

Minutes of the Salem City Council Meeting held on January 7, 2026, in the Salem City Council Chambers.

## **6:30PM WORK SESSION**

### **1. Agenda Item Discussion**

Mayor Christensen called to order the work session for January 7, 2026. City Manager Matt Marziale came to the podium to discuss agenda items seven, eight and nine.

**-Agenda Item # 7** – The UDOT agreement is to approve \$1,184,633.59 in additional Transportation Investment Program Funds from UDOT in order to finish the Salem Canal Trail project. These funds require Salem City to commit to a match of \$296,158.40. These funds will be re-allocated from two other projects, so it is net zero for us. It's just a matter of management of funds from one area to another.

**Agenda Item # 8** –Marziale is requesting approval of the Interlocal Agreement between Utah County and Salem City which is also needed to complete the Salem Canal Trail Project in regard to Loafer Mountain Parkway and Woodland Hills Drive. The agreement discusses payment of \$2.9 million that has been awarded for the construction of the trail project and the remaining \$7 million came from UDOT.

**Agenda Item # 9** - Kenny Seng Construction is requesting their final payment on the Salem Canal Trail project now that the project is complete. The change order proposed is just to ensure that we can pay the remainder of the bills for the project. The request to City Council for this agenda item is to approve paying \$30,044.39. These funds will then be recovered from the U-dot agreement (agenda item #7) or Utah County (Agenda Item # 8)

Chief Brad James came to the podium to present the discussion for agenda items thirteen and fourteen.

**Agenda Item # 13** – The Salem Ambulance Association is a volunteer organization that is led by Karen Boothe. Our bylaws state that they will hold a secret election each year to elect their officers. Chief James is recommending that we elect the officers as presented in the staff report with First Lieutenant as Lisa Horton, Second Lieutenant being James Ealey and the Secretary will be Layne Farley. The Training Officers are selected to be Kenneth Wright and Marcia Ealey and Historian/Activity Chairperson as Lori Farley.

**Agenda Item # 14** – Chief James presented the request for a drone to be purchased for the public safety departments. He proposed a contractual agreement that he feels will work for us. Chief James currently has \$11,000 in this budget year set aside for this. City Manager Matt Marziale will be presenting his suggestion for the remainder of the funds needed.

Officer Stones is a certified drone pilot so he would head up the piloting of the drone and then train one to two additional officers. The drone can be launched remotely by cell phone. Some drone use examples are search and rescue, visual search in the pond, and flying over crash sites within minutes of a reported incident. The proposed agreement includes receiving

an updated drone after 2.5 years with the latest technology so then the city would essentially own 2 drones within the agreed upon contract. The drone has 2.5 hours of battery life capability. It can also be used for Salem Days to provide live feed over the parade.

Chief James said that Salem is one of the last remaining city departments that has yet to add a drone. Councilperson De Graw had questions about the company supplying the drone. Axon is the company we are proposing to contract with. The cost of the drone on the market is \$20,000 so we are essentially getting the drone and support in the first year at the cost of the drone itself and then paying for additional support for the remainder of the 5-year contract. Additional uses of the drone for public works were mentioned by staff. Power Director Adam Clements mentioned that this drone would replace a service that the power department already uses each year which would provide us with cost saving in that area.

**Agenda Item # 15** – City Recorder/Finance Director Jeff Nielson briefly updated that we need to have the signers on our Salem City Alta Bank account updated with the change in mayoral leadership. This agenda item is to propose the approval of Mayor Cristy Simons, Jeff Nielson and City Treasurer Tammy Beck as the signers on the Alta Bank account for the city.

**Director Reports:**

Director's Reports were discussed briefly during work session as there was additional time left before the city council meeting was opened. See Director Report section below for individual reports.

