

**KEARNS CITY COUNCIL  
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
May 29, 2026**

Element Event Center  
5658 Cougar Lane  
Kearns, UT 84118

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Jesses Valdez, Mayor  
Chrystal Butterfield  
Lyndsay Longtin  
Lorrin Colby Jr.  
Patrick Schaeffer

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Diana Baun, City Recorder  
Nathan Bracken, City Attorney (via Teams)

**Others Present:** Dan Dugan, Sophia Nicholas

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Jesse Valdez called the special meeting to order at approximately 6:00 p.m. The mayor welcomed those in attendance and thanked the Council for arriving quickly for this session. He stated that the purpose of the meeting was to ensure the Council performed its due diligence regarding Ordinance 2026-O-04, relating to the Community Clean Energy Program, and to obtain answers to questions raised by residents and Council Members.

**2. DETERMINE QUORUM**

The mayor confirmed that all Council Members were present, and a quorum was established.

**ORDER OF BUSINESS:**

**3. COUNCIL BUSINESS – ACTION ITEMS** (Discussion/Motion)

- A. Discussion and Potential Action Regarding Reconsideration of the Previous Vote on **Ordinance 2026-O-04**, Enacting the Community Clean Energy Program

The Mayor explained that the city had previously opted out of the program but that the Council had heard significant resident feedback since that action. He stated this meeting was intended to allow the Council to ask questions directly to representatives from the Utah Community Renewable Energy Program and Salt Lake City. He introduced Mr. Dan Dugan, Salt Lake City Council Member and Chair of the Utah Renewable Community Board, and Ms. Sophia Nicholas, Deputy Director of the Salt Lake City Sustainability Department.

Ms. Nicholas provided background on the Utah Renewable Communities Agency, explaining that it is an interlocal collaborative composed of participating municipalities. She stated the agency has no independent staff and is operated by personnel from member governments. She noted that 19 communities were currently participating and that the program was designed as a community and customer choice initiative authorized by the state legislature.

Council Member Longtin began the Council's questions by asking what financial benefit Rocky Mountain Power receives from the program and who controls decision-making once a city opts in. Ms. Nicholas stated that Rocky Mountain Power receives no financial benefit and that the program's structure mirrors how renewable energy projects are traditionally developed. Mr. Dugan explained that each participating community has one vote and that although weighted voting exists in the bylaws, it has never been used. In response to questions about weighted vote percentages, he stated that weighted votes are based on electrical load, with Salt Lake City being over fifty percent. Council Member Longtin asked whether cities could be required to provide additional funding if program revenues fall short. Mr. Dugan responded that there are no such circumstances, explaining that participating customers fund the program through monthly charges and that cities' financial contributions ended with the initial payments and required mailings.

Council Member Schaeffer asked what benefits Kearns residents would receive and when they would see a return. He also asked how residents could verify that the energy produced is actually clean energy delivered to local homes. Ms. Nicholas stated that participation provides communities influence over energy planning and supports the creation of additional renewable energy resources. She explained that while electrons on the power grid cannot be physically distinguished, the projects added under the program would not exist without participating customers and are contracted specifically for program use. Mr. Dugan added that these resources are additive to the existing grid.

Council Member Schaeffer asked why the program required an opt-out structure if it is intended to be a customer choice program. Ms. Nicholas explained that an opt-in structure already exists through Rocky Mountain Power's Blue Sky program, which operates differently. She stated that the opt-out structure was designed to allow communities and smaller consumers to act collectively in influencing renewable energy procurement. Mr. Dugan added that the design allows the program to begin more quickly and with more certainty.

The Mayor asked whether the program is run by Rocky Mountain Power and whether the company could profit at the city's expense. Mr. Dugan replied that Rocky Mountain Power is difficult to work with and has caused delays but that decisions on energy procurement are made by the participating communities. Ms. Nicholas clarified that although the program depends on Rocky Mountain Power's infrastructure, it is not operated by the utility.

The Mayor also asked whether the opt-out enrollment could be changed. Ms. Nicholas stated that changing the structure would be extremely difficult and would likely require reopening proceedings before the Public Service Commission. Mr. Dugan noted that such a change would conflict with actions already taken by other member communities.

