



City of Green River

460 East Main Street, Green River, Utah
City Council Minutes
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, April 14, 2026

ATTENDING: Mayor Larry Packer; Council Members: Bo Harrison; Kent Nelson, Guy Webster, Stephanie Crabtree, Tonya Bigelow; Planning Commission Members: Kim McFarlane, Glenna Brown; Employees: Edward Bennett, Julie Spadafora, David Wilson, Loni Meadows, Bryan Meadows, Janet Smoak, Candice Cravins, Kerry Bigelow ; Citizens: Royd Hatt, Jo Anne Chandler, Diane Chandler, Anne Elliot, Kent Johnson, Frank Vetere Jr., Sandy Silliman, Dorothy Carter, Phillip Stubblefield, Kathy Ryan, Diane Smith, Leiann Chidester, Jackie Nelson, Nathan Martinez, Gayna Salinas; Ensign Engineering: Ryker Ogden.

CONDUCTING: Mayor Larry Packer, the meeting began at 7:00 p.m.

ORDER OF BUSINESS:

The Pledge of Allegiance directed by Tonya Bigelow.

1. Public Comment

Sandy Silliman opened public comment by updating the council on the Veteran's Memorial replacement. She explained that the new memorial from Marietti Monuments in Price won't arrive until late September, which means the planned July dedication will need to be postponed. The Green River Business Alliance had hoped to combine the dedication with a 250th anniversary celebration for the nation, complete with county commissioners and veterans performing, but the timing just won't work out. She also asked about the \$3,500 from the travel council, which David Wilson confirmed is coming but hasn't hit the books yet.

Sandy Silliman then requested permission to place large rocks along the north curb near the memorial to protect it from vehicle damage. Stephanie Crabtree noted that the city only owns a small diagonal portion of that area and suggested they'd need to work with the adjacent property owner. The memorial was previously damaged by a young student driver turning into the museum parking lot.

Gayna Salinas thanked organizers of the River Rocks event but expressed concern about the lack of local attendance. She noted the event wasn't

advertised on Green River's City or Facebook pages, nor on the Epicenter's Website, despite attracting visitors from Washington, Oregon, Colorado, Salt Lake, and Logan. She emphasized the quality of people attending these tours and reminded the council of their responsibility to listen to all citizens. She also thanked whoever fixed the water takeout door.

Leiann Chidester provided a comprehensive update on the old cemetery project. She reported visible improvements this year after extensive cleanup last year, with B- Joe Hatfield filling sinkholes and planters. The cleanup efforts have removed glass, wood, and nails, with Chad Pinneo offering to install a front entrance gate for better access. She's working on getting a protected information kiosk with maps and history, plus a guest book in a weather proof box. She requested the city add the cemetery to their weed spraying schedule and suggested a temporary garbage can during cleanup months. She's also coordinating with schools for educational trips and seeking bench donations for visitors.

Dorothy Carter promoted upcoming business training opportunities, including a health fair for ages 60 and over, Green River Business Alliance meeting on the 21st featuring Custom Fit training dollars (paying up to 50% of business training costs), and upcoming presentations by SERDA and ROI (Rural Online Initiative). She's also coordinating with Savannah Withers on a kid's business fair for July or August and highlighted an upcoming visit from Marlo Oaks, the state treasurer.

Phillip Stubblefield shared historical context on two agenda items. For the museum irrigation project, he researched the issue four years ago and estimated 1 million gallons annually of city water usage. His research with Munroe Pump suggested using a culvert system 5 feet off the riverbank instead of a direct pump, with state water officials confirming this approach would work while still counting water shares. On the Elgin roads petition, he supported reducing the 80-foot right-of-way and emphasized that city employees work harder than most comparable municipalities, handling water, sewer, parks, streets, cemeteries, and museums with half the typical staff.

Kathy Ryan thanked the city for recent infrastructure work and challenged the council to collaborate with the canal company on water usage and community planning. She also called for community-wide cleanup efforts, noting excessive parking along streets and unlicensed vehicles creating an unsightly appearance.

2. Discuss/Approve/Deny 2026 Municipal Waste Water Planning Program Survey

Bryan Meadows explained this is a yearly requirement involving a comprehensive survey about the city's wastewater budget, replacement capabilities, and potential upgrade needs. The survey asks about sewer overflows, backups, and their causes, with most responses being "no" since the city is fortunately focusing on repair and replacement rather than major upgrades. He noted they had three basement floods last year due to construction contractor issues, but overall, they've been fortunate. The survey goes to the Division of Water Quality and is necessary for future funding eligibility.

