

City Council June 25, 2026

Meeting Minutes

June 26, 2026, 6:30 PM

1. Call to Order

Mayor Travis Mote called the Willard City Council meeting of June 25, 2026 to order at 6:30 PM at the Willard City Offices.

a. Invocation

The invocation was offered by Mayor Travis Mote.

b. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilmember Jacob Bodily.

c. Conflict of interest declaration

No conflicts of interest were declared.

2. Public Presentation

The public comment period was opened. No substantive public comments were received. The public comment period was closed.

3. Planning Commission Report

Planning Commission Member Ken Ormond reported on the most recent Planning Commission meeting. Items discussed included a proposed amendment to zoning codes 24-01-16 and 24-44-51 relating to lot frontage, requiring all lots to have 100-foot frontage on any road, including corner lots. The Commission reviewed and passed the amendment, with formal documentation expected to be forwarded to the Council within a week or two. Regarding conditional use permits (CUPs), the CUP for Brian Gilbert was deemed unnecessary as the ADU in question was already covered under existing provisions. Three additional CUPs were tabled as City Planner Madison Brown was still working on them. Member Ormond noted the meeting concluded in 38 minutes.

4. New Business

a. Public Hearing to receive public comments regarding Resolution No. 2026-08, a Resolution of the City Council of Willard City Adopting the Final Operation and Capital Budgets for Willard City for Fiscal Year 2026-2027

Motion to open the public hearing was made by Councilmember Bodily and seconded by Councilmember Braegger. The motion carried unanimously.

The public hearing was opened. No substantive public comments were received.

Motion to close the public hearing was made by Councilmember Braegger and seconded by Councilmember Bodily. The motion carried unanimously.

b. Action Item: Discussion/Approval of Resolution No. 2026-08, a Resolution of the City Council of Willard City Adopting the Final Operation and Capital Budgets for Willard City for Fiscal Year 2026-2027

The Council discussed the proposed FY 2026-2027 budget. Mayor Mote raised a concern regarding the sustained growth of the police budget, noting year-over-year increases of approximately 19%, 16%, 13.9%, 25%, and a proposed 9% increase in the current year — all significantly above the city's population growth rate of 2–5% annually and general inflation. He acknowledged the importance of maintaining quality police services but expressed the need to contain that budget going forward.

Councilmember Braegger agreed, suggesting the city had been proactively staffing up in anticipation of future growth, but that the rate of increase may need to moderate. Police Chief Theron Fielding noted that the budget increases were driven primarily by salary adjustments to remain competitive, and that vehicles had not been budgeted this year, though an aging Explorer and a Chevrolet approaching 100,000 miles were anticipated in next year's budget. Chief Fielding also mentioned the potential for cost grants covering 75% of wages for new officers in their first two years as a tool for managing future budget impacts.

Councilmember Christensen noted that a small sewer-related budget amendment would be forthcoming, though that was not seen as a reason to delay approval of the budget as presented.

Motion to approve Resolution No. 2026-08, adopting the Final Operation and Capital Budgets for Willard City for Fiscal Year 2026-2027, was made by Councilmember Bodily and seconded by Councilmember Christensen. Roll call vote: Hulsey – Yes; Christensen – Yes; Braegger – Yes; Bodily – Yes. Motion carried 4-0.

c. Action Item: Discussion/Approval of Willard City current Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Proposed Budget Amendments dated June 30, 2026

City Finance Representative Corey Urie walked the Council through the proposed FY 2025-2026 budget amendments. He explained that most amendments reflected variances between budgeted and actual figures across several funds:

In the General Fund, revenues from property tax, sales and use tax, and road tax came in higher than anticipated, while fees in lieu came in lower. A line item of \$35,000 for street cuts (account 10-34-2-20) was added as it had not been originally budgeted, representing fees paid by residents and developers for excavation and street restoration. On the expenditure side, a \$25,000 increase in professional fees (account 10-43-3-10) represented a reclassification of costs previously budgeted under the Parks Department, moved to the Administrative Department.

