ROY CITY CORPORATION
Council Meeting Minutes
Date: August 11, 2026
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Roy City Council Chambers, 5051 S 1900 W. Roy, UT 84067

These are the pending minutes that have been prepared in draft form and are subject to change before being approved by the public body that held the open meeting. Notice of this meeting was provided in accordance with Utah Code Ann. § 52-4-203. This meeting was also streamed on YouTube, and the video archive can be found at youtube.com/@RoyCityCorporation.

Elected Members present:
Mayor Ann Jackson
Councilmember Hulbert
Councilmember Jackson
Councilmember Saxton
Councilmember Sphar
Councilmember Wilson

Legislative Staff present:
City Manager, Matt Andrews
City Recorder, Brittany Fowers
Deputy City Recorder, Helen Garcilazo

Legal Staff present:
City Attorney, Matt Wilson

Department Directors present: Management Services Director, Amber Kelley; Police Chief, Matt Gwynn; Fire Chief, Theron Williams; Parks and Recreation Director, Michelle Howard; Public Works Director, Brandon Edwards.

A. **Welcome and Roll Call**
Mayor Jackson welcomed those in attendance and noted which Elected Members were in attendance.

B. **Moment of Silence**
Councilmember Hulbert invited the audience to observe a moment of silence.

C. **Pledge of Allegiance**
Councilmember Hulbert led the audience to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

D. **Public Hearing**

Mayor Jackson first turned the time over to Management Services Director Kelley. Management Services Director Kelley explained that the purpose of the evening's meeting was to adopt the final fiscal year 2027 budget and set the certified tax rate for 2026. She stated that the original budget had included a proposed tax increase of 55%. She explained that the budget planned to give a 2.8% COLA to employees in the fiscal year 2027 as well as wage correction adjustments to bring all full-time employees to average market rate for their positions.

Management Services Director Kelley reported that since the original budget had been presented some changes had been made, namely the annexation of the fire department to Weber Fire District and reductions to Roy Days budget. She summarized that these changes had reduced the original proposed tax increase of 55% to 34.29%. She said this new tax rate equated to an average increase for a Roy City of household of $133.15 per year, or $11.10 per month. She stated further that the Council could still make changes to this amount or make changes to the proposed budget.

Management Services Director Kelley explained that a final budget had to be adopted that evening. She indicated that copies of the property tax impact schedule were available for the public in attendance that evening, and copies were also available on the City website. She recommended that the Council move into a public hearing.

Councilmember Hulbert motioned to enter a Public Hearing for the purpose of receiving public input in consideration of Resolution 26-24. Councilmember Jackson second the motion. The roll call votes are as follows:

Councilmember Hulbert	_X_ "Aye"	___ "Nay"	___ "Excused"
Councilmember Jackson	_X_ "Aye"	___ "Nay"	___ "Excused"
Councilmember Saxton	_X_ "Aye"	___ "Nay"	___ "Excused"
Councilmember Sphar	_X_ "Aye"	___ "Nay"	___ "Excused"
Councilmember Wilson	_X_ "Aye"	___ "Nay"	___ "Excused"

E. <u>Public Hearing Comments</u>

Mayor Jackson opened the floor for public comments. Public comments are held to a 3-minute maximum per speaker in accordance with the Roy City Council Meeting Rules of Procedure and Order.

Paul Puzey said he had lived in Roy for nearly 60 years and loved the City. He felt that the City needed to be careful with tax dollars, although the City could only cut so much before it began to impact the residents quality of life. He expressed disappointment in the personal attacks he had seen and called for everyone to navigate this problem with mutual respect. He opined that the Complex and Aquatic Center should be preserved and expressed that not every service a City provided needed to be absolutely essential. He spoke in favor of the programs and services that those facilities and the Parks and Recreation department provided.

Alex Taft said he was a relatively new resident to Roy City. He thought a 34% increase was fair and doable for most people. He agreed with Mr. Puzey's comments about Roy City's services and said that although he originally was not in favor of the Complex, he now appreciated what it did for the community. He agreed as well that not every service the City provided needed to generate money.

Natalie Betton said she felt Roy City had lost much of its character as businesses and landmarks had disappeared, and she noted that Main Street had many vacant buildings. She explained that she had opposed the original 55% increase, although she felt she could live with an increase of about 35%. She expressed additional concerns about the direction of the City and compared the situation to a train approaching a sharp curve.

Carrie Cazier expressed concern about the effect of property tax increases on retirees and other residents living on fixed incomes. She supported paying Police and Fire personnel fairly, but suggested selling the Aquatic Center and finding a private sponsorship for the Complex. She also urged the Council to attract more businesses and sit-down restaurants to come into Roy, in order to broaden the sales tax base.

