-installed lights powered from private homes, with some level of cost-sharing or neighborhood participation. Councilmembers expressed concern that similar efforts in Clearfield might not be effective unless a neighborhood organized collectively. Mr. Allen and Mr. Knapp also described the possibility of creating a Public Infrastructure District (PID) or special assessment area to install lighting in existing neighborhoods that had originally been developed without street lights. Councilmembers noted that such districts often required near-unanimous support from residents, making them difficult to implement, and that any assessment would be paid directly by the benefiting property owners rather than the citywide tax base. The Council agreed not to allocate CDBG to lighting at this time but asked staff to continue exploring other funding mechanisms and programmatic approaches for street lighting where warranted.

Mr. Knapp then introduced a sustainability (operational) and security (cash) overview. He outlined the major factors that had positively affected operational sustainability in the current draft budget, while noting that some were not reliably repeatable each year. Among the positive factors he listed were: a sales tax projection approximately $600,000 higher than budgeted the prior year; a $168,000 decrease in the Layton dispatch contract; substantial Aquatic Center expense reductions of approximately $287,000 (net of certain staffing choices still under discussion); anticipated emergency management cost savings of about $64,000 resulting from moving the functions to the North Davis Fire District; and no new General Fund employee requests outside the Aquatic Center and some non-General Fund positions. He also noted that the City's health insurance renewal came in at 0% increase, which materially helped the budget.

Mr. Knapp summarized new or pending operational changes that had not yet been incorporated into the draft budget. They included a $20,000 reduction for a part-time inspector in Community Development, an increase in Mayor and Council compensation to match staff COLA and merit adjustments (totaling approximately $7,400 based on 5.6% combined increases), the addition of an Assistant Aquatic and Fitness Center Manager, and other small adjustments. Mr. Knapp reminded the Council that staff had been instructed to hold off on adding a building official position and certain other expenses until the Council had clear direction.

Mr. Knapp then presented the operational sustainability calculation, showing total operating revenues (total revenues less non-operating revenues and transfers) and ongoing operating expenses (personnel, materials and services, and debt). He noted that, after subtracting 3% of expenditures to represent budgetary underspend (a long-standing conservative assumption that the City historically exceeded), the City was projected to have an operational deficit of approximately $435,810, meaning the proposed level of service was not fully sustainable on current revenues. Councilmember Ratchford asked about the 3% underspend assumption and its effect on cash; Mr. Knapp explained that increasing or decreasing that percentage would affect both the sustainability calculation and longer-term cash projections.

Mr. Knapp displayed a table showing adjustments that worsened or improved the $435,810 operational gap, including anticipated increases in property and liability insurance, the addition of the building official, the Mayor/Council compensation adjustment, the Aquatic Center staffing efficiencies and changes, and emergency management savings. Mr. Knapp also noted that the Aquatic Center efficiency savings of $287,000 would be reduced if the City chose to restore a head swim coach or to add an additional aquatic supervisor position, both of which would be addressed later in the discussion.

Mr. Knapp then discussed potential cuts that, if adopted, would close the gap without a property tax increase. He presented a list of items totaling approximately $225,000 in reductions, including roadway striping, sidewalk repair, lobbyist services, an economic development study, autonomous mowing equipment, and other operational or capital items. He explained that, if the Council chose to implement all of these cuts, the operational deficit would be essentially eliminated, leaving the General Fund about $2,000 in the black for operations. The Mayor immediately expressed concern about cutting items such as roadway striping, sidewalk repairs, the City's lobbyist, and economic development studies, stating that those services were important to maintaining service levels, securing external funding, and planning for the City's economic future.