In the Capital Projects Fund, a \$50,000 increase to the gain on sale of assets reflected more proceeds from asset sales than anticipated. In the Water Fund, increased hydrant meter rental activity drove additional miscellaneous revenue. In the Sewer Fund, more impact fees were collected than projected, and bank fees also exceeded expectations.

When asked about the overall fiscal year performance, Urie indicated that revenues were estimated to come in slightly under budget in aggregate, though several departments — including the court, administration, government buildings, police, fire, streets, and parks — were tracking under budget on expenses. Planning and zoning was the only department estimated to run slightly over budget. The Capital Projects Fund was projected to have more revenue (primarily from interest) and lower costs. The Water Fund was projected with slightly higher total revenue due to impact fees, and the Sewer Fund revenues came in under due to a rate increase that only took effect partway through the year rather than for a full year.

Motion to approve the Willard City current Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget Amendments was made by Councilmember Bodily and seconded by Councilmember Christensen. The motion carried unanimously.

d. Action Item: Discussion/Approval of Resolution No. 2026-10, a Resolution of the City Council of Willard City, Utah Adopting and Certifying the Property Tax Rate for Fiscal Year 2026-2027

The Council was advised that there was no change to the property tax rate. Brief discussion took place regarding the mechanics of the certified tax rate process.

Motion to approve Resolution No. 2026-10, adopting and certifying the property tax rate for Fiscal Year 2026-2027, was made by Councilmember Bodily and seconded by Councilmember Braegger. Roll call vote: Hulsey – Yes; Christensen – Yes; Braegger – Yes; Bodily – Yes. Motion carried 4-0.

e. Action Item: Continued Discussion/Approval of Resolution No. 2026-09, a Resolution of the Willard City Council Approving the Employer Pickup of Member Contributions for the Tier 2 Public Safety and Firefighter Retirement System

The Council confirmed that this item had been tabled from the previous meeting pending confirmation that the related costs were adequately reflected in the FY 2026-2027 budget. Finance Representative Urie confirmed that retirement budget line items across all applicable departments had been increased with the pickup election in mind, and that the amounts were considered reasonable. The Council expressed satisfaction that the budget was now in place to support this resolution.

Motion to approve Resolution No. 2026-09, approving the employer pickup of member contributions for the Tier 2 Public Safety and Firefighter Retirement System, was made by Councilmember Braegger and seconded by Councilmember Bodily. Roll call vote: Hulsey – Yes; Christensen – Yes; Braegger – Yes; Bodily – Yes. Motion carried 4-0.

Finance Representative Urie also presented the annual Fraud Risk Assessment as required by the State of Utah. No action was required. He reported that the city scored 325 out of a possible 395 points, placing it comfortably in the "low risk" category. He noted that policies for conflict of interest, procurement, ethical behavior, travel, purchasing cards, and IT security are in place, and that licensed accounting professionals are part of city management. He identified two areas for potential improvement to reach a "very low" risk rating: designating a formal audit committee and ensuring that introductory ethics training certificates for governing body members are completed and kept on file. Councilmember Braegger noted that the training is available through the state auditor's website. City Attorney Amy Hugie confirmed that an annual ethics statement is also required. The Council was encouraged to complete the training and provide copies to the City Recorder for record-keeping purposes.

f. Action Item: Discussion/Approval of the Perry/Willard Wastewater Treatment Plant Budget

Councilmember Christensen presented the Perry/Willard Wastewater Treatment Plant budget on behalf of the joint sewer board. He noted some discrepancy between the figures he had discussed at the most recent sewer board meeting — which contemplated an amendment of approximately \$20,000 for equipment and oil supplies — and the budget document circulated, which appeared to reflect a larger variance and included both FY 2025-2026 amendments and FY 2026-2027 projections.