**MEETING CONVENED AT:** 7:02 p.m.

**CONDUCTING:** Mayor Kurt L Christensen

**COUNCIL PRESENT:**

Mayor Kurt L Christensen  
Councilperson Kelly Peterson  
Councilperson Cristy Simons  
Councilperson Cynthia Deveraux Rees  
Councilperson Paul Taylor  
Councilperson Tim De Graw  
Mayor Cristy Simons  
Councilperson Craig Sacco  
Councilperson Delys Snyder

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Jeffrey Nielson, Finance/Recorder  
Chief Brad James, Police Chief  
Walter Bird, City Attorney  
Adam Clements, Electrical Dept.  
Matt Marziale, City Manager  
Steve Cox, Building Dept.  
John Bowcut, Fiber Dept.  
Lisa Webster, Planner  
James Thomas, Public Works Dept  
Bradey Wilde, City Engineer  
Jen Wright, Recreation Dept  
Megan Grover, Deputy Recorder

**OTHER PRESENT**

**Please See Attached Document at Bottom**

**1. VOLUNTEER MOTIVATIONAL/INSPIRATIONAL MESSAGE**

Resident Casey Bazil stated he would like to offer a motivational message in the form of a prayer.

**2. INVITATION TO SAY PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Kurt Christensen invited those who wish to participate, to stand and say the pledge of allegiance with him. He then led the pledge of allegiance to those who wanted to participate.

**3. YOUTH COUNCIL REPORT**

Alysa Chandler and Rowan Meagher from the Salem Youth Council came to the podium to update the Mayor and Council on the Amaryllis Project. They delivered 145 kits to senior citizens in the city a few weeks ago as a community outreach project. Also, on Christmas Eve, they set up luminaries at the cemetery which is an annual event that residents look forward to. Unfortunately, this year the wind did not cooperate and blew out the candles in the luminaries. As a result, the Youth Council plans to change to battery-powered lights next year. The next upcoming activity is the Seniors Dinner at the Salem Activity Center. Mayor

Christensen thanked the youth council members for their service and the fun activities they plan.

#### **4. SF/SALEM CHAMBER REPORT**

Kathleen Leavitt from the Spanish Fork/Salem Chamber of Commerce came to the podium for a few local updates. They have moved their office to a new location for the new year. It is now centrally located between Spanish Fork and Salem across from the Utah County Fairgrounds. The new address is 726 S Main Street. January 26<sup>th</sup> is the Chamber's annual awards gala and Kathleen invited all elected officials to attend that event. It will be held at 6:00 pm at the Amavi Event Venue on Spanish fork Main Street. Another event will be Bills and Bagels on Jan 31<sup>st</sup> and Feb 28<sup>th</sup> at 7:30am in the Nebo School District board room.

#### **5. ONE KIND ACT RECOGNITION**

Mayor Christensen turned the time over to Councilperson Rees to present the One Kind Act awardees. First, the Mayor and Council honored Salem Hills High School students including Senior Sophie Hansen, Junior Mason Standifird, and Sophomore Rowan Meagher (Youth Council member).

Next, One Kind Act awards were presented Salem Junior High School students Paisley Beddoes (8<sup>th</sup>) and Boe Wright (9<sup>th</sup>).

Last, Mayor Christensen and the City Council presented awards to Valley View Middle School students Amelia Christensen(6<sup>th</sup>) and Myles Gourley (7<sup>th</sup>).

The award winners received their certificates and a gift from the Mayor and Council and posed for a photo.

#### **6. PLANNING AND ZONING – APPOINTMENT OF KEVIN TAYLOR**

Mayor Kurt Christensen called Councilperson Elect Craig Sacco up to thank him and release him for his service on the Planning & Zoning Commission as he cannot hold two positions at one time. It is the Mayor's responsibility to fill those positions so Mayor Christensen has selected to appoint Kevin Taylor to replace Craig Sacco. Kevin will be a great addition to the Commission. He has twenty years of experience with Provo City Power and then an additional two years with Spanish Fork Power. He is also a small business owner in Salem City. Mayor Christensen expressed his excitement about him joining and is grateful to have someone with his level of knowledge. Mayor Christensen called for a motion for decision on the appointment of Kevin Taylor to the Salem Planning and Zoning Commission.

**MOTION BY:** Councilperson Peterson

**SECONDED BY:** Councilperson Taylor

**VOTE:** Councilperson Peterson; Aye, Councilperson Simons; Aye, Councilperson Rees; Aye, Councilperson Taylor; Aye, Councilperson De Graw; Aye (5 Ayes)

**7. DECISION: U-DOT FUNDING FOR SALEM CANAL MOD # 1**

City Manager Matt Marziale presented this decision request to the Mayor and Council. The request is to approve an agreement with U-DOT and accept \$1.1 million in funds to help pay the bills of the Salem Canal trail project. There are roughly two miles of the trail still waiting to be completed so that users from Salem to Payson will be able to use the trail continuously. In order to receive the funds from U-DOT, we must agree to pay \$296,158.40 from city funds for the project. Marziale asked Mayor Christensen and the City Council for their decision on the agreement and to accept the funds from U-DOT.

