

1 **MINUTES OF THE HELPER CITY COUNCIL MEETING**
2 **Thursday, June 4th, 2026**
3 **at 6:00 p.m.**
4 **in the Council Chambers**
5 **19 South Main Street**
6 **Helper, Utah 84526**
7

8
9 **ATTENDANCE:**

10 Mayor Lenise Peterman
11

12 **Council Members:**

13 Tyson Damron
14 Robert Olson
15 Ruth Lee
16 David Palacios
17 Edward Chavez
18

12 **City Staff:**

13 Community Administrator: Cole Stapley
14 City Recorder: Traci Bishop
15 Deputy Recorder: Shaley Vasquez - Absent
16 Police Chief: Sean Draper
17 Police Officer: Lara Olson
18 Public Works Co-Directors:
19 DJ Romero & Brittany Hansen – Hansen Absent
20 City Attorney: Dominique Kiahtipes
21 Museum Director: Roman Vega - Absent
22
23
24
25

26 **CITIZENS:**
27

28 Jacob Hardy, Daniel Hawley, Aidan Mortensen, Nathaniel Woodward, Garrett
29 Newman, Julie Behn, Russell Behn, Rick Harper, Charlene Burnham, Gary
30 Burnham, Stephanie Olsen, Nancy Elkins, Katie Gurule, David Gurule, Michael
31 Cola, Michelle Fidell, Ellis Powelson, Bruin Nielsen, CJ McManus, Nathan Behn,
32 Chris Shaw
33
34

35 **PUBLIC COMMENT:**
36

37 Jacob Hardy made a public comment in regard to the art in the tunnels. Nathaniel
38 Woodward made a public comment on the Rio Theater and a possible play during
39 the Arts Festival.
40
41
42

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE MAY 7, 2026 COUNCIL MEETING,
THE MAY 14TH, 2026 WORK MEETING, THE MAY 14TH, 2026 SPECIAL
MEETING AND THE MAY 21ST, 2026 WORK MEETING.**

Council member David Palacios found a small spelling error to be corrected. Council member Bob Olson moved to approve only the meetings he was in attendance for.

Council Member Chavez moved to approve all the sets of the minutes with the
aforementioned correction. Council Member Damron seconded the motion. Motion
carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Lee</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Damron</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

**DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF HOSTING THE LOTUS CAR
RALLY ON FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25TH AT THE MAIN STREET PARK FROM
APPROXIMATELY 10 A.M. TO 3 P.M.**

Mayor Peterman explained that the group had already filled out their reservation paperwork and paid their fees. They will show up with 100 cars, about 300 people, and are catering a lunch in the park. Council member Bob Olson asked if these were all Lotus cars, to which Mayor Peterman said it was. The group had come through last year as well. Mayor Peterman said that she also gave the group local catering options.

Council Member Chavez moved to approve the Lotus Car Rally. Council Member
Olson seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Lee</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Damron</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF DISPOSITION OF FOUND AND SAFEKEPT PROPERTY BEING HELD BY THE HELPER CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT.

Police Chief Sean Draper said that every once in a while, he has to go through the department's storage. They receive bikes, found property like backpacks and clothing. They also have to keep property when an individual is arrested, or the disposal of evidence. There's a process to post a public notice asking the owner to pick it up. Chief Draper did that for 30 days and after that time, it has become abandoned property and it is up to the city to determine what to do with it. Clothing, personal items such as debit cards, bicycles, tools, and other miscellaneous items are included. The vast majority will be donated, but there are two items the chief would like to utilize. There are tools he would like to retain at the police department to fix various items up, and currency.

The currency is in the amount of \$1,098.21 that nobody recovered or identified as their own. He would like to retain it at the police department and use it for the next agenda item that would be discussed. Council member Ed Chavez asked how many bikes they have, and was told about three or four. He then asked if those could possibly be donated to the E. Clampus Vitus to fix up for their Sub for Santa program, and the chief said that he would be willing to do that.

Council Member Damron moved to approve the disposition by the police department of the property, with the amendment that the bikes be donated to the clampers.

Council Member Chavez seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Lee</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Damron</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF PURCHASING TRAINING AMMUNITION FOR THE POLICE DEPARTMENT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,285.

Chief Draper said that over the last several months, in surplus the department has \$259.03 and with the abandoned currency that was just approved, as well as a donation of \$100, he currently has a total of \$1,457.24. They are running out of training ammunition and are required to re-certify on their guns every year. He is looking to purchase rounds for this effort in the total of \$1,285. This will give the

department a year and a half of training ammunition. They are aiming for a fall and spring training.

