



**MURRAY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**  
Meeting Minutes

**Tuesday, August 24, 2021  
Murray City Center**

5025 South State Street, Conference Room #107, Murray, Utah 84107

**Attendance:** Council Members and others:

Diane Turner – Chair	District #4
Brett Hales – Vice Chair	District #5
Kat Martinez	District #1
Dale Cox	District #2
Rosalba Dominguez	District #3

Blair Camp	Mayor	Jennifer Kennedy	City Council Director
Doug Hill	Chief Administrative Officer	Pattie Johnson	Council Administration
Jennifer Heaps	Chief Communications Officer	Crystal Brown	Council Office
Rob White	IT Director	Craig Burnett	Police Chief
Kristin Reardon	Police Department	Brooke Smith	City Recorder
Danny Hansen	IT Department	Robin Colton	Human Resources
Brenda Moore	Finance Director	Melinda Greenwood	CED Director
Residents			

**Conducting:** Ms. Turner called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

**Approval of Minutes:** Mixed-Use Workshop – June 29, 2021. Ms. Martinez motioned to approve, seconded by Mr. Hales. (All in favor 5-0)

**Discussion items:**

- **HB (House Bill) 244 bond parameters:** Ms. Moore presenting. This bill allows the City to receive funding of \$500,000 per year for the next 15 years for transportation projects. Included with the allocation was an offer to utilize State bonding capacities for issuing bonds; the \$500,000 would be applied as the bond payments. Instead, it was determined after a thorough analysis that to address costly street projects, a series of sales tax revenue bonds could be issued over time for a lesser interest rate. The City would use financial advisors Stifel, Nicolaus & Company, and Gilmore and Bell as bond counsel on the debt issuance project.

Ms. Moore said the reason to bond was not only because interest rates are so low, but to stay ahead of rising costs for material and labor, and to hedge against continued inflation. Currently the City has approximately \$10 million in street projects that are estimated to cost more than \$500,000 each, which is why bonding is proposed rather than saving multiple years of allocations to get these projects

accomplished; the annual funding of \$500,000 would still be allocated as bond payments.

Mr. Dougdale with Stifel, Nicolaus & Company confirmed very low interest rates and shared market information related to Series 2021 sales tax revenue bonds that the City would issue. Benchmark ratings within the tax-exempt bond market and market consensus yield curve projections were discussed. Graphs were analyzed related to 20-year AAA MMD yields, (Municipal Market Data); and the 10-year historical AAA MMD range was compared to current interest rates. The 2022-2026 Street Project Bond List was shared. (Attachment #1) He said Murray has a tremendous bonding history and reported with the current revenue stream, the City has \$125 million in bonding capacity. He commended Murray for its historical methodology in determining the best avenues for issuing bonds.

Summary of bond parameters:

- Principal Maximum Amount = \$ 6,750,000
- Maturity Term: 16 years
- Maximum Interest rate: 5% (Anticipated to be much lower.)
- Designated Officers: Mayor and Finance & Administration Director.

Ms. Turner asked the City's total in outstanding bonds. Mr. Dougdale replied \$10.5 million in outstanding principal and noted according to Standard and Poor's, the City has a tremendous bond rating of AA, which reflects that Murray has been debt adverse on the revenue stream. He discussed the bonding process and reviewed the timeline to do so. The Council would consider the resolution to approve the bond parameters during the September 7, 2021 council meeting.

- **FY 2021-2022 Budget Amendments:** Ms. Moore presenting. A budget opening would be required to address several changes to the budget. Ms. Moore provided detailed budget information and said it was standard practice to roll forward unfinished projects and specific items from the FY 2021 budget to the FY 2022 budget. (Attachment #2) Insurance adjustments due to open enrollment changes and new grant receipts were also included. A brief summary about why the rollforward process was necessary within the CIP fund (Capital Improvements Projects) was given. For example, ongoing projects have taken multiple years to accomplish, like a fire truck purchase, the Murray Park pavilions project, and resurfacing City parking lots. In other instances, funding would be transferred from reserves back into the CIP fund to allow department directors to appropriate new priorities. The Council would consider the budget amendments during the September 7, 2021 council meeting.