Mr. Knapp then shifted to cash and fund balance ("security"). He displayed a chart showing the historical unrestricted General Fund balance, which had declined from approximately $11 million in FY 2022 (above the State's informal 35% fund balance threshold) to a projected $5.7 million at the end of FY 2025, primarily because the City had intentionally reduced fund balance over several years to fund projects and maintain higher service levels. For FY 2026, the draft budget projected unrestricted fund balance at about $6.6 million, or 27%, assuming no additional cuts or tax increases took place. Mr. Knapp then showed that, if the City maintained its current course without cuts or new revenue, the unrestricted General Fund balance would drop to approximately $2.2 million, or 9%, leaving the City with only 32 days of cash on hand to operate the General Fund (given that roughly $4.26 million was needed for two months of operations). He stated that staff's policy target was 60 days of cash (approximately 17% fund balance), and that the City was projected to fall short of that mark.

Mr. Knapp explained that, when the City last considered its financial policy, it set a goal of around 60 days' cash and decided to accept a lower fund balance for several years to accomplish key projects and maintain services, but the City now needed either to reduce expenditures, increase revenue, or both to avoid further erosion of security. He indicated that the combination of operational cuts and a potential property tax increase could move the City back to the desired security level.

Mr. Allen then provided an overview of the new Property Tax Impact Schedule (PTIS) requirements under recent State law changes. He explained that, by May 12, the budget officer would need to present a tentative budget that presumed a property tax increase and to present a PTIS showing which programs or expenditure categories would be funded by that incremental property tax revenue. In June, the Council would need to formally state its intention to consider a Truth in Taxation property tax increase and adopt an interim budget. Mr. Allen emphasized that any items listed on the PTIS could not be funded or expended between the interim budget adoption and final budget adoption in August, when the Truth in Taxation hearing would be held. As an example, Mr. Allen stated that if the lobbyist contract appeared on the PTIS, the City would need to advise its lobbyist that monthly payments could not be made until after final budget approval, even though the scope of work continued. Similarly, sidewalk repairs and other PTIS-listed items could not proceed until the property tax decision was determined.

Mr. Knapp then presented two versions of a Property Tax Impact Schedule. The first, referred to as PTIS 1, focused on ongoing operational items and would largely restore the $196,000 in property tax that the Council had attempted to secure through Truth in Taxation in the prior year but that had been reversed by the Utah State Tax Commission. Mr. Knapp indicated that PTIS 1 would result in an average annual property tax increase of approximately $22 per residential household. He then showed optional incremental items—such as additional streets funding—that, if added to PTIS 1, would further increase the average annual tax impact. For illustration, he noted that if the City added enough projects (including road projects) to reach a higher threshold, the total annual increase per average residence could rise to around $69 (on top of the $22), which councilmembers viewed as excessive.

Councilmember Peterson questioned why some items such as lobbyist services and an economic development study were placed on the PTIS list, given that they had historically been funded as part of ongoing General Fund operations, and whether it might be more appropriate to list only capital projects that could be postponed if the tax increase did not occur. Mr. Allen responded that, while it was tempting to limit the PTIS to capital items, the intent of the law was to link ongoing property tax revenue with ongoing expenditures, and that staff had tried to identify operational items that were relatively defensible. He noted that the City's lobbyist had provided significant value and that sidewalk repairs, striping, and economic development research were likewise easily justifiable to residents as areas worth preserving. Regarding the economic development study, Mr. Allen clarified that, while CDRA administration funds were transferred to the General Fund, the study itself was budgeted in the General Fund, making its funding source indistinguishable from other General Fund activities.

Council then briefly discussed the idea of directing some additional property tax specifically toward street projects. Mr. Knapp suggested that the Council could, for example, add $10 per year per residence to the PTIS to accumulate about $100,000 per year into a street fund, gradually building a resource to address underfunded road needs. Mr. Allen, however, pointed out that the City was already in the middle of a transportation utility fee study, intended to create a dedicated fee for road maintenance and improvements. He advised that passing a property tax increase for streets now, only to implement a transportation utility fee for the same purpose in the near future, might be confusing and duplicative. Mr. Knapp added that even with a transportation utility fee, it would take a few years to build a sufficiently large street fund to have significant impact. The Council indicated that they preferred to wait for the transportation utility fee study results before using property tax as a dedicated streets funding mechanism, though they acknowledged that some interim funding challenges would remain.