Specific items discussed for the FY 2026-2027 budget included \$17,331 for IFAS (Integrated Fixed-Film Activated Sludge) repair and parts, \$7,000 for gear oil supplies, and \$4,000 for IFAS gearbox oil — reflecting equipment and maintenance needs that had not been previously accounted for. Maintenance Supervisor Payden Vine emphasized the urgency of addressing gear oil changes, noting that the lack of regular oil changes was causing premature wear on gearboxes. Discussion also touched on the step screen billow replacement, estimated at approximately \$15,000 but anticipated to last over 15 years, which would reduce recurring annual maintenance costs of roughly \$5,000 per year.

Councilmember Braegger noted the budget figures were higher than anticipated relative to Willard's contribution in the prior year (approximately \$266,000 amended), rising to an estimated \$299,000 in FY 2026-2027. The Council acknowledged that some follow-up clarification with the Perry City finance contact would be needed, and that a budget amendment may be necessary once final numbers are confirmed. The Council noted that state law requires these budgets to be approved by fiscal year-end.

Motion to approve the Perry/Willard Wastewater Treatment Plant Budget was made by Councilmember Braegger and seconded by Councilmember Bodily. Roll call vote: Hulsey – Yes; Christensen – Yes; Braegger – Yes; Bodily – Yes. Motion carried 4-0.

5. Next Meeting Agenda – July 9, 2026

Mayor Mote noted that the next regular meeting is scheduled for July 9, 2026, and that he would again be out of the area that week.

6. Upcoming Events: 4th of July Celebration

The Council discussed preparations for the Fourth of July celebration. Councilmember Christensen confirmed he would read a patriotic poem at the program. Regarding event booths, City Recorder Diana Mund reported that booth coordinator Marjorie had the younger volunteers covered but still needed four adults (age 15 and older) to assist from approximately 10:00 AM to noon. Councilmember Braegger and Mayor Mote volunteered to assist with the booth. The Mayor committed to recruiting additional help from within the community, including young men to assist with breakfast service.

Mayor Mote noted that several long-time volunteers who have supported the celebration for many years are beginning to step back, and suggested that after the summer — around October — the Council should consider forming a community committee to help reinvigorate the Fourth of July event and ensure its continuity in future years. Councilmember Braegger acknowledged that much of the effort has historically come from South Willard residents as well, and that broader community involvement should be considered.

7. Approval of June 11, 2026, Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the June 11, 2026 meeting minutes was made by Councilmember Bodily and seconded by Councilmember Christensen. The motion carried unanimously.

8. Staff Reports

a. Public Works

No formal report. Public Works indicated readiness for the Fourth of July.

b. Police Department

Police Chief Fielding provided a brief report on a small plane crash that occurred on the west side of the mountain near the skyline trail above McGuire's pit, at approximately 9,000 feet elevation. The incident was investigated with assistance from a UPS helicopter, which flew the area near midnight and confirmed a single fatality. The pilot was reportedly a student pilot on a solo flight from Salt Lake City to Idaho Falls. Recovery operations were conducted the following day by county and UPS personnel. Chief Fielding noted the crash was determined to be in the county's jurisdiction. Mayor Mote expressed appreciation for the emergency notification text system coordinated by Councilmember Hulsey.

c. Fire Department

Fire Chief Van Mund provided an extensive report on current fire conditions and the upcoming Fourth of July fireworks situation in light of the Governor's executive order on fire restrictions.

Chief Mund clarified that the Governor's order does not grant authority to ban fireworks within municipalities — that authority remains with the municipality. The city's existing ordinance (passed in 2023) restricts certain activities on the east side of Highway 89 annually from June 1 through October 1. Under the Governor's executive order, the city has the authority — jointly exercised by the Mayor and Fire Chief — to designate a specific area within the municipality where legally licensed fireworks will be permitted for the July 2nd through 5th period; all areas outside of that designated zone would be subject to the state forester's restrictions.

Discussion centered on defining the allowable fireworks area as a zone bounded roughly by 600 North to the north, 600 South to the south, and 400 West to the west, with the east side of Highway 89 remaining fully prohibited. Chief Mund and Chief Fielding noted the current zone boundaries may be adjusted slightly and would be refined.