Council Member Chavez moved to approve the purchase of training ammunition. Council Member Lee seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Lee</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Damron</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF URS EMPLOYER ELECTION TO PICK-UP MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS FOR TIER 2 PUBLIC SAFETY.

Community Administrator Cole Stapley said that it is currently at 4.73%, that the city is picking up for the public safety officers. It is going up to 5.98% this year and that was included in the tentative budget that was adopted.

Council Member Lee moved to approve the election to pick-up member contributions. Council Member Palacios seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Lee</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Damron</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF RESCINDING PRIOR APPROVAL TO LEGALIZE ARTWORK AND PAINTING TUNNELS ON THE RIVER WALKWAY FROM SEPTEMBER 9TH, 2021.

Jared Beard, Deputy Director for UDOT Region 4, said he was in attendance to update the policy surrounding artwork on state-owned property. Currently, no artwork or murals are allowed on any state-owned property, period. In the past

things have been approved and gotten through, but in today's world, Mr. Beard said that anything that gets approved will be questioned by someone and UDOT does not want to be responsible for that. With that having been said, UDOT is requiring that the current art gets removed, but UDOT would help to assist in purchasing materials if Helper wants to paint over the artwork. To clarify, Mayor Lenise Peterman said that the council never had the legislative authority to approve the artwork, as it was owned by UDOT. At the time, that was not owned.

Mr. Beard acknowledged that it's a bit tricky, as UDOT owns the tunnels, but regular maintenance of them falls to Helper City. Mr. Beard said this came about as UDOT started receiving some complaints on the art. The council discussed how their hands are technically tied and that the tunnel is going to have graffiti in it no matter what. The council was not making any decisions on possibly covering up the artwork during this meeting, simply the rescinding of the approval for the artwork. Council member Ruth Lee asked Mr. Beard if UDOT would be willing to continue to assist Helper in covering graffiti as it is painted. He said he was sure that UDOT would be willing to continue.

Council Member Palacios moved to approve rescinding the prior approval to legalize artwork and painting tunnels on the River Walkway from September 2021. However, this motioned was not seconded, and the motion died.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF PROVIDING SWIM PASSES TO JACKFM IN EXCHANGE FOR MARKETING.

CJ McManus with JackFM said that it is the same exact contract as last year and he's been in contact with Jodi Stowe, one of the pool managers. It is in exchange for advertising through the radio.

Council Member Palacios moved approve the exchange with JackFM. Council Member Olson seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Lee</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Damron</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF APPOINTING NEW MEMBER TO THE MUSEUM BOARD.

Council member Lee led this discussion, saying she, Mr. Stapley and Roman Vega, Museum Director, all interviewed him. She believes he'd be a great fit, as he's really interested in going through the archives and organizing. She said that she approves of him being on the board and that his first name is Amir. Council member Tyson Damron asked about him not being in attendance, and he had not been reminded as he was not able to get on the agenda for last month. Amir's background is working in IT for the Department of Natural Resources and had also worked at a museum previously.

Council Member Lee moved to approve the new museum board member. Council Member Palacios seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Lee</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Damron</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF FRAUD RISK ASSESSMENT.

Mr. Stapley said this is gone through every fiscal year and is required as part of the audit. When the insurance is renewed each year, it is done as well. There's not a licensed certified CPA on staff, making the score a bit lower. However, there are opportunities for training that Mr. Stapley and the City Recorder will work on together to get the word out. Mr. Stapley also said that he will work with the Trust as well on database training to help improve the score as well.

Council Member Chavez moved to approve the Fraud Risk Assessment. Council Member Damron seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Lee</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Damron</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Palacios	X		
Chavez	X		
Motion passed			

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF LOCOMOTIVE DONATION LOCATION.

Council member Lee took the lead on this. She, Mr. Vega and the Public Works department have been going over the various proposed locations for the locomotive and Mr. Vega had provided print-outs of the areas that would not work. The reasons varied from water lines, power poles, access to the railroad, etc. The council discussed possibly switching land with someone that had mentioned before he would be interested. However, the land that Helper currently has available to switch is not what this person is looking for. Where they are in the locomotive process, Council member Lee said that there is a need to get it moved as soon as possible. Council member Damron then asked for a final cost. Storage is \$50 a month and there is a cost of around \$11,300 to get it transported.

