

**MURRAY CITY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

Work Session Minutes of Tuesday, January 2, 2024

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

Attendance:

Council Members:

Paul Pickett	District #1
Pam Cotter	District #2
Rosalba Dominguez	District #3 – Vice- Chair
Diane Turner	District #4
Adam Hock	District #5

Others:

Brett Hales	Mayor	Jennifer Kennedy	City Council Executive Director
Doug Hill	CAO (Chief Administrative Officer)	Pattie Johnson	Council Administration
G.L. Critchfield	City Attorney	Brenda Moore	Finance Director
Phil Markham	CED Director	Ben Ford	Public Works
Erick Bracewell	Power Department	Joey Mittelman	Fire Chief
Greg Bellon	Power Director	Russ Kakala	Public Works Director
Jeff Puls	Fire Department	Chris Niemann	Power Department
Zach Smallwood	City Planner CED	Anthony Semone	NeighborWorks
Camron Kollman	IT	Citizens	
Kathy White	Murray Chamber of Commerce		

Conducting: Council Member Dominguez called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm.

Approval of Minutes: Committee of the Whole – December 6, 2023

Ms. Turner moved to approve, and Mr. Pickett seconded the motion.
All in favor 5-0.

Discussion Items:

• **Power Department Report**

Power Director Greg Bellon gave an overview of the Murray City Power Department that included staffing information. He introduced two employees; Engineering Manager, Chris Niemann and Operations Manager, Eric Bracewell and outlined all functions and responsibilities for the Forestry, Line Workers, Metering, Substations, Center Control, Planners and Warehouse divisions.

Mr. Bellon discussed Murray's involvement with the interlocal agency UAMPS (Utah Associated Municipal Power Systems), explained membership details and the process UAMPS has to provide energy to all their member cities. He reviewed Murray's current power resources and provided generation information about each one. An update was given on three projects related to the purchase of two power transformers for the Central Substation, the installation of Advanced Metering Infrastructure and the three-year project to install LED streetlights throughout the City.

When asked about the City's small hydro-plant near Little Cottonwood Canyon, Mr. Bellon reported that one of the two units is still not functioning. He said last year only one unit operated into the month of October and the malfunctioning unit will be rewired soon. Hopefully both units will be up and running for this year's spring runoff. He explained how the inner lining of the penstock was coming out, so work was done to remove what was flaking off which would keep it operating for one more year. Once the hydro plant shuts down in October of 2024, they hope to have the penstock relined properly so that the resource will continue to last for the City.

Ms. Dominguez asked about the City's landfill contract that would expire soon. Mr. Bellon said a new contract is underway where the City can still sell the Renewable Energy Credits and low load hours to California, but the avenue for Murray to keep most of the energy produced will now be open.

- **An ordinance amending Title 16 of the Murray City Municipal Code regarding subdivision approval procedures.**

Mr. Smallwood said the proposed amendment was related to subdivision approval procedures and the text amendment would put the City in compliance with new State requirements. The State has been concerned with the delay in housing construction approvals by certain municipalities. Senate Bill 174 – Local Land Use and Development Revisions was passed by the Utah State Legislature as a solution. The City must comply with the new State Code.

He reviewed the current process to create a new subdivision, provided an example of the new application, and explained how the new process forces developers to be clearer on housing applications and requires staff to be more stringent when reviewing applications. The new application has been distributed and studied by City reviewing departments. As part of the new process the City may not ask for concept reviews.

Mr. Pickett asked if the Murray City School District would be notified about new subdivisions that might affect enrollment and overcrowding challenges. Mr. Smallwood said school districts and various entities would be informed when new growth was coming, however the State has implemented that cities are not required to get approval from school districts.

Mr. Hock asked if a project could be stopped when developers do not respond to staff requests at the preliminary review. Mr. Smallwood said preliminary approvals are good for one year, so developers would have that long to make adjustments. When the final application review is approved, one more year is given to record the project.