City Attorney Amy Hugie reviewed the existing fireworks ordinance, confirming that cutting, welding, and grinding metal in areas of dry vegetation is already prohibited, and that violations are punishable as a Class B misdemeanor. She indicated that for the specific July 2nd–5th window, the Mayor and Fire Chief have the authority to designate the allowable area under the executive order framework without requiring a full council vote. However, for any broader or extended restrictions beyond that window — such as the 24th of July — a council action would be needed.

Chief Mund also noted that stage 2 fire restrictions on state and unincorporated lands were likely imminent, which would prohibit campfires even in designated fire rings and require permits for cutting and welding outside of enclosed structures. He expressed concern about open pit fires on the east side of town and indicated those should also be addressed in the city's communications.

The Council agreed on a plan: City Planner Madison Brown would attend a League of Cities/State Forestry Zoom webinar at 9:30 AM the following morning to obtain precise guidance on the process and required notification to the state forester. A special emergency council meeting was tentatively scheduled for Monday, June 29, 2026 at 6:00 PM to formally adopt the necessary restrictions. Once enacted, the information would be disseminated through Facebook, the city's water bill email list, and potentially through the CERT calling tree. Chief Mund also proposed distributing printed notices to all approximately 854 residences, potentially with scout or CERT assistance.

Regarding the fireworks display itself, Chief Mund indicated he would assess wind conditions to determine whether the existing launch site remains appropriate or whether an alternative location should be considered. The July 24th fireworks situation was noted as "to be determined" pending conditions closer to that date.

d. City Manager

No report. The City Manager was not in attendance.

e. City Planner

City Planner Madison Brown reported that the Bear River Association of Governments (BRAG) had contacted the city regarding its participation in the regional hazard mitigation plan, to which Willard City agreed by resolution in 2017. BRAG requested to review the city's flood ordinance; the city currently has a sensitive areas ordinance that addresses flood-related matters in limited scope but does not have a standalone flood ordinance. Brown indicated she would meet with the emergency coordinator, Larry Holmes, to respond to BRAG's questionnaire. The Council directed Brown to first determine what specifically BRAG requires the city to have, and then return with a recommendation on whether to expand the existing sensitive areas ordinance or draft a separate flood hazard ordinance. Councilmember Braegger noted that the Box Elder County Flood Control District could provide relevant study data for problem areas, including the Willard Creek floodplain corridor.

f. City Attorney

City Attorney Hugie noted that the fireworks and fire restriction topic had been addressed under the Fire Department staff report.

g. City Recorder

City Recorder Diana Mund had no formal report.

9. Council Member Reports

a. Jacob Bodily

No report.

b. Rod Mund

No report.

c. Mike Braegger

Councilmember Braegger noted he had recently observed the Beaver Fire near the Tusher Mountains while traveling, describing extensive fire burning across the ridge tops and expressing concern for the cabins and

homes in that area. He noted that similar conditions, if they occurred in Willard's foothills, could spread rapidly toward Mantua. Several citizens had also contacted him expressing fire-related concerns.

d. Rex Christensen

Councilmember Christensen reported that Flying J is closing its Subway restaurant, anticipated in August, and will be adding showers, bathrooms, and expanded food services. This will result in some additional flow into the sewer system, though the impact is expected to be metered and manageable. He also reported that the Perry-Willard joint sewer board has formally renamed the facility the Perry-Willard Regional Water Reclamation Facility, reflecting a shift in branding from "wastewater treatment plant" to "water reclamation facility." He confirmed the name change involves no significant financial cost beyond a state permit name update.

e. Jordan Hulse

No report.

10. Mayor's General Correspondence and Information

Mayor Mote noted ongoing coordination around the Fourth of July and the forthcoming emergency council meeting related to fire restrictions. He also noted that a flag installation on the local peak is being coordinated by Josh, anticipated for the coming Saturday.

11. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn was made by Councilmember Bodily and seconded by Councilmember Christensen.
The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned.

Minutes prepared by the Office of the City Recorder, Willard City Corporation. Diana Mund, City Recorder