

MINUTES OF THE DRAPER CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 18, 2026, IN THE DRAPER CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 1020 EAST PIONEER ROAD, DRAPER, UTAH

PRESENT: Mayor Troy K. Walker, and Councilmembers Kathryn Dahlin, Mike Green (via ZOOM), Bryn Heather Johnson, Tasha Lowery, and Fred Lowry

EXCUSED:

STAFF: Mike Barker, City Manager; Kellie Challburg, Assistant City Manager; Scott Cooley, City Engineer and Public Works Director; Spencer DuShane, Assistant City Attorney; Rich Ferguson, Chief of Police; Traci Gundersen, City Attorney; Jennifer Jastremsky, Community Development Director; Rhett Ogden, Parks and Recreation Director; Derek Orth, Human Resource Director; Nicole Smedley, City Recorder; Clint Smith, Fire Chief; Jake Sorensen, Network Manager; and John Vuyk, Finance Director

Study Session

Closed Meeting

The Council did not meet in a closed session.

Report: Great Salt Lake Preservation Efforts

Jacob Young, General Manager for Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District (JVWCD), said because of conservation efforts in the last few years, JVWCD had been able to dedicate 21,000 acre-feet of water per year to the Great Salt Lake (almost one-third of the total amount that had been dedicated to date). He thanked Draper City for being part of the conservation efforts. Mr. Young said JVWCD had declared a Level 2 drought in the service area and asked for a 10% reduction in water use, and Draper City was currently at an 11% reduced water consumption level compared to the previous year.

Aspen Johnston, Strategic Coordinator in the Great Salt Lake Commissioner's Office, said the Great Salt Lake was unique in the world, and crucial to the area for ecological, economic, social, and other reasons. Mr. Johnston gave a presentation about how the Great Salt Lake had changed over time, and described efforts to increase the level of water in the lake.

Councilmember Johnson asked what Draper residents could do to help, and Mr. Johnston said residents could help by using less water outdoors. Mr. Young encouraged changing landscapes from being lawn dominant to water efficient. He said increased conservation efforts contributed to the delay of costly supply improvement projects.

Councilmember F. Lowry asked what impact 70,000 acre-feet of water would have on the Great Salt Lake. Mr. Johnston responded the impact would not be visible after one year, and said the objective was to change the trajectory of the Great Salt Lake on a long-term scale.

Mr. Johnston spoke of comprehensive municipal conservation strategies and flexible water management options. He shared his contact information and welcomed feedback from the Council. He invited the Council to participate in an air boat and education center tour at Farmington Bay. Responding to a question from Councilmember T. Lowery, Mr. Johnston said he believed there was a need for more urgency on the issue, and said the Commissioner's Office was doing everything the agency could do to the best of their ability to result in positive outcomes for the Great Salt Lake.

Discussion: Community Reinvestment Agency Overview

Jason Burningham with LRB Public Finance Advisors provided an overview of Community Reinvestment Agency (CRA) project areas and tax increment financing within Draper. Mr. Burningham said Draper currently had six active project areas: FrontRunner CDA, Crescent RDA, South Mountain CRA, Sand Hills RDA, East Bangerter EDA, and West Freeway. Each of the project areas had far outpaced what any natural development would have been. Some of the project areas were required to use a portion of project area tax increment income to benefit housing issues in the area. Mr. Burningham said the project area fund balances totaled almost \$31 million combined.

Councilmember F. Lowry asked if some of the available funds could be used to incentivize commercial in a particular vacant strip mall area. Mr. Burningham said there were guardrails for how some of the funds could be spent. Some of the funds could only be spent for a specific project area, and some of the funds were flexible. He emphasized that Sand Hills RDA, East Bangerter EDA, and West Freeway project areas only had two years remaining to expend funds or commit funds before money would be lost.

Councilmember T. Lowery asked about using some of the Crescent RDA funds to straighten Kimballs Junction at 700 East. Mr. Burningham said Crescent RDA had the most flexibility. He said the Council, acting as the CRA Board, could find that an infrastructure project would benefit and improve the project area, even if the project was outside the project area. He said he was confident the suggested project could qualify. Mr. Burningham said his team could help staff put together a list of projects. He suggested considering infrastructure projects that would help support affordable housing initiatives.

Responding to a question from Councilmember T. Lowery, Mr. Burningham said the biggest difference between a Housing and Transit Reinvestment Zone (HTRZ) and a CRA was governance. He said the plan and the budget for an HTRZ were specific to State initiatives and what the State wanted to accomplish. Mr. Burningham said it was important to look at the balance between local control and objective, and potential benefits and revenues from an HTRZ that would help support the objective. He suggested a project would need to be regionally significant for an HTRZ to make sense. Mr. Burningham encouraged members of the Council to reach out to him with questions about potential projects.