Mayor Christensen called for a motion to accept the agreement and to accept the funds from U-DOT.

**MOTION BY:** Councilperson Taylor

**SECONDED BY:** Councilperson Rees

**VOTE:** Councilperson Peterson; Aye, Councilperson Simons; Aye, Councilperson Rees; Aye, Councilperson Taylor; Aye, Councilperson De Graw; Aye (5 Ayes)

**8. DECISION: INTERLOCAL COOPERATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN UTAH COUNTY AND SALEM CITY RELATED TO SALEM CANAL TRAIL**

This agenda item is discussing an agreement for \$2.2 million dollars that we have with Utah County through MAG. The request Marziale is proposing to the Mayor and Council is asking for permission to receive the funds.

Mayor Christensen called for a motion to approve the agreement and receive the funds in the amount of \$2,292,802.00

**MOTION BY:** Councilperson Simons

**SECONDED BY:** Councilperson De Graw

**VOTE:** Councilperson Peterson; Aye, Councilperson Simons; Aye, Councilperson Rees; Aye, Councilperson Taylor; Aye, Councilperson De Graw; Aye (5 Ayes)

**9. DECISION: HANSEN, ALLEN LUCE CANAL CHANGE ORDER # 9**

Kenny Seng Construction worked on the Salem Canal Trail Project and since we are nearing completion, they are requesting additional funds of \$30,044.39 to finish out the remainder of the project. These funds will then be recouped through the funds received from U-DOT and Utah County.

**MOTION BY:** Councilperson Peterson

**SECONDED BY:** Councilperson Taylor

**VOTE:** Councilperson Peterson; Aye, Councilperson Simons; Aye, Councilperson Rees; Aye, Councilperson Taylor; Aye, Councilperson De Graw; Aye (5 Ayes)

#### **10. DECISION: MEETING MINUTES – DECEMBER 10, 2025**

Mayor Christensen asked for a motion to approve the minutes for the city council meeting held on December 10, 2025.

**MOTION BY:** Councilperson Rees motioned to approve the minutes from December 10, 2025.

**SECONDED BY:** Councilperson Simons

**VOTE:** Councilperson Peterson; Aye, Councilperson Simons; Aye, Councilperson Rees; Aye, Councilperson Taylor; Aye, Councilperson De Graw; Aye (5 Ayes)

#### **11. DECISION: BILLS FOR PAYMENT**

Mayor Christensen asked for a motion to pay the bills in the sum of \$11,456,915.44.

**MOTION BY:** Councilperson Peterson motioned to pay the bills in the sum of \$11,456,915.44

**SECONDED BY:** Councilperson Taylor

**VOTE:** Councilperson Peterson; Aye, Councilperson Simons; Aye, Councilperson Rees; Aye, Councilperson Taylor; Aye, Councilperson De Graw; Aye (5 Ayes)

City Manager Matt Marziale came back to the podium for a special presentation of thanks to Councilperson Kelly Peterson and Mayor Kurt Christensen.

Adam Clements of the Salem City Power Department expressed his thanks and appreciation for Councilperson Peterson who came on 4 years ago and has been an asset to our City Council. Before being elected to the City Council, he retired from Spanish Fork City employment and then decided to give back by running for city council in Salem City. Staff and all person present would like to recognize Councilperson Peterson for his service to Salem City. Clements presented Councilperson Peterson with a plaque and a framed photo of the Salem City Power department team that he was an integral part of.

Mayor Christensen invited Councilperson Peterson to say a few words. Peterson expressed thanks to his fellow City Council members, city staff and Salem City residents for all their support.

City Manager Marziale then called Mayor Kurt Christensen forward for recognition. Eight years ago, Mayor Christensen became the mayor and leader of Salem City and brought a passion for Salem City to his efforts and service. He has directed the city with love and guidance.

