

**MINUTES
CITY OF FALLON
55 West Williams Ave
Fallon, Nevada
September 25, 2025**

The Honorable City Council met at a special meeting on the above date in the Council Chambers, 55 West Williams Avenue, Fallon, Nevada.

Present:

Mayor Ken Tedford
Councilwoman Kelly Frost
Councilwoman Karla Kent
Councilman Paul Harmon
Chief of Staff Bob Erickson
City Attorney Trent deBraga
Deputy City Attorney Sean Rowe
Deputy City Attorney Jaren Stanton
Deputy City Clerk Elsie Lee
Public Works Director Brian Byrd
Deputy Public Works Adrian Noriega
Deputy Public Works Marco Guerrero
Chief Daniel Babiarz
Captain John Riley
City Engineer Derek Zimney
Director of Tourism Jane Moon
Emergency Manager Steve Endacott

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Tedford at 9:00 a.m.

Mayor Tedford led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Tedford inquired if the agenda had been posted in compliance with NRS requirements.

Deputy City Clerk Elsie Lee advised that the agenda was posted in compliance with the NRS requirements.

Public Comments

Mayor Tedford inquired if there were any public comments. He noted that comments are to be general in nature, not relative to any agenda items. No action may be taken on a matter raised under this item until the matter has been specifically included on an agenda as an item upon which action will be taken.

No comments were noted.

Presentation on food safety and farm to market food source.

Mayor Tedford stated that it is our honor to have the Nevada State FFA public speaking public contest champion with us here today. Believe me, none of us up here have accomplished that. We are fortunate to have you, thank you.

Allie Fait thanked the Council for the opportunity to practice her speech. I did win the state speaking contest and will be attending the National FFA Convention and Expo in October. We've all been told that breakfast is the most important meal of the day, but have you ever picked up your favorite cereal box, skimmed the back of it, and actually read through the ingredients list? If you have, you are not alone. Food safety is a rising issue in today's society. Food regulations outline methods intended to protect public safety by ensuring the safety, efficacy, and security of our nation's food supply but these sometimes become counterproductive. Everyone wants to make healthy food decisions. Eating healthy is becoming extremely important to consumers. Alternatives like organic foods have gained traction amid purchasers. According to the USDA Economic Research service, the United States organic retail sales have increased by an average of eight percent per year over the past decade. However, the higher retail costs of these products in today's economy tends to be a drawback when compared to their conventionally produced counterparts. Foods labeled as natural or naturally grown are another alternative. However, the natural labeling process is often less consistent in terms of how it is defined and as to what the food actually is. These foods may not be any better than conventionally produced foods. Now more than ever, people are determined to know exactly what's in their food and where it comes from. Consumers feel more comfortable purchasing from farm to market producers, where healthy foods are more readily available. Farm to market producers are typically the smaller farmers and ranchers that don't have the economy of scale. These operations include private membership associations, co-ops, and farmers markets. According to the USDA's 2022 Census of Agriculture, from 2017 to 2022 sales through these three direct sales channels have increased 33.2% to \$14.2 billion, and the number of operations selling through them more than doubled to 60,332. As consumers, we are able to purchase pretty much anything that can be grown, harvested, and produced. Animal products like meat, dairy, and eggs are common as well as fruits, vegetables, honey, and nuts, among others. Farm to markets generate popularity because you can meet face to face with the producer, have a genuine conversation, and even possibly hand pick your own products. For instance, someone wanting to buy a grass fed and finished steer could communicate directly with the producer and possibly even pick which animal they liked best. Farm to market producers give the community healthy produce and dairy products with explicit ingredients and without extra additives. These types of operations have become so popular that my own State Land Grant University has created guidelines, classes, and seminars to show producers how to tap into this market. Private membership associations are one of the last legal avenues that farmers have to directly sell their farm goods to consumers without government interference. These private farm-to-market avenues are selling their products directly to the public. Thus, they focus their business on private individuals rather than wholesale processors. But these marketing methods are not without potential problems. Current state and federal regulations may prohibit the functionality of these farm-to-market producers. For example, an Amish farmer, Amos Miller, founded one of these co-ops to sell his products. In January of 2024, Miller was being sued by the State of Pennsylvania, in pursuit of a complete and permanent injunction against him. His operation, Miller's Organic Farm, was legally forced to cease the sale of products by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, even though his co-op members knew exactly what they were purchasing. The

Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture and the local authorities then raided Miller's Organic Farm, leaving the farm with coolers full of products to be tested, while not allowing Miller to perform independent testing to counter any allegations from the state. Thousands of raw dairy products were counted, thrown out, and wasted. Each product was individually recorded to ensure not one would be revived for human consumption. During this raid, Miller's Organic Farm lost tens of thousands of dollars in highly perishable foods, creating a significant financial loss for Miller. Many of Miller's private members relied upon these healthy products as they are unable to obtain them from their local grocery store. A primary reason Miller's customers purchase his organic foods, raw dairy products, and meat is because in doing so they know exactly what is in the products they and their families are consuming. Taking the option of private farm to market producers away also takes away the public's food freedom. Government control on local, private producers also deprives these businesses from thriving and making a profit. No one wants to run a business where no profit is being made. The farm-to-market approach supports local economies and communities. By purchasing directly from local farmers and producers, consumers contribute to the vitality of their community's agricultural sector. This support helps small-scale farmers thrive and strengthens local food systems. Sustainable agriculture flourishes when consumers prioritize locally sourced, seasonal ingredients, fostering a more resilient and interconnected community. When push comes to shove, that important breakfast meal can be made from healthy and safe, locally produced eggs, bacon, and milk. As long as people desire healthier food, the need for local, trustworthy food producers will continue to remain crucial. Farm to market producers have a more direct and personal relationship with consumers than other producers. As with other small, local businesses, word of mouth is vital to successful marketing of local products. A bad or negative review can be a serious setback to successful farm to market sales. Thus, the incentive is strong for farm to market producers to provide safe and nutritious foods to their customers. So, what's on the back of your cereal box? Thank you.

Mayor Tedford stated that Allie did a great job. I can see why you won on the state level. You really have a lot of knowledge and know your subject well, which is great. The back of the cereal box is probably a real problem for me. Even on the back of my Grapenuts box, I am told by my children, it is not awesome for me. Those labels are really misleading, and you are right on target with that. It is hard to understand this farm-to-market decrease. You think with everything that is out there that would not be an issue. I think that your knowledge is really great. I don't know how they score these. You know much more about that because your talk is geared towards that. I think knowledge is one. I think that your timing is really pretty good, and you didn't rush it, which I think is very important. I think you did a really good job there. The one thing that I would like to see come out during your speech is more passion. People tell me, when I talk, they can hear this passion for Fallon that I have, and for what I do. Usually, that makes up for some of the mistakes I make during my speeches. I think you could have more passion for the farm-to-market subject. Just that you let people know that you really believe in this subject and let your heart show more about it than just stating the facts. Now, don't let me lead you in the wrong direction if it is supposed to be all about facts. I am in a different arena than you are. I thought that you did great and can see how you won at the state level and think that you are going to do super at nationals. I learned a lot today. If that is the purpose of your speech, to spread the word about farm-to-market, I think that you did an excellent job in doing that, Allie. Thank you.

Councilwoman Frost stated that Allie did a great job. You gave an example of the Pennsylvania case. How are the Nevada regulations on the farm-to-table? Have you done research on that? I am sure that you have a lot of knowledge on this subject as well.

Allie stated that Nevada regulations are kind of all over the place, right now. So, with the research that I have done, the only big regulation is that Nevada is not allowed to sell raw dairy products privately to consumers. It has to go through other places. This is why Nevada ships a lot of their raw dairy products over to California because it is not illegal in California. Whereas we can't privately sell raw dairy products in Nevada.

Councilwoman Frost stated that the Legislature previously, when the egg prices were extremely high, passed a law allowing private producers not to have to go through all the processes of the large egg producers. What effect did that have on the industry? I know that it brought prices down, I saw that as consumer.

Allie stated that she believes it runs along the same lines of bringing the prices down. It also made the interference and the control, from the government, go down as well. It gave them a little more freedom to do what they want in their market operations.

Councilwoman Frost reiterated that Allie did a great job. I wish you all the luck when you go to the national competition. I think that you will do really well. Good luck to you.

Councilwoman Kent stated that Allie did a great job. What I was impressed with, when you had a little bit of a stumble, you stayed consistent. If that was me, I would be in a complete meltdown. So, you did really well with that. I just wondered if you knew much about bioengineered ingredients. I just wanted a little bit of elaboration on that, if you had any information on that subject.