Council/Manager Reports

Business Session

1. **Call to Order by Mayor Troy K. Walker**

2. **Pledge of Allegiance led by Jake Sorensen**

3. **Oaths of Office**

Mayor Walker introduced Youth Council leadership, and Nicole Smedley administered the Oath of Office to new Draper City Youth Council members.

4. **Public Comments**

Sarah Brinkerhoff, Draper Library Branch Manager, said the branch would be closed for three months beginning the end of August for an update to the building.

Chase Kimball, Draper resident, asked the Council to put Flock cameras on the agenda for the next Council meeting to consider cancelling the contract. He said he had respect for police and what they did for the community, but expressed the opinion that the cameras violated Constitutional rights under

the 4th Amendment, and said the principle behind the 4th Amendment was to prevent policing from being taken to an extreme. He said the cameras twisted the idea of how policing should work by collecting data on innocent citizens.

Scott Standage said he agreed with Mr. Kimball's comments. He said he hoped Draper did not raise taxes, and expressed the opinion that Draper did not need more police on the road. He said he believed there was waste, fraud, and abuse in Draper City government, and asked if every line item in the budget had been examined to find things that could be cut.

Alberto de la Torre, Draper resident, said he concurred with Mr. Kimball's comments. He said he did not know how a city government could be run if residents only had three minutes to talk at the Council, and said some topics required more time than was allotted. Mr. de la Torre said residents were forced to live within their own budgets, and said he did not know how the City could justify raising taxes. He said he felt residents should have been asked for feedback before Flock cameras were implemented in Draper, and said the cameras were against 4th Amendment rights. He asked the Council to put Flock cameras on a future agenda.

Gary Free, Draper resident, congratulated the Council for everything they did for the City. He said a memorandum of understanding had been submitted regarding a museum for the City, and spoke of individuals who would submit additional comments. He emphasized that he would want the project to be financially feasible, and commented on the tax advantage of being a public facility.

Chris Foresta, Draper resident, expressed support for moving forward with a Draper historical museum and event center. He said the Historical Society was trying to preserve historical documents and artifacts in a facility never intended for long-term storage of such items. Mr. Foresta said he believed the concept and proposal deserved serious consideration. He asked the Council to continue working toward a formal agreement and help make the museum a reality.

Kathy Free, Draper resident, said she grew up with museums and developed a love and appreciation for the history of America. She expressed the opinion it would be lovely to see the history of Draper in a museum, because there was a lot to highlight and show.

5. Consent Items

5.a Approve the Minutes of the August 4, 2026 City Council Meeting

Councilmember Johnson moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Councilmember T. Lowery seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

	Yes	No	Absent
Councilmember Green	X		
Councilmember Johnson	X		
Councilmember T. Lowery	X		
Councilmember F. Lowry	X		
Councilmember Dahlin	X		

6. Items for Council Consideration

6.a Public Hearing: Ordinance #1736 amending the text of Chapter 9-11 of the Draper City Municipal Code related to residential units in the Town Center

Planner Todd Taylor said proposed text amendments were in response to errors in the text concerning the Town Center. He presented proposed text amendments pertaining to existing structures in Town Center, and said the Planning Commission reviewed the amendments and forwarded a positive recommendation.

Mayor Walker opened a public hearing, and closed the public hearing seeing no one come forward.

Councilmember F. Lowry moved to adopt Ordinance #1736. Councilmember Johnson seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

	Yes	No	Absent
Councilmember Green	X		
Councilmember Johnson	X		
Councilmember T. Lowery	X		
Councilmember F. Lowry	X		
Councilmember Dahlin	X		

6.b Public Hearing: Resolution #26-39 adopting the final Draper City Budget including compensation schedules and adopting the certified tax rate for the fiscal year 2026-2027

Finance Director John Vuyk showed a timeline of the FY2027 Budget process, which began in October of 2025. He said departments were asked to be prepared to make a 5% cut in departmental budgets. Mr. Vuyk shared a graph of sales tax growth in Draper since 2018, and emphasized that sales tax revenue had flattened out since 2023. He said the City needed to find a different source of revenue to cover continually increasing costs. Mr. Vuyk showed a table of City staffing since 2018, and said City staff had grown in response to the growth in Draper City. He showed a comparison of total number of city employees in other area cities, with the number of employees in Draper being low compared to Sandy City, West Jordan, and South Jordan.

Councilmember T. Lowery said when she started on the City Council, the City had been understaffed in Police and Fire for quite a long time, and had experienced an increase in crime. As the two departments had grown closer to what could be considered fully staffed, there had been a sharp decrease in crime in Draper. She said the City now had highly qualified paramedic staff that provided a high level of service to residents. Councilmember T. Lowery said public safety represented a large portion of the City budget, but also had tremendous value. Councilmember Green commented that traffic accidents had also decreased across the City.

Councilmember Johnson said she believed it was more financially responsible to be able to retain quality employees instead of hiring, training, and losing employees to higher paying entities. Police Chief Rich Ferguson said the worst business plan he could think of was to hire and train really good people and then lose them to competitors. He said it had been refreshing to see the level of support in Draper in recent years, and to be able to keep trained officers in the City.

