



Members Present:

Bradley J. Frost	Mayor
Ryan Hunter	Council Member
Ernie John	Council Member
Clark Taylor	Council Member
Tim Holley	Council Member <i>*electronically*</i>
Staci Carroll	Council Member

Staff Present:

David Bunker	City Administrator
Camden Bird	Asst. City Administrator
Anna Montoya	Finance Director
Stephanie Finau	Deputy Recorder
Sam Kelly	Public Works Director
Dan Loveland	Asst. PW Director
Patrick O'Brien	Development Service Director
Derric Rykert	Community Service Director
Heather Schriever	Legal Counsel
Cameron Paul	Police Chief
Ryan Archuletta	Police Lieutenant
Aaron Brems	Fire Chief
Jason Thompson	Parks Director
Ben Hunter	Engineer
Cody Opperman	City Planner

Also present: Hugh Johnson (PARC Board), Kimberly Martin (PARC Board), Karen Schaak (PARC Board), Kate Sorenson (PARC Board), John Miller, and Josh Christensen (Chamber).

The American Fork City Council held a work session on Tuesday, May 19, 2026, in the City Administration Conference Room, located at 51 East Main Street, commencing at 4:00 p.m.

WORK SESSION

1. Presentation by the PARC Tax Advisory Board on the proposed PARC Tax fund allocation recommendations.

Mr. Hugh Johnson introduced himself and explained what he was presenting on behalf of the Board. Mr. Johnson thanked the Mayor, Council, and staff for the opportunity to present and stated that the PARC Tax Advisory Board values the annual process of reviewing applications, discussing priorities, and making funding recommendations for allocation of PARC tax revenues. He stated that the Board had received directions from the Council in the prior year to continue moving toward a funding allocation target of 70% for Parks and Recreation and 30% for Arts and Culture. He explained that the Board had gradually adjusted recommendations over several years and that the current

recommendation reflected approximately 66% for Parks and Recreation and 34% for Arts and Culture.

Mr. Johnson explained that although available PARC Tax funding had increased, requests still exceeded available funds by roughly two-to-one, making allocation decisions difficult.

Mr. Johnson provided an overview of several of the major PARC Tax funding recommendations, beginning with American Fork City projects, which he noted traditionally represent the largest category of requests and allocations.

- *Mary & Art Dye Park* was for the bond repayment, with funding of approximately \$350,000 per year and an estimated two years remaining on the obligation.
- *Monarch Park* had no funding for the project in the prior year. The Board recommended allocating the full requested amount of \$80,000 this year in hopes of advancing development of the park.
- *Beehive Park* has historically served as a central location for Little League activities. Mr. Johnson stated that increased investment and activity at Mary & Art Dye Park had naturally extended interest and use toward Beehive Park, including recent additions such as picnic tables and gathering areas intended to better connect the two parks. He noted that improvements at Beehive Park remain in early stages and that the Board recommended funding Phase One of the project in the amount of \$179,000 for items including fencing and restroom improvements. He stated that with the planned trail connection along the east side of the park, the area is expected to become increasingly attractive and accessible.
- *Lakeview Park* this as an important planned neighborhood park in an area of need. He stated that because the project is still in early stages, the city requested phased funding. The Board recommended funding Phase One in the amount of \$185,000, primarily for restroom construction and playground installation. He noted that City staff had expressed a strong commitment to advancing the project and the Board believed the recommendation would assist with implementation.
- *Evergreen Park* referenced the existing sand volleyball court, noting that the Recreation Department had recommended changes to improve utilization of the site. He stated that the proposal would replace the sand volleyball area with a full-size basketball court and add pickleball courts. The Board supported the recommendation and determined it to be an appropriate use of PARC funding.
- *Boat Harbor* project would continue as a long-term effort supported by grants and other funding sources. He explained that the Board had recommended \$24,000 in funding to support improvements associated with boating infrastructure, including dock and anchoring system enhancements.
- *Lions Park* is an older neighborhood park with significant improvement needs. He stated that the Board recommended beginning phased improvements including playground equipment upgrades, sidewalk improvements, and replacement of park signage as an initial investment in the site.

Mr. Johnson then transitioned to discussion of cemetery-related recommendations.

Cemetery Memorial section

Council Member Taylor asked whether the Lions organization still existed locally and whether it remained involved with the park signage or maintenance, questioning whether only Rotary remained active. Mr. Johnson responded that he believed the organization may have transitioned to the North County Rotary Club but was not certain. He explained that, regardless, there is no longer an active supporting club associated with the park. However, he noted that retaining the existing name still serves as recognition of the historical contributions made in the past and stated that staff recommended allocating some funding support for the site.

Council Member Taylor commented that preserving the name for historical and legacy purposes made sense, observing that the Lions organization had likely not supported the park in approximately twenty years. He suggested that, in the future, space could present an opportunity for dedication to an individual from that area who made significant contributions to the city. He also commented on the quality of the location and reflected on improvements that have been made there over time.

Mr. Johnson clarified that the park is located within the cemetery's Veterans Memorial section and described it as a meaningful and reflective space that provides a strong visual and commemorative introduction to the cemetery. He explained that the memorial was originally funded through donations from the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), the City, and other contributors. Additional memorial stones have been added over time. This year, a request was submitted to add two additional stones; the committee recommended funding one of the stones and suggested the City explore outside donations to fund the second. Mr. Johnson noted that adding two stones would likely satisfy projected memorial needs for the foreseeable future.

City Library

Mr. Johnson transitioned to discussion of the City Library and highlighted the long-running effort to renovate and improve the teen area. He expressed appreciation for the patience shown throughout the process and explained that this year's recommendation included funding specifically intended to furnish and complete portions of that space.

- Teen Area - improvements are intended to create a higher-quality environment where teens can gather and spend time, making the area more functional and welcoming. While the proposed allocation would not fully complete the teen area project, he stated that it would move the effort meaningfully forward.
- Friends of the Library - noting that the organization consistently brings forward strong proposals. He specifically referenced the Book Fairy program, which provides books annually to first-grade students, describing it as a valuable initiative. Although the program was not fully funded in a prior cycle, the committee recommended fully supporting it this year.
- Author Event Series - noting that the Board had differing perspectives regarding continued funding. Despite differing opinions among Board members, Mr. Johnson emphasized that the event receives substantial community support and remains popular with residents. He noted that attendance numbers have been strong and, as a result, the committee recommended continued funding. However, rather than approving the full \$10,000 requested, the recommendation was to allocate \$6,000 to help cover author appearances and associated event costs.

Harrington Center for the Arts

Mr. Johnson next reviewed funding recommendations for the Harrington Center for the Arts and highlighted the organization's significant contribution to the community's arts and cultural vision.

- Fork Fest - noting that it was the first request considered. The committee recommended funding of \$65,000 compared to the \$66,000 requested. He described Fork Fest as a great community tradition and characterized
- Concert in the Park at the amphitheater is another well-loved event held in a beautiful setting. The committee recommended continued support for that event as well, though not at the fully requested amount.
- Bethlehem and Christmas Village project, noting that it generated substantial discussion among committee members. He emphasized that the committee values the event and acknowledged its popularity in the community, explaining that tickets are often difficult to obtain and require advance planning.

He explained that a concern was raised internally by committee members—not from outside feedback—regarding whether City funding directed toward a specific religious presentation could create concerns. To evaluate the issue, the committee consulted with the City Attorney, who advised exercising caution. Following that guidance, the committee reviewed the request and recommended a narrower funding approach. Rather than funding elements directly associated with the Nativity presentation, as had occurred in prior years, the recommendation was to allocate funding only toward components such as the Christmas market and Christmas village experience. Mr. Johnson explained that the committee's intent was to support the broader cultural and community aspects of the event while avoiding direct funding of the religious presentation itself. Harrington would retain responsibility for allocating and accounting for the funds in accordance with those parameters.