Bo Harrison asked about notification of problems, and Bryan Meadows confirmed they would be contacted if issues arose, though he's never heard back from them. He emphasized the importance of completing the survey since failing to do so could jeopardize funding opportunities.

MOTION: Bo Harrison made a motion to approve 2026 Municipal Waste Water Planning Program Survey. Tonya Bigelow seconded the motion. **VOTE:** Bo Harrison, Kent Nelson, Guy Webster, Stephanie Crabtree and Tonya Bigelow voted aye. The motion carried.

3. Discuss/Approve/Deny Appointment of Jackie Nelson to Historic Preservation Commission

Kent Nelson disclosed that Jackie Nelson is his mother but stated he would still vote on the appointment.

MOTION: Bo Harrison made a motion to approve the appointment of Jackie Nelson to Historic Preservation Commission. Kent Nelson seconded the motion. **VOTE:** Bo Harrison, Kent Nelson, Guy Webster, Stephanie Crabtree and Tonya Bigelow voted aye. The motion carried.

4. Discuss/Approve/Deny Appointment of Guy Webster to Historic Preservation Commission

Bo Harrison made a motion to approve the appointment of Guy Webster to Historic Preservation Commission. Stephanie Crabtree seconded the motion. **VOTE:** Bo Harrison, Kent Nelson, Stephanie Crabtree and Tonya Bigelow voted aye. Guy Webster abstained from the vote. The motion carried.

5. Discuss/Approve/Deny Petition to Vacate Elgin Roads

David Wilson introduced the petition, clarifying that it seeks to vacate portions of roads, not entire roads. Most residential streets are 45-50 feet wide, but Elgin roads are platted at 80 feet. Kent Johnson, the petition's lead organizer, explained that the original 1883 platting by the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad was designed for turning two-team wagons around without backing up—a need that no longer exists.

Kent Johnson detailed how the lots were later replatted to 25 by 125 feet (or 15 by 125) with 20-foot alleys providing utility access. He argued that 80-foot streets are excessive and create unnecessary maintenance costs for the city. Kent Johnson suggested reducing it to 45-50 feet, which would benefit both the city and landowners, with costs potentially shared through special assessment.

David Wilson clarified they're only voting to accept the petition for further study, which would require multiple workshops and public hearings. He provided technical details about street width standards: 32-36 feet of asphalt for parking on both sides, 28-30 feet for one-side parking, and 26 feet minimum for no parking (fire department requirement). He also noted potential cost savings in storm water infrastructure with narrower streets.

David Wilson cautioned about utility complications, noting that water lines currently in the street right-of-way might end up on private property if portions are vacated, requiring careful analysis. Guy Webster supported the project as part of broader infrastructure planning, seeing it as beneficial for future development and cost management.

MOTION: Kent Nelson made a motion to approve Petition to Vacate Elgin Roads. Guy Webster seconded the motion. **VOTE:** Bo Harrison, Kent Nelson, Guy Webster, Stephanie Crabtree and Tonya Bigelow voted aye. The motion carried.

6. Discuss/Approve/Deny UDOT TAP (Transportation Alternatives Program) Funding for Elberta Street

David Wilson explained that the city has been awarded a Transportation Alternatives Program grant from UDOT but needs to provide a commitment letter for the city's 40% cost share before they proceed. The total project cost is estimated at \$350,000, requiring the city to contribute \$140,000 over the course of the project, not as an upfront payment.

The project includes curb, gutter, sidewalk, and storm drainage, with potential asphalt work from curb to curb.

Kent Nelson highlighted the broader safety issue of students walking to the high school without proper sidewalks, describing dangerous conditions after evening games where students walk in dark streets. He advocated for making school access routes a priority. David Wilson confirmed he's working with Jonathan Johansen on a stormwater and utility study from Main Street to Pirate Avenue for potential future sidewalk projects to the public safety building.

MOTION: Stephanie Crabtree made a motion to approve UDOT TAP (Transportation Alternatives Program) Funding for Elberta Street. Kent Nelson seconded the motion. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Bo Harrison, Kent Nelson, Guy Webster, Stephanie Crabtree and Tonya Bigelow voted aye. The motion carried.

