Manti City Council Regular Meeting

MINUTES

AUGUST 12, 2026
6:30 PM

MANTI CITY BUILDING
50 SOUTH MAIN STREET

MEETING CALLED BY	Mayor Mary Wintch
TYPE OF MEETING	Regular Council Meeting
ATTENDEES	Councilmembers: Meagan Johnson, Mary Pipes, Jennifer Christiansen, and Brian Francois City Planner: McKay Muhlestein City Recorder: Matt Gray
ABSENT	AJ Mower, City Manager: Jason Brown
WELCOME	Mayor Mary Wintch
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE	Led by Councilmember Brian Francois

Regular Meeting

ITEM 1	**Declaration of Conflicts of Personal Interest**
The meeting began with Mayor Wintch asking the council if there were any agenda items that needed to be disclosed concerning conflicts of interest. Councilmember Mary Pipes noted that she was part of the Historic Preservation Commission, and was unsure if this would be considered a conflict of interest.	

ITEM 2	**Approval of Recent Council Meeting Minutes, July 15, 2026**
Mayor Wintch spoke regarding the minutes for the Council meeting on July 15, 2026. She asked if there were any corrections or modifications needed for the regular City Council meeting minutes. There were no corrections noted. Mayor Wintch called for a motion to approve the minutes for the July 15, 2026 meeting. Councilmember Brian Francois made the motion and Councilmember Jennifer Christiansen seconded the motion. Council members voting Aye: Meagan Johnson, Mary Pipes, Jennifer Christiansen, and Brian Francois. Council members voting Nay: None.	
ACTION TAKEN	
Approval of the City Council minutes from the July 15, 2026, meeting.	

ITEM 3	**Approval of Payment Report (Bills) July 16-31, 2026**

Mayor Wintch proceeded by asking if there were any questions regarding the current bills. Noting that there were no questions, Mayor Wintch called for a motion to approve signing of the bills from July 16-31, 2026. Councilmember Jennifer Christiansen made the motion and Councilmember Meagan Johnson seconded the motion. Council members voting Aye: Meagan Johnson, Mary Pipes, Jennifer Christiansen, and Brian Francois. Council members voting Nay: None.

ACTION TAKEN

Approval of the bills from July 16-31, 2026.

ITEM 4	**2027 Municipal Election Discussion - Draft Interlocal Cooperation Agreement between Sanpete County and Manti City**

Mayor Wintch turned the time over to Heather Piper from the Sanpete County Clerk's office to discuss the Interlocal Cooperation Agreement. This agreement is between Sanpete County and Manti City regarding the upcoming 2027 election cycle. Ms. Piper explained that city recorders are the official election officers for municipal elections, while the county helps manage the technical side of elections. She stated that Sanpete County takes care of ballot printing and mailing, signature verification, vote tabulation, election audits, and security procedures. The cost of elections is increasing from $2.25 to $4.00 per registered voter. The increase has been caused by rising costs of postage, equipment, staffing, and mandated security requirements. Manti currently has about 2,034 active registered voters. Ms. Piper recommended that Manti City budget accordingly for both a primary and general election just in case a primary is triggered. She emphasized that city participation is still essential even though the county takes on many of the responsibilities. Ms. Piper stated that the city is still responsible for poll worker training, ballot pickup and delivery, public notices, candidate disclosures, ballot review, and keeping elected official information updated. Council members asked questions about the agreement language, ballot boxes, and whether an uncontested race still appears on the general ballot. Ms. Piper clarified those points and encouraged continued communication and training.

ITEM 5	**Urban Deer Removal Program**

Mayor Wintch turned the time over to Rod Nielsen of the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources to discuss renewal of Manti's urban deer removal program. The program allows the city to remove urban deer — meaning deer that live in town year-round — as needed. The city does not have to remove deer, but renewing the agreement keeps the option available. Discussion regarding the program end date was discussed. The document listed that removals could occur through October 31, but Mr. Nielsen said

this was an error and that the intended cutoff is October 15, 2026. The reason is that after mid-October, migratory deer from the mountains begin coming into town, and DWR wants the program to target only resident urban deer, not healthy migratory deer. The council discussed the currently estimated 200 urban deer in the city, the difficulty of trapping deer, why only a small number are removed each year, whether archery removal is allowed, what residents can do about aggressive deer, and how to protect gardens and landscaping. Mr. Nielsen suggested residents call the DWR if there is a public safety concern involving aggressive deer. For garden protection, they said an 8-foot fence is the surest option, but also recommended motion-activated "scarecrow sprinkler" and consistently scaring deer away so they do not become comfortable in yards. Mayor Wintch called for a motion to approve the urban deer removal program. Councilmember Brian Francois made the motion and Councilmember Mary Pipes seconded the motion. Council members voting Aye: Meagan Johnson, Mary Pipes, Jennifer Christiansen, and Brian Francois. Council members voting Nay: None.