Joe Fowler stated that he was a longtime local business owner and reiterated concerns about the burden of the proposed increase on both businesses and residents with fixed incomes. He felt that even an approximately 35% increase was excessive, and spoke about the effect that such an increase would have on a private business. Mr. Fowler encouraged the City to do more with less. He also agreed with previous comments and urged the Council to seek additional revenue by attracting businesses rather than relying primarily on property taxes for revenue.

Jim Panagoplos argued that the fire department annexation would not ultimately reduce residents' overall tax burden, on the grounds that taxes for the Weber Fire District would also increase. He suggested delaying some COLA and wage increases and prioritizing Police, Fire, and Public Works employees. Mr. Panagoplos also reiterated concerns about vacant properties in the downtown area. He encouraged the City to address blight and attract businesses that could generate additional revenue.

Donald Harris expressed frustration that rising property values and property taxes had substantially increased his housing costs. He urged the City to trim expenses and attract more restaurants and businesses so residents would spend more money within Roy. Mr. Harris stated that even the reduced tax increase was too high for him. He said that he knew of many other residents struggling with household expenses who would also struggle to take on the additional tax burden.

Donna Russell stated that she was a retired parks and recreation professional. She spoke in support of the Complex and the City's recreation and aquatics programs. She emphasized that swimming lessons and aquatic programs provided safety, health, and social benefits to children, seniors, and residents with mobility concerns. Mrs. Russell urged the Council to look elsewhere for budget reductions and not cut programs that she felt substantially improved residents' quality of life.

Ty Chaston spoke in favor of reducing expenses associated with the Complex, Aquatic Center, and splash pad. He called for recreation services to be evaluated from a business perspective. He wondered whether the City's recreation facilities could be consolidated or supported through interlocal agreements. Mr. Chaston also asked for clearer budget data. Lastly, he questioned some of the conclusions that had been drawn from juvenile arrest statistics related to the Complex.

Deanne Chaston echoed concerns about the cost of subsidizing the Complex and argued that the City should consider more substantial spending reductions. She discussed juvenile arrest and citation data she had obtained from the City, and stated that many of the incidents had involved non-Roy residents or occurred during school hours. Mrs. Chaston argued that the data did not establish if closing the Complex had caused increased juvenile crime. She asked the Council to examine the information more closely before using it to justify keeping the facility open.

Grant Cooper asked the Council to examine staffing and management levels throughout the City and consider whether operations could be streamlined, which could reduce costs without reducing services. He stated that he had many years of experience with corporate restructuring, and based on his background knowledge he suggested reviewing the ratio of managers to employees and considering attrition or other efficiencies, rather than layoffs. Mr. Cooper also asked whether the tax increase could be spread over two years to reduce the immediate burden on residents.

Nancy Inman opposed the proposed increase and argued that employee compensation and COLAs were driving repeated double-digit tax increases. She questioned the methodology of the wage survey that had been conducted and previously discussed, and expressed concern that comparing only public-sector wages could contribute to continually increasing compensation. Mrs. Inman also opined that the proposed Weber Fire District tax increase should be considered alongside the City's tax increase, as she felt that not doing this undermined transparency.

Don Ashby echoed Mr. Puzey's previous positive comments about Roy and spoke in support of competitive wages for City employees. He said that based on his professional experience in accounting, he could tell that several City positions could earn substantially more elsewhere, and he further noted that inflation had reduced City employees' purchasing power over time. Mr. Ashby also expressed support the Complex and Parks and Recreation programs, especially the opportunities they provided for youth and families.

Bryanna Human presented written notices to the Councilmembers and several City officials that discussed Constitutional and private property rights. She spoke about the importance of Constitutional rights, and asked rhetorically where in the Constitution it allowed for public servants to use taxpayer's money for programs such as the Complex and Aquatic Center.

Shelley Polston continued Ms. Human's comments regarding Constitutional rights. She argued that government could not interfere with the use of private property without due process, and called on the Councilmembers to immediately cease any actions that violated these rights. Mrs. Polston said that the Council needed to show their Constitutional authority if they took any actions that blocked people's rights to enjoy their private property. She said that if the Council failed to do this, she would construe their actions as malicious.

Brent Saxton agreed with Mrs. Polston and stated his opposition to the tax increase. He questioned why information that reduced the proposal from 55% to approximately 35% had not been presented earlier. He accused the Council of intentionally withholding information until this time in an effort to make themselves look better to the public. He also referenced new sales tax revenue and the planned fire department annexation, and asked the Councilmembers to present additional proposals for reducing the increase even more. Mr. Saxton objected to moving forward with COLAs and wage adjustments without first identifying other budget alternatives.