Once it is moved, within a couple of months they are expected to have it gutted to sell those parts. Council member Damron then discussed possibly shifting the responsibility from Helper City to the promontory chapter that is confident in selling the parts from the train. Council member Lee said she feels like it is a very low risk for the city to end up responsible for any of the cost. They discussed liability in regard to volunteers helping disassemble the locomotive. The City Attorney, Dominique Kiahtipes, stated that there is always liability. If it is shifted to the nonprofit, the attorney said that negligence is always difficult to fully avoid. Council member Damron questioned if there is any other city that they helped out have assumed the cost. He does not want the city on the hook if the timeframe is not met.

Council member Damron's desire was to table discussion on the locomotive until a contract is created for the nonprofit to sign to assume responsibility in assisting the city. Council member Olson acknowledged that although the nonprofit said they would help, there isn't yet an assurance that they would follow through. Council member Palacios suggested bringing Nathan with the promontory chapter back to have discussions with the city. Attorney Kiahtipes said that the location would not be contingent on the contract, or vice versa. She said the council could decide on the location and it would not be an issue. The council also discussed the possibility of accepting a location at this meeting and then possibly changing it at a later date. With that, the council briefly discussed more locations.

Council member Olson advocated for the locomotive to be located in the park behind the museum, though there were many logistical reasons why it was not a good location, especially the fact that it would raise the cost greatly just to make it possible. Council member Damron also raised the topic of the concrete pad that would have to be placed for the locomotive to be stored on it.

Council Member Lee moved to approve the locomotive location at Gardner Field, the left field. However, there was no second to the motion, meaning that the motion died.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE 2026-01, UTAH FRANCHISE WITH ROCKY MOUNTAIN POWER.

Mayor Peterman said that the city attorney looked over the ordinance and had nothing to share from a legal perspective, as it was pretty standard.

Council Member Palacios moved to approve Ordinance 2026-01. Council Member Damron seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
<u>Lee</u>	<u>X</u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
<u>Damron</u>	<u>X</u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>X</u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION 2026-07, A RESOLUTION ADOPTING FEES FOR CEMETERY DEED RE-ISSUES.

The mayor asked Recorder Traci Bishop to discuss this. She stated that there are a lot of times that people call or come in and have no idea where their deed is and have not kept track. Most of the time, City Hall has a copy of the deed, but there are times that they do not, which makes the situation even trickier. Mrs. Bishop said, more than anything, this is for accountability.

Council Member Chavez moved to approve Resolution 2026-07. Council Member Palacios seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
<u>Lee</u>	<u>X</u>	<u></u>	<u></u>

<u>Damron</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF ADOPTING THE MASTER TRANSPORTATION PLAN.

Gary Burnham, Planning and Zoning Board Chair, said that they reviewed the plan at a public meeting. There were no comments from the public at the hearing and the committee went ahead and approved the Master Transportation Plan with a positive recommendation.

Council Member Palacios moved to approve adopting the plan. Council Member Damron seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Lee</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Damron</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

PUBLIC HEARING ON ADOPTING THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027.

Council Member Chavez moved to open the public hearing on adopting the budget for Fiscal Year 2026-2027. Council Member Palacios seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Lee</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Damron</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

The hearing opened at 7:10 p.m. The public were invited to comment, though none did.

Council Member Chavez moved to close the public hearing on adopting the budget for Fiscal Year 2026-2027. Council Member Palacios seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Lee</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Damron</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

The public hearing was closed at 7:11 p.m.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION 2026-08, A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027.

Mayor Peterman said that everyone did a great job, and that it is a well thought out budget. Council member Palacios said that Mr. Stapley, Mrs. Bishop and the department heads did great. It was clarified that the budget amount is a bit less than the year before, a point that Council member Olson wanted to make.

Council Member Palacios moved approve Resolution 2026-08. Council Member Damron seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Lee</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Damron</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

REPORTS ONLY FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS AND DEPARTMENT HEADS.

ADJOURNMENT:

333 There being no further business, Council Member Palacios moved to adjourn.
334 Council member Damron seconded. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as
335 follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Lee</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Damron</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

336
337
338

339 I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record
340 of the Helper City Council meeting held on June 4, 2026.

341
342

343 
344

345 Lenise Peterman
346 Mayor

347
348

349

350 Approved on June 18, 2026


Traci Bishop
City Recorder