Council Member Carroll clarified the committee's recommendation regarding the Bethlehem and Christmas Village project. She explained that the request included three distinct components: a stage, the Christmas market, and the Nativity presentation. The recommendation was to allocate funding only toward the portions considered nonreligious in nature, specifically the stage and Christmas market components, while excluding direct funding for the Nativity element.

Sculpture Exhibition Program.

Mr. Johnson noted that many community members may not be familiar with the program, despite its presence throughout the city. He explained that sculptures are installed on designated pedestals located around the community for public display during the year. At the conclusion of the exhibition period, the artwork is returned to the sculptors. The committee recommended fully funding the Sculpture Exhibition request in the amount of \$3,000.

Nashville in the Rockies

Mr. Johnson described it as a newer organization centered around bluegrass music. He explained that the group's mission extends beyond concert performances to also include

education and training opportunities that help individuals learn and preserve the bluegrass tradition. He noted that the organization made a presentation to the committee and generated enthusiasm because of its unique concept and potential cultural value. At the same time, committee members recognized that the organization was brand new and had not yet established a track record. Despite that, the committee viewed the proposal as an appropriate opportunity to broaden and diversify the City's cultural programming through the PARC funding process and recommended funding the request in full.

Timpanogos Arts Foundation - TAF

Mr. Johnson noted that it is one of the more established organizations that regularly seeks PARC funding. He referenced broader discussions that have occurred over the past several years regarding how to evaluate and treat administrative expenses, particularly requests tied to salaries and overhead costs. He explained that the committee has been cautious in reviewing those requests and deliberate in determining which administrative costs are appropriate for public funding.

For this year's application cycle, TAF separated its administrative expenses into a distinct project request. Mr. Johnson noted that only a relatively small portion of the request—approximately \$5,000—related to salaries, and the committee felt more comfortable with the organization's proposed allocation and intended use of funds under that structure. As a result, the committee recommended partial funding of the administrative request. He added that the Foundation also submitted requests related to its community theater programming, and the committee recommended partial funding for those programs as well.

Council Member Carroll added context regarding the committee's ongoing effort to improve consistency and transparency in evaluating arts funding requests. She recalled previous discussions in which Council expressed interest in establishing a standardized financial reporting format for arts organizations to allow for clearer side-by-side comparisons across applicants. She explained that the committee developed a proposed financial template; however, by the time direction had been communicated and implementation was being considered, organizations had already begun preparing and submitting applications under the existing process. She stated that she did not feel comfortable requiring applicants to restart or substantially revise work already completed. As a result, the standardized format was not implemented for the current cycle but remains under development for future years. Council Member Carroll suggested circulating the proposed template to the full Council for review and feedback to ensure it captures the information Council members are seeking in future funding evaluations.

Mr. Johnson thanked Council Member Carroll for the clarification and stated that the committee intends to implement the standardized financial reporting format next year. He explained that the goal had been to use it this year, but there was not enough time to introduce it fairly after organizations had already begun preparing applications. The committee plans to finalize the format for future funding cycles to improve consistency and comparison between applicants.

- *Visual Arts Program*, another project under Timpanogos Arts Foundation. He noted that the organization has a new director who is highly committed to developing artistic talent within the community. While several of the

Foundation's programs focus on musical development, this particular request emphasized growth and opportunities in the visual arts. He stated that the committee was impressed with the presentation provided and based on the strength of the proposal and its community value, recommended fully funding the requested amount of \$2,000.

- *Timpanogos Youth Choir* and *Timpanogos Singers*. These were submitted as part of the Timpanogos Arts Foundation requests. He noted that the committee was pleased with the presentation and felt comfortable supporting the programs. Based on their review, the committee recommended partial funding for the request.
- *Timpanogos Chamber Music*. This organization brings world-class musicians to American Fork and, although performances are typically held in smaller venues, they are known for presenting high-quality chamber music, often featuring string quartets and trios. Mr. Johnson noted that the organization has built a strong reputation for delivering excellent musical experiences to the community. The group requested \$12,000 in funding, and the committee recommended awarding \$8,000, representing approximately two-thirds of the requested amount.
- *Timpanogos Chorale*. This organization has operated under different names over the years and, until last year, functioned under the Harrington Center for the Arts umbrella. Mr. Johnson shared that during a prior presentation to the committee, the group performed live, which left a strong impression and demonstrated the quality of their work. Based on earlier discussions with the committee regarding project structure and transparency, the organization changed its approach this year by separating each planned concert into its own individual project request.

As a result, Timpanogos Chorale submitted 11 separate project requests. After review, the committee recommended fully funding 9 of those projects.

- American 250 Patriotic Concert
- Main Street Christmas Concert
- Library Christmas Concert
- Veterans Day Program,
- Spring Concert
- Library Concert
- Care Center performances held in both December and May
- Anthem for America program. These represented the projects the committee recommended for funding as part of Chorale's revised project-by-project approach.

Wasatch Music Alliance submitted two separate proposals. These included support for *Wasatch Winds* and the *Showband Jazz Band*. Mr. Johnson explained that these organizations provide opportunities for local musicians to perform in organized ensembles with experienced and dedicated participants, and the committee recommended funding for those requests. Finally, he noted that another project presented through Wasatch Music Alliance was the Steel Days Drone Show. He explained that this request had previously been submitted under Live American Fork in the prior year but was now being presented through Wasatch Music Alliance.

Mr. Johnson described the Steel Days Drone Show as a unique and popular community event that offers a different experience from traditional fireworks. He noted that the committee viewed it as exciting and worthwhile to continue supporting. While the request was for \$43,000, the recommendation was to fund \$30,000, with the understanding that organizers had flexibility in structuring the presentation and that some credit may be available due to issues experienced with the prior year's show.

Mr. Johnson then reviewed projects that were not recommended for funding, emphasizing that those decisions were not judgments on project quality but rather reflected limited funding, category balancing, community reach, and how broad projects served residents.

One example was the proposed Grove at Mary & Art Dye Park, envisioned as a quiet retreat space in the northeast wooded portion of the park with picnic seating and a nature-oriented atmosphere closer to home than traveling to American Fork Canyon. While the committee recognized the concept's appeal, concerns remained regarding environmental impacts and access considerations, and members felt those issues needed further development before funding.

Mr. Johnson also noted that the committee did not allocate funding this year for general park amenities such as trash cans, picnic tables, and similar improvements. He explained that the decision was primarily driven by limited available funding rather than opposition to those types of projects.

Mr. Johnson reviewed several projects that were not recommended for funding.

- *Aqua Climb* feature at the American Fork Recreation Center pool did not generate strong support or enthusiasm from the committee, and funding was not recommended this year, although members indicated it could receive future consideration.
- *Public Art* feature intended for the area near the bend at Main Street and approximately 200 East, envisioned as a gateway element introducing visitors to historic downtown American Fork. The committee viewed the location as promising and liked the concept; however, members felt the application lacked sufficient detail regarding the design, appearance, and overall project scope. As a result, they did not recommend funding until more complete information is available.
- *Literacy in Motion* requested an automated book sorting system. He noted that the committee liked the concept and recognized its potential to improve efficiency, reduce labor demands, and modernize library operations. However, the project carried a significant cost, approximately \$1 million or more, which influenced the committee's decision not to recommend funding at this time. The committee believed the City Council may have better options available, such as bonding, donations, or other funding sources that could more meaningfully support the project.
- *Alianza Venezolana Utah*, a nonprofit organization focused on supporting and promoting Latin American and Hispanic culture in Utah through community programs and cultural engagement. The proposal presented to the committee included expanding cultural programming through dance. Mr. Johnson noted that

the committee did not recommend funding this year—not because of opposition to the concept, but because the application lacked sufficient detail. He explained that information was submitted late, and there was uncertainty around the venue, location, and implementation plan. The committee felt the organization should further develop and clarify the proposal before returning for future consideration.