The Council next considered travel and training budgets for elected officials. Mr. Allen presented cost comparisons for sending the Council to the National League of Cities (NLC) Congressional City Conference in Washington, D.C., the NLC City Summit in Nashville, and the Utah League of Cities and Towns (ULCT) conference in St. George. Mr. Allen noted that the per-person cost for the recent D.C. trip had been approximately $3,455, whereas estimated costs for the City Summit in Nashville were approximately $2,889 per person, assuming a Wednesday–Sunday stay. Mr. Allen observed that trimming a day from the City Summit trip could bring its cost closer to that of combining it with ULCT training. Mr. Allen further explained that for the past couple of years, the City had not budgeted for Council travel to the ULCT St. George conference, relying instead on other training and online resources such as the ULCT's recorded "spring training" legislative wrap-up.

Mayor Shepherd and several councilmembers compared their experiences at the Congressional City Conference versus the City Summit. Mayor Shepherd described the D.C. conference as primarily focused on federal lobbying and legislative priorities, with the State's congressional delegation sometimes easier to access locally than in D.C., particularly since ULCT had stopped coordinating congressional visits. Councilmember King and Councilmember Peterson both stated that they had found the City Summit more valuable for professional development, policy ideas, and vendor connections, noting that it offered mobile workshops and hands-on tours demonstrating how host cities addressed homelessness, transportation, water, and other issues. Mayor Shepherd added that the City Summit in Salt Lake the previous year had been particularly beneficial because of its city-focused content and opportunities to see local projects. Councilmembers agreed that City Summit training was more directly applicable to Clearfield's issues than the D.C. lobbying trip.

With respect to the ULCT St. George conference, Councilmember Peterson observed that, while it offered networking and a legislative wrap-up, much of the content had become repetitive and that the same legislative information was now available online at substantially lower cost. Mayor Shepherd noted that the ULCT legislative wrap-up was now broadcast and recorded, reducing the need for in-person attendance. After discussion, there was general consensus that it was difficult to justify budgeting for the St. George trip in the current fiscal environment.

Mr. Allen summarized the direction as follows: for the FY 27 budget, staff would budget for the Mayor and Council to attend the NLC City Summit in Nashville and would not budget for attendance at the Congressional City Conference in Washington, D.C. or the ULCT St. George conference. Mayor Shepherd asked that the City budget for the full estimated City Summit cost for now, with the understanding that the travel schedule might be refined once the detailed conference agenda was published. He also indicated that, in the near term, he would attend only a limited portion of the ULCT St. George conference for board responsibilities, paying close attention to costs and scheduling.

The discussion then returned to the Aquatic and Fitness Center (CAFC), particularly the proposed Aquatic Supervisor and head swim coach positions. Mr. Allen recapped that staff had identified a need for additional supervisory capacity at the Aquatic Center in response to a series of operational and HR issues, and that the Council had previously directed staff to “fix” the problems and propose organizational changes. Staff responded by recommending the addition of an Assistant CAFC Manager (already included in the draft budget) and an additional Aquatic Supervisor position. Mr. Allen explained that staff believed a full-time aquatic supervisor would oversee all swim team matters while also providing broader support, including program development and possibly expanded pool rentals and lessons that could generate additional revenue.

Mr. Knapp reminded the Council that the total expense reduction at the CAFC was approximately $287,000, based on restructuring, program changes, and personnel adjustments, but that adding a head swim coach or an additional supervisor would reduce those savings. Mr. Knapp noted that a head swim coach position would cost about $35,000 annually, whereas the full-time aquatic supervisor was estimated at roughly $105,000 annually, including benefits. He further indicated that, in the current budget scenario, staff had assumed no new aquatic supervisor and no head swim coach, thereby maximizing immediate savings but leaving a high workload on existing staff.