Fire Chief Clint Smith said one of the most prevalent issues in public safety was poor mental health from stress and being required to work more than regular hours to cover shortages. He said the three additional firefighter positions would help keep staffing where it needed to be and lower the need for more overtime, which took a heavy toll on firefighters.

Councilmember Dahlin said she appreciated the emphasis on public safety in Draper in recent years. She asked if the requested 5% reduction in departmental budgets had happened. Mr. Vuyk said there had been cuts, particularly within the Public Works Department. He said it was determined that a full 5% cut in some departments would not provide a positive impact, since the impact residents would see and experience would not justify the cuts that were proposed.

Responding to a question from Councilmember Dahlin, Mr. Vuyk confirmed that even with the proposed property tax rate increase, \$3,295,000 would be appropriated from Fund Balance to balance the FY2027 Budget, reducing the City's reserves. He said the City's Fund Balance was currently at the maximum 35% allowed by State law, and said he believed reducing the amount somewhat was prudent and something the City could afford to do.

Responding to a question from Councilmember F. Lowry, Chief Smith confirmed that without the three new firefighter positions, the number of firefighters on call at a time would need to reduce, possibly reducing the City's ISO (Insurance Services Office) fire rating. He said the current level of mandatory overtime was not sustainable.

Mayor Walker opened a public hearing, and closed the public hearing seeing no one come forward.

Councilmember Johnson moved to adopt Resolution #26-39 adopting the Final Draper City Budget including compensation schedules, and adopting the Certified Tax Rate for the Fiscal Year 2026-2027. Councilmember T. Lowery seconded the motion.

Councilmember Dahlin said she appreciated the hard work and discussions that went into preparing the budget. She stated she was concerned about the spending pattern, said she believed the Mayor had led well during his time in the position, and said she believed sometimes tax increases were necessary. Councilmember Dahlin said her own family had struggled with inflation, and knew others were in the same position. She said there needed to be a balance. She said she believed adding three firefighter positions was better than continuing the current overtime pattern. Councilmember Dahlin said she believed it was important for the City to make hard cuts when asking residents for more property tax revenue.

Mayor Walker said Draper had implemented one property tax rate increase during his more than twenty years as an elected official. He emphasized that in Utah, municipalities did not receive an increase in property tax revenue when the value of homes increased. As property values increased, property tax rates decreased. Mayor Walker said he did not like raising property taxes, and pointed out the property tax rate increase would not balance the budget without drawing from Fund Balance. He spoke of good sales tax potential in the next several years, inflation, the City's comprehensive road improvement program, complex emergency measures, and the City's blended budget versus special service districts in other cities. He expressed the opinion that the blended budget was clear and transparent.

Councilmember Johnson thanked Mayor Walker for the information he had shared during the process to clarify how the City received revenue. She said the City had been successful in reducing budgets in many areas, and said she found it very impressive that Draper had been able to cover increased costs with sales tax revenue for 17 years.

Councilmember Dahlin said she believed it was important that the City had raised the level of service, but expressed concern that it had been done with deficit spending. She said she would support the budget and the proposed property tax rate increase because she believed in paying for what was promised, although she felt what was promised needed to be reviewed going forward. Councilmember T. Lowery commented that personnel was an ongoing expense, and pointed out there were cities that raised the property tax rate a small amount every year to keep up with inflation.

A roll call vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

	Yes	No	Absent
Councilmember Green	X		
Councilmember Johnson	X		
Councilmember T. Lowery	X		
Councilmember F. Lowry	X		
Councilmember Dahlin	X		

- 6.c Action Item: Ordinance #1734 amending Title 3 of the Draper City Municipal Code governing the structure and procedures of the Planning Commission as required by State law

Assistant City Attorney Spencer DuShane said State law had changed concerning how Planning Commissions operated. He said adoption of Ordinance #1734 would delegate the authority to appoint and remove members of the Planning Commission to the Mayor with Council consent, consistent with current City practice. Mr. DuShane listed mandatory reasons for removal from the Planning Commission, and reviewed recusal and consanguinity or affinity with the Council.

Councilmember Dahlin moved to adopt Ordinance #1734. Councilmember Johnson seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

	Yes	No	Absent
Councilmember Green	X		
Councilmember Johnson	X		
Councilmember T. Lowery	X		
Councilmember F. Lowry	X		
Councilmember Dahlin	X		

7. Recess to a Community Reinvestment Agency Meeting

Councilmember F. Lowry moved to recess to a CRA meeting at 8:35 pm. Councilmember Johnson seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

	Yes	No	Absent
Councilmember Green	X		
Councilmember Johnson	X		
Councilmember T. Lowery	X		
Councilmember F. Lowry	X		
Councilmember Dahlin	X		

The Council returned to regular meeting at 8:58 pm.

8. Adjournment

Councilmember Green moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Johnson seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 8:59 pm.