Allie stated that she has not looked into the bioengineering products. I am familiar with GMOs, Genetically Modified Organisms. It kind of just falls into the opinion of the consumer. Some consumers are willing to pay a little extra for the organic products that don't have any of the genetically modified organisms in there. That way, they can go to the farm-to-market producers, to get that.

Councilwoman Kent thanked Allie. I think that you will do really well.

Councilman Harmon echoed everyone's comments. I think that you did a fantastic job. Congratulations on winning state. I think that is an enormous accomplishment, going to represent not only the State of Nevada, but the City of Fallon at Nationals, is very cool. Congratulations to you, and your family. I think the people here in Fallon can really relate with what your speech is about because we are a farming community and big on farm-to-market. One of my questions is regarding selling this idea of overtaking the big brands, big markets, and retailers that are out there, who are trying to push the small farmers out. Do you have ideas on how the smaller farmers can survive that big push from the takeover of the big market people?

Allie stated that, as mentioned in her speech, farm-to-market operations have a more direct and personal relationship with the consumer. I think that is very important and helps them understand the farm-to-table aspect of consuming food. Starting on the farm and going to the table, not just from the back of the grocery store. I think educating the public and opening the eyes to everyone to see what is actually in these foods, are important steps towards that.

Councilman Harmon stated that he has one more request. If you wouldn't mind coming back and letting us know how your experience was at the national contest. I think that we would all enjoy hearing about how you did and how it went.

Allie stated she could do that.

Mayor Tedford stated there is a movement in grocery stores for farm-to-market. Is that correct?

Allie stated not that she is aware of. I am starting to see more organic produce being available at the stores.

Mayor Tedford stated that it seems like when he sees ads from Raley's, they highlight

some farm-to-market products. They are in Reno, not here, so we don't see it as much. I don't know if that is happening around the country.

Allie stated that she would look into it.

Mayor Tedford inquired if Allie could look and see if there is a national case, not just a Pennsylvania case, to hang her argument on.

Allie stated that she hasn't looked into a national case. I felt that the Pennsylvania case spoke to what I was trying to convey, but I will look into more national cases, as well, to use as additional examples.

Mayor Tedford stated that he would just hate Allie to walk into something that she doesn't want to get into. This panel is going to be a national panel, not a regional panel, like you had here. You may end up with a Pennsylvania judge, on this panel, and you may get questions regarding this not being just a Pennsylvania issue, but a nationwide issue. This could hurt you if you just have tunnel vision for just the Pennsylvania case instead of something that has more broadly been discussed on other benches. You might look into that, but I am not trying to throw you off, if this is the only one. You might just look for some other cases. I think you did a great job.

Allie thanked the Council.

Mayor Tedford inquired whether there were any further comments or questions from the Council or the public regarding the annexation of this property.

No further comments were noted.

Discussion and possible action to approve negotiated agreement between the City of Fallon and the Operating Engineers Local Union No. 3 to be effective from July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2028. (Pursuant to NRS 288.153, the proposed agreement and any exhibits or other attachments to the proposed agreement are available to the public on the City's website, fallonnevada.gov, and at the City Clerk's Office, 55 West Williams Avenue, Fallon, Nevada.)

Don Lattin greeted the Council. Congratulations to Allie, she did a great job. I can tell that she was projecting because I could hear here from back there. I would also comment that if the Mayor is eating Grapenuts, he has upped his game from the Frosted Flakes he used to eat. I don't remember him ever looking at label either. As the Mayor indicated we are here to talk about the negotiated agreement with Operating Engineers and hopefully you will approve it. Also, as the Mayor indicated, it has been posted, in two forms. In a red line version and a pdf form. So, what I would like to do is go over it quickly, it won't take long. It was a very good negotiating session. We only met once, which is usually an indication that things are going well. Sometimes when you sit down during negotiations you sometimes hear all the things that they are complaining about. It was limited to one item, salary, which we were able to agree upon, fairly quickly. I would like to quickly go over the changes. The first thing, and this time, I have the one that has your numbers on it. So, when I refer to the numbers, I will be referring to your numbers and not something that you are looking at me blankly about. The first one is, on the very first page of the agreement, which is page 5, you will see that it is a three-year agreement. The change was down at the bottom. It is going to be effective from July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2028. The very next page, six, we changed the first line of that. It did read, July 2024. We changed that to July 2025, which will be the effective date. The next change is on page 28, Article 19. This relates to protective equipment. You will see that we just struck out some language. The boots should last, approximately, at the minimum of one year. So, we struck that. Boots last different times, depending on what your duties are and what you are