Councilmember Peterson expressed significant concern that the Council had told Aquatic Center staff to correct issues and that staff had returned with a comprehensive plan that included additional supervisory positions, only for the Council to consider not funding those positions while still expecting the same performance improvements. She stated that, from a leadership and organizational standpoint, it would send a mixed message to direct staff to fix systemic problems, then decline to fund the solutions identified, while holding staff accountable to timelines and outcomes based on those unfunded positions. She stressed that staff’s proposal had included reallocating existing dollars and achieving net savings of about $60,000 rather than simply adding costs and that the additional supervisor was embedded in that reallocation.

Mr. Dickson responded that attrition was one way to view adjustments, if the Council later decided the new position was not necessary. He mentioned that the City might also consider PARAT tax funds to support some elements of CAFC operations, though councilmembers were generally hesitant to redirect PARAT resources away from existing commitments.

Mayor Shepherd expressed that the Aquatic Center remained one of the City’s most challenging facilities from a budget perspective, noting that it required a substantial annual subsidy (on the order of $1 million), and that not all residents used the facility despite paying for it through City finances. Councilmember Peterson acknowledged the concern but pointed out that the decision to build and subsidize the Aquatic Center had been made by a prior Council and that the City was now effectively committed to sustaining the facility. She reiterated that if the Council did not fund the recommended aquatic supervisor, it would need to adjust performance expectations and timelines accordingly.

Mr. Allen clarified that it was not accurate to say that a head swim coach would accomplish the same things as a full-time aquatic supervisor, and that the supervisor position would provide broader management and program capacity that could support additional revenue generation from swim lessons, rentals, and other programming. Councilmember Peterson recalled from earlier presentations that past issues at the Aquatic Center had stemmed from insufficient management oversight and staffing support, not solely from a lack of a swim coach, and that multiple “pillars” of corrective action had been proposed to address HR, customer service, and operational challenges.

Eric Howes, Community Services Director, added that the previous problems had arisen under a part-time swim coach model, and that the proposed full-time aquatic supervisor would not only address swim team needs but also provide additional capacity to expand programs and rentals. Mr. Howes stated that Aquatic Center staff estimated that a full-time supervisor could conservatively generate additional revenue (for example, through expanded evening swim lessons) on the order of $50,000 annually, though he acknowledged that figure was an estimate and that precise revenue would depend on program uptake. Mr. Howes and Clint Warnick, Aquatic Center Manager, had begun calculating potential revenue, but those numbers were still preliminary.

The Council did not reach a final decision on whether to fund the aquatic supervisor or a head swim coach. Instead, members expressed that the issue would need to be weighed alongside the City’s overall sustainability and security needs and any property tax decisions, with the expectation that if the additional supervisory position did not produce meaningful improvements in operations and measurable progress on prior issues, it could be reconsidered or eliminated in a future budget cycle.

Throughout the budget discussion, Councilmember Ratchford raised the possibility of addressing the funding gap by reducing planned labor increases across the organization rather than focusing solely on service cuts and a property tax increase. Mr. Allen responded that such a move would fundamentally change the City’s compensation paradigm and could have implications for recruitment and retention, and that the approach would require separate policy deliberation.

Mr. Knapp and Mr. Allen reiterated the key budgetary decisions and next steps. Staff needed clear direction in order to finalize the tentative budget and PTIS presentation by mid-May. They summarized that the Council had: (1) endorsed revised green waste and recycling rates reflecting updated diversion cost savings; (2) agreed informally to cap America 250 / Fourth of July Wilcox funding at $25,000 while reserving $75,000 for later Council allocation to longer-term uses; (3) directed staff to prepare and return with a detailed Fourth of July/America 250 plan and budget on April 28; (4) prioritized CDBG funding for sidewalks and ADA pool lifts, with the remaining balance primarily supporting additional sidewalks; (5) expressed a preference to pursue a transportation utility fee for street funding rather than using property tax at this stage; (6) agreed to budget for NLC City Summit travel while forgoing budgeted travel to the D.C. Congressional City Conference and the ULCT St. George conference; and (7) requested further analysis and discussion on property tax options, the PTIS, and Aquatic Center staffing prior to finalizing the budget.