7. Discuss City Employee Wages

Guy Webster initiated discussion about reviewing employee compensation, expressing concern that some employees are underpaid compared to private sector opportunities and risking loss of quality staff. He suggested reviewing job descriptions to identify duties and potential gaps, noting an apparent imbalance with 6 museum employees versus 5 public works employees handling cemeteries, weed spraying, and various projects.

Guy Webster emphasized that 3% cost-of-living increases don't keep pace with inflation, meaning employees effectively earn less each year. He supported continuing Dorothy Carter's business development position, noting the value she brings to Green River. He also suggested the event coordinator position should be office-based to serve as a front door for visitors and provide better accountability for duties like advertising events.

Tonya Bigelow praised Dorothy's Carters contributions and supported requiring all employees to log hours if public works employees must do so. Stephanie Crabtree emphasized the importance of clear job descriptions for both supervisors and employees, noting past ambiguity about expectations that complicated employee evaluations.

Phillip Stubblefield suggested combining across-the-board cost-of-living adjustments with department head evaluations for individual merit increases. He recalled the city policy providing 1.5% COLA plus up to 1.5% merit increases based on performance evaluations.

David Wilson confirmed they conducted employee evaluations last year, though they felt rushed due to management transition. The discussion revealed the city's strong financial position according to recent audit reports, suggesting room for substantial employee raises.

Guy Webster requested that employees document their duties and responsibilities to help identify workload distribution and staffing needs. The council agreed to schedule a work session within the next month to develop specific wage proposals for the budget process.

8. Discuss Changing Museum irrigation from culinary to river water

Guy Webster advocated for switching the museum's irrigation system from treated city water to river water, citing significant cost savings and reduced burden on the water treatment system. He noted the city has water rights and would need to register a point of diversion with the state. Guy Webster mentioned conversations with local farmers who successfully use river water with filtration systems.

Phillip Stubblefield referenced his previous research estimating 1 million gallons annually for museum irrigation and suggested a culvert system with gravel filtration instead of a direct river pump to avoid maintenance issues.

Stephanie Crabtree raised concerns about maintaining landscaping quality, noting that some grass areas around the building aren't necessary and suggesting eliminating sections during any irrigation system redesign. She pointed out that irrigation water would stain the building's concrete more than the current culinary water already does.

David Wilson revealed that a trust water line runs through city property behind the museum with a contract provision for installing a 4 or 6-inch tap and requesting surplus water. He's consulting the city attorney about potentially accessing this 12-inch line, possibly with settling ponds to help irrigation.

Bryan Meadows supported exploring the concept, mentioning grant funding opportunities for transitioning off culinary water. Several speakers noted the museum's south-facing grass areas are difficult to maintain even with heavy watering.

Gayna Salinas recommended contacting Brian Jones through the Soil Conservation District for water optimization programs and grants, noting that NRCS provides grants several times yearly while water optimization programs open only once in February.

Guy Webster pushed for concrete action, requesting David Wilson research design proposals and cost estimates to have the system operational by next spring's irrigation season.

9. City Council, Mayor, and/or Employee comments and concerns

Bryan Meadows reported that the new water treatment plant startup hit programming issues in early April, with additional problems discovered in the design that would drain granule activated carbon vessels nightly. A control valve was added to maintain water in the vessels when the plant shuts off. The contractor returns tomorrow to attempt another startup, though electrical work may not be complete. They successfully flushed arsenic from the fresh carbon media and expect the plant to run within the next two weeks. The pressure reducing valve preconstruction meeting was postponed due to I-70 closures but rescheduled for the 23rd. The same contractor will handle sewer lift station work starting early July with parts arriving end of June. They received the bio barge for lagoon work, though Bryan Meadows expressed reluctance about floating on sewer lagoons to replace aerators. Three remaining potholes on South Solomon by the elementary should be patched by Tuesday, weather permitting.

David Wilson discussed storm drainage planning from Pirate Avenue to Main Street in conjunction with four potential new homes in that area, requiring sewer and water infrastructure analysis. His planned April spay and neuter clinic for feral cats was postponed to May due to veterinarian availability. He rescued eight kittens from a lift station odor control box, spending an hour and a half on the extraction.