ACTION TAKEN	

Approval of the Urban Deer Removal Program.

ITEM 6	**Monthly Financial Report (July 2026)**

Mayor Wintch asked City Planner McKay Muhlestein to discuss the Manti City financial report in City Manager Jason Brown's absence. The July 2026 Financial Statement, attached to and made part of the minutes was discussed. Mr. Muhlestein reported that 8% of the budget year is complete with total budgeted revenues realized at 5% and total budgeted expenses coming in at 8%. He then reviewed the Enterprise and Special Revenue Funds with water revenue at 1% of budget and expenses at 0%, sewer department budgeted revenues at 8% and expenses at 3%, and electric fund budgeted revenues at 9% and expenses at 7%.

ITEM 7	**Manti City Parks & Recreation - Duncan Hill Discussion**

Mayor Wintch turned some time to Recreation Director Luke Rowley who presented a proposal to use a $5,000 grant to begin developing a disc golf course on Duncan Hill. The plan is to start with nine holes, while having the full 18-hole course designed from the beginning. A nonprofit called Elevate Utah would help design the course, signage, and layout. Mr. Rowley said the organization has experience designing major courses and has already helped secure 17 donated baskets, worth roughly $5,000.00.
The course would begin near the flat parking area east of the temple and climb up Duncan Hill. The first two holes would be more difficult because of the climb, but the rest would be on top of the hill with scenic views. Important items discussed included the need to have the grant completed by around mid-October, so work needs to move

quickly. The first phase would use temporary turf tee pads instead of concrete so locations can be adjusted after seeing how people use the area. The course would be designed to work alongside future walking and biking trails. Volunteers and disc golf enthusiasts are expected to help with installation. The city may need to contribute about $1,000 in cash over and above the grant money.

Council members asked about parking, road access, labor, and whether the hill could still support multiple uses. Mr. Rowley and supporters said the disc golf course could coexist well with bike and walking trails. Several residents spoke in favor of the idea, saying disc golf is family-friendly and accessible to many ages and skill levels. No final vote was taken, but the council seemed generally supportive while wanting to understand logistics.

ITEM 8	**Historic Preservation Draft Ordinance and Commission Update**

Mayor Wintch turned the time over to City Planner McKay Muhlestein and Councilmember Mary Pipes who gave an update on the recent Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) meeting. Councilmember Pipes said the commission has a strong group of members with experience in historic homes, art, pioneer history, and preservation work. The commission is enthusiastic about using Manti's history to support tourism, economic development, and community identity. Mr. Muhlestein then explained that the city is working toward becoming a historically certified local government with the Utah State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) again, which would help with preservation efforts and access to resources. An ordinance to support that certification is expected to come before the council, at the next meeting. The HPC's initial goals include helping residents preserve historic properties, connecting property owners with funding or loans, promoting Manti's culture and heritage, supporting local businesses through preservation, and Main Street improvements. Ideas for community involvement included reinstitution of a traditional farmers market, historic barn tours, historic home or coach tours, better use of the Pioneer Heritage Gardens, local mural competitions, Christmas lights in the Pioneer Heritage Gardens. Councilmember Pipes also mentioned that Preservation Utah recently visited Manti and was very impressed by the city's historic homes and setting.

ITEM 9	**Continuing Business**

a. City Ordinance Corrections on rear-yard accessory buildings capacity

Administrative work for correction is being completed for the September 9, 2026 meeting.

b. Master Plan (General Plan) Update

City Planner McKay Muhlestein conducting community involvement surveys. A local Scout troop is helping him with his work. Residents were encouraged to complete the city survey available on manti.gov.

c. Veterans Memorial

Layout of the memorial is progressing.

d. Parks, Paths & Trails

The city is continuing work on the parks, paths, and trails master plan

e. Economic Development

Manti City is currently working on new projects.

f. e911 Rural Health Tax

Upcoming 911 rural health tax measure expected on the ballot. The Mayor and Councilmember Pipes emphasized that if voters do not approve it, residents may end up paying more.