- December 2026 *Bethlehem Live Marketplace Stage Concert* and December 2026 *Live Angel Choir*.

Council Member Taylor returned to discussion of the Steel Days drone show and asked whether the City had explored alternatives to last year's vendor, given the significant delays and technical issues experienced during the event. Mr. Christensen responded that staff obtained quotes from four different companies and determined that the current provider remained the lowest-cost option. Mr. Christensen explained that the company is providing \$5,000 credit in response to last year's issues and is also offering an additional \$5,000 pyrotechnics package at no charge, pending approval from the Fire Department.

To address the prior technical failures, Mr. Christensen stated that the vendor returned during Steel Days and conducted testing from three separate locations throughout the park. Based on those tests, they provided recommendations and the plan is to launch from a different location to reduce the likelihood of repeating the connectivity and performance issues experienced previously.

Mayor Frost thanked the committee members and all applicants for their work throughout the PARC funding process. He noted that the process has become more refined over time and acknowledged that, although the presentation made it appear straightforward, he recognized the significant effort and time invested over several months. Mr. Johnson responded on behalf of the committee and said it had been a pleasure to serve. He noted that the committee represents a wide range of viewpoints but expressed appreciation for members' willingness to openly share opinions and still work toward consensus.

2. Discussion on park strips.

Mr. Rykert explained that staff had prepared several slides and supporting information to facilitate a discussion regarding park strips and sidewalks. He stated that staff were seeking Council direction on several code provisions that have created challenges in administration and enforcement. He reviewed the current language code governing park strip landscape maintenance, noting that the ordinance requires all park strips to be landscaped and maintained by the abutting property owner. Maintenance responsibilities include keeping park strips safe and well-maintained condition and removing trash, debris, noxious weeds, and other nuisances.

Mr. Rykert noted that staff would like to amend Section 12.12.030 to clarify maintenance responsibilities. The current language references only the "front of the premises," which has led to confusion in enforcement. Staff proposed replacing that language with "adjacent," thereby making clear that maintenance obligations apply to all sides of a property, including front, side, and rear park strips and sidewalk areas.

Council Member Carroll expressed support for the proposed clarification, stating that it would address a common problem where property owners fail to maintain areas that are

not directly visible from the front of their homes. She noted that properties backing onto public areas are often neglected because owners do not regularly see those locations.

Mr. Thompson presented an example from North County Boulevard, referred to by staff as the Autumn Crest park strip. He recalled helping install the original landscaping in the area and noted that the grass has since been replaced with rock landscaping. Using the location as an example, he explained that one of the recurring enforcement issues involves weeds originating on private residential property and growing beneath or through fences into adjacent park strips and sidewalk areas. He stated that staff frequently encounter questions regarding who is responsible for maintaining and removing those weeds when they originate from private property but impact public landscaping areas.

Council Member Carroll asked whether UDOT owned the park strip shown on the parcel map. Staff confirmed that UDOT owns the right-of-way, but maintenance of landscaping within the area is typically delegated to the city. Council Members discussed the difficulty of expecting adjacent homeowners to maintain weeds along fences bordering public sidewalks and park strips when they are not otherwise responsible for maintaining the public property. The Council generally agreed that, in this specific situation, maintenance responsibility should remain with the city.

Mr. Thompson explained that staff were seeking clarification regarding the application of the ordinance to properties where park strips and sidewalks about the rear or side of residential lots. He noted that while the ordinance assigns responsibility to the abutting property owner, questions arise when the area in question is located behind a wall or fence rather than along the front of the property.

Council Member John noted that maintenance issues involving weeds and park strips are common throughout the city, particularly in newer subdivisions where fences border sidewalks and landscaped areas. Staff explained that one example near Lakeshore was being maintained by an HOA or developer rather than the city. Council Member Hunter questioned why the city should assume responsibility for maintaining similar areas when adjacent homeowners are generally responsible for park strips elsewhere. Council Member Carroll responded that the challenge is determining who will maintain those areas if neither the City nor nearby property owners take responsibility.

Mr. Rykert stated that this question was at the heart of the issue staff was seeking to resolve. He explained that while the ordinance may place maintenance responsibility on abutting property owners, staff frequently encounter situations where those responsibilities are not being fulfilled. He asked whether, in those circumstances, the maintenance obligation should automatically fall to City staff or whether the City should continue to rely on enforcement of the property owner's responsibility. The discussion highlighted the need for clearer policy direction regarding maintenance expectations and enforcement for park strips and landscaped areas adjacent to residential properties.

Council Members and staff discussed the practical challenges of enforcing maintenance responsibilities for rear and side park strips. Council Member Carroll observed that the City must decide whether it is more effective to cite property owners or simply perform the maintenance. Council Member Hunter maintained that the City should not assume responsibility merely because property owners fail to maintain the area. Council Member

Taylor noted that these situations differ from traditional front-yard park strips and questioned whether homeowners would realistically maintain areas located behind their properties. Several Council Members acknowledged that many residents assume such areas belong to the City because they do not appear to be part of their property and were often installed by developers rather than homeowners. The discussion highlighted the tension between the City's legal expectations and the practical realities of maintenance and enforcement.

The Council and staff discussed the need to clarify code language to assist code enforcement staff when responding to complaints about neglected park strips adjacent to residential properties. Mr. Rykert and Mr. Kelly explained that the proposed code revisions are intended to make it clear that maintenance responsibilities apply to abutting properties, including those located behind homes. Council Member Hunter sought confirmation that the intent of both the existing and proposed code is for homeowners, not the city, to maintain these areas. Staff confirmed that this has been the intent of the ordinance and that the proposed changes are intended to strengthen that clarification. Council Member Carroll generally agreed but noted that situations involving state-owned rights-of-way, such as UDOT corridors, may not fit neatly within the same framework and could require separate consideration.

Council Member Taylor acknowledged the practical challenges of expecting homeowners to access and maintain narrow areas behind masonry fences and agreed that any approach presents difficulties. He noted that the City has previously faced complaints regarding weed-control practices and observed that maintenance efforts can create conflicts when residents believe their property has been damaged. He characterized the issue as a difficult tradeoff, with no simple solution for locations such as Autumn Crest, North County Boulevard, areas near Costco, and neighborhoods near the Boat Harbor, where similar conditions exist. The discussion focused on balancing maintenance expectations, enforcement practicality, and the risk of unintended impacts on private property.

Mr. Rykert and Mr. Thompson presented another example near 980 North and Art Dye Park where the City has historically maintained a park strip adjacent to private property. Staff indicated they were unable to locate any agreements or documentation explaining why the city assumed that responsibility and expressed a desire to align maintenance practices with the City Code. They suggested notifying affected property owners that future maintenance responsibilities would rest with them if that were the Council's intent.

Council Members discussed whether maintenance of certain park strips should be shifted from the city to adjacent homeowners. Council Member Hunter argued that taxpayer funds should not be used to maintain areas that can reasonably be maintained by property owners, particularly in light of potential tax increases. Council Member Taylor agreed in principle but emphasized the need for homeowner education before enforcement, noting that many residents may not realize they are responsible for the areas. Mayor Frost suggested that homeowners who assume maintenance responsibility could be given greater flexibility to landscape the park strips with trees, gardens, or other improvements. The discussion reflected general support for an education-first approach that clarifies homeowner responsibilities while allowing greater flexibility in the use of park strips.

