MINUTES OF THE TRUTH IN TAXATION PUBLIC HEARING OF THE GRANTSVILLE CITY COUNCIL, HELD ON AUGUST 5, 2026 AT THE GRANTSVILLE CITY HALL, LOCATED AT 429 EAST MAIN STREET, GRANTSVILLE, UTAH AND ELECTRONICALLY VIA ZOOM. THE MEETING BEGAN AT 7:00 P.M.

Mayor and Council Members Present:
Mayor Heidi Hammond
Rhett Butler
Derek Dalton
Brittany Skinner
Jake Thomas
Jeff Williams

Council Members Excused: none.

Appointed Officers and Employees Present:
Michael Resare, City Manager
Alicia Fairbourne, City Recorder
Tysen Barker, City Attorney
Aspen Clegg, Finance Director

Citizens and Guests Who Provided Comment: Cameron Moulton and Marianne Tutone; written comments were also submitted by Caleb Gerber, Marlisa Gerber, Julie Mackley, Mike White and Stacey White.

Mayor Hammond called the Truth in Taxation Public Hearing meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and conducted a roll call of Councilmembers present.

She then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA:

1. **Public Hearing Item: Consideration of Resolution 2026-59 approving a property tax increase, and levying the property tax rate for Fiscal Year 2027**

   Mayor Hammond introduced Resolution 2026-59 and explained that Grantsville City was considering increasing the property tax rate from 0.001417 to 0.001488, representing a 4.98 percent increase over the certified tax rate. The proposed increase was anticipated to generate approximately $110,832 in additional annual ad valorem tax revenue. Based on the median Grantsville home value of $563,000, the increase was estimated at approximately $21.99 annually, or $1.83 per month. Mayor Hammond stated that the additional revenue would fund one full-time benefited Parks and Recreation employee to assist with the maintenance of Scenic Slopes Park, Veterans Park, and a park being constructed by the developer of the Desert Edge subdivision, all of which were anticipated to come online during Fiscal Year 2027.

   Finance Director Aspen Clegg presented the property tax impact statement. Ms. Clegg stated that the current tax rate was anticipated to generate approximately $2,211,956 in property tax revenue, while the proposed rate was anticipated to generate approximately $2,322,788. She reiterated that the additional $110,832 would be used to fund the Parks and Recreation position.

Mayor Hammond opened the public hearing at 7:08 p.m. and explained that comments were limited to three minutes per speaker. She stated that emailed comments received prior to the meeting had been provided to the Council and that additional emailed comments would be accepted until the close of the meeting.

Cameron Moulton expressed concern regarding the difference between the approximately 84 percent property tax increase initially discussed during the budget process in May and the 4.98 percent increase currently proposed. He stated that the significant difference could create a negative public perception and encouraged the City to more thoroughly evaluate proposed increases before presenting preliminary figures. Mr. Moulton also suggested increased traffic enforcement as a potential source of additional revenue.

Marianne Tutone asked whether the estimated $21.99 annual increase was a flat amount or whether the increase would vary based on property value. She also asked how new residential growth would affect property tax revenues and whether new homes had been considered in calculating the proposed increase.

There were no additional comments from those present or participating electronically. Mayor Hammond closed the public hearing at 7:13 p.m.

Councilmember Butler requested that Ms. Clegg and City Manager Michael Resare explain the budget process and how the proposed increase had been reduced from the amount initially discussed. Ms. Clegg stated that the budget process began in February, when departments were asked to evaluate their Fiscal Year 2026 budgets and submit requests for Fiscal Year 2027, including staffing, capital projects, equipment, and other expenditures. Ms. Clegg and Mr. Resare subsequently met with department heads to review and reduce those requests. Mr. Resare stated that funding all original departmental requests would have required an increase substantially higher than the amount initially presented.

Ms. Clegg explained that even after eliminating departmental requests, the City continued to face an operating deficit and had historically relied on savings to maintain basic operations. Mayor Hammond and Ms. Clegg discussed the role that COVID relief funding had played in allowing the City to offset prior deficits. Ms. Clegg stated that, in her opinion, without those relief funds, the City likely would have needed to consider a property tax increase earlier. She confirmed that the City had not increased its property tax rate since 2009.

Mr. Resare stated that the proposed Fiscal Year 2027 budget would continue to operate at a deficit and require the use of savings, but the Council had directed staff to reduce the immediate impact on taxpayers. Ms. Clegg stated that no additional staffing, projects, or equipment requests had been included in the proposed budget other than the Parks and Recreation position associated with the proposed tax increase. Mr. Resare added that the Council had reviewed the budget line by line and made additional reductions.