Larry Neal opposed the tax increase and discussed an example of a former neighbor who had been unable to remain in her home because of rising taxes on a fixed income. He expressed that he strongly supported Police and Fire services. He said that although he also valued the Complex, he believed the City could find operational efficiencies. Mr. Neal urged the Council to review the budget line by line for waste before increasing taxes.

Garrett Chaston reiterated previous concerns about the effect of the increase on residents who were already struggling to afford basic necessities. He objected to comparisons between the proposed monthly tax increase and the cost of a soda or coffee. He felt this comparison was unfair, and he further argued that for some families this same amount represented the cost of food and as such, should not be treated as insignificant.

Shannon Jackson voiced her strong opposition to the tax increase and emphasized the financial pressure it could place on elderly residents, young families, and working households. She urged the Council to consider reductions and other solutions rather than repeatedly relying on tax increases. Mrs. Jackson also called for greater transparency and long-term planning. She lastly questioned whether the City would face another substantial increase the following year.

Melissa Conchley cited some publicly available salary information about Roy City staff, and she questioned whether City compensation levels justified the proposed increase. She also worried that residents would face additional costs through the fire department annexation. Mrs. Conchley suggested increasing memberships and improving advertising for the Complex and Parks and Recreation programs, so that more residents would use City amenities and generate additional revenue.

Clark Roberts said he supported adequate funding for Police and Fire, but was concerned about a prior COLA that had been implemented before residents were asked for input on the current budget. He then discussed beautification issues, including damaged above-ground utility pedestals and weeds on properties acquired by UDOT along 3500 South. Mr. Roberts asked the City to encourage utility companies to place equipment underground when possible, and to work with UDOT on property maintenance.

Jessica Fowler echoed previous comments that City government should operate within financial constraints, just like households and businesses had to do. She described the significant costs faced by her family business and pointed out that they could not simply pass every increase on to their customers. Mrs. Fowler supported higher pay for rank-and-file police officers and firefighters, but did not support high salaries at the upper end of staff. She summarized that the property tax burden had become onerous.

Alex [no last name] reiterated concerns about relying on tax increases instead of reducing expenses. He supported maintaining the Complex because of its benefits to schools and the community, but suggested there be a modest membership or family fee to help users contribute to its operating costs. He urged the Council to look for solutions that would not just postpone the City's financial problems, but actually solve them in the long term.

Victor Chaston criticized the positions and conduct of several members of the Council. He felt that they had not adequately represented residents who opposed higher taxes. He praised Councilmember Saxton for opposing the increase. Mr. Chaston believed the proposed tax increase demonstrated a willingness of the Council to continue increasing taxes in future years, and worried that this issue would only get worse.

Laura Johnston said she believed residents and City officials needed to work together to improve Roy City. She expressed respect for those serving on the Council. She said she trusted elected officials to make decisions that required expertise she did not have, and stated that she supported the proposed tax increase.

Rick Hadley described his experience operating a landscaping business and maintaining a large number of properties with his own equipment. He suggested that the City examine whether contracting some parks maintenance could reduce equipment and personnel costs. Mr. Hadley encouraged the Council to consider private-sector bidding as one possible way to save money.

Trisha Hill said she had entered the meeting strongly opposed to the increase but felt the reduced proposal of approximately 34% was reasonable. She supported paying police and firefighters competitively, but still wanted the City to keep looking for additional cuts. Mrs. Hill also suggested seeking input from youth and adults about new fee-based activities that could increase use of the Complex. She lastly expressed appreciation for Councilmember Saxton's responsiveness to her and other residents.

Kate Turner said she had initially been alarmed by the size of the proposed increase and reported that she had contacted a Councilmember to better understand the budget discussion. She explained that after asking questions and learning more about the City's reasoning, she now supported the tax increase. Mrs. Turner thanked the Council for the time spent on the issue and for hearing residents with differing opinions.

Marlaine Scott reiterated her opposition to the tax increase, and said that even the reduced proposal remained too high. She described significant financial and medical expenses in her household and expressed concern about being able to remain in her home on a fixed income. Mrs. Scott urged the City to budget within its means and also thanked City emergency personnel for the service they had provided her family in the past.

Darrin Albright reiterated concerns that the City was continuing to postpone underlying budget problems and felt that residents needed more transparent information about long-term plans. He questioned whether the fire department annexation would produce meaningful savings once Weber Fire District taxes were included and argued that wage increases should be focused more heavily on lower-paid employees. Mr. Albright further opined that current Councilmembers shared responsibility for past budget decisions, and expressed concern about perceived communication problems among members of the Council.