Council Members discussed whether traditional park strips remain the best long-term design solution, particularly in rear-facing lots and along roadway corridors. Alternatives such as hard-scape treatments, wider sidewalks, reduced-width park strips, and tree wells were considered as ways to improve water conservation and reduce maintenance requirements while preserving pedestrian safety and visual appeal. Council Member Carroll emphasized the importance of maintaining buffers along higher-speed roads, while Council Member Hunter noted that alternative designs may achieve the same safety goals with less maintenance. The discussion also included a suggestion to consolidate park strip regulations into a single code section for clarity. Staff confirmed that current code places maintenance responsibility on the adjacent property owner, even when a sidewalk separates the property from the park strip.

Council Member Hunter suggested the City could support homeowners through beautification efforts, such as providing landscaping materials, while still maintaining that responsibility for the areas should remain with the adjacent property owners. He expressed concern that many rear-facing lots were developed without gates or practical access to the park strips, making maintenance more difficult. He suggested that future development standards could require rear access gates or other design features to ensure homeowners can reach and maintain adjacent areas. He emphasized that property owners should clearly understand that their maintenance responsibility extends to the roadway corridor.

Staff noted that future code amendments could require such access features in new developments and observed that similar maintenance expectations already exist in other neighborhoods where homeowners are successfully maintaining comparable areas despite limited access.

Council members emphasized the importance of applying park strip maintenance requirements consistently across the city. Council Member Hunter noted that residents who already maintain their adjacent areas would likely object if other neighborhoods received City-funded maintenance. Staff agreed that consistency would be important to avoid perceptions of unfair treatment. Council Member John asked whether the City could identify affected property owners and provide direct mailed notices in addition to broader public outreach. Staff indicated that such an effort would be possible but would require clear policy direction from the Council. Council Member Carroll observed that City maintenance could create its own challenges, including complaints about maintenance practices, and suggested that homeowner responsibility may ultimately be the more practical approach. The discussion reflected a general consensus in favor of educating property owners and consistently enforcing existing maintenance obligations rather than expanding City maintenance responsibilities.

The discussion turned to tree requirements within park strips. Staff clarified that current code prohibits new trees in park strips narrower than 8 feet, though existing nonconforming trees may remain. If such a tree is removed, however, it cannot be replaced under current standards. Council Member Hunter expressed support for maintaining tree-lined streets, noting their aesthetic value and community character. He observed that tree canopy is gradually diminishing because removed trees are not being replaced and questioned whether the city should continue allowing narrow park strips if trees are prohibited in them. Staff confirmed that current subdivision standards already

require an eight-foot park strip where trees are anticipated. They noted that developers have sometimes objected to the requirement because it consumes developable space, but the standard was established to ensure adequate room for trees and to avoid future conflicts with sidewalks, curbs, and utilities.

Brady McNaughton, the city Arborist suggested revisiting the City's current eight-foot minimum park strip standard for trees. He proposed creating two classifications: park strips between 4 and 8 feet wide and park strips 8 feet or wider. Under his proposal, trees could be permitted in 4-to-8-foot park strips if limited to specific compact tree species with growth habits that minimize conflicts with sidewalks, curbs, and other infrastructure. He emphasized that trees should not be allowed in park strips narrower than four feet due to the long-term maintenance and infrastructure issues they create.

Mr. Bunker sought clarification and summarized the proposal as prohibiting trees in park strips 4 feet wide or less while allowing certain approved tree species in park strips wider than 4 feet. The discussion focused on balancing the desire to preserve tree-lined streets with the need to reduce future infrastructure conflicts and maintenance costs.

Council Member John asked whether a permitting process should be required for all park strip tree plantings or only for trees proposed in park strips narrower than eight feet. Mr. McNaughton suggested that a permitting process for all park strip trees could help ensure compliance with City standards, prevent unauthorized plantings, and allow staff to enforce an approved tree list before trees are installed. He noted that such a process would reduce future conflicts with infrastructure and avoid situations where noncompliant trees remain undetected for years before enforcement issues arise.

Mr. McNaughton further explained that the City could establish a list of approved tree species based on recommendations from neighboring cities and Utah State University resources, with an emphasis on Utah-adapted and drought-tolerant species.

Mr. Rykert and Mr. Bunker clarified that the proposed tree standards would apply only to park strips wider than 4 feet, with larger tree species prohibited in narrower park strips. Mr. McNaughton confirmed that trees planted in park strips between 4 and 8 feet wide would be limited to approved compact species suitable for constrained planting areas.

Mr. Bunker then raised concerns about how the proposed flexibility could affect new developments. He noted that developers, rather than future homeowners, determine park strip widths during the subdivision design process and may be incentivized to reduce park strip sizes to maximize developable land. He cautioned that without a clear minimum standard, developers would likely propose the narrowest allowable park strips, potentially undermining the City's long-term streetscape and tree canopy goals. The discussion highlighted the need to balance flexibility in tree planting standards with clear development requirements that preserve adequate space for trees and public infrastructure.

The discussion clarified that the proposed tree standards were primarily intended to address existing developments rather than change current subdivision requirements. Council Member Carroll noted that most existing park strips are already less than 8 feet wide, making the discussion particularly relevant to replacement trees in established

neighborhoods. Council Member John observed that under current code, once a tree is removed from a noncompliant park strip, it generally cannot be replaced.

Council Members discussed the challenges associated with narrow park strips and street tree placement. Council Member Hunter expressed concern that allowing very narrow park strips in new developments could lead to long-term maintenance and infrastructure issues and suggested that curb-and-gutter designs may be more appropriate in some residential areas. Council Member Carroll noted that trees planted in front yards can still create sidewalk damage through root growth. The discussion focused on balancing tree canopy preservation with standards that minimize future conflicts with sidewalks and other public infrastructure.

The discussion focused on how the park strip and tree requirements should be applied in future developments. Staff noted that current code already establishes minimum separation distances between trees and nearby infrastructure. Mr. O'Brien clarified that recent state law prevents cities from requiring developers to install trees in residential park strips, although developers may choose to do so voluntarily as part of their subdivision design.

Council members and staff discussed whether park strip requirements should vary based on roadway type. Mr. Bunker suggested that local residential streets could potentially use curb-and-gutter designs without traditional park strips, while collector and arterial roads would continue to require landscaped buffers for pedestrian safety, snow storage, and separation from traffic. Council Member John noted that wider roads also create additional snow storage needs. Staff further discussed whether standards should be tied to roadway classification rather than speed limits alone, recognizing that some wide local roads function similarly to higher-speed streets and may still benefit from a landscaped buffer between sidewalks and traffic lanes. The discussion centered on creating flexible design standards that account for safety, infrastructure needs, and changing state requirements.

The discussion focused on preserving the character and benefits of tree-lined streets while balancing infrastructure constraints. Staff noted that some neighborhoods successfully accommodate street trees through curb, gutter, and sidewalk configurations with trees located in front yards rather than park strips. Council Member Hunter expressed strong support for maintaining tree-lined streets and emphasized that he did not want to lose the aesthetic value that mature trees provide to neighborhoods.

A discussion followed regarding the meaning of "urban canopy." Council Member Hunter distinguished between general tree coverage and the large, arching tree canopy found on streets such as 100 East, which he described as a defining feature of the corridor. Mr. McNaughton acknowledged that while smaller approved tree species can contribute to the City's urban canopy goals, they cannot recreate the same canopy effect as larger trees. Staff noted that achieving the traditional tree-lined street appearance requires larger trees and wider park strips, but those trees can also create long-term conflicts with sidewalks and other infrastructure. Mr. Bird concluded that maintaining the iconic canopy effect associated with mature tree-lined streets would likely require preserving or reinforcing park strip widths of eight feet or greater.

Council Member Hunter expressed concern that the city may be gradually losing its tree canopy by removing trees and not replacing them. Referring to recent tree removals along 100 East, he suggested that when trees must be removed due to infrastructure conflicts, the city should consider replanting appropriate replacement trees rather than eliminating them altogether. Staff explained that some removals were undertaken in coordination with property owners because of sidewalk damage and planned Safe Routes to School improvements.

