MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL WORK SESSION OF THE GRANTSVILLE CITY COUNCIL, HELD ON MAY 11TH, 2026 AT THE GRANTSVILLE CITY HALL, LOCATED AT 429 EAST MAIN STREET, GRANTSVILLE, UTAH AND ELECTRONICALLY VIA ZOOM. THE MEETING BEGAN AT 6:00 P.M.

Mayor and Council Members Present:

Mayor Hammond
Rhett Butler
Derek Dalton
Brittany Skinner
Jake Thomas
Jeff Williams

Council Members Excused: none.

Appointed Officers and Employees Present:

Michael Resare, City Manager
Alicia Fairbourne, City Recorder
Tysen Barker, City Attorney *(via Zoom)*
Fire Chief Jason Remick
Christy Montierth, Public Works Director
Bill Cobabe, Comm. Development Director
Heidi Jeffries, HR Director
John Ingersoll, Library Director
Jamie Topham, Justice Court Judge *(via Zoom)*

Citizens and Guests Present or on Zoom: Brian White, and others who may not have signed in or used their full name via Zoom.

Mayor Hammond called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA:

1. **Discussion of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Tooele County School District**

   Councilmember Thomas reviewed the history of the shared use arrangement between Grantsville City and the Tooele County School District for the athletic fields located near Grantsville High School. He explained that the arrangement had operated for years under an informal understanding without a written agreement and stated that the increasing population and growing recreational demands had created scheduling, maintenance, liability, and safety concerns. Councilmember Thomas stated that discussions with school district representatives had included the possibility of the school district purchasing the park property to expand athletic facilities and alleviate congestion. He also noted concerns regarding field maintenance responsibilities and stated that the school district had historically benefited from the use of the facilities without significant financial contribution.

   Mayor Hammond and Public Works Director Christy Montierth discussed recent field maintenance issues, including mowing, weed control, fertilization, and aeration. Ms. Montierth stated that the school district had continued mowing the fields but had indicated they would no longer spray weeds, fertilize, or aerate the property after the current school year. Mayor Hammond stated that City staff had recently been required to assist with maintenance due to overgrown weeds and other conditions affecting field usability.

Councilmember Thomas and Mayor Hammond discussed the increasing safety concerns associated with traffic congestion, limited parking, and the growing number of recreational and school programs utilizing the area. Mayor Hammond reviewed prior discussions with the school district regarding the possible sale of the park property and construction of a new high school campus elsewhere in Grantsville. She explained that earlier discussions regarding a future high school relocation had since shifted, with current estimates placing a new high school approximately eight to ten years away. Councilmember Thomas and Mayor Hammond also discussed the impact of portable classroom placement on existing youth football practice fields and concerns regarding the loss of recreational space for community programs.

Councilmember Skinner asked questions regarding the school district's willingness to enter into a formal agreement and discussed the need for long-term solutions. Councilmember Butler expressed that the issue would not be resolved during the meeting and recommended postponing further discussion until after the budget presentation. The Council agreed to table the discussion temporarily and proceed to the FY2027 budget work session.

Motion: Councilmember Butler moved to table agenda item #1 until after the budget discussion (agenda item #2).

Second: Councilmember Williams made the second.

Vote: The vote was as follows: Councilmember Butler, "Aye"; Councilmember Dalton, "Aye"; Councilmember Skinner, "Aye"; Councilmember Thomas "Aye"; Councilmember Williams, "Aye". There were none opposed. The motion carried.

2. Presentation and discussion of the FY27 budget *(this is a discussion item only. No public comment or action will be taken.)*

a. Presentation of the proposed property tax impact schedule

Finance Director Aspen Clegg presented the proposed property tax impact schedule and reviewed the proposed increase to the City's property tax rate from 0.001368 to 0.002517, which would generate approximately $1.75 million in additional property tax revenue and represented an estimated 84% increase over the certified tax rate. Ms. Clegg stated that the increase would equate to approximately $27.92 per month for the average residential property owner. She explained that the proposed increase was intended to address operational costs, including a proposed pay and compensation study for Human Resources, additional Parks and Recreation staffing associated with the Scenic Slopes development, and approximately 3% inflationary increases across departmental budget line items.