ITEM 10	**Council Member Reports**

Council Member Francois

- Nothing to report.

Council Member Christiansen

- Gave a shout out for the Temple Ridge Campground, which received a $20,000 economic development grant from Sanpete County. She praised both the campground and the Chamber of Commerce for their work.

Council Member Mower

- Nothing to report.

Council Member Pipes

- Reminded council members to register for the Utah League conference in October before rates increase.
- Reported on a National League of Cities discussion about the 21st Century Rural Housing Act, which is intended to provide more flexibility and support for affordable housing, infrastructure, and housing programs.
- Attended an event honoring the legacy of Daniel Funk, who helped create Palisade reservoir using horse and mule power. She explained that Palisade reservoir is currently low because old tree roots have created seepage problems, but repairs are planned.

Council Member Johnson

- Nothing to report.

ITEM 11	**Public Comment**

Russ Hatch (Resident) – Identified himself as a member of the Constitution Party and said he was concerned about constitutional rights in relation to data collection associated with Flock cameras. He referenced a camera located near city hall and

Main Street Pizza and said the Sanpete County Sheriff's Office also has mobile equipment capable of similar data collection. Mr. Hatch provided articles and information for the council to review and expressed concern that some communities elsewhere have moved away from these cameras due to privacy concerns.
Susan Manning (Resident) – Discussed Fourth Amendment concerns and said the current camera system surveils people who are not criminals. She said she had collected 38 signatures so far opposing the cameras and intended to gather more. She asked the city council and mayor to tell the sheriff to remove the camera from Manti.
Helen Thurston (Resident) – She and her family are opposed to the Flock cameras, and that nearly everyone at a recent preparedness meeting also opposed them.
Nate Brown (Resident) – Thanked the city for how it handled a recent Facebook controversy about the 100 West sidewalks. He said the city's response was informative and avoided unnecessary online conflict. He also said he is an avid disc golfer and strongly supports the proposed course. He said disc golf naturally works well with walking and biking trails, and disc golfers are used to sharing space with other users.

ITEM 12	**Mayor Comments:**

Mayor Wintch began her comments regarding the LPC Housing and Land Use Advisory Subgroup meeting she had attended earlier that day. Mayor Wintch said impact fees are likely to be discussed again at the state level. An audit is expected before the legislative session to evaluate how cities use impact fees. She explained that Manti uses impact fees because new development creates the need for expanded infrastructure, such as additional water tanks, larger sewer pipes, and other utility improvements. She said current residents should not have to pay for infrastructure needed due to new development. Mayor Wintch mentioned discussion about developments that built their own roads below city standards and later wanted cities to take them over. She said one suggestion was to use an overlay or assessment structure so those developments pay for the improvements rather than shifting costs to other residents. She continued by stating that building inspections are expected to come up again at the Legislature. Builders are pushing to use their own building inspectors, which she compared to "the fox guarding the hen house." She also noted that there was discussion about using artificial intelligence for permitting. Other topics included annexation and funds available for housing infrastructure. Mayor Wintch mentioned that Herriman, Utah had received funding for smaller owner-occupied homes. She observed that simply allowing smaller lots does not always create affordable housing, because builders may still build large homes on small lots and sell them at high prices. Mayor Wintch concluded by reminding the council about the upcoming UMPA summer social.

ITEM 13	**Closed Session - for discussion**

Mayor Wintch wrapped the meeting up by calling for a motion to adjourn and said there would not be a need for a closed session. Councilmember Mary Pipes made the motion to adjourn, and was seconded by Councilmember Brian Francois. Council members voting Aye: Meagan Johnson, Mary Pipes, Jennifer Christiansen, and Brian Francois. Council members voting Nay: None.

Signing of bills and payroll occurred after adjournment.

ADJOURNED	8:00 P.M.
NEXT MEETING DATE	Regular Council Meeting – September 9, 2026

Mary Wintch, Mayor

Matt Gray, City Recorder