The discussion then shifted to the suitability of tree species for narrower park strips. Mayor Frost cautioned that approved tree lists should carefully consider mature tree size, canopy spread and required clearances above sidewalks and roadways. He noted that larger trees planted in constrained spaces can create ongoing maintenance and pedestrian clearance issues. Mr. McNaughton responded that the draft list under consideration was not final and was largely composed of columnar tree varieties selected specifically for their compact growth habits, with many reaching a maximum width of approximately ten feet. The discussion highlighted the desire to preserve tree coverage and neighborhood character while ensuring that future tree plantings are compatible with available space and infrastructure constraints.

Council Member Carroll asked staff to explain the broader purpose of park strips beyond tree planting. Mr. O'Brien responded that park strips serve multiple functions, including accommodating utilities and contributing to streetscape design and community aesthetics. Staff further explained that park strips also provide space for public infrastructure such as streetlights, fire hydrants, utility meters, and other facilities, helping keep those elements out of sidewalks and private yards. The discussion highlighted the tradeoffs between preserving a traditional tree-lined streetscape, accommodating public infrastructure, and reducing maintenance and infrastructure conflicts.

Council Members discussed how infrastructure and landscaping would be accommodated if curb-and-gutter designs were used in place of traditional park strips. Staff explained that features such as streetlights and landscaping could be relocated to front yards or incorporated into wider sidewalks and alternative streetscape designs. The discussion also addressed a potential tree permitting process. Council Member John supported permits as a way to provide clarity and improve enforcement of tree standards, while Mayor Frost expressed concern about the staff time and resources required to administer and inspect a large number of permit requests. The discussion highlighted the balance between enforceable tree standards and administrative practicality.

The discussion focused on the practicality of a tree permitting process. Staff noted that permit requests from existing homeowners would likely be infrequent, while most of the tree reviews could occur during the development approval process. Council and staff discussed incorporating tree standards and approved species lists into development planning to ensure compliance while minimizing administrative burdens.

The discussion shifted to tree replacement policies associated with future capital improvement projects. Staff explained that water, sewer, stormwater, sidewalk, and curb-and-gutter projects will require the removal of some existing park strip trees, particularly along corridors such as 100 East. Staff sought Council direction on whether removed trees should be replaced in kind, relocated to private property, or compensated through a

cost-to-cure payment to homeowners. Staff estimated replacement costs at approximately \$500 per tree, including installation. The discussion highlighted the practical challenges of preserving existing trees during infrastructure projects, as many trees are located directly above utility services or have contributed to sidewalk and curb damage that necessitates replacement.

Council Members and staff discussed options for addressing tree removals associated with infrastructure projects. Staff explained that widening park strips or relocating sidewalks would be difficult due to existing utility conflicts. The discussion focused on whether homeowners should receive a replacement tree or a cost-to-cure payment when trees are removed. Some members favored a standardized payment approach for simplicity and consistency, while others supported allowing homeowners to choose between a replacement tree and compensation. Staff noted that flexibility may help address individual homeowner preferences and reduce frustration during project implementation.

Staff also reviewed several conceptual street cross-sections considered as part of the code update process, including options with shared-use paths, wider sidewalks, reduced park strips, and combination curb-and-gutter designs. The concepts included small landscape buffers to accommodate infrastructure such as streetlights, fire hydrants, and utility equipment while reducing maintenance obligations and preserving pedestrian functionality. The discussion focused on potential alternatives to traditional park strips and how future streetscapes could balance infrastructure needs, landscaping, and maintenance considerations.

Mr. Hunter presented several conceptual street design options, including reduced-width park strips, shared-use paths, buffered bike lanes, and curb-and-gutter configurations, and asked for Council input on how future roadway projects should balance parking, pedestrian facilities, bicycle infrastructure, and landscaping. Discussion included the potential elimination of some park strips to accommodate bike lanes or trails while maintaining on-street parking. Mayor Frost noted that the topic involved numerous design alternatives and suggested deferring the broader policy discussion to a future work session so the Council could focus on the immediate park strip maintenance and tree-related issues. Staff agreed to bring the design options back for more detailed discussion at a later meeting.

Mayor Frost concluded the discussion by requesting preliminary Council direction on the park strip and tree-related issues so staff could continue refining options and bring recommendations back for further consideration. Recognizing time constraints and upcoming scheduling commitments for Council Members Taylor and Hunter, he suggested postponing the broader design discussion to a future work session and moved the meeting to the next agenda item regarding project scope of the Fitness Center.

3. Discussion on the scope of project for the Fitness Center.

Mr. Rykert introduced a discussion on proposed improvements to the Fitness Center, explaining that the presentation was based on prior Council feedback and collaboration among City staff. Staff stated that the primary goals are to improve the level of service for residents, increase memberships and revenue, and better utilize the existing facility while maintaining a focus on serving American Fork residents first. They emphasized

that the recommendations are based on industry trends, operational data, facility usage statistics, and ongoing evaluations of programs, membership patterns, resident participation, and financial performance. He presented two potential improvement options for Council consideration and requested direction on which concepts should be explored further.

Strategic Goals of Improvements

- Option A desired options
 - Locker room renovation
 - New building weight room addition – above ground
 - Gym swap
 - Upstairs: basketball and pickleball programs
 - Downstairs: Gymnastics (decreasing the program)
 - The wellness zone
 - Temporary parking

Mr. Rykert reviewed the potential benefits and limitations of the proposed Fitness Center improvements, explaining that the concepts are intended to maximize membership growth, facility usage, and resident engagement within the available budget. He noted that the proposal would not address significant pool repair needs and could require reducing gymnastics program space, which would have a corresponding impact on program revenue. The expectation is that any lost revenue could be offset through increased membership and more efficient use of repurposed facility space. He emphasized that the recommendations are focused on achieving the greatest overall benefit from the available funding while improving utilization of the existing facility.

Council Member Hunter asked about the financial performance of the Fitness Center. Mr. Rykert reported that annual revenue has historically ranged from approximately \$130,000 to \$175,000 but has trended downward over the past five years. He explained that gymnastics operates as an in-house recreation program, with the city collecting registration fees, employing instructors, and providing equipment.

In discussing the proposed facility changes, staff explained that gymnastics would not be eliminated entirely but would likely be relocated to a smaller space. The revised program would focus on introductory and youth-level instruction, utilizing the existing X-Train room and accommodating activities such as tumbling, balance beam, and bars for younger participants. He indicated that once participants reach higher skill levels, the intent would be for them to transition to private gymnastics providers. The discussion focused on how to retain youth gymnastics offering while repurposing space within the Fitness Center and mitigating the loss of program revenue.

Council Member Hunter asked whether reducing gymnastics capacity could create opportunities to increase program fees due to limited availability. Mr. Rykert responded that the City's recreation programs are intentionally priced below private-sector offerings because the goal is to provide introductory and recreational opportunities rather than compete directly with private gyms. He noted that fees are reviewed regularly and that recent efforts to widen the gap between resident and non-resident rates have produced the expected results, increased resident participation while reduced non-resident usage. They acknowledged that the shift toward more resident-focused pricing has contributed to

some of the recent decline in program revenue but stated that the long-term goal is to replace nonresident participation with increased resident enrollment.

- Option B
 - Locker room renovation
 - Gym swap
 - Upstairs: Larger weight room renovation with more equipment
 - Downstairs: Gymnastics or keep the same
 - Pool repairs
 - Wellness zone
 - Temporary parking

Mr. Rykert explained that repurposing gymnastics space into an expanded fitness area is a strategic effort to increase overall facility usage and membership revenue. He believes that a larger, more modern, and more visible weight room would attract additional members and daily users, helping offset revenue lost from scaling back the gymnastics program. He acknowledged that there is some uncertainty in those projections, as the gymnastics program is currently successful and generates consistent revenue. However, the analysis indicates that gymnastics does not maximize the use of the space throughout the day, whereas an expanded fitness area could serve a larger number of residents for more hours each day and better align with the facility's long-term goals.