Marziale offered Mayor Christensen a chance to speak. Mayor Christensen thanked his City Council members and recognized especially Councilperson Peterson for his willingness to serve with the Salem City Power department. Mayor Christensen was proud to express his feelings that we are better today as a city than when he began his years of service as a

testament to the strength of our council, staff and residents. Mayor Christensen ended by thanking his family for all their support during his years of service as Mayor.

City Manager Marziale presented Mayor Christensen with a plaque and a framed picture as a gift of appreciation for his service.

## **12. SWEARING IN CEREMONY**

### **a. Mayor Cristy Simons**

City Recorder Jeff Nielson called Councilperson Cristy Simons forward to be sworn in as the next Mayor of Salem City. Nielson led Mayor Simons by having her repeat the Utah Oath of Office. Following the oath, Mayor Cristy Simons was applauded by those present as the new Mayor of Salem City.

### **b. Councilperson Craig Sacco**

City Recorder Jeff Nielson called forward Councilperson Craig Sacco and led him in the Utah Oath of Office. Following the oath, Councilperson Craig Sacco was applauded by those present as a new member of the Salem City Council.

### **c. Councilperson Delys Snyder**

City Recorder Jeff Nielson called forward Councilperson Delys Snyder and led her in the Utah Oath of Office. Following the oath, Councilperson Delys Snyder was applauded by those present as a new member of the Salem City Council.

Mayor Cristy Simons ended the swearing in ceremony by saying a few words of thanks regarding Mayor Christensen and Councilperson Kelly Peterson. She expressed her gratitude for their service and her feelings that many things can be accomplished when united with good people for a good purpose. The City Council meeting then took a short recess for a short open house and refreshments to celebrate the elected officials.

The new councilmembers and Mayor came back to the Councilmembers Dais to resume the city council meeting, and Mayor Cristy Simons made a motion to resume the meeting.

**MOTION BY:** Councilperson De Graw motioned to resume the city council meeting for January 7, 2026.

**SECONDED BY:** Councilperson Snyder

**VOTE:** Councilperson Sacco; Aye, Councilperson Snyder; Aye, Councilperson Rees; Aye, Councilperson Taylor; Aye, Councilperson De Graw; Aye (5 Ayes)

### **13. DECISION: SALEM AMBULANCE ASSOCIATION LEADERSHIP JANUARY 2026**

Captain Karen Boothe of the Salem Ambulance Association came to the podium to present the proposed new leadership for the Salem Ambulance association. Each year, there are 6 positions voted on and four of those positions require individuals with advanced EMT training. The proposed new leadership team is as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Lisa Horton
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant James Ealey
- Secretary Layne Farley
- Training Officers – Kenneth Wright and Marcia Ealey
- Historian/Activity Chairperson – Lori Farley

Captain Boothe expressed her support for this leadership team and requested that the Mayor and Council approve the new Salem Ambulance Association Leadership.

Mayor Simons called for a motion to accept the new Salem Ambulance Association Leadership team.

**MOTION BY:** Councilperson Taylor motioned to accept the new Salem Ambulance Association Leadership team.

**SECONDED BY:** Councilperson Rees

**VOTE:** Councilperson Sacco; Aye, Councilperson Snyder; Aye, Councilperson Rees; Aye, Councilperson Taylor; Aye, Councilperson De Graw; Aye (5 Ayes)

### **14. DECISION: POLICE/PW AXON DRONE AGREEMENT**

Chief Brad James came to the podium to present a proposed contract for Salem Public Safety to purchase a drone from Axon in the amount of \$84,676 to be paid over 5 years. The per year cost will be \$16,935.20 and the cost per department breaks down to \$1483.80 per year times 4. The details of the proposed uses for the drone were discussed during the work session of this meeting. The proposed contract also includes the addition of a second drone in 2.5 years in the cost of this 5-year contract.

Councilperson De Graw recommended budgeting for replacement and repair costs and Chief James clarified that Axon has guaranteed that if we crash it or break it, they will replace the drone as part of our agreed contract. All consumables (batteries, etc) are also covered in the contract.

Mayor Simons called for a motion to approve the purchase of the drone.