Julie Spadafora announced changes to utility payment procedures, eliminating reminder phone calls while maintaining late letters with email notifications encouraged. Door stickers two days before cutoff were also eliminated to increase customer responsibility. The result was cutting the late payment list in half, demonstrating success in encouraging timely payments. She suggested texting capabilities would further improve communication efficiency.

Loni Meadows thanked public works for baseball field preparation, noting two teams utilizing fields extensively with practices and games on Mondays and Wednesdays. Bryan Meadows and Kerry Bigelow have been working extra to maintain both Green River's ball fields and prepare facilities for visiting teams. Little League expects three softball teams this year, with youth sports planned to conclude by the second week of July. Volleyball remains a possibility for high school community participation.

Janet Smoak apologized for missing the monthly report due to Green River Rocks preparation. March saw over 750 visitors, nearly 300 more than last March, partly due to the new Bowline Film Festival organized by the Friends

nonprofit group. The festival features adventure and outdoor films focused on the Colorado Plateau, designed as a springtime fundraising event to complement the existing signature event, with goals of eventually generating \$100,000 annually each.

The Green River Rocks Festival brought approximately 400 people to town despite moving activities indoors, representing significant economic impact through hotel, camping, and restaurant spending. The museum plans a student art show in May with a two-week run and weekend reception.

The mayor acknowledged the excellent work of public works employees, noting their visibility throughout town handling various infrastructure challenges.

Gayna Salinas announced a tentatively scheduled May 6th tree pruning workshop from 10 AM to 2 PM at city park, bringing experts to teach community members and city employees about proper fruit and shade tree pruning. The event includes lunch and covers both baseball fields and trees near tennis courts affected by fungus disease. She encouraged city employee attendance for chainsaw operation training.

Tonya Bigelow reported on several meetings and initiatives. Billboard replacement is complete. The conservation district petitioned both Emery and Grand County Commissioners to declare a drought emergency for future funding access. She attended Carbon Emery Energy Collaborative meetings, emphasizing their importance for local representation and learning about potential refinery projects. A housing meeting revealed discrepancies in Canal Commons occupancy reports versus Facebook posts seeking applications. She detailed promising discussions with Inland Port representatives about infrastructure and housing development, specifically mentioning Jenna Draper as their housing representative and referencing Salina City Housing Development as a model. The representatives expressed interest in Green River due to various potential projects including lithium, Blue Castle, and Valero Atomics manufacturing. She recommended scheduling a work session to hear presentations from Jeff Sauer about Salina's housing development approach.

Guy Webster provided EMS updates, including a \$500 referral bonus for bringing new EMTs to Emery County EMS and pursuing \$12 million in federal rural EMS grants. The board is drafting a letter requesting county commissioners allocate CRMA funds to the EMS Special Service District for retention raises. Six EMTs are currently in training, with three expected to be available for Green River scheduling.

Guy Webster requested regular agenda updates on previously discussed items to prevent projects from falling through the cracks, specifically mentioning landfill RFP, ambulance building compliance, employee wage reviews, and museum irrigation projects. He suggested either assigning council members to specific projects or holding city management accountable for follow-through.

Kent Nelson supported reinstating departmental assignments for council members to ensure project accountability, though Phillip Stubblefield cautioned against council members pushing personal projects over collective priorities.

The discussion concluded with agreement to add regular updates on prior month's decisions to future agendas, with the mayor accepting responsibility for tracking these items.

10. Discuss/Approve/Deny Consent Agenda

- Financial Report February 2026
- Payment Approval Report April 2026
- Treasurer Report March 2026
- City Council Regular Meeting Minutes March 10, 2026

MOTION: Guy Webster made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Tonya Bigelow seconded the motion. **VOTE:** Bo Harrison, Kent Nelson, Guy Webster, Stephanie Crabtree and Tonya Bigelow voted aye. The motion carried

11. Closed Session, if necessary, pursuant to Utah Code § 52-4-205

No closed session was held.

12. Adjourn, the meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

MOTION: Kent made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Stephanie Crabtree Seconded the motion. **VOTE:** Bo Harrison, Kent Nelson, Guy Webster, Stephanie Crabtree and Tonya Bigelow voted aye. The motion carried

Larry Packer, Mayor

Julie Spadafora, City Recorder

Approved: May 12, 2026