Council Member Taylor asked how membership pricing affects participation in gymnastics and tumbling programs. Mr. Rykert explained that participants are not required to hold a Fitness Center membership but pay different rates based on residency and membership status, with resident members receiving the lowest fees and nonresident nonmembers paying the highest rates. Council Member Hunter asked whether similar membership discounts apply to other recreation programs. Mr. Rykert clarified that outdoor sports programs such as basketball, soccer, flag football, and track use resident and nonresident pricing but do not provide additional discounts based on Fitness Center membership status.

Council Member Hunter asked whether offering additional recreation program discounts to Fitness Center members could help drive membership growth. Mr. Rykert indicated that they have considered providing a percentage discount on recreation programs for Fitness Center members as a way to encourage participation and increase memberships. Council Member Hunter expressed support for strategies that create incentives for residents to purchase memberships.

Mr. Rykert reviewed current gymnastics pricing, noting the significant difference between resident member and non-resident non-member rates. He added that maintaining some level of gymnastics programming remains part of the proposal and that relocating the program rather than eliminating it is a key component of the strategy. He stated that staff believes moving gymnastics out of the upstairs space would allow the Fitness Center expansion to achieve the desired impact on memberships and facility utilization, although additional feedback may be needed as the concept is further developed.

Council Member Taylor asked which option Mr. Rykert would recommend if required to make a decision immediately. Mr. Rykert responded that Option A would have the

greatest impact on operations, resident service, membership growth, and revenue generation. He acknowledged, however, that the City still faces significant pool repair needs that would require future funding regardless of which option is selected.

Council Member Hunter then asked for additional details regarding the scope of construction required to implement the proposed improvements. Mr. Rykert explained that the proposal includes constructing a new locker room addition designed around family changing areas and gender-neutral wet and dry spaces, addressing one of the most common concerns raised by Fitness Center users. The concept would utilize a steel-framed, insulated structure connected to the existing facility, similar to the connection used for the pool bubble.

Council Member Hunter expressed concern about the long-term value of the proposed addition, questioning whether it would function as a meaningful phase of a future facility expansion or merely serve as a temporary solution. He stated that if the City invests significant funds in improvements, he will prefer those investments to be incorporated into a long-term expansion strategy rather than become obsolete within a few decades. Mr. Rykert acknowledged the concern and indicated that, in their view, the City will likely need to pursue more substantial facility improvements or expansion within the next 20 years regardless of the option selected.

Council Member Hunter emphasized that restroom improvements are a clear need but questioned whether adding significant new square footage for fitness equipment represents the best long-term use of funds. He expressed concern that constructing an addition primarily to relocating existing weight equipment may not align with a broader vision for the facility's future and sought guidance on whether the proposed expansion would provide lasting value beyond addressing immediate space constraints.

Council Member John sought clarification regarding utilization of the Fitness Center weight room, and staff explained that while the space is not full at all hours, it is the most heavily used area in the facility and is currently overcrowded relative to its size. Mr. Rykert indicated that limited space may be discouraging some potential users from utilizing the facility.

Council Member Hunter reiterated his concern that any expansion should align with the facility's long-term future and questioned whether existing space, such as the gymnastics area, could be repurposed before constructing a new addition. Mr. Rykert reviewed the relative sizes of the existing fitness and gymnastics spaces and noted that Option B would rely more heavily on reallocating existing space rather than constructing a substantial addition.

Mr. Bunker observed that if the Council's primary concern is ensuring future flexibility, Option B may better align with that objective because it avoids building a facility component that may not fit into a future comprehensive redevelopment. Council Member Carroll expressed support for Option B, noting that significant aquatic facility repairs remain unresolved and cautioning against delaying those investments further, particularly given the pool's importance to overall facility usage and revenue generation.

Council Member Hunter asked whether the aquatic facilities generate significant revenue and whether additional investment in the pool area could create greater resident use and attendance. Mr. Rykert responded that pools are generally expensive to operate and rarely serve as strong revenue generators. They explained that the competition pool is heavily programmed and well utilized but is designed primarily for lap swimming, water aerobics, and organized programs rather than family recreation. He noted that increasing open swimming time would likely reduce program revenue without generating equivalent replacement income.

Council Member Hunter referenced resident concerns about limited public access due to swim team and program use and questioned whether future investments could make the facility more appealing to families. Council Member Carroll asked whether staff would prefer to delay certain improvements in favor of a more substantial aquatic facility enhancement. Mr. Rykert clarified that the proposed pool expenditures are primarily maintenance and rehabilitation projects—including replastering the competition pool, repairing the leisure pool, replacing the bubble liner, and upgrading pool deck concrete and related infrastructure—and are intended to preserve the existing facility rather than transform it into a new recreational attraction.

Council Member Carroll asked whether staff would prefer to postpone the proposed pool repairs in anticipation of a future pool reconstruction or major redesign. Mr. Rykert responded that the repairs cannot reasonably be deferred and will need to be completed within the next few years to keep the facility operational. He explained that the proposed pool improvements are necessary maintenance projects rather than enhancements that would significantly increase attendance or revenue.

Mr. Rykert contrasted those maintenance needs with Option A, which is intended to create a more visible and immediate impact for residents through expanded fitness amenities and increased facility capacity. Mr. Bird noted that the Council is essentially balancing two priorities: investing limited resources in critical maintenance that preserves existing facilities or directing funds toward improvements that residents can more readily see, use, and experience. The discussion highlighted the tradeoff between maintaining aging infrastructure and making investments that could generate greater participation and perceived value for residents.

Discussion ensued in regard to which high schools use the pool for practice and what is the revenue from the school district and the trade-off being that the city uses the school for their recreation programs like basketball. Mayor Frost noted that broader questions regarding swim team usage and facility programming may extend beyond the scope of the current Fitness Center improvement discussion unless they directly affect facility capacity. He suggested those issues could be addressed separately with the relevant user groups. He also acknowledged that Council Member Holley may have additional ideas regarding future facility expansion.

Additionally, Mayor Frost expressed support for reviewing agreements and rates with partner organizations to ensure the value provided by the city is appropriately reflected in the benefits and compensation received in return, emphasizing the importance of maintaining an equitable arrangement.

Council Member Holley requested a more detailed cost breakdown for each proposed Fitness Center option, including major components such as parking improvements, locker room renovations, and other project elements. He indicated that understanding the individual costs would help the Council better evaluate the alternatives and priorities within the overall project budget. He also noted that the proposals appeared to involve approximately \$4 million in improvements and suggested that a more itemized estimate would assist the Council in determining how best to allocate those funds.

Mr. Rykert explained that the two Fitness Center concepts were developed around a maximum budget of approximately \$4 million and represent alternative approaches rather than a package of improvements that could all be completed simultaneously. He noted that the next step, if directed by the Council, would be to obtain more detailed design work and cost estimates, as architects had only provided preliminary conceptual pricing at this stage.

Council Member Holley indicated that he generally favored Option B because it avoids constructing a new standalone addition that may not fit into the facility's long-term future. However, he expressed concerns about relocating gymnastics to the lower level of the Fitness Center. He noted that the current gymnastics area benefits from large open spaces and high ceilings, whereas the proposed downstairs location is smaller, narrower, and has lower ceilings. Based on his observations of gymnastics facilities, he questioned whether the program could continue to operate successfully in the proposed space.

Mr. Rykert acknowledged those concerns and explained that Option B would require a significant change in the gymnastics program. Rather than continuing to offer a full gymnastics experience, the program would shift toward introductory tumbling and youth instruction focused primarily on children age 10 and under. He agreed that the program would look and feel different under that model and would no longer provide the same level of gymnastics programming currently offered in the existing space.

