

**HEBER CITY CORPORATION
75 North Main Street
Heber City, UT 84032
Heber City Council Meeting
August 5, 2026**

APPROVED Minutes

**7:00 p.m. Special Meeting
TRUTH IN TAXATION**

I. REGULAR MEETING - 7:00 P.M.

City Council Present: Mayor Heidi Franco
Council Member Yvonne Barney
Council Member Aaron Cheatwood - Remotely
Council Member Mike Johnston
Council Member Morgan Murdock
Council Member Sid Ostergaard

Staff Present: City Manager Matt Brower
Finance Manager Sara Jane Nagel
IT Director Anthon Beales
Deputy City Recorder Andrew Conley
Chief of Police Parker Sever

Staff Participating Remotely: IT Director Anthon Beales, and Accounting Technician Wendy Anderson.

Also Present: Rick Anderton, Gary Fredricks, Jolene Cox, Kelly Jo Mayoh, Jill Vanleeuwen, Dennis Vanleeuwen, Mark Sprunt, Gaylyn Latimer, Grace Doerfler, Ulla Libre, Staci Basilius Haynes, Kevin Payne, Keaton Hanson, Linda L Middleton, Soni Greenhawn, Mike Greenhawn, Patty Sprunt, Cannon Taylor, and others who did not sign in or whose handwriting was illegible.

Also Attending Remotely: (names are shown as signed-in online) Hoff, J, J S, Jami Hewlett, John, Scott Phillips, TC, AB, Casey Stevens, Diana, Jen, JS, Kenneth Davis, Kevin Devine, Kevin Payne, MTN, R, Shorty5, TMT, and Tom Reed.

1. Call to Order (Heidi Franco, Mayor)

Mayor Franco called the Special City Council Meeting for the Truth in Taxation Public Hearing to order at 7:02p.m. and welcomed everyone present.

II. PUBLIC HEARING:

1. Finance Director Statement of Proposed Property Tax Increase and Presentation of the Proposed Property Tax Impact Schedule (Sara Nagel, Finance Director) - *10 min*

Finance Director Sara Nagel presented the proposed Property Tax Impact Schedule as required by State Code and as shown in the Agenda Packet. She provided the Truth in Taxation 101 presentation as included in the meeting materials. Ms. Nagel described the services provided to taxpayers through the collection of property taxes and what the average household paid for each. She shared four videos from the Utah State Tax Commission to help explain both the function of the taxes and the Truth in Taxation hearing. She explained the need for the tax increase was for the City to maintain the level of service provided to the residents based on current inflation. She noted an average home in Heber valued at \$850,000.00 would pay approximately \$16.00 more per year in property taxes. Heber City collected the fifth lowest property tax amount for a city of its size in the state of Utah. Council discussed the proposed tax increase and reasons it was needed.

2. Public Hearing for the Public to Provide Feedback on Heber City's Consideration to Levy a Tax Rate that Exceeds the Certified Tax Rate (Sara Nagel, Finance Director)

Mayor Franco opened the Public Hearing at 8:05 p.m.

Stacy Haines said that the property tax on her home had gone up 14% a few years ago and this year it had gone up over 70%. She was going through the appeals process but asked that the City Council speak with the County to encourage better transparency. She noted what a frustrating process it was for her and felt it was not sustainable.

Gary Fredericks shared numbers for revenues the City received and felt the County and State should not get such a large portion of the City's property taxes.

Linda Middleton said she had heard that when you tax something, you get less of it. She said there were 15 different taxing authorities and the developers could add units and increase fees with HOAs, while the City provided infrastructure. She expressed concern with the effect on existing residents and said she felt the pressure of the global economy.

Patti Sprunt was speaking on behalf of the Wasatch County Republican Party Leadership. She wished the many residents who had contacted her with concerns about rising taxes could have been present at the meeting. She emphasized that although Utah's taxes were still relatively low, she felt that both the state and Heber City were on a concerning upward trajectory that left average citizens feeling vulnerable. She noted that Heber City taxpayers already carried the highest tax burden in the county and questioned why Heber was the only City raising taxes that year.

Ms. Sprunt urged the Council Members to consider who they worked for and to direct staff to identify spending cuts so residents would not be further burdened.

Rick Anderton was a contractor that lived in the valley. His income had gone down over the past few years due to inflation. He proposed the higher-budgeted staff members could have incomes cut to subsidize the budget.

Midway City Council Member Kevin Payne, said he had spent his whole career in affordable housing. He suggested that Heber City's current budget shortfall was caused by the tax increment being diverted to the Community Reinvestment Area (CRA), not by inflation. He claimed the CRA was capturing all increases in property values, even normal market inflation, despite not having made any improvements. He believed CRAs were intended for severely blighted urban areas, not healthy downtowns like Heber's, and felt the law was being misused in Utah. He noted a valuation error that would have allowed the CRA to capture all taxable value until they reported it. He proposed that the Heber City Council return the diverted funds to the City, reduce the property-tax rate, and terminate the CRA.