In response to Ms. Tutone’s questions, Councilmember Skinner and Ms. Clegg clarified that the $21.99 annual increase was an estimate based on the median home value and that the actual amount would vary according to the assessed value of each property. Ms. Clegg stated that new homes within Grantsville City would be taxed at the same rate as existing properties and that undeveloped property was also subject to property taxation. She explained that property values were established by the Tooele County Assessor's Office rather than Grantsville City.

Councilmember Butler clarified that tax increases imposed by other taxing entities, including Tooele County or the Tooele County School District, were independent of Grantsville City and would not generate additional revenue for the City. Ms. Clegg provided an example involving a property valued at approximately $556,000, for which total property taxes were approximately $3,461.85, while Grantsville City would receive approximately $455 under the proposed rate. She stated that the proposed City increase for that property would be approximately $21.72 annually.

Councilmember Dalton asked Ms. Clegg to address questions raised in emailed public comments regarding apparent increases in certain budget line items. Ms. Clegg explained that the Police Department's Other Professional Services line had increased primarily because the approximately $157,000 Tooele County dispatch contract had been moved from the Dues and Fees line to Other Professional Services to more accurately categorize the expense. She stated that the change represented a reallocation rather than a comparable increase in spending.

Councilmember Dalton also asked about the Legal Department budget. Ms. Clegg explained that legal expenses had previously been included within the general government budget and had subsequently been moved into a separate Legal Department budget to provide greater transparency. Mr. Resare stated that the change provided a clearer representation of the City's legal expenditures. Councilmember Thomas expressed support for categorizing expenditures according to the services provided to improve transparency and budget management.

Mayor Hammond asked Ms. Clegg to address an emailed question regarding the increased irrigation assessment budget for parks and the cemetery. Ms. Clegg explained that the City paid assessments to Grantsville Irrigation Company for its irrigation shares and that the City budgeted sufficient funds to pay the amounts billed by the irrigation company. She stated that Grantsville Irrigation Company would need to provide information regarding the reason for any increase in the assessment itself.

Councilmember Thomas stated that he generally supported a zero percent tax increase but recognized that continuing to operate at a deficit was not sustainable. He stated that the Council and staff had spent considerable time reviewing departmental needs and the budget line by line and had reduced expenditures substantially. He noted that departments had needs, including additional public safety staffing, but the proposed budget represented a minimal approach intended to maintain City services.

Councilmember Dalton stated that he opposed increasing property taxes, particularly in light of recent increases in sewer and water costs. He expressed concern about approving an additional Parks and Recreation position and referenced videos he said residents had provided to him depicting City employees posting on TikTok while at work. He stated that the situation created a negative public perception and made it more difficult for him to support asking residents for additional funding.

Councilmember Skinner stated that she also did not favor increasing taxes but believed the City's failure to adjust the property tax rate for many years had contributed to the current situation. She stated that the Council had spent considerable time reducing the proposed increase and that departments had been denied additional staffing and funding requests. Councilmember Skinner stated that she was not familiar with the videos referenced by Councilmember Dalton and that, based on her observations, City employees were doing a good job. She stated that the proposed increase represented the minimum she believed was necessary to help prevent a significantly larger increase in the future.

Councilmember Williams discussed the importance of attracting businesses to Grantsville City and increasing sales tax revenue as a means of reducing future reliance on property tax increases. He noted the development of a business district and expressed optimism that future commercial development could benefit the City's revenues.

Councilmember Butler agreed that sales tax represented an important source of City revenue and encouraged residents to support local businesses. He stated that the City had worked to encourage additional commercial development and that increased local sales activity could strengthen the City's revenue base.

Motion: Councilmember Skinner moved to approve Resolution 2026-59 approving a property tax increase and levying the property tax rate for Fiscal Year 2027 as described.

Second: Councilmember Butler seconded the motion.

Vote: The vote was as follows: Councilmember Butler, "Aye"; Councilmember Dalton, "Nay"; Councilmember Skinner, "Aye"; Councilmember Thomas, "Aye"; and Councilmember Williams, "Aye." The motion carried 4-1.

2. Adjournment

There being no further business, Mayor Hammond asked for a motion to adjourn.

Motion: Councilmember Butler moved to adjourn.

Second: Councilmember Williams seconded the motion.

Vote: The vote was as follows: Councilmember Butler, "Aye"; Councilmember Dalton, "Aye"; Councilmember Skinner, "Aye"; Councilmember Thomas, "Aye"; and Councilmember Williams, "Aye." The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.