Ms. Clegg stated that City administration and department heads had conducted an extensive internal review of the proposed FY2027 budget and reduced expenditures by approximately $456,000, lowering the estimated tax increase need from 84% to approximately 62% based on current projections. Councilmember Butler clarified that the formally noticed Truth in Taxation process remained at the previously presented 84% maximum increase amount.

Ms. Clegg also reviewed the City's historical property tax rates dating back to 1997 and explained that the City had not increased property taxes since 2010. She noted that the City had adopted property tax rates below the certified tax rate in both 2011 and 2012, including reductions of approximately 10% and 16%, respectively. Ms. Clegg stated that, as a result, the City had continued operating below the revenue levels that could have been generated through adoption of the certified tax rate in subsequent years. She stated that the historical information and calculations had been verified with the State of Utah. Following the presentation, the Council began reviewing departmental budgets and hearing from department heads regarding operational needs and proposed expenditures.

Police Chief Robert Sager reviewed the proposed Police Department budget and stated that the department had attempted to reduce expenditures wherever possible while maintaining current service levels. He explained that the proposed budget largely reflected status quo operations with the inclusion of a proposed 3% wage increase. Chief Sager and Ms. Clegg discussed the difficulty of accurately budgeting unemployment compensation costs due to employee turnover and staffing fluctuations.

Councilmember Butler asked questions regarding the increase in the "Other Professional Services" line item. Chief Sager explained that the increase included software and service contracts for programs such as Frontline public safety management software, Lexipol policy management and training services, investigative tools through LexisNexis, and shredding services. Ms. Clegg clarified that the department's dispatch contract expense had also been moved into that line item from a different budget category, accounting for a significant portion of the increase.

Chief Sager discussed reductions within the department's special program expenses and stated that grant funding had allowed the department to continue programs such as RAD training, the NOVA program, and student holiday card initiatives while reducing the amount needed from the general fund. The Council also discussed the Justice Center loan repayment line item and repayment schedule associated with the Municipal Building Authority.

Councilmember Butler and Councilmember Skinner asked questions regarding department equipment, staffing, and overtime needs. Chief Sager explained that the department would eventually need to replace its current Taser systems due to manufacturer discontinuation and estimated the replacement cost at approximately $85,000 to $100,000, though payment plan options were available. He stated that the equipment was necessary to provide officers with less-lethal de-escalation tools.

Councilmember Skinner asked several questions regarding staffing levels, salary increases, and supervisory positions within the department. Chief Sager explained that the proposed salary budget reflected current staffing levels and did not include filling an existing vacant sergeant position. He stated that the department remained understaffed compared to recommended officer-to-population ratios and discussed the operational strain caused by staffing shortages, overtime coverage, and increasing service demands. Chief Sager estimated that adding an additional officer, including benefits, would cost approximately $150,000 annually depending on experience level and timing of hire. He also stated that the department continued operating below recommended staffing ratios based on population growth projections and service demands.

Councilmember Butler asked additional questions regarding projected property tax revenues and the City's historical ability to balance prior budgets without significant tax increases. Finance Director Aspen Clegg explained that some of the projected revenue figures contained in the State-required budget presentation were formula-based projections and did not accurately reflect actual anticipated collections. She noted that actual property tax collections were limited to the certified tax rate amounts and explained that collection timing, delinquent payments, and tax sales could affect annual revenues.

Councilmember Butler and Ms. Clegg discussed the City's fund balance and prior use of COVID-19 relief funding. Ms. Clegg stated that pandemic relief funding had significantly assisted the City in prior years and confirmed that the current available fund balance was approximately $2.4 million, though portions of the total fund balance reflected equity and assets rather than unrestricted cash. Ms. Clegg also explained that state law restricted the amount of fund balance municipalities could maintain and discussed proposed legislative efforts that could further limit municipal fund balances and annual property tax increases in future years.

Public Works Director Christy Montierth presented portions of the Parks, Cemetery, Streets, Water, Sewer, and Class C Road budgets. Discussion regarding the Parks Department focused on staffing levels, vandalism repairs, fertilizer, sprinkler maintenance, portable restroom costs, and future maintenance demands associated with Scenic Slopes. Ms. Montierth stated that the department was already over budget in several operational categories due to ongoing maintenance and repair costs. Mayor Hammond and several Councilmembers complimented the condition and appearance of the cemetery and parks.