**MOTION BY:** Councilperson Sacco made a motion to approve the purchase of the drone.

**SECONDED BY:** Councilperson Snyder

**VOTE:** Councilperson Sacco; Aye, Councilperson Snyder; Aye, Councilperson Rees; Aye, Councilperson Taylor; Aye, Councilperson De Graw; Aye (5 Ayes)

**15. DECISION: ALTA BANK ACCOUNT SIGNERS**

City Recorder Jeff Nielson presented the need for a change in approved signers on our Alta Bank account. This is necessary with the change in mayor from Mayor Kurt Christensen to Mayor Cristy Simons. The additional signers Jeff Nielson and Treasurer Tammy Beck will remain unchanged. Mayor Simons called for a motion to approve the signers on the Alta Bank account as Mayor Cristy Simons, Finance Director Jeff Nielson and Treasurer Tammy Beck.

**MOTION BY:** Councilperson Rees motioned to approve the new Alta Bank account signers as Mayor Cristy Simons, Finance Director Jeff Nielson and Treasurer Tammy Beck.

**SECONDED BY:** Councilperson Taylor

**VOTE:** Councilperson Sacco; Aye, Councilperson Snyder; Aye, Councilperson Rees; Aye, Councilperson Taylor; Aye, Councilperson De Graw; Aye (5 Ayes)

**16. MATT MARZIALE, MANAGER**

Nothing additional to add.

**17. CHIEF BRAD JAMES, PUBLIC SAFETY DEPT.**

Nothing additional to add at this time.

**18. STEVE COX, BUILDING DIRECTOR**

Building Director Steve Cox reported on the year-end number of permits issued in 2025. We did 1,000 units and a total of 357 permits – 189 single-family residences and 168 townhomes. This is the greatest number of permits that Salem has issued in a single calendar year.

**19. WALTER BIRD, ATTORNEY**

Nothing additional to add.

**20. LISA WEBSTER, CITY PLANNER**

- a. RMP Route Update – Rocky Mountain Power asked if we have any public noticing and permitting requirements for their transmission lines. We let them know that we do not have a mechanism for that and we do not need to or have a way to publicly notice a transmission line beyond what the county has already done.
- b. The second item discussed is that we will be needing to make updates to our ADU policies. This will go through Planning and Zoning first before coming back to council. This is a target item that state legislature plans to discuss during the 2026 session. We will discuss this in two council meetings from now.

**21. JEFFREY NIELSON, FINANCE/RECORDER**

Nielson updated the Mayor and Council that with Tammy Beck's upcoming retirement, Robyn Mortensen has been selected to take Tammy's place as City Treasurer. We opened up Robyn's previous position for applicants and Aubree Barnum has been selected and has accepted an offer to take the position.

**22. ADAM CLEMENTS, ELECTRICAL DEPT.**

Clements briefly updated that the reconductor project on 100 East will start on January 19<sup>th</sup>. Half of it was budgeted in this fiscal year's funds and the other half will be paid through impact fees.

**23. BRADEY WILDE, ENGINEERING DEPT.**

Nothing further to report.

**24. JOHN BOWCUT, FIBER DEPT.**

The fiber department now has 2376 signups.

**25. JEN WRIGHT, RECREATION DEPT.**

Jen Wright is excused from tonight's meeting for travel.

**26. JAMES THOMAS, PUBLIC WORKS DEPT.**

Public Works Director James Thomas updated the Mayor and Council that three of the public works fleet vehicles are budgeted for replacement. Thomas is seeking permission to explore financing options for these replacement vehicles. One will be financed by replacing a payment that is now paid off. Thomas also briefly updated everyone on the Viridian Well project and motors.

**COUNCIL REPORTS**

**27. MAYOR CRISTY SIMONS**

Mayor Simons had nothing additional to report and invited each of the Council members to report if needed.

**28. COUNCILPERSON CYNTHIA DEVERAUX REES**

Councilperson Rees had nothing additional to report.

**29. COUNCILPERSON PAUL TAYLOR**

Councilperson Taylor had nothing additional to report.

### **30. COUNCILPERSON TIM DEGRAW**

Councilperson De Graw reported on the recent Tabitha's Way meal service event. The volunteers gave out 600 meals and had representatives from Payson, Spanish Fork, Springville, and Salem. Other than that, he had nothing else to report.