Council Member John asked how much the current gymnastics program serves younger recreational participants versus older or more advanced gymnasts. Mr. Rykert explained that relocating the program to a smaller space would likely eliminate approximately 40 percent of the existing program because higher-level activities and progression opportunities could no longer be accommodated. Mr. Rykert acknowledged that the program's long-standing success is tied in part to participants being able to advance through multiple levels, and that scaling it back would reduce some of that appeal. However, he noted that staff's strategic goals are focused on improving cost recovery, increasing revenue, and expanding opportunities for broader resident use, which is why expanding fitness space remains attractive from an operational perspective.

Council Member Holley expressed mixed views on the proposal. While he supported the concept of expanding fitness facilities and recognized the demand for additional weight room space, he remained concerned about constructing a new standalone addition attached to the Recreation Center. He suggested that if a separate fitness building were pursued, it might be more appropriate to locate it elsewhere on the site rather than attaching it to the existing facility and reducing parking. He reiterated his concern that a detached addition could become obsolete if the Recreation Center undergoes a major

redevelopment in the future and questioned whether it represents the best long-term investment strategy.

Council Member Hunter expressed concern about relying on future revenues to fund major pool repairs, noting that the City cannot assume a larger facility expansion will occur within the next few years. He stated that preserving and repairing the existing aquatic facilities should take priority over adding new fitness space, as allowing the pools to deteriorate further is not a viable option.

Council Member Carroll agreed, expressing hesitation about using reserve funds for improvements that rely on uncertain future revenue growth. In response, Mayor Frost asked staff to explain the proposed financing plan. Ms. Montoya clarified that the approximately \$4 million project would be funded entirely by General Fund reserves and would not affect the City's balanced operating budget. She explained that the expenditure would reduce reserve levels from roughly 35% of annual revenues to about 25 percent, with the expectation that reserves would gradually be rebuilt through conservative budgeting and future excess revenues.

Following the explanation, Council Member Hunter sought clarification on Option B, asking whether it would preserve the existing gymnastics program location while addressing restroom renovations, fitness center improvements, and pool repairs. He also questioned whether Option B would still utilize most or all of the available \$4 million budget despite taking a more conservative approach to facility expansion.

Council Member Carroll asked for clarification regarding the proposed "Wellness Zone." Mr. Rykert explained that the concept would repurpose space currently used for a preschool program into a dedicated wellness area featuring activities such as Pilates, hot yoga, and other fitness trends. He stated that creating a more intentional and specialized space could improve the member experience and help attract additional participation.

The discussion also addressed proposed temporary parking improvements. Mr. Rykert explained that the concept would utilize underused space near the relocated pony field to create additional parking at a relatively low cost, estimated at approximately \$50,000. He noted that parking shortages are one of the most common complaints from Fitness Center users, and the additional spaces would help address current demand while providing a near-term solution to parking challenges.

Mayor Frost asked the Council for directions regarding the proposed project budget and preferred option. Council Member Hunter stated that he favored Option B and emphasized that available funds should be directed toward essential needs rather than discretionary improvements. He identified pool repairs and locker room renovations as the highest priorities and expressed a desire to keep the total project cost below \$4 million if possible. Council Members Holley and John agreed, indicating their support for Option B and prioritizing the improvements of the pool and locker room. Based on the discussion, staff concluded that the Council's preference was to move forward with refining Option B.

Council Member Clark excused to leave at 6:13 p.m.

Mr. Bunker stated that staff would develop more detailed designs and cost estimates, with the goal of reducing the overall project cost where possible while preserving the key project elements identified by the Council. Mr. Rykert added that staff would proceed with additional design work and obtain more concrete cost information for future Council consideration.

Council Member Hunter excused to leave at 6:35 pm

Council Member Holley logged off electronically

4. Review of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027 budget book.

Ms. Montoya provided an overview of the proposed budget, directing Council members to the introductory sections of the budget document, which outline the strategic goals established during the February budget workshop. She explained that the budget recommendations were developed to support Council priorities, including growth planning, transportation connectivity, and infrastructure improvements.

Staff reviewed the citywide budget summary, noting total proposed expenditures of approximately \$208.9 million across all funds. She highlighted the major expenditure categories, explaining that capital projects represent the largest portion of the budget, followed by operating expenses, personnel costs, and debt service.

Ms. Montoya also reviewed the proposed staffing changes for the upcoming fiscal year, which include an increase of 16.82 full-time equivalent positions. The majority of those additions are within public safety, particularly the Fire Department. The most significant request is for nine new personnel positions to staff the planned fire station on the west side of the city, including three captains, three lieutenants, and three firefighter-paramedics. Staff emphasized that these recommendations align with the Council's previously identified public safety priorities and anticipated service demands associated with continued growth.

Ms. Montoya continued her review of the proposed staffing increases, explaining that the Fire Department's request includes additional part-time personnel to support ambulance transport and shift coverage, with some of those costs expected to be offset by transport revenue. The Police Department is requesting two additional officers, a crossing guard, and a crossing guard supervisor. Administrative services include a request for a full-time accountant and part-time communications support. Parks, Cemetery, and other departments are requesting seasonal personnel, with some Parks staffing costs offset by bringing landscaping services in-house rather than contracting them out. Staff also recommended eliminating a previously vacant building inspector position rather than filling it.

Turning to the General Fund budget, Ms. Montoya explained that the proposed operating budget is balanced, with revenues matching expenditures as required by state law and audit standards. She clarified that the proposed \$4 million Fitness Center project is not funded through ongoing revenues but would instead be paid from General Fund reserves as a one-time capital expenditure. She emphasized that City policy is to use reserves for capital projects rather than ongoing operational expenses and that the operating budget remains balanced independent of the Fitness Center proposal.

Council Member Carroll asked for clarification on how reserve funds are treated within the budget, noting that reserves are not counted as operating revenue when balancing the budget. Ms. Montoya confirmed that reserve spending is treated as a reduction in the City's cash balance rather than as revenue and is therefore separate from the requirement that recurring revenues equal recurring expenditures.

Mr. Bunker added that maintaining this distinction is important from a financial management perspective. He explained that the City's financial advisor has cautioned against using one-time reserve funds to support ongoing operating expenses because doing so could negatively affect the City's creditworthiness. He noted that American Fork currently maintains an excellent bond rating, effectively at the AAA level for general obligation debt, and that using reserves for recurring expenses could result in a credit downgrade. He emphasized that this is one of the primary reasons the city restricts reserve spending on one-time capital projects rather than ongoing operational costs.

Ms. Montoya emphasized the importance of maintaining the City's strong bond rating, noting that higher credit ratings result in lower borrowing costs and can save the city millions of dollars over time. She then reviewed General Fund expenditures by function, highlighting that public safety now accounts for approximately 62% of General Fund spending, largely due to the addition of the new fire station and associated personnel costs. Other major categories include community services, general services, public works, and development services.

Staff also discussed the proposed property tax increase included in the budget. Ms. Montoya explained that the budget document identifies the specific expenditure that would be funded by the additional tax revenue, providing transparency regarding how those funds would be used. Mr. Bunker clarified that because the tax increase has not yet been approved through the Truth-in-Taxation process, those revenues and expenditures are segregated within the budget. As a result, the city can adopt an interim budget in June to authorize normal operations, but expenditures tied to the proposed tax increase cannot occur until the Truth-in-Taxation process is completed and the Council adopts a final budget, anticipated in August.

Council Member John confirmed that the Council must adopt a final budget in August regardless of whether the proposed property tax increase is approved. Ms. Montoya responded that all required notices, advertisements, and public disclosures related to the proposed tax increase have been completed and included in the budget materials.