Councilmember Thomas asked questions regarding maintenance costs associated with Cherry Street Park and ongoing recreational facility demands. Ms. Montierth stated that Cherry Street Park experienced a high level of vandalism and maintenance needs compared to other facilities. Discussion also occurred regarding future improvements at the cemetery, including widening roads within the north cemetery expansion area.

The Council reviewed the Streets Department budget, including staffing allocations, road maintenance operations, equipment purchases, and Class C Road funding restrictions. Ms. Montierth and Ms. Clegg explained that a portion of the increased salary expenditures reflected the addition of Ben Hansen's position within the Streets Department budget and discussed the City's intention to reimburse portions of labor and project costs through eligible Class C Road funds where permitted. Ms. Montierth discussed the department's recent work on Scenic Slopes, rodeo grounds preparation, stockpiling road millings from UDOT, and future plans to perform more road maintenance operations in-house rather than contracting all work externally.

The Council also briefly reviewed the Water, Sewer, and Garbage enterprise fund budgets. Ms. Montierth discussed rising material and infrastructure costs associated with water system maintenance, including hydrants, valves, pressure reducing valves, water meters, and leak repairs. Councilmember Thomas asked questions regarding hydrant meter rental revenue and water usage charges associated with development activity. Ms. Clegg and staff clarified that the enterprise funds operated separately from the general fund and were not directly impacted by property tax revenues, though portions of administrative salaries were proportionally allocated among the various enterprise funds based on operational responsibilities.

Fire Chief Jason Remick reviewed the proposed Fire Department budget and discussed staffing, equipment, vehicle maintenance, turnout gear replacement, and volunteer appreciation funding. Chief Remick explained that the department's salary and wages line item covered stipends for volunteer firefighters, the fire chief staff, the fire marshal, and administrative support staff. Ms. Clegg clarified that the proposed salary figures reflected current stipend structures and chief compensation rather than full-time firefighter staffing increases.

Chief Remick stated that vehicle maintenance costs could fluctuate significantly depending on wildfire response activity and major apparatus repairs. He noted that the department had not incurred major ladder truck expenses during the current fiscal year but anticipated a difficult wildfire season. He also explained that the State reimbursed certain wildfire-related repair costs. Chief Remick discussed turnout gear replacement requirements and explained that firefighter bunker gear expired every ten years and cost approximately $5,000 per set to replace.

The Council discussed the department's extrication equipment and the need to eventually replace aging hydraulic "Jaws of Life" equipment. Chief Remick explained that the current equipment was outdated, leaked hydraulic fluid, and was becoming unreliable. He stated that replacement battery-powered extrication tools would cost approximately $45,000 per set, with two sets desired by the department. Mr. Resare noted that the Council could choose to add the purchase into the proposed budget, and Councilmember Thomas expressed support for including the equipment. Chief Remick also stated that the City had applied for grant funding opportunities to help offset equipment costs.

Chief Remick further discussed the need to increase uniform and turnout replacement funding due to aging equipment and mandatory replacement schedules. He also requested adjustments related to the Fire Department's upcoming 100-year anniversary celebration. Chief Remick proposed separating anniversary celebration expenses from the existing volunteer appreciation line item and requested approximately $15,000 for anniversary-related events, commemorative items, and a department celebration. The Council and staff discussed possible accounting methods for tracking the one-time anniversary expenses without permanently creating a separate budget line item.

Library Director John Ingersoll reviewed the proposed Library Department budget and stated that the library was already operating with minimal staffing and limited flexibility for additional reductions. Mr. Ingersoll explained that the library had reduced several collection development budget categories, including books, music collections, audio visual materials, dues and fees, and training-related expenses. He stated that the library planned to rely more heavily on grants to supplement collection purchases where possible.

Mr. Ingersoll noted that DVDs and children's books remained the library's most popular materials, particularly for residents without access to streaming services or online resources. Mayor Hammond commented on the popularity of the DVD collection, and Mr. Ingersoll stated that the library's collection continued to align with community standards and expectations.