doing on that day. So, we thought that it was not good language and we removed it. The next, and the most important change is on page 18, Article 12. This is the compensation portion of it and what is really the most effective part of this agreement. You will see that we have changed salaries. The raises were 3% in the first year, 2% in the second year, and 3% the third year. That also coincides with the very end of the agreement. You will see that there are three salary schedules. Those salary schedules, if you look at the top left-hand corner, are reflective of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd years. Those were the changes in the agreement. There were some other formatting changes. Commas, the usual things we try to clean up, when we can. So, with that, those are the major changes. Are there any questions?

Councilman Harmon inquired on a grammatical error on page 27. I did not know what the word was until I had discussion with Bob and the group. On 18.5, my copy says that employees caned out on City/County. That was explained to me that it should read as, called out. So, can we make sure that change is made as well? Like you said, there were a few grammatical errors. This is the one that I couldn't figure out what it was.

Don Lattin stated that what happens is that it is prepared in Word format, it goes back to them and have a different Word format so some of these things come back mixed up.

Councilwoman Kent inquired on PERS having a reflection on salaries. So, they have made a big change, this last year. Are these scheduled changes or are they just random, when they feel they are necessary.

Don Lattin stated that before each legislative session, PERS issues their projection for what they think the increase will be needed. What happens is that it never gets approved by the legislature, except through the governor's budget. This year, there was a pretty significant change, particularly for law enforcement. It was projected by PERS, for the first part of the year, entered into the governor's budget. The governor's budget is approved by the legislature. So, that is how it gets approved. We have no way of knowing what is going to happen next time. I am sure there will be increases but we do not know how much.

Councilwoman Kent inquired on the necessary increases. What do they base that on? It isn't a cost-of-living. Is it administrative fees?

Don Lattin said no, it is their internal calculations. Having to do with death rates, number of employees, salaries, and put it all into a matrix where they come up with what is going to be the necessary increase based on what is coming down the pipeline. How many people they anticipate will reach their number of years, and how many people will be retiring. I think it is a matrix that nobody really understands except for them. It is a shock to municipalities. It was a huge increase for somebody who is preparing the budget and presenting it to the Council.

Councilwoman Kent stated she had one more question. On PERS, they say that law enforcement can retire in 20 years. What is it for the other employees?

Don Lattin stated that it depends on when you started. Sometimes it is 30 years, sometimes it is 25. Generally, 25-30 years.

Councilman Harmon inquired on the length of time we have been negotiating with OE3.

Don Lattin stated that he believes it is about 5-6 years.

Councilman Harmon stated that it seems to him, if the only change we are doing is with salary, we have been doing a good job over those 5-6 years to make everything right. I appreciate your efforts and the negotiating team's efforts with working with these guys. To get to a point where our employees feel like they are getting a fair deal, other than the salaries, which is going to be negotiated every 3 years, or however long the contract is. It seems like everything else is going well. It seems like the employees think it is fair, the City thinks it is fair. So, my kudos go out to you and the negotiating team. To get us to this point, which makes it easier for everything else, in the contract, to move forward.

Don Lattin thanked Councilman Harmon. Kudos really need to go to Bob and Brian. What they do is go into negotiation sessions with employees and discuss the problems there. There is a line of communication and what makes them feel good and gets problems resolved.

Mayor Tedford inquired whether there were any further comments or questions from the Council or the public.

No further comments were noted.

Councilwoman Frost motioned to approve negotiated agreement between the City of Fallon and the Operating Engineers Local Union No. 3 to be effective from July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2028; seconded by Councilman Harmon and approved with a 3-0 vote by the Council.

Executive Session

Mayor Tedford tabled the executive session, as it was not needed at this time.

Public Comments

Mayor Tedford inquired if there were any public comments.

No comments were noted.

Council and Staff Reports

Mayor Tedford inquired if there were any Council or staff reports.

No reports were noted.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Tedford adjourned the meeting at 9:32 a.m.

Mayor Ken Tedford

Attest: _____
Michael O'Neill, City Clerk-Treasurer