It was noted that Mr. Brimley would coordinate with EDCUtah on Clearfield’s participation in the June Destination Summit and the June 24 site selector dinner and would distribute links to

EDCUtah's industry reports to the Council. Mr. Williams would contact Davis County and the Home Consortium to determine whether any Clearfield residents had received housing rehabilitation assistance and would report back. Mr. Howes and the Fourth of July committee would develop a Fourth of July/America 250 program and budget, including potential VIP decor, seating/blanket solutions, and America 250 swag, and present those recommendations at the April 28 Council meeting. Mr. Allen and Mr. Knapp would update the one-year CDBG action plan to reflect the Council's priorities for sidewalks and ADA pool lifts and would prepare the transportation utility fee study for future Council consideration. Mr. Allen and Mr. Knapp would also refine the tentative budget, incorporating Council direction on training and travel, green waste/recycling rates, Wilcox funds, and CDBG allocations, while preparing revised PTIS scenarios and updated sustainability and security calculations, including the impact of any chosen Aquatic Center staffing configuration, for Council review prior to Truth in Taxation decisions.

The Council took a brief recess.

The meeting reconvened at 8:10 p.m.

<u>DISCUSSION OF THE RECENT NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES CONGRESSIONAL CITIES CONFERENCE</u>

Mayor Shepherd stated that the Council would bypass the NLC item until all councilmembers were present.

<u>DEPARTMENT UPDATES</u>

Water Restrictions, Irrigation Operations, and City Wells

Adam Favero, Public Works Director, reported on current water restrictions as communicated by Weber Basin within its district. He explained that although there were no direct restrictions on culinary water, the City's system was 100% culinary and also fed the secondary irrigation system. The City relied on a calculation developed in 2022 to estimate the percentage of irrigation water being drawn from the culinary system. Using that methodology, Weber Basin required a 20% reduction in irrigation water usage, resulting in a reduction of approximately 300 acre-feet from the City's contracted amount. Mr. Favero noted that the City would still be required to pay for the full contracted amount even though the usage would be reduced. He stated that the total contract was for approximately 5,248 acre-feet of water and indicated that the 300 acre-feet reduction was not a substantial portion of the overall contract.

Mr. Favero further explained that Weber Basin had shortened the secondary water season to run from May 15 to September 15, whereas in traditional years, service generally ran from mid-April through mid-October. Mr. Favero indicated that in good water years, the season typically extended from around April 15 through October 15, but that recent drought-related conditions had resulted in shorter seasons in some years.

Mayor Shepherd commented that one potential benefit from the City's perspective was that the secondary system would be shut off by September 15, but acknowledged that that presented enforcement challenges because the City had no practical means to monitor or forcibly control individual irrigation use beyond the system cut-off. He noted that residents might view the availability of water as a benefit and continue watering even when advised not to, especially if their lawns began to brown.

Eric Howes, Community Services Director, informed the Council that the City's irrigation systems were in the process of being turned on in advance of the May 15 start date. He clarified that if residents noticed irrigation systems running during daytime hours, the activity was largely related to charging the lines, checking for leaks, and ensuring the systems functioned properly. Mr. Howes noted that the process typically took about a month, and that the City was trying to conserve water by identifying and correcting problems early. He stated that, under drought conditions similar to prior years, the City planned to water ball fields enough to prevent excessive turf damage from heavy use while significantly reducing irrigation on other parks, with the goal of keeping other park areas alive but not as lush.

Mayor Shepherd requested that Shaundra Rushton, Communications Manager, ensure that this information was shared with residents via the City's social media channels, specifically to explain why irrigation systems might be seen operational even before the formal start of the watering season and during drought messaging. Ms. Rushton responded that this information had already been addressed in comments on existing posts, and Mr. Howes added that some calls had already been received from residents expressing concern, making the communication particularly important.