Dan Johnston spoke in support of the tax increase and said competitive compensation was important for all City employees, not only Police and Fire. He emphasized the work performed by employees who maintain parks, streets, and other City services. Mr. Johnston also supported keeping the Complex and parks due to the recreational opportunities and open space they provided for children and adults.

Carl [no last name] said he believed the City was “top-heavy” and felt the Council should be more willing to say no to expenditures and compensation increases. He expressed strong support for police and fire services, although he questioned whether higher-paid positions in the City should receive the same increases as lower-paid employees. He urged the Council to focus reductions at the upper end of the organization.

Pat Pangoplos echoed her husband’s previous comments about making personal sacrifices when income did not increase and urged the City to look internally for additional savings. She said her family had reduced expenses and taken additional work when necessary, rather than expecting more income. Mrs. Pangoplos also commented on what she perceived to be differences in the different Councilmembers’ attentiveness to supportive and critical public comments.

Leon Wilson spoke in favor of competitive wages for City employees. He argued that underpaying staff could cost the City more over time by increasing turnover. He also described Parks and Recreation services as essential to community cohesion and quality of life, particularly for youth and seniors. Mr. Wilson opposed selling parks or eliminating community events and said he was willing to pay the cost of maintaining those services.

Lilian [no last name] opposed the tax increase. She said she worked full time and overtime while carefully budgeting household expenses. She expressed concern about future increases as she approached retirement and said residents should not continually be asked to cover growing costs. She suggested user fees for the Complex and additional business development as strategies to reduce the tax increase.

Kevin Homer spoke about limited government and the principle of taxpayer consent. He stated that he did not support either the original increase or the reduced proposal, and argued that government should not continually expand through higher taxation. Mr. Homer said he supported and appreciated Councilmember Saxton’s effort to identify alternative solutions and find a lower tax increase.

Geoffrey Cox said he had previously provided the Council with a written list of budget and revenue suggestions and had not received a response. He suggested converting part of an underused park into a cemetery or mausoleum as a potential revenue source. He asked why local schools used aquatic facilities outside Roy, rather than the City's facilities, and he felt this undermined the alleged advantage of having the Aquatic Center in the first place. Mr. Cox also expressed that he felt additional reductions and revenue ideas could have been identified more quickly by the Council.

Rob Simpson discussed the operating deficit of the Complex and compared it to the financial expectations placed on a private business. He debated the value of paying taxes to subsidize the facility while residents also paid membership and program fees, and he reiterated earlier comments that the Complex needed better marketing. Mr. Simpson felt the facility should be closed, or at least substantially changed if it could not increase participation and revenue.

Greg LaRue said that he supported police and firefighters. He felt that compensation should be based on job requirements and performance, rather than trying to match neighboring cities. He thanked Councilmember Saxton for attempting to fix the budget crisis, and accused the other Councilmembers of not caring about what happened to the City. He criticized many of the City's spending practices, particularly the purchase of expensive vehicles and fleet replacement. He agreed with previous comments that the organization was too top-heavy. Mr. LaRue urged the City to reduce higher-level expenses so lower-paid employees could be compensated without placing additional pressure on residents with fixed incomes.

Quaid Cole opposed the tax increase and cited examples of City spending that he believed were inefficient, including sidewalk work, vehicles, and Roy Days expenses. He shared a recent example about a torn-up sidewalk near his home to illustrate his point. He felt that the City was not focused on the things that needed to be fixed and were misusing the money that they had. He expressed concern that rising taxes would make it more difficult for older residents and young families to remain in Roy. Mr. Cole supported preserving community amenities such as the Complex but wanted the City to improve how it prioritized and delivered services.

Eric [last name unclear] complained that he felt public comments had little influence on the City's decisions and he felt that the taxes were going to be increased regardless of what the majority of residents wanted. He voiced his opposition to the proposed increase. He discussed the cumulative taxes he paid through property, sales, vehicle registration, and other sources and questioned where additional increases would end. He believed that property taxes as coercive because failure to pay could ultimately jeopardize homeownership and urged the City to find another solution.

Deputy City Recorder Garcilazo reported as of 8:00 pm, there were no hands raised on Zoom and no online written comments had been left in the Q&A section.

City Recorder Fowers then read the following written comments that had been submitted by email to the admin@royutah.gov email, so that they could be entered into the public comment record.

