



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

**Tuesday, February 1, 2022
Murray City Center**

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

Attendance: Council Members and others:

Kat Martinez – Chair District #1
Diane Turner – Vice Chair District #4
Open position not filled District #5
Pam Cotter District #2
Rosalba Dominguez District #3

Brett Hales	Mayor	Jennifer Kennedy	City Council Executive Director
Doug Hill	Chief Administrative Officer	Pattie Johnson	Council Administration
Tammy Kikuchi	Chief Communications Officer	Rob White	IT Director
G.L. Critchfield	City Attorney	Craig Burnett	Police Chief
Brenda Moore	Finance Director	Brooke Smith	City Recorder
Danny Astill	Public Works Director	Ben Ford	Wastewater Superintendent
Aaron Montgomery	Zions Public Finance	Susan Nixon	Associate Planner
Jared Hall	CED Division Supervisor	Residents	

Conducting: Ms. Martinez called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: Committee of the Whole December 7, 2021 – Ms. Turner moved to approve the minutes. Ms. Cotter seconded the motion. All in favor 4-0.

Discussion Items:

- **Sewer water fee increase** – Mr. Astill, Mr. Ford and Mr. Montgomery gave a presentation to propose how raising rates would meet current and future financial obligations for the CVW (Central Valley Water Reclamation Facility) and Murray’s wastewater system operations. More stringent discharge standards were implemented on the State by the federal government, which is why reconstruction of the water treatment plant had to happen. Recently, significant cost increases in labor and materials for ongoing construction have caused the fund balance of the City’s wastewater fund to be depleted. The original cost for construction was \$250 million which escalated to \$370 million.

Mr. Montgomery gave a PowerPoint to discuss his rate review report that proposes to help meet the City’s budget needs going forward. He explained how rates would increase from a time period of April 1, 2022 to April 1, 2026 and until otherwise amended; and flow rates per 100 cubic feet would increase from April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2027. The new CVW rate schedule from April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2027 would actually reduce over time to help cover cost increases, and offset rate increases to lessen the impact on rate payers. He shared various tables regarding when, where and how increases will

affect base rates and flow rates for residential and commercial customers and for CVW. He discussed the overall impact to single-family residential customers. The proposed sewer sustainability plan was reviewed to explain the new rate structure and key ratios related to debt service, capital expenses and cash on hand. He thought another reevaluation would be necessary in 2027 to ensure the plan was effective and to determine if projections held true to sustain and absorb the significant increase.

Mr. Astill said the model included \$1 million from ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funding so rate increases could have been higher. Ms. Turner commented that regardless of the good explanation, she had concerns about how constituents would respond to rate increases. Mr. Astill agreed the increase was a hardship but unfortunately CVW is under federal order to upgrade the plant to the new standard. The reason for the immediate jump to increase rates was to meet existing debt obligations and address future requirements that could be funded by bond purchasing.

Ms. Turner said the situation was not due to poor management or something the City could control. Mr. Astill reported reconstruction was going well prior to 2020 when construction bids were 30% lower. Murray is one of seven owners of the plant, so all entities would share the cost increase; Murray's portion is 8%. He said they would inform Murray citizens about how and why the situation must be addressed. Mr. Montgomery and Mr. Ford confirmed all owner entities are having the same concern and would also implement rate increases.

Ms. Dominguez asked about grant funding. Mr. Astill said during the 2021 Legislative Session, Utah received \$250 million in Federal ARPA funding for distributing grant money to cities, counties, and entities for various needs. Unfortunately only \$50 million of the \$250 million was dispersed and no money was given to CVW. Ms. Turner thought if the current State infrastructure bill were to pass the possibility to receive funding could still exist. Mr. Astill agreed.

Ms. Cotter said the situation was not under city control, shared concerns for those who live on fixed incomes, and asked if additional stringent regulations were expected in the future. Mr. Astill said the 30-year-old plant was in perfect operation, but the new technology-based standard would also meet new regulations into the future. Ms. Martinez asked about financial assistance for this type of utility increase. Ms. Moore noted the HEAT program is an overall utility bill assistance program for those who qualify, which includes sewer water fees.

- **Zone Map amendment from A-1 (Agricultural) to R-1-8 (Low Density Single Family) for the property located at 1079 East Vine Street.** – Ms. Nixon explained applicant Nathan Sheppick would like to split his property that is zoned A-1 and sell a portion of it to the adjoining neighbor on the east whose lot is listed as R-1-8. She confirmed the GP (General Plan) and future land use map suggest that the entire area be zoned for low density residential. Street-view photos of the parcel were displayed. On July 15, 2021 a public hearing was held where there was no public objection. After reviewing the item the planning commission voted 5-0 to forward a recommendation of approval to the City Council. Ms. Nixon discussed findings that were all consistent with the GP and is why City staff also recommended approval. It was noted that the item was delayed since July because of sale negotiations between the property owners.
- **Text Amendment to the R-2-10 Zone to allow Twin Homes as a permitted use.** – Ms. Nixon said Jonathan Rudd with JNG Investments made the request. She explained that by amending text to allow

for Land Use 1112 (single-family dwellings attached or twin homes) as a permitted use, twin home structures would have the same restrictions for land area and density as duplexes that are allowed. A visual diagram was shared for additional clarification. She said adding the text will increase opportunities for owner occupied housing because each twin home can be individually owned, unlike duplexes that are usually rental properties owned by one person. The text amendment would allow for another owner-occupied housing type. The planning commission heard the request on January 6, 2022 after public notice was sent to all affected entities. The vote was 6-0 to recommend approval to the City Council and all findings were in harmony with the GP, so staff also recommended approval.

- **City Council meals.** – Ms. Martinez said the intent of the discussion was to provide transparency about meals provided to Council Members and staff on council meeting nights. She discussed pre-pandemic meal procedures, noted that 2020 council meetings were held remotely so no meals occurred, and in 2021 in-person meetings resumed with prepackaged snacks. She said the hope was for Council Members to give council staff any new direction moving into 2022.

Ms. Turner provided a history of how and why meal provisions began, including the sharing of meals with department heads who would stay afterhours to attend lengthy meetings. There was a conversation about who would attend the meal break so that council staff would know how much food to order; and that the 30-minute eating timeframe between meetings was preferred. It was noted that council meals are paid from the City Council budget. Ms. Kennedy added that council staff would continue to be conscious of appropriate spending. Reasonable budget funding and length of meeting time was considered. There was consensus to return to pre-pandemic meal procedures in accordance with details discussed.

- **Legislative Update** – Ms. Dominguez reviewed various bills that were considered during the third week of the 2022 Legislative Session. She provided detailed information and reviewed several bills.

Announcements: None.

Adjournment: 4:26 p.m.

**Pattie Johnson
Council Office Administrator III**