Ms. Cotter confirmed the only proposed change to the land use ordinance was that the Planning Commission would not see final applications and that the City needs to update our code to reflect the new State Code. Mr. Smallwood agreed and shared all findings that support the text amendment, including the recommendation of approval from the Planning Commission.

Ms. Turner expressed concern about grammatical inconsistencies within the proposed ordinance. Mr. Smallwood assured her that once adopted, all textual inconsistencies would be adjusted after the codifier process.

Mr. Critchfield explained the new State Code essentially applies only to single-family housing, duplexes, and townhomes; however the City would apply the changes to all of the City's Subdivision

Code. The most significant work is done during the preliminary review stage when public comments are heard. The biggest concern should be whether a final application changed substantially from the preliminary presentation. If not, a housing project should be approved.

- **Reports from Interlocal Boards and Committees**

- **CVW (Central Valley Water)** – Wastewater Superintendent Ben Ford shared that the 2024 CVW budget was 12% less than the previous year because major construction has been completed and spending is down. A few construction projects remain, but the hope is that final completion of the rebuild will occur in April of 2026. A new senate bill was passed requiring CVW to publicly notice their meeting agendas; and the State granted CVW's request for an 18-month extension to reach permit compliances. He explained that due to the pandemic and rising construction costs the rebuild project was delayed and took much longer than expected. CVW has locked in natural gas for approximately the next two years. With the rebuild, CVW determined to use the Biological Nutrient Removal process to treat wastewater. This decision would result in an annual savings of \$1.7 million for the life of the plant, that includes a \$2.9 million rebate to Rocky Mountain Power, the largest rebate ever issued.
- **UIA (Utah Infrastructure Agency)** – Finance Director Brenda Moore shared a graph to confirm a recurring revenue trend over the last 10 months and to discuss current revenue compared to bond payments. There are now 61,000 subscribers; and Murray's take rate has dropped to 30%, although Murray residential subscribers continues to climb.
- **UTOPIA (Utah Telecommunications Open Infrastructure Agency)** – CAO Doug Hill gave a history about UTOPIA to explain why the City is still obligated to pay original UTOPIA bonds.

He said fifteen years ago the City Council voted to join UTOPIA along with 10 other cities, to place highspeed fiber cable into the ground with the hope that any provider would use it. Internet, phone, and television services were available. The original bond was \$185 million, and all member cities would make bond payments. The business model was unsuccessful as customers did not subscribe at a rate UTOPIA expected and there were problems with the internet, phone, and television service so customers began to leave the service.

As UTOPIA was failing, they were forced to change their business model. They created UIA which allowed them to buy new bonds and continue to buildout their service in other cities.

Murray did not get a full buildout until 2024 and UIA continues to focus on adding additional cities to implement their fiber. UTOPIA has started to refund Murray approximately \$500,000 per year and eventually a revenue stream will offset the total bond payment the City has to make.

- **VECC (Valley Emergency Communications Center)** – Mr. Hill said VECC continues to determine what calls are emergencies and what calls are not. Currently VECC is meeting all established State requirements with the exception of the transfer rate. The hope is to improve the transfer rate by eliminating UHP calls that currently go to VECC first. Mr. Hill reported that the executive director retired, so a nationwide search is underway to fill that position.
- **Metro Fire** – Mr. Hill provided a history about Metro Fire and had nothing else significant to report.
- **COG (Council of Governments)** – Mr. Hill shared about proposed legislation to repair corridors

along the Jordan River, encourage short-term rentals, increase the housing supply, and address low-income housing issues.

- **Wasatch Front Waste and Recycling District** – Mayor Hales said campaigning is underway to better educate citizens about proper recycling practices; curb-side Christmas tree recycling will be available for Murray's annexed residents, and there was a budget opening two days before Christmas for the new 2024 budget year.

Adjournment: 6:09 p.m.

Pattie Johnson
Council Administrator III