City Recorder Fowers first read a comment from Christine Lewis, which read:

"First and foremost, I would like my comment to be read at the meeting tonight. Thank you. Since I am not able to attend the Truth and Taxation meeting tonight, I am sending this email and would greatly appreciate it if it would be read during the meeting. I am a retired small business owner of 38 years and I fully understand how important it is to balance a budget. The claim has been made that the Council and Mayor inherited the problem that you are addressing tonight. Let me be very clear, many of you on the Council, including the Mayor, have served on previous City Councils over the last 10 years. You have not inherited the problems. You have created them and kicked the can down the road for many years. There seems to only be one person on the City Council, Brian Saxton, who is actually using some common sense and listening to residents of Roy City. Many of us who are paying attention notice that. Thank you, Brian. Things have been suggested over the years on ways to save money and trim the budget. There's a lot of overspending and there's a lot of fat in the budget. One such example is the IT person, whoever that is, is a City employee and drives an $80,000 SUV. I have worked for two neighboring cities. Neither of those have an IT person as an employee. It is a contracted position. Another thing that has been brought to my attention about the $80,000 vehicle is that it was needed because he couldn't put a ladder in his Ford Pinto. A much less expensive way to go about this would be to buy a ladder for each building he has to go to. Again, just another example of how government does it the expensive way and the private sector does it the logical and cost-effective way. Another way the City could save money is doing it like most of all our neighboring cities do it as far as their fleet. Whoever came up with the idea of leasing vehicles obviously wasn't too bright. I could go on and on, but it always seems to fall on deaf ears. Please trim your budget, cut out all the fat and unnecessary things, and learn how to live within your means. Thank you." City Recorder Fowers next read a written comment from Dennis and Robyn Barney: "We would like this read at the meeting. We appreciate Roy City Council for their efforts to manage the budget and keep the City functioning properly. We support them in what they need to do to continue to manage the City budget. Thank you."

City Recorder Fowers then read a written comment from Emily and Phil Atkinson, which read:

"Hello. My husband and I are longtime residents of Roy, 20-plus years, and we see the stretched resources in our City. We see the need for a significant investment into our community. We see the City Council working hard to show that need and the data to back it up. We see loud opponents crying foul with no realistic alternatives offered, seemingly only intending to cause drama in our community. In Copenhagen, Denmark, the tax rates are nearly double what the average city in the U.S. has. Keeping this in mind, it's hard to imagine a happy society with such high tax rates. However, reality isn't so simple. Denmark consistently ranks amongst the top, number three currently, for happiest citizens, while the U.S. is currently 23rd. Why would a society be so happy to pay up to 55% tax rate? Looking into it, they rank so happy because they invest in themselves and their communities. Please see this article for more. It's from worldhappiness.report/news, 'Why Finland and Denmark are Happier Than the U.S.' My husband and I are for the large increase and investment in our taxes for our City that has been recommended by those who've done and seen the research. Thank you for working so hard to explain and explain and explain again to residents who are determined to ignorantly misunderstand and misrepresent what's happening and what's needed until we all understand that it's important that we work towards a better, healthier community. Thank you."

City Recorder Fowers next read a written comment from Mavanee Espinoza, which read: "I am unable to attend the meeting tonight and I am voting against raising housing taxes." City Recorder Fowers noted that the remainder of Ms. Espinoza's email contained personal information that would not be read into the record. City Recorder Fowers then read a written comment from Lisa Hatch, which read:

"Good morning. I'm not able to attend the meeting tonight, but I want this message read into record at the meeting. My name is Lisa Hatch and I have lived in Weber County for 25 years during my life and most recently five in Roy. I have served eight years as a town council member in Colorado and can tell you by experience that a large tax increase can be devastating to the property owners and the businesses, especially small businesses. Property owners may lose their homes. Small and large businesses may be forced to leave and new businesses may choose to go elsewhere with the 54% tax increase. That is simply too much. We're all struggling with the high inflation as of late. I do understand the need to pay competitive wages. I believe in taking care of employees because they are your greatest asset. However, I feel it is irresponsible in the City of Roy to impose this level of tax increase because of poor prior planning. I am against any large increase at one time. Large in my definition is 10% or more. I suggest you first get creative as you reevaluate more closely the following areas. Number one, all revenue sources to see if some adjustments can be done here. Number two, evaluate other employee benefits that are unique or better than the companies or cities that your employees choose over Roy City that you can add either without increasing taxes or not increasing more than 10%. Number three, research all possible state and federal programs to save you money in other areas to leave more money for employees. Number four, if possible, do more work in-house and less contracted work; find a good balance. Number five, evaluate the work environment. Are you a fair, friendly, and fun employer? How can you stand out from others? Again, please, for the sake of Roy City and for all residents and business owners, do not increase taxes more than five to 7% every two years. Still, this would be two times more than average wage or COLA for your residents. We cannot afford a 55% increase. Thank you for considering the ideas I've given you. You must find a way."

City Recorder Fowers then reported as of 8:09 PM there were no additional written comments that had been received by email and still no hands raised or written comments received on Zoom.