Mr. Ingersoll discussed a previously requested additional part-time library technician position that could assist with literacy tutoring or technology support services for residents but acknowledged that the request was unlikely to move forward given the City's current budget constraints. Ms. Clegg clarified that the proposed salary and wage adjustments reflected current staffing levels and included the proposed 3% cost-of-living adjustment without eliminating existing library staff positions.

Councilmember Butler noted that the library had reduced its overall proposed budget by approximately $45,000 compared to the prior year. Mr. Ingersoll stated that library staff regularly assisted with additional City needs outside normal library operations, including landscaping, grant writing, and other support tasks as needed.

The Council also briefly discussed the library building loan payment. Ms. Clegg explained that Tooele City contributed funding toward the library facility costs and that the City's library payment reflected the remaining balance owed after that contribution. Mayor Hammond asked whether any of the City's building-related loan obligations were nearing completion, and Ms. Clegg stated that updated loan schedules could be provided to the Council for review.

Community Development Director Bill Cobabe reviewed the proposed budgets for the Building Department and Community Development Department. Mr. Cobabe thanked the Council for participating in the extended budget work session and acknowledged the difficulty of reviewing the City's financial needs in detail.

Mr. Cobabe explained that the Building Department continued generating significant revenue through permit activity and development-related fees, which helped offset departmental expenditures. Councilmember Skinner noted that the proposed Building Department budget had decreased from the prior fiscal year. Councilmember Butler asked questions regarding transfers previously budgeted into the Capital Projects Fund. Ms. Clegg explained that transfers from departmental funds into the Capital Projects Fund had been removed from the FY2027 proposed budget under the assumption that future water credit sale proceeds would instead provide funding for capital projects.

The Council also discussed salary and benefit increases within the Building Department budget. Ms. Clegg explained that the salary figures reflected current staffing levels, administrative salary allocations, and proposed compensation and benefit increases. Mr. Cobabe noted that administrative salaries were split between the Building and Community Development budgets.

Mr. Cobabe stated that several increases within the Community Development budget were associated with recently added staffing positions, including his position and additional planning and engineering support staff. He explained that training and operational budgets had also increased proportionally to support those positions. Mr. Cobabe further discussed the Engineering Services line item and explained that, although the City now had in-house engineering capabilities through Barry Johnson, outside engineering consultants were still occasionally necessary for specialized services such as floodplain analysis and technical plan review.

Councilmember Butler noted that engineering service expenditures had exceeded prior budget estimates during the current fiscal year. Mr. Cobabe explained that many engineering review costs were ultimately reimbursed by developers through application and review fees, which helped offset expenditures within the department.

Mr. Cobabe also discussed a proposed additional iWorQ software module that would provide a customer-facing online portal allowing applicants and developers to track permit and review statuses electronically. He stated that the software would improve operational efficiency and communication with applicants.

The Council discussed a proposed general plan grant project funded through the Wasatch Front Regional Council. Mr. Cobabe and Ms. Clegg explained that the City anticipated receiving approximately $100,000 in grant funding with a local match contribution of approximately

$15,000. Ms. Clegg noted that grant-funded projects were required to appear within the City budget in order to strengthen grant eligibility and application competitiveness.

Mr. Cobabe also informed the Council about recent discussions with the Tooele Army Depot regarding the Colonel Road project. He explained that land contributions associated with the project could potentially be leveraged as matching value for future grant opportunities, including transportation and infrastructure funding programs. Mr. Cobabe stated that staff continued seeking creative opportunities to leverage grants and outside funding sources to support future infrastructure improvements.

Justice Court Judge Jaime Topham clarified that she was appearing before the Council in her administrative capacity as Justice Court Director rather than in her judicial capacity. Judge Topham discussed the proposed Justice Court budget and explained that judicial compensation was governed by state statute and could not be reduced during an active term, even if state workload calculations changed. She stated that although the Administrative Office of the Courts had reported a reduced weighted workload percentage for the Grantsville Justice Court, actual case filings and court activity had increased substantially. Judge Topham reported that monthly case filings had risen significantly over prior years and stated that the court's workload continued increasing alongside Police Department activity.