Mr. Favero reiterated that the current restriction level was not as severe as in 2022, and that the talking points being shared were essentially verbatim from Weber Basin to maintain consistency. He noted that the restrictions could change mid-season if water conditions worsened, as had occurred in 2022 when the City had been required to conduct additional calculations and further reduce usage. At the time of this meeting, however, recent storms and moisture had been favorable, and the current requirements were considered manageable.

Mr. Favero also reported that the City wells were fully functional and that the small booster station was still under evaluation but not considered critical. Mayor Shepherd clarified that while the wells were operational, they were not all in active use at that moment. Mr. Favero stated that the City had operated the wells longer than usual recently, partly at Weber Basin's request, which could give the City some "credibility" with Weber Basin in future discussions due to the City's assistance on a major project.

JJ Allen, City Manager, then noted an exception, explaining that the 200 South well that supplied water to Mabey Pond had been down for several months. Mr. Allen reported that the City was still working on a solution to restore that well and its function, indicating that remained an ongoing operational issue.

Crosswalk Project at 1450 South and 1500 East

Mr. Favero provided an update on the crosswalk project located near 1450 South and 1500 East, associated with the Chancellor Gardens area. He stated that the total project cost was projected to be approximately $33,000, which was a few thousand dollars under the approved budget. The project work had been divided roughly "50/50" between in-house crews and contracted services. The contracted portion had handled concrete-related work such as aprons and approaches, while city crews, including Brad Wheeler's crew, were responsible for installing signage and other elements.

Mr. Favero noted that the crosswalk used solar-powered flashing lights, which reduced costs by eliminating the need to run power to the location, and that such installations could otherwise add around $10,000 in cost. He reported that the crosswalk was already being heavily used by the public even though it was not yet fully complete. Remaining work included painting the crosswalk lines, stop bars, and associated striping. Mr. Favero indicated that Mr. Wheeler's crew planned to complete this striping work "by the end of the month" as their schedule allowed.

Mr. Favero clarified the orientation of the crossing, noting initially some confusion about whether it ran north-south or east-west. It was clarified that the installation served crossings in both directions in the Chancellor Gardens area, addressing initial safety concerns that had prompted resident requests. Kelly Bennett, Police Chief, asked follow-up questions regarding crossing points and sight lines on the east side of 1500 East, and Mr. Favero clarified that the improvements covered the needed approaches in that area.

The Council commented that they were pleased the project was nearing completion. Mayor Shepherd noted that there had been numerous calls from the facility's director over approximately two years, and that expectations had originally been for the project to be completed the previous year. The delay had led to repeated follow-up calls and concerns about perceived commitments, so the approaching completion was seen as resolving a long-standing concern for that neighborhood.

Mr. Favero mentioned that a video had been created as part of a marketing or informational effort for the crosswalk and noted that while the video quality was not ideal, it did help demonstrate how the crosswalk functioned.

Police Department Mental Health and Wellness Program

Kelly Bennett, Police Chief, provided a detailed update on the mental health and wellness program for the City's police department. He explained that several years earlier the State of Utah had mandated mental health support programs for law enforcement, but that the City had already established a program prior to that mandate. Initial state funding had been one-time, and the program was now supported as a General Fund budget item.

Chief Bennett reported that the department contracted with Carbajal Counseling and Consulting, which provided therapists who focused on trauma and post-traumatic stress. Many of the therapists had personal or family connections to military, law enforcement, or firefighting, and some male therapists were former military. This background was described as helpful for understanding the specific stressors facing officers and support staff.

Chief Bennett noted that, by state statute, the department had a mental health liaison, identified as Ricki Miller, HR Manager, who served as the confidential coordinator of the program. All invoices and session details went directly to Ms. Miller, and administrative staff did not receive information about individual sessions. The program was described as confidential, with employees able to seek counseling without disclosing session content to administration.

The department conducted biannual (twice-a-year) assessments. During those assessment periods, Carbajal counselors came to the department for approximately three weeks, twice a week, to meet with employees in 30-minute mandatory sessions. These sessions were required for every employee in the police department, including support staff. Chief Bennett stated that the department used two types of visits: one was an open discussion format and the other involved a structured questionnaire to establish and track baselines for individual wellness over time. The department had previously relied solely on questionnaires but adjusted the model after feedback from personnel indicating a desire for at least one open discussion session per year.