Mayor Jackson closed the floor for public comment.

Councilmember Sphar motioned to exit the Public Hearing and move into their discussion in consideration of Resolution 26-24. Councilmember Wilson second the motion. The roll call votes are as follows:

Councilmember Hulbert	_X_ "Aye"	___ "Nay"	___ "Excused"
Councilmember Jackson	_X_ "Aye"	___ "Nay"	___ "Excused"
Councilmember Saxton	_X_ "Aye"	___ "Nay"	___ "Excused"
Councilmember Sphar	_X_ "Aye"	___ "Nay"	___ "Excused"
Councilmember Wilson	_X_ "Aye"	___ "Nay"	___ "Excused"

F. <u>Action Items</u>

1. Consideration of Resolution 26-24; Consideration of proposed additional $2,807,745 in property tax for employee wages and revenue shortfall and approval of A Resolution of the Roy City Council Adopting the Final Annual Budget for the Fiscal Year 2027 Commencing upon final approval from the Utah State Tax Commission and Ending June 30, 2027; and Setting the 2026 Certified Tax Rate.
    - Roy City is considering a tax rate that exceeds the certified rate.
    - Roy City is considering increasing the certified tax rate to generate an additional $2,807,745 of ad valorem tax revenue. The purpose of the increase is for:
        1. To balance the budget due to a revenue shortfall resulting from the Cost-of-Living Adjustment given to employees in March 2026.
        2. To give a 2.8% Cost-of-Living Adjustment to employees in the 2027 fiscal year and;
        3. To give wage correction adjustments to all full-time employees.
    - The proposed tax rate increase is approximately 54.94%.

Mayor Jackson expressed that Roy City was fortunate to have dedicated and experienced employees. She said the goal of the proposed wage adjustments was not to make Roy the highest-paying city in the area, just to bring their employees' compensation closer to competitive levels. She acknowledged that higher taxes were difficult for residents and said the Council had reviewed alternatives in an effort to balance the tax burden with the need to retain employees and maintain City services.

Councilmember Jackson summarized a budget presentation that she had previously given at another Council meeting. She first reviewed property tax relief programs available through Weber County and clarified that changes in assessed property values did not automatically increase the amount of property tax revenue received by the City. She then reviewed the alternative property tax impact schedule. She explained that the proposed increase was intended to fund full-time employee wages and wage corrections.

Councilmember Jackson next reviewed prior budget reductions and the limits on how different City funds could be used. She discussed operational cuts made by multiple departments and explained that personnel represented the largest portion of the General Fund. She stated that eliminating individual programs generally produced relatively small savings. She provided more detail about this point, and explained that closing the Complex would reduce the average household's monthly increase by approximately \$2.78, and eliminating all recreation programs and selling all parks would reduce it by approximately \$9.93. Councilmember Jackson opined that losing all of these services would not be worth the savings.

Councilmember Jackson further discussed staffing in the City. She pointed out that Roy operated with relatively lean staffing compared with similar cities. She reviewed the history of the City's property tax increases and compared it with other municipalities. She suggested that the City start with bringing employee wages to the market average and then use smaller inflationary increases in future years, rather than allowing wages to fall behind and requiring larger catch-up increases.

Councilmember Wilson discussed that she had spent extensive time reviewing all elements of the budget, including employee positions, expenses, revenue sources, programs, and possible cuts. She said the City had already eliminated positions and made substantial cuts, and she stated they were now at a point where making further cuts would provide limited savings and reduce needed services. Councilmember Wilson also discussed employee turnover, reporting that turnover in several departments was substantially above a typical municipal rate. She added that the cost of recruitment and training new employees made continued turnover very expensive.

Councilmember Wilson explained that the goal of the revised budget proposal was to bring full-time City employees to the median market wage and reduce turnover. She stated that the revised amount needed was approximately \$1.751 Million, which equated to a 34.29% property tax increase. She explained that this represented about \$133 per year for the average household in Roy City. She explained that the reduction from the original proposal of 55% was due to the fire department annexation, Roy Days reductions, additional School Resource Officer revenue, and new property tax growth. She again directed residents to County property tax relief programs.

City Recorder Fowers then reported that as of 8:49 PM, upon logging out of the Zoom meeting, there were three additional emails that had been received in time that just updated to the inbox and should be read into the public record.