Judge Topham explained that the Justice Court currently operated with one full-time and one part-time employee and stated that the department ideally needed an additional full-time position to keep pace with caseload demands. She acknowledged the City's financial constraints and instead requested consideration for an additional part-time judicial assistant position. Judge Topham explained that court clerical work required extensive specialized training and noted that replacing trained personnel created operational challenges and additional staff burdens.

Judge Topham stated that the court operated efficiently with limited expenditures and had implemented electronic systems and shared equipment arrangements with the Police Department to reduce costs where possible. She discussed recent efficiencies implemented within court operations and prosecution procedures to streamline case management and reduce unnecessary expenditures.

Councilmember Skinner asked questions regarding bailiff staffing and court security costs. Chief Sager explained that court bailiff responsibilities were funded through the Police Department overtime budget and typically required two to three officers during court proceedings. Judge Topham explained that the court currently operated one primary court day per week in an effort to maximize efficiency for court staff, prosecutors, defense counsel, and law enforcement personnel.

Councilmember Thomas asked about the approximate cost of adding an additional part-time court employee. Judge Topham estimated that converting the current part-time position to full-time status would require approximately $26,000 in additional funding, while a second part-time position would cost somewhat less. Judge Topham also noted that she served as the City's only part-time department director while continuing separate full-time employment outside her judicial responsibilities.

At 8:02 p.m., there was a five-minute recess.

At 8:07 p.m., the meeting resumed.

Chief Sager reviewed the proposed Animal Control budget and explained that the department continued operating with a very limited budget. He stated that community donations of pet food and supplies significantly helped reduce operational costs at the animal shelter. Chief Sager also explained that the City's part-time animal control officer position was supplemented by Police Department officers, who assisted with feeding, cleaning kennels, and caring for animals during mornings, evenings, and other periods when the animal control officer was unavailable. He stated that those staffing costs were effectively absorbed within the Police Department budget.

Councilmember Skinner asked questions regarding shelter operations and staffing responsibilities. Chief Sager confirmed that officers routinely checked on and cared for animals multiple times per day.

Mr. Resare discussed the future need for a replacement animal shelter facility, noting that the current shelter was located near the sewer treatment plant and would likely need to be relocated once the new wastewater treatment facility became operational. He explained that the City would eventually need to evaluate options such as constructing a new shelter facility, bonding for future construction costs, saving toward a future capital project, or potentially partnering with Tooele County and Tooele City on a regional animal shelter solution. Ms. Clegg explained that any future shelter project funding would likely need to come from the Capital Projects Fund rather than the general fund due to the impact on the property tax increase calculation.

Chief Sager stated that Animal Control would also benefit from an additional full-time employee position but acknowledged that the current budget limitations would likely require Police Department staff to continue supplementing shelter operations and animal care responsibilities.

Ms. Clegg reviewed the City Hall and General Government budget categories, including community relations, employee appreciation, legal services, administrative operations, and City Hall staffing. She explained that the Community Relations budget included funding for community events and organizations such as the Fourth of July celebration, Grantsville Sociable, youth livestock purchases, scholarships, and the rodeo. Ms. Clegg and Mr. Resare also discussed reductions to the Small Business Alliance contribution after renegotiating the City's participation level.

The Council discussed the proposed rodeo budget and anticipated sponsorship and ticket sale revenues. Ms. Clegg explained that the proposed $25,000 rodeo expenditure primarily covered the stock contractor and rodeo clown while additional sponsorships and donations were expected to offset costs. Mayor Hammond and staff noted that the rodeo had already received substantial community support, volunteer labor, and sponsorship commitments.

Ms. Clegg also reviewed the legal services budget and explained that legal costs remained elevated due to ongoing litigation and specialized legal needs related to water rights, bond matters, land use, and other municipal issues. City Attorney Tysen Barker stated that the legal department attempted to reduce future liability exposure through preventative legal guidance and risk management efforts. Mr. Barker reported that prosecution-related workloads had increased significantly over the prior year and stated that approximately half of the legal department's workload involved criminal prosecution support and case management. He noted that legal service expenditures could potentially decline in future years as active litigation matters were resolved.