Keaton Hansen, Heber City resident and nurse with five children, said he and his wife could not afford to send his children to childcare. He said he could not afford any more taxes. He did not feel the City needed luxury and asked the Council to return to basics.

Kelly Mayoh spent nine years as a VIPS (Volunteers in Police Service) officer and was upset that a Heber City officer had pulled him over for illegally tinted windows. He claimed there was an exception to the law for astigmatism. He did not see how the City could raise taxes when he felt they couldn't meet an appropriate level of service.

Scott Phillips expressed support for the tax increase. He felt the presentation offered by the Finance Director Sara Nagel clearly outlined the need for the proposed tax increase. He appreciated the City's budget being a needs-based budget and not felt it was not frivolous. He knew prices were going up for everyone, including the City.

Jami Hewlett said she had several questions that the Council was welcome to answer via email later. She questioned how the City would repay bonds. Asked why residents were expected to cut their budget but the City was not cutting back. She wanted to know how her increased property taxes did not give the City more revenue. Ms Hewlett asked why the City needed more engineers and planners for the developers. She wanted someone to tell her if the cows cost the City money. She proposed that CAMS (Community Alliance for Main Street) could send volunteers to work for the City. She felt it was horrific to have taxes and utilities raised year after year. She asked that the City stop designing the park, what five things had the City cut spending on, and what the City was doing to support small businesses instead of housing. She claimed some employees had gotten over 50% to 75% pay upgrades and felt they were doing less.

Jenna Strom expressed agreement with previous speakers that she was stretched too thin. She could not afford any more expenditures. She did not support the government employees getting pay increases when so many others in the community were not. She felt the City spending was nauseating.

John Heine provided the amount of delinquent property taxes in the County and calculated Heber City's revenue to be \$480,000.00 in uncollected taxes. He said this was from developers and asked what the City was doing to collect the unpaid taxes. He asked what the City was going to do to collect the revenue it was owed and felt it was the City's job rather than the County's. He felt the City was turning a blind eye to the revenue it was owed and should do more to collect from the developers. Mr. Heine felt the City was not doing enough to protect its residents and said he was against the proposed property tax increase.

Chris Provost had lived in Heber City his whole life. He felt it used to be affordable, but was no longer. He thought that taxes and utilities had doubled in cost since 2020. Mr. Provost proposed that the City live within its means.

Catherine Moore said that her property taxes had doubled that year. She asked if the tax-payers were paying for the City Council to travel to Sacramento for their field trip.

Linda Middleton referred to the previous tax increase and asked about the cost increase for commercial businesses versus residential.

Council addressed the questions that they were able to posed by the public.

Tracy Taylor, Heber City Citizen and Wasatch Taxpayers Association, noted that the two entities going through the Truth in Taxation process were both participants in the CRA. She said she spoke with people who were struggling every day. She did not feel it was respectful to the citizens to compare the tax increase to a dollar amount spent on a food item. She felt it was the small decisions made all year long that had come to the \$174,000.00 budget increase needed by the City. She thought the City had gone over the top for the Cemetery Building constructed in previous years. She was opposed to subsidizing developers and felt the City was putting kerosene on the growth of the town. She did not agree that the development paid for itself and wished the City would stop permitting the growth.

Patti Sprunt felt that budget cuts were a necessity. She thought the Council should not be taking a field trip to Sacramento on the taxpayer's dollar.

Mayor Franco closed the public hearing at 9:17 p.m.

City Manager Matt Brower wished to address comments made regarding the Central Utah Conservancy District. He noted the several counties that the District encompassed and clarified that the CRA was not the reason for the Truth in Taxation process for the City or the District. He further described the purpose and details of the CRA to correct misinformation and further transparency.

3. Council to Make an Announcement at the Public Hearing that Heber City Will Consider the Adoption of a Property Tax Increase on Tuesday, August 18, 2026

Mayor Franco announced that the City Council would take two votes on Tuesday August 18th, 2026, at the next City Council Meeting. One vote would be for the proposed property tax increase and then the other on the final budget adoption.

III. ADJOURNMENT:

Motion: Council Member Ostergaard made the motion to adjourn until August 18, 2026.

Second: Council Member Barney made the second.

Voting Yes: Council Members Ostergaard, Johnston, Barney, Cheatwood, and Murdock.

Voting No: None.

The **Motion Passed Unanimously, 5-0.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:27 p.m.



Trina Cooke, City Recorder