Councilmember Jackson motioned to re-enter a Public Hearing for the limited purpose of having City Recorder read the three received emails so they can be entered on the record. Councilmember Hulbert second the motion. The roll call votes are as follows:

Councilmember Hulbert	_X_ "Aye"	___ "Nay"	___ "Excused"
Councilmember Jackson	_X_ "Aye"	___ "Nay"	___ "Excused"
Councilmember Saxton	_X_ "Aye"	___ "Nay"	___ "Excused"
Councilmember Sphar	_X_ "Aye"	___ "Nay"	___ "Excused"
Councilmember Wilson	_X_ "Aye"	___ "Nay"	___ "Excused"

Seth Jensen –
City Recorder Fowers read the following emails aloud for the public record:

From Seth Jensen:

"Please read these comments in the public record or the public comment period this evening. Thank you. I support the tax increase and the proposed budget. My taxes will go up about $164 or $14 a month, and that is probably about average for Roy households. That is not nothing, but it is manageable. If we are not willing to pay for quality City employees, especially law enforcement, we should expect to move in the direction of lawlessness and anarchy. Furthermore, if we pay employees a competitive salary, we will be relieved of the burden and cost of so much turnover. Other comments: We should expect a County tax increase to pay for the Fire Department. We should definitely keep our City parks and manage them with City employees. I hope those who express public comments this evening do so in a respectful and civil manner. Thanks to the Mayor and the City Council for serving Roy City."

City Recorder Fowers next read a written comment from Bryan Nay, which read as follows:

"Good evening, Mayor and Council. My name is Brian Nay and I am a Roy resident here in Roy. I appreciate the hard work of our City employees. That said, I strongly oppose the proposed approximate 55% property tax increase that would raise nearly $2.8 million, primarily for wage corrections, a new COLA, and backfilling last year's COLA. A 55% jump is extreme, far larger than Roy's recent increases, and places a permanent new burden on homeowners and businesses. For a typical home, it means over $200 more a year. Many residents simply cannot absorb that on top of everything else rising, including myself. The packet itself shows a clearer path. The alternative that accounts for the fire annexation, other revenue changes, and new growth drops the ask to roughly 34%. Even that should be scrutinized. Temporary use of fund balance while those structural changes take effect is better than locking in higher tax rates forever. Wage adjustments of this size also need clear public data on market competitiveness and retention, data that isn't clearly laid out for residents here. Please reject the full increase, prioritize efficiency, use the lower alternative or less, and protect residents from an outsized permanent tax hike. Thank you."

City Recorder Fowers lastly read a written comment from Kiefer Mogensen, which read:

"Hello, my name is Kiefer Mogensen and I am submitting a written comment for the Roy City Truth and Taxation Public Hearing statement. I refuse to believe that the reduction from a 55% to a 34.5% hasn't been the plan all along. After last year's 28% debacle, I'm sure that the Council decided if they just propose a high enough number to begin with, they can swoop in at the last minute with a reduction to a paltry 34.5% and feel like they really saved the day. I watched the Truth and Taxation meeting last year and the vast majority of public statements opposed the tax increase. When the 55% increase was proposed earlier this year, the vast majority of public statements opposed the tax increase, but I have no doubt that when this meeting concludes, the

Council will vote for the proposed increase because you really don't care about what we have to say. All this meeting does is fulfill a requirement to levy whatever tax rate you deem fit. Shame on all of you."

Councilmember Sphar motioned to exit the Public Hearing and resume their discussion in consideration of Resolution 26-24. Councilmember Wilson seconded the motion. The roll call votes were as follows:

Councilmember Hulbert	_X_ "Aye"	___ "Nay"	___ "Excused"
Councilmember Jackson	_X_ "Aye"	___ "Nay"	___ "Excused"
Councilmember Saxton	_X_ "Aye"	___ "Nay"	___ "Excused"
Councilmember Sphar	_X_ "Aye"	___ "Nay"	___ "Excused"
Councilmember Wilson	_X_ "Aye"	___ "Nay"	___ "Excused"

Councilmember Hulbert noted that several of the suggestions raised during the public hearing were already being pursued by the City. She encouraged residents to contact Councilmembers directly if they wanted responses to specific questions. She reviewed the City's history of COLAs and merit increases, and explained that the long periods without adjustments had contributed to the need to make larger catch-up increases. Councilmember Hulbert also compared Roy's current tax rate with comparably sized cities in Weber County. She also pointed out that the City's tax rate would be required to decrease after the fire department annexation.

Councilmember Saxton reiterated that he had opposed the original 55% increase and said he also could not support the 34% alternative. He presented a proposal for a 27% increase, which he said would generate approximately $1.3 Million in new revenue. He stated that his plan would require about $375,000 from the fund balance. He explained that the proposal was intended to reduce the immediate increase but would still address the employee wage gaps, especially for police and fire employees.

Councilmember Saxton also expressed frustration that it had not been made clear to him before the meeting that Staff had calculated an alternative of about 34% compared to the original figure of about 55%. Councilmember Jackson responded that the 34.29% figure had been developed by Staff and had not been privately adopted as the Council's formal decision.