Chief Bennett explained that employees were allowed up to nine visits per year beyond the biannual assessment sessions under the program budget. If an employee approached or exceeded that number, a conversation would occur with Ms. Miller in HR, and the department could allow up to 12 visits. Chief Bennett stated that the department had never had to refuse visits at the 12-visit level and expressed a desire to continue supporting staff as needed. The program also included a peer support team, with trained employees who could provide immediate support following critical incidents.

Chief Bennett reported that the counseling provider supplied the department with confidential, aggregated statistics that did not identify individuals but summarized the types of issues being addressed (such as sleep problems, alcohol use, stress, and family life pressures). That information helped guide departmental training and support initiatives. Program usage extended beyond the required biannual visits, with many employees regularly using the available sessions, especially after challenging incidents. Chief Bemmett noted that the department had recently experienced multiple critical incidents involving the same crews, and that in such cases, peer support was activated and employees were encouraged to use Carbajal sessions as needed. Because the department was currently in an assessment period, impacted employees could count any needed session as part of the established schedule.

Councilmember Peterson referenced a difficult six-month period in public safety, particularly on the fire department side and publicly visible incidents, and asked how the department felt overall under the increased stress. Chief Bennett responded that, based on feedback and usage patterns, employees appeared to be coping reasonably well overall, notwithstanding the increased workload and stress. He emphasized the importance of having support in place because personnel might return to service quickly after traumatic events and required mechanisms to process those experiences.

Chief Bennett stated that at least two employees had personally shared that the program had been life-saving for them, helping redirect them from destructive paths. He contrasted the City's program favorably with programs used by some neighboring jurisdictions. Chief Bennett also noted that Carbajal had been positive and easy to work with, and that Ms. Miller also used them for non-law-enforcement-related needs, which was seen as a sign of confidence in their services.

Stuart Williams, City Attorney, commented that in over two decades of work, it was rare to hear uniformly positive feedback about a contracted service, but that the feedback regarding Carbajal had been very positive. Chief Bennett added that, although it had taken time, even long-serving staff were becoming more comfortable with using the counseling services, while newer officers appeared to adopt the service more readily.

The Council expressed appreciation for the program and its focus on officer and staff well-being. Councilmember Peterson mentioned personal family connections to public safety work and noted that prospective officers increasingly viewed mental health support as an important factor when deciding where to work.

Communications and Social Media Performance (Police and City Pages)

Shaundra Rushton, Communications Manager, presented a detailed report on the performance of the City's social media accounts, with a particular focus on the Police Department's social media page. She explained that since January, the communications division had prioritized improving the police social media presence, made possible by the Council's prior decision to fund a longer-term communications intern. This additional support allowed the team to implement structured statistics and analytics tracking for department pages.

Using two months of data, Ms. Rushton reported that the police department's social media page had become the top-performing police page in Davis County, rising from a previous ranking of third. During this period, the page gained approximately 3,000 additional followers in two months, which she described as unusually rapid growth for government pages, which typically grow slowly. As a result, approximately half a million people were now viewing the department's safety and informational content, including both safety messages and "trendy" videos.

Ms. Rushton emphasized that increased views and followers enhanced the likelihood that residents would see City content, due to how Facebook's algorithm prioritized posts based on engagement. While some virality resulted in views from distant locations, such as Australia, that engagement still improved the chances that Clearfield residents would see important safety messages, emergency alerts, and event information.

Ms. Rushton also reported that the City's main Facebook and Instagram pages had experienced positive growth in all key statistics for March. The City's main Facebook page was already the top-performing City page in Davis County, and with the police page's recent gains, all primary pages managed by the communications team were seeing growth. Councilmembers expressed support and noted anecdotal evidence that content was being seen and recognized by younger residents and students in neighboring communities.