### **31. COUNCILPERSON CRAIG SACCO**

Councilperson Sacco briefly provided reports from the recreation department. The packets about Salem Days will be ready to hand out soon. The theme for the 2026 Salem Days will be "Built on Freedom" to commemorate the anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

### **32. COUNCILPERSON DELYS SNYDER**

Councilperson Snyder presented that Salem Business Network is planning to meet on January 26<sup>th</sup>.

**Mayor Simons presented the new assignments for the council members as given below:**

**Mayor Simons:**

Power (UMPA)  
Personnel  
Public Safety  
City Budget  
Economic Development  
Utah County Council of Governments  
Mountainland Association of Governments (MAG)  
Metropolitan Planning Organization

**Councilperson Tim De Graw:**

Mayor Pro-Tem  
ULCT  
Fiber  
Utah Lake Committee  
Sewer Treatment Plant/Collections  
Community Development  
MAG Alt (rotate every other month with Cristy)

**Councilperson Cynthia Rees:**

SUVSWD  
Library

Memorial Day  
Pond Town Christmas  
Kindness Creates Peace (Mt Loafer Elem)

**Councilperson Paul Taylor:**  
Public Works (Water, PI, Roads, Storm Drain)  
SUVMWA  
Mt Nebo Water Board  
Kindness Creates Peace (Foothills Elementary)  
SUVSWD Alt  
DRC Alternate  
Emergency Preparedness  
SUVPS Board Member

**Councilperson Delys Snyder:**  
Business Relations  
    Chamber, Salem Business Network, Easter Egg Hunt, Goosebump Gala  
DRC  
UMPA Alt (attend with Cristy)  
Citizen Education

**Councilperson Craig Sacco:**  
Parks, Trails, Recreation  
    Seniors, Salem Days, Community Events, Miss Salem  
Youth Council  
Emergency Preparedness  
Kindness Creates Peace (Salem Elementary)  
SUVMWA Alt/Mt Nebo Water Alt (attend with Paul)

Mayor Simons called for a motion to accept the assignments of the City Council members as presented in her proposal.

**MOTION BY:** Councilperson Snyder motioned to accept the new assignments.  
**SECONDED BY:** Councilperson De Graw  
**VOTE:** Councilperson Sacco; Aye, Councilperson Snyder; Aye, Councilperson Rees; Aye, Councilperson Taylor; Aye, Councilperson De Graw; Aye (5 Ayes)

City Manager Marziale made a brief mention about the council retreat event coming up at the end of January. The dates are set for January 29-31<sup>st</sup>. The Thursday portion will be an evening portion to be held in the City Office Council Chambers. The remainder of the retreat will be held off-site.

### 33. CLOSED SESSION

No closed session was needed for this council meeting.

**ADJOURN CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

Mayor Simons called for a motion to adjourn the city council meeting for January 7, 2026.

**MOTION BY:** Councilperson Rees motioned to adjourn the city council meeting.

**SECONDED BY:** Councilperson Snyder

**VOTE:** Councilperson Sacco; Aye, Councilperson Snyder; Aye, Councilperson Rees; Aye, Councilperson Taylor; Aye, Councilperson De Graw; Aye (5 Ayes)

**MEETING ADJOURNED AT:** 8:21 pm

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Jeffrey Nielson, City Recorder

**ADJOURN CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

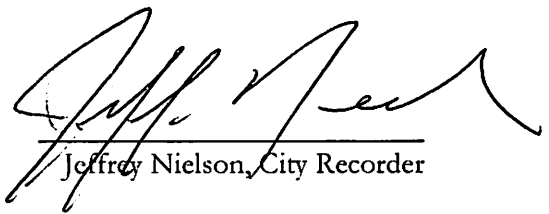
Mayor Simons called for a motion to adjourn the city council meeting for January 7, 2026.

**MOTION BY:** Councilperson Rees motioned to adjourn the city council meeting.

**SECONDED BY:** Councilperson Snyder

**VOTE:** Councilperson Sacco; Aye, Councilperson Snyder; Aye, Councilperson Rees; Aye, Councilperson Taylor; Aye, Councilperson De Graw; Aye (5 Ayes)

**MEETING ADJOURNED AT:** 8:21 pm



Jeffrey Nielson, City Recorder