Ms. Montoya explained that the proposed property tax increase is intended primarily to help fund staffing and operations for the new fire station. The total annual cost associated with the station is approximately \$1.4 million, while the proposed tax increase would generate only about \$600,000, with the remaining costs absorbed through existing revenues, budget adjustments, and operational efficiencies. Ms. Montoya emphasized that staff have carefully reviewed expenditure and viewed the tax increase as a last resort measure necessary to address a structural funding gap created by public safety needs.

Ms. Montoya also outlined a proposed organizational change that would move street and roads operations into a separate secondary General Fund account. The change is intended to improve transparency by consolidating roadway maintenance, repairs, and

improvements into a single budget area while continuing to account for new road construction through impact fees. She noted that the approach is consistent with practices used by other municipalities and has been reviewed and approved by the City's auditors. Increased transportation-related revenues, including Class C Road funds and transportation sales tax revenues, have enabled the City to shift roadway operating costs into this separate fund, freeing additional General Fund resources to support public safety priorities.

Finally, she noted that the budget remains tentative and that several updates are still forthcoming, including PARC Tax project allocations, a separate five-year capital improvement plan, and potential personnel cost adjustments. She encouraged Council members and residents to review the additional budget information available on the City's website and advised that the Council would reconvene on June 9 to consider adopting the interim budget and set the Truth-in-Taxation hearing.

Mr. Bunker expressed appreciation for Ms. Montoya's extensive work in preparing the budget, noting that the process had been particularly challenging and required significant time and effort. He emphasized that staff do not take a proposed tax increase lightly and views it as a measure of last resort.

Mr. Bunker explained that many local governments are facing similar financial pressures and that American Fork is not immune to rising costs. He reiterated that staffing and operating the new Fire Station 53 remains a critical priority for the city. He stated that staff carefully reviewed every department, line item, and operational expense in an effort to reduce costs before proposing any tax increase. Although the annual cost of operating the station is approximately \$1.4 million, the proposed tax increase would fund only about \$600,000 of that amount, with the remainder absorbed through existing revenues and budget reductions elsewhere. He emphasized that staff believe the proposed budget is responsible and reflects every reasonable effort to minimize the impact on residents while still meeting the City's public safety needs.

~~5. Discussion on external Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).~~

6. Discussion on updates to the General Fee Schedule.

Ms. Montoya reviewed proposed schedule changes and noted that the Senior Center membership fee would increase from \$12 to \$15 annually. Council Member Carroll asked what benefits members receive. Mr. Rykert explained that membership provides access to free programs and helps manage distribution of donated food and meal opportunities, including contributions from local businesses and organizations. The membership model is intended to support Senior Center services while preventing the program from functioning primarily as a food distribution site.

Council Member John observed that the proposal increased resident membership fees but did not include a corresponding increase for nonresident memberships, which are currently \$36 annually. Consistent with the City's broader effort to prioritize services for residents, he suggested increasing the non-resident fee by a similar amount. Staff indicated that a nonresident fee increase could be incorporated, with discussion centering on maintaining a comparable differential between resident and nonresident rates.

Council Member John also commented on the high level of participation at the Senior Center, noting that attendance is frequently at capacity and that programs are well utilized throughout the week. The Council generally supported reviewing the nonresident fee structure to ensure it remains aligned with the City's resident-first service philosophy.

Staff reviewed several proposed fee adjustments. Council Member Carroll asked about a sewer-related fee increase, and staff explained that the charge is a direct pass-through of fees adopted by the Timpanogos Special Service District (TSSD), with the city collecting and remitting the exact amount to the district.

Council Member John noted that North Pointe Special Service District had recently approved a modest rate increase to strengthen reserves and support future bonding capacity, emphasizing the importance of maintaining adequate reserves for infrastructure financing.

Ms. Montoya then discussed a proposed increase to the construction water meter replacement deposit. The adjustment reflects the rising cost of replacing lost or damaged meters and is intended solely to recover actual replacement costs. Finally, staff proposed a new streetlight activation fee to recover charges imposed by Rocky Mountain Power when new streetlights are energized. Mr. Kelly explained that developers currently pay consultant and installation costs but that the utility's activation charge is not currently reflected in the City's fee schedule, making the proposed fee a cost-recovery measure rather than a revenue-generating increase.

Ms. Montoya reviewed several proposed development-related fee updates, including the addition of storm drain hydraulic model review fees and clarification of site inspection and SWPPP (Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan) inspection fees. Staff explained that many of these inspections are already being carried out, but the fees have not been clearly identified in the City's fee schedule.

Mr. Kelly explained that the proposed residential SWPPP inspection fee is intended to address a recent issue involving a homebuilder who refused to pay inspection charges after construction had begun. He noted that recent state legislation has reduced municipalities' enforcement leverage in some situations, making it more difficult to recover inspection costs after this fact. To address this issue, staff proposed collecting the inspection fee upfront for single-family residential construction projects. The proposed fee was benchmarked against neighboring communities and set at a comparatively lower level, with the intent of recovering actual inspection costs while ensuring developers and builders pay for the services they receive. Mr. Kelly indicated the fee would be reviewed annually to confirm it remains aligned with the City's actual costs.

Ms. Montoya reviewed proposed utility fee adjustments, including new boundary line adjustment fees and a proposed \$2 per month reduction in the city sewer fee. She explained that sewer reserves are currently strong enough to support the reduction and that staff wanted to offset other utility increases where possible. She emphasized that sewer, storm drain, and sanitation funds are accounted for separately, but the City is trying to be sensitive to the cumulative impact of fee changes on residents.

The discussion then turned to potential increases in sanitation tipping fees. Council Member John explained that North Pointe Special Service District recently approved a tipping fee increase, estimated to affect residents by roughly \$0.65 per month, in order to build reserves and maintain the financial metrics necessary to secure favorable revenue bond financing for upcoming capital projects. He noted that without stronger reserves and revenues, the district would face challenges obtaining reasonable bond rates.

Mr. Bunker asked to evaluate whether the city could temporarily absorb the increased disposal costs through existing sanitation reserves rather than immediately passing them on to residents. He suggested exploring a short-term approach, such as absorbing the increase through January, to allow additional time for evaluation. Ms. Montoya agreed to review the financial impact and bring back recommendations.

Council Member John further explained that the planned North Pointe financing would likely involve a relatively modest revenue bond of approximately \$15–20 million issued through Utah County. However, because the debt would be secured by district revenues rather than the County's general credit, the district must still maintain adequate reserves and revenue coverage ratios to qualify for favorable financing terms. The discussion highlighted the relationship between reserve levels, utility rates, and long-term infrastructure financing needs.

Ms. Montoya explained that while the sewer utility has sufficient reserves to support a temporary fee reduction, the sanitation fund does not maintain similarly large reserves, limiting the City's ability to absorb future cost increases indefinitely. She noted that staff expects an additional sewer-related contract increase from TSSD in January and will reevaluate utility rates at that time. She then highlighted the most significant utility adjustment in the budget: a proposed 12% culinary water rate increase, consistent with recommendations from the Bowen Collins water rate study. She explained that the increase has been incorporated into the budget projections and will be presented to the Council separately through a future resolution, along with the associated multi-year rate schedule.

Ms. Montoya also reviewed proposed fee increases for the Fitness Center and recreation programs. Mr. Rykert explained that the proposed methodology generally increases resident fees by 3% and non-resident fees by 5%, continuing the City's effort to prioritize residents while addressing rising operational costs. Some recreation programs, such as baseball, reflected different adjustments due to changes in the materials and equipment provided.

As the discussion concluded, Mayor Frost suggested that the proposed water rate increase be considered separately from the broader fee schedule because of its significance and direct impact on residents' utility bills. Staff agreed to bring the water rate proposal back as a standalone item for further discussion and review at a future meeting

7. Adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Stephanie Finau

Stephanie Finau
Deputy Recorder