The Councilmembers discussed the one-on-one meetings that had occurred during the budget process. The Council acknowledged the legal difficulty of discussing detailed proposals among multiple Councilmembers outside an open meeting.

Councilmember Jackson asked how the $375,000 use of fund balance money in Councilmember Saxton's proposal could be sustained in later years, pointing out that the wage adjustments would be ongoing expenses. City Manager Andrews added additional context to note that the fund balance itself would not have to be replenished immediately, but the higher wages would continue into the following year and would require another revenue source.

Councilmember Saxton acknowledged that another tax increase could be necessary the following year under his proposal, but still felt that his plan was better than the alternative. Councilmember Jackson reiterated that this year's tax increase was part of a two-year plan and attempted to assuage Councilmember Saxton's concerns about this increase being historical. Councilmember Jackson said that with Councilmember Saxton's plan, it was certain that the following year they would need to do another tax increase.

Councilmember Sphar added that the fire department annexation would impact their tax rate as well. He discussed the effect the fire department annexation would have on future tax-rate percentages and noted that the possibility that a relatively modest dollar increase could appear as a much larger percentage after the City's tax base changed.

Councilmember Sphar then discussed how he wanted the City to move toward smaller inflationary adjustments, rather than having to do large reactionary increases. Councilmember Sphar appreciated that previous Councils had made the best decisions with the information that they had at the time and could not have anticipated the changes brought by things like COVID-19 and international wars. He expressed concern about committing recurring expenses against revenue the City had not yet received. Councilmember Sphar emphasized that increasing the tax rate was one of the hardest decisions he had ever needed to make.

Councilmembers Jackson, Hulbert, and Wilson echoed Councilmember Sphar's concern about using one-time funds for ongoing wages. Councilmember Jackson emphasized the point that none of them knew what would happen the following year that they might need money for. Councilmember Wilson expressed surprise that Councilmember Saxton had been unaware of the changing tax rate figure.

Councilmember Wilson proposed removing the COLA for the Mayor and Council from the revised plan. She stated that this would lower the tax increase from 34.29% to approximately 34.25%. Mayor Jackson and the other Councilmembers indicated that they were willing to forgo the COLA. Councilmember Sphar noted that the Councilmembers had not received their increase in six years. Councilmember Jackson said that although they had not further reductions at that time, the City would continue reviewing contracts, programs, and other opportunities to reduce costs.

Councilmember Jackson explained her reservations about Councilmember Saxton's plan. She said that although she did not think the dollar figure that Councilmember Saxton had proposed to take out of the fund balance was unreasonable, she was worried about the long-term financial impacts and the premise of using one-time funds. Councilmember Hulbert agreed with Councilmember Jackson's assessments.

Councilmember Saxton reiterated that he remained opposed to the increase and emphasized the number of public comments that had opposed it. Councilmember Saxton said that he had promised the public that he would do everything in his power to prevent the increase. Mayor Jackson replied that she had never supported the original approximately 55% increase either, and reported that she had heard from many residents who did not attend the meeting but were willing to pay a smaller increase if it allowed the City to retain competent employees and continue providing services. She said she preferred correcting wages in the current year rather than relying on fund balance and potentially facing another substantial adjustment the following year.

Councilmember Jackson calculated that the difference between the 27% proposal and the revised 34% proposal equated to a difference of less than $2.50 per month for the average household. She said she saw value in completing the full wage correction in the current year, rather than creating an ongoing revenue shortfall for the following year.

Councilmember Wilson moved to approve Resolution 26-24 with a tax rate of 34.24%, striking the COLA for the Council and Mayor, approving the 2.8% COLA for employees and providing the wage correction adjustment to full-time employees as determined by the salary survey; Councilmember Sphar seconded the motion to approve. The roll call votes are as follows:

Councilmember Hulbert	**_X_ "Aye"**	**___ "Nay"**	**___ "Excused"**
Councilmember Jackson	**_X_ "Aye"**	**___ "Nay"**	**___ "Excused"**
Councilmember Saxton	**___ "Aye"**	**_X_ "Nay"**	**___ "Excused"**
Councilmember Sphar	**_X_ "Aye"**	**___ "Nay"**	**___ "Excused"**
Councilmember Wilson	**_X_ "Aye"**	**___ "Nay"**	**___ "Excused"**

Resolution 26-24 was Adopted with a vote of 4:1.

G. Adjournment

Councilmember Hulbert motioned to adjourn the meeting; Councilmember Saxton seconded the motion; all present members voted in favor and the meeting adjourned at 9:54 PM.

Ann Jackson, Mayor

Attest:

Brittany Fowers, City Recorder