The following additional items were not included in the attached distributed document:

- Receive Grant Funding:
    - \$6,450: To purchase car cameras and camera storage supplies for the police department.
    - \$9,000: To reglaze windows in the Murray Mansion.
    - \$21,000: The library will purchase more electronic books.
  - \$30,000 from reserves: To correct error in the Streets- Fleet assessment.
  - \$50,000: Roll forward to Power Fund to complete power pole testing work. The project was overlooked.
- **Proposed changes to police officer salaries:** Mayor Camp and Chief Burnett presenting. Mayor Camp gave an overview to explain the current police force crisis. Due to retirements and job changes, police officers in surrounding cities including SLC (Salt Lake City) are leaving the police force in great number. The SLC Council recognized the dilemma to retain officers, so great pay increases were recently implemented for SLC police. West Valley City and other cities also boosted officer pay following the

SLC decision. Up until now SLC police pay was lagging behind Murray City, after Murray adopted a new step-plan program four years ago.

A spread sheet was shared to discuss what other agencies have done to retain officers by adjusting pay scales. (Attachment #3) Since then, Murray is now paying 15% below the average starting pay for a police officer. Top pay is sufficient, but to attract new officers and retain current officers, it is necessary to raise the lower end of the Murray police pay scale up to current market wages. The estimated cost to do so is approximately \$412,000. Last year the Murray police department turned back approximately \$500,000 in pay costs, so the request is to rollback funding from reserves to fund the police salary budget. The request would be included in a proposed budget amendment the Council would consider during the September 7, 2021 council meeting.

Chief Burnett confirmed other cities increased police pay within six weeks of SLC doing so; others will research competitive salary amounts. He reported currently Murray has two police vacancies that are \$4 below the average pay for starting wages. Also, Murray lost 12 police members in the last 18 months through retirements, resignations, and transfers; the majority were hired by other agencies. The biggest concern is with officers who have been employed with Murray for 0-10 years; they want to stay but will leave if offered better pay. He said it is imperative Murray do something quick to retain existing well-trained employees and help the City attract new employees. The increase would not affect redlined employees but meant to incentivize 30% of police staff with 0-5 years' experience who could leave.

Ms. Turner noted the cost to fund pay increases would offset officer training expenses. Chief Burnett confirmed one year of training is required before a vacancy is considered filled. Officers are paid during all training, so there is great loss when police leave for higher pay following training. Also, the force runs short while officers attend training; for example, currently nine officers are in training, which leaves the department with less detectives and patrol officers, and overtime expenses incur because existing officers cover needs as they wait for new officers to complete training. He reported the City has good quality people and is hopeful that by addressing the wage war quickly they can hold onto the good officers recently hired.

Mr. Hales agreed the City should retain good officers and understood the financial loss could be in the hundreds of thousands if not addressed. Chief Burnett said the increase would affect all sergeants in the City's police department and top pay levels would be reconsidered in the future.

Mr. Cox said if we are at the point of losing well experienced officers the City should act fast.

Ms. Dominguez expressed concern about ensuring protection for Murray's police officers and residents of the City. She felt besides monetary gain, a sense of value, protection and longevity should be sustained. Her desire is to see officers stay with Murray 20 to 30 years; she encouraged conversations to continue well-on before letting officers' leave.

Chief Burnett was appreciative and noted the many *We Love Our Police Officers* signs placed throughout the City; he confirmed the police department is in a good place with the community right now. He stressed the continued support of residents is what is needed; money matters, but it is essential knowing that the community cares about police officers.

Ms. Martinez believed the City must be competitive to provide the best police officers. She requested the Council be informed of the new pay level amounts made by cities that are still researching. The Chief would report back as wages continue to change.

**Announcements:** None.

**Adjournment:** 5:59 p.m.

**Pattie Johnson  
Council Office Administrator III**