Human Resources Director Heidi Jeffries discussed the City's staffing levels, employee retention concerns, and compensation challenges. Ms. Jeffries stated that the City operated with very limited staffing levels and expressed concern regarding employee burnout, morale, turnover, and the long-term sustainability of current workloads. She noted that many department directors regularly worked extended hours and discussed the importance of maintaining competitive compensation and employee retention. Ms. Jeffries also presented survey information regarding cost-of-living adjustments and merit increases used by other municipalities and discussed the proposed compensation study intended to evaluate City employee pay structures.

The Council held an extended discussion regarding possible budget reduction strategies, use of fund balance reserves, and potential use of anticipated water credit sale proceeds. Councilmember Butler proposed identifying one-time expenditures that could potentially be funded using anticipated water credit revenues rather than ongoing property tax increases. Discussion included possible one-time funding for fire department equipment, public safety needs, and other capital items. Councilmember Butler also proposed evaluating investment strategies for portions of the anticipated water credit proceeds to generate interest revenue that could offset future budget deficits.

Councilmember Dalton discussed the possibility of reducing the proposed FY2027 budget by approximately 15% compared to the FY2026 budget and suggested exploring temporary reductions such as freezing certain salary increases, reducing City Council compensation, limiting non-essential hiring, and using investment earnings from anticipated water credit proceeds to help offset operational deficits. Councilmember Williams and Councilmember Thomas discussed balancing long-term financial sustainability with maintaining essential City services and employee retention. Councilmember Skinner expressed concern regarding reductions that could negatively impact employee morale, public safety staffing, and operational effectiveness.

The Council and staff also discussed the risks associated with relying on one-time revenues for ongoing operational costs, future infrastructure obligations, inflationary pressures, and long-term planning needs associated with continued city growth. Discussion included possible future needs related to roads, public safety facilities, animal shelter relocation, equipment replacement, and City Hall expansion.

Ms. Clegg explained that the City had already reduced the proposed property tax increase from approximately 84% to approximately 60% through internal budget reductions completed by staff and department heads. The Council directed staff to continue refining the proposed budget and prepare additional scenarios for review, including options involving investment income, use of fund balance reserves, reduced or modified cost-of-living adjustments, and identification of potential one-time expenditures that could be funded through anticipated water credit proceeds rather than ongoing property tax revenues.

3. Discussion of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Tooele County School District ***(continued from previous discussion)***

The Council returned to discussion regarding the proposed memorandum of understanding with the Tooele County School District concerning shared use of athletic field properties. Councilmember Butler asked what amount the school district might offer if the City were to sell the park property and suggested the possibility of allowing continued public use of the fields until replacement facilities could be developed. Councilmember Thomas discussed the possibility of structuring an agreement that would allow continued shared use during any transition period.

Councilmember Skinner stated that much of the discussion remained speculative because the school district's long-term plans for a new high school facility remained uncertain. Councilmember Williams noted that the City had previously obtained an appraisal for portions of the property and discussed prior school district purchases of athletic facilities in other communities. Mayor Hammond and Councilmember Thomas discussed the school district's previously discussed timelines for a future high school relocation and concerns regarding whether acquisition of additional athletic property could delay construction of a new high school campus elsewhere in the community.

The Council discussed the ongoing operational and scheduling challenges associated with the shared use arrangement and acknowledged concerns expressed by parents, coaches, and community members regarding recreational field availability. Mayor Hammond stated that the City needed to pursue a more formalized agreement to address the long-standing issues surrounding field use and maintenance responsibilities.

Councilmember Thomas stated that the City currently did not have a formal memorandum of understanding or interlocal agreement in place with the school district regarding use of the property and expressed concern that some type of agreement would likely be necessary moving forward if the school district continued utilizing the facilities. The Council continued discussing possible long-term and interim solutions before concluding the discussion without formal action.

4. Adjourn

There being no further discussion items, Mayor Hammond asked for a motion to adjourn.

Motion: Councilmember Dalton moved to adjourn.

Second: Councilmember Skinner seconded the motion.

Vote: The vote was as follows: Councilmember Butler, "Aye"; Councilmember Dalton, "Aye"; Councilmember Skinner, "Aye"; Councilmember Thomas "Aye"; Councilmember Williams, "Aye". There were none opposed. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 10.28 p.m.