Council Member Butterfield asked whether other cities could join the agency, how many cities exist in Utah, why more communities did not join, and which states are included in the regional grid. Mr. Dugan stated that new members cannot currently join without changes to state law. He and Ms.

Nicholas noted that approximately 240 cities and towns exist in Utah and that only Rocky Mountain Power service communities were eligible. They explained that participation was self-selecting based on local interest in clean energy goals. Ms. Nicholas clarified that the regional grid within PacificCorp's eastern system includes Utah, Idaho, and Wyoming.

Council Member Butterfield asked what circumstances trigger weighted voting. Ms. Nicholas stated that one circumstance is when a resource could increase rates by ten percent or more, which would require a supermajority of both community count and electrical load.

Council Member Colby asked why the program could not remain opt-in as it had been for cities before launching. Ms. Nicholas and Mr. Dugan explained that the agency spent years developing the program and that participating communities had already made commitments to the opt-out structure approved by the Public Service Commission. Mr. Dugan described delays caused by Rocky Mountain Power's decisions to halt procurement at one point, requiring the agency to redesign its approach.

Council Member Longtin asked about the opt-out process for businesses, possible termination fees, and difficulty obtaining consistent information. Ms. Nicholas stated that businesses would receive mailed notices and that large users on specific schedules would receive direct outreach. She acknowledged that some communities may have had different experiences in communicating about the program.

Council Member Schaeffer expressed concerns that the cost for businesses could make it harder for Kearns to attract commercial investment. Ms. Nicholas responded that different businesses value different factors and noted that some businesses seek renewable energy opportunities tied to community-scale programs.

The Mayor asked whether the rate could increase or decrease and whether there were ongoing costs for the city. Ms. Nicholas stated that there is no annual cost for the City, and that the initial \$4 residential rate is expected to be the highest, though future adjustments would depend on program costs and regulatory approvals. The Mayor asked how customer funds are used, and Ms. Nicholas stated that they primarily pay for clean energy resources, with a small portion supporting program administration. The Mayor asked whether Rocky Mountain Power could sell program energy to other states. Ms. Nicholas stated that the program's resources are secured through long-term contracts specific to participating communities.

The Mayor asked about oversight, transparency, and rate protections. Ms. Nicholas explained that the entire program is regulated by the Public Service Commission, which must approve all resources. She stated that annual reporting requirements and working groups involving state consumer agencies would provide additional oversight.

Council Member Butterfield asked what Kearns' earlier contribution of roughly \$19,000 had funded. Ms. Nicholas stated that it paid for energy experts and legal work associated with designing the program, with some funding used for marketing and low-income participation support. Council Member Longtin asked whether an independent financial risk assessment had been performed and what lessons the agency had learned. Mr. Dugan stated that the program was intentionally designed to be conservative and stable and that implementation required patience because of the complexity of coordinating with Rocky Mountain Power and the Public Service Commission. Ms. Nicholas added that early project procurement will be limited to avoid over-purchasing energy.

Council Member Schaeffer expressed concern that the \$4 residential burden would fall solely on residents. Ms. Nicholas responded that customers may leave the program at any time and that the Council may choose whether Kearns should participate.

Council Member Butterfield asked why residents with older net-metering arrangements could not participate. Mr. Dugan explained that customers on certain pre-2017 net-metering schedules receive one-for-one credit and therefore are not included.

After concluding all questions, the Mayor asked the visiting representatives if they wished to provide additional closing remarks. Ms. Nicholas and Mr. Dugan expressed appreciation for the Council's engagement and the seriousness of the discussion.

The Mayor then requested a motion to reconsider the Council's previous decision to opt out of the program. Council Member Longtin moved for reconsideration. A second was acknowledged. Following that item, the Mayor requested a motion to adjourn.

**4. ADJOURN**

**A motion to adjourn was made by Council Member Butterfield and seconded by Council Member Colby. All Council Members voted in favor; 5-0. The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:57 p.m.**

**This is a true and correct copy of the May 29, 2026, City Council Special Meeting Minutes, which were approved on June 7, 2026.**

Attest:

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**Diana Baun, City Recorder**

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**Jesse Valdez, Mayor**