

**MURRAY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

Meeting Minutes

**Tuesday, June 27, 2023**

Murray City Hall, 10 East 4800 South, Poplar Conference Room, Murray, Utah 84107

**Attendance:**

Council Members and others:

Garry Hrechkosy – Chair	District #5
Phil Markham – Vice Chair	District #1
Pam Cotter	District #2
Rosalba Dominguez	District #3
Diane Turner	District #4

Brett Hales	Mayor	Jennifer Kennedy	City Council Executive Director
Brenda Moore	Finance Director	Pattie Johnson	Council Administration
Emily Barton	Finance Director	Brooke Smith	City Recorder
G.L. Critchfield	City Attorney	Joey Mittelman	Fire Chief
Kim Sorensen	Parks and Recreation Director	Steve Roberson	Deputy Fire Marshal
Loran Pasalich	Murray Chamber of Commerce	Citizens	

**Conducting:** Council Member Hrechkosy called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

**Approval of Minutes:** None Scheduled.

**Discussion Items:**

- **Amend the regular meeting schedule of the Murray City Council for calendar year 2023.**

City Council Executive Director Jennifer Kennedy said that due to recent adjustments to the 2023 Utah Municipal Election timetable and the need for the City to hold a Truth in Taxation meeting, changes were needed to the existing council meeting schedule. The following changes would be considered in the council meeting:

- Cancel the August 15, 2023 council meeting and schedule the Truth in Taxation meeting for August 22, 2023. The council meetings for August will be held on August 1 and August 24, 2023.
- Cancel the September 5, 2023 council meeting for the primary election. The council meetings for September will be held on September 12 and September 19, 2023.
- Cancel the November 21, 2023 council meeting for the general election. The November council meetings will be held on November 7 and November 14, 2023.
- Cancel the December 5, 2023 council meeting and move it to Wednesday, December 6, 2023. The December 12, 2023 meeting would remain the same.

In addition:

- Schedule a joint workshop with Millcreek City on August 24, 2023. Ms. Kennedy reported that Millcreek City requested a meeting with the Murray City Council. The purpose is to discuss future plans for the TRAX North Transit Station because both Murray and Millcreek own property in the Fireclay area.
- **City Council Travel Policy updates.**

Council Chair Garry Hrechkosy noted that since his initial proposal to update the Council Travel Policy, several discussions had occurred prompting other Council Members to submit proposals and amendments of their own to the current travel policy. He said as an elected official it was important

to be transparent about what the Council actually spends on travel.

He said his main reason for updating the policy was to bring all travel expenses into the City Council's travel budget. He felt this would bring clarity because some travel funding comes from other city department budgets. Also, to avoid unlimited spending, he proposed to implement an annual spending cap of up to \$7,500 per council member. Mr. Hrechkosy studied the cost of each conference that Council Members are allowed to attend, spoke to various legislators who attend one conference per year, compared travel budgets of other municipalities to the Council and evaluated past travel spending of the Council over the years. As a result, he found that the Council has a higher travel budget than most other city councils. In addition, with current inflation, a possible power rate increase and a possible property tax increase coming, he thought it would be prudent of them to adjust the current travel policy.

Ms. Turner felt there were no problems with the current travel policy and stated travel was a function of the Council. She expressed concern about having a predetermined amount of travel money because, as far as she knew, the Council has never exceeded their travel budget. She thought budgeting one amount for the whole Council to use was sufficient. She said not all Council Members go to every conference and she did not feel that it was one Council Members' role to determine the educational needs of another council member. She proposed a requirement that after educational travel a report be given publicly following any conference attendance.

Ms. Cotter suggested that before reimbursements not consistent with the travel policy be paid out, a majority vote by the Council be required in a public meeting. Mr. Hrechkosy agreed to include that in his update. Ms. Cotter discussed existing policy stating that Council Members may choose only one out of two power conferences held each year. Ms. Turner proposed that the option be stricken from the language so that Council Members could attend both power conferences if they desire.

Mr. Hrechkosy agreed the Council never exceeded the travel budget in the past, however he thought it would be easy to do because one current council member has already spent \$9,000 so far this year. He said if all Council Members did this, total spending would be \$54,000 which exceeds the set budget of \$35,000.

Ms. Turner asked what would happen if a Council Member attended a conference that resulted in going over the predetermined \$7,500. Mr. Hrechkosy said any amount spent over the \$7,500 would be paid back to the City. He pointed out that the Council also receives the highest council allowance of any city in the State. Ms. Cotter said taxpayer money should be spent in a frugal way and agreed due to current inflation and a possible power rate increase coming, the power department should not be paying for the council to travel. Mr. Markham agreed it was wise fiscal policy to have an established spending amount because open ended accounting was not wise. He suggested any money needed beyond the set spending limit would require consensus from the City Council. Mr. Hrechkosy said elected officials are a different entity from administrative employees who travel for learning. Ms. Turner disagreed and thought the set limit would discourage Council Members from becoming educated.

Ms. Dominguez proposed a \$9,500 spending cap per Council Member. She thought there should be no dictation about what conferences Council Members can attend. She did not oppose the \$7,500 but thought learning and gaining better understanding of any department in the City was beneficial. She noted other conferences not included in the given choices that might help them in the

legislative role and suggested making those exceptions.

Various edits were discussed regarding last minute travel needs critical to decision making that would require a public council meeting vote for extenuating circumstances. There was consensus to include the language in the travel policy update and that these expenditures would still come from the City Council Travel budget.

Ms. Cotter proposed a \$5,800 spending cap which totaled slightly under the existing \$35,000 travel budget. She stressed how the City has department directors who can educate the City Council after they attend conferences. Due to the possibility of a power rate increase, she was more comfortable with proposing a less amount than \$7,500.

Mr. Hrechkosy, Ms. Turner, and Ms. Cotter asked that their proposals move forward to the council meeting for a final vote.

**Adjournment:** 6:08 p.m.

**Pattie Johnson**  
**Council Office Administrator III**