Ms. Rushton highlighted one particularly successful example: a local business highlight video filmed with Dylan Schuler at Beans Coffee, which achieved approximately 26 million views on Instagram, making it comparable to high-performing YouTube Shorts content.

Ms. Rushton then described the data-driven strategy behind the results. The communications team had set up a tracking system for 11 different department-level pages, including other police departments in Davis County, and monitored metrics such as engagement, reach, and share of online conversation. At the outset of tracking, Clearfield's police page held about 7% of the total online conversation among the 11 tracked police pages and was ranked third. Within two months, the page's share had increased to approximately 71% of the total conversation, with the next highest agency (Kaysville) at 12%, indicating a substantial lead.

The communications team determined that video content performed particularly well on the police page, even more so than on general City pages. Through experimentation, they found that:

1. Video in general outperformed static content.
2. Original scripted content performed better than simple announcements.
3. The best results came from adapting popular social media "trends" for local and law enforcement-related content—effectively making the department a "trend follower," which aligned with audience expectations and generated significantly higher engagement.

Ms. Rushton noted that management support had been critical to the efforts. Assistant Chief Devin Rogers had been assigned to oversee social media on the police side, setting an expectation that participation in social content was a departmental priority. A sergeant meeting weekly with the communications team helped coordinate officer participation, schedule content opportunities, and arrange filming at trainings and other events. The leadership involvement helped overcome many officers' understandable reluctance to appear on social media while still providing the content needed to engage the community.

Ms. Rushton thanked the Council for investing in the communications division, particularly in funding the longer-term intern position, which enabled the enhanced data tracking and strategic adjustments that produced "unprecedented" results. Mayor Shepherd and councilmembers expressed support.

Proposed Changes to Bubble Party Event

Ms. Rushton presented a proposal to modify the structure of the City's "Bubble Party" event. Historically, the event included bubble cannons and a large bubble pit area. She described the prior setup as including a central bubble pit and bubble cannons positioned around it. Ms. Rushton recommended removing the bubble pit and instead adding additional bubble cannons, allowing bubbles to be spread more evenly over a larger area. The primary reasons for the proposed change were:

1. Safety concerns: The bubble pit was located on asphalt. Attendees, particularly children, sometimes dove or jumped into the pit, and the hard surface presented a risk of injury. Additionally, safety signage around the pit was challenged by wet and slippery conditions, making it difficult to maintain proper warnings and barriers.
2. Long wait times and crowd management: The concentration of activity in the pit created long lines, with some attendees reporting waits of approximately 30 minutes for only about one minute of play time in the pit. This led to complaints and reduced overall satisfaction with the event.
3. Emergency access: The layout of the pit and queue presented concerns about emergency vehicle access. In the event of a medical or other emergency, the bubble pit and associated

lines could obstruct necessary routes. Additionally, staff expressed concern about visibility and the difficulty of quickly locating a child within a large, dense bubble area in an emergency situation.

By removing the pit and adding more cannons spread across a broader footprint, the event would provide more distributed play areas, reduce line lengths, and improve emergency access while also mitigating the risks associated with diving on asphalt.

Ms. Rushton explained that the change would require additional hoses, water access points, and barrels, and that the event vendor did not own enough cannons to cover the requested expansion. As a result, the vendor would need to outsource a few additional bubble cannons, increasing the cost of the event by approximately $550. Ms. Rushton confirmed that the additional cost could be absorbed within the communications department's existing budget.

Mr. Allen confirmed that the Bubble Party was scheduled for the Saturday before the Davis School District started its school year, which would be one of the dates around August 15–18.

The proposal to remove the pit and add cannons was generally favorably received by councilmembers, who acknowledged the safety and operations rationale and the relatively modest cost increase within the existing budget.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED
This 12th day of May 2026

/s/ Mark R. Shepherd, Mayor

ATTEST:

/s/ Nancy R. Dean, City Recorder

I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Clearfield City Council meeting held Tuesday, April 14, 2026.

/s/ Nancy R. Dean, City Recorder