

SOUTH JORDAN CITY
CITY COUNCIL STUDY MEETING

April 1, 2025

Present: Mayor Dawn Ramsey, Council Member Patrick Harris, Council Member Kathie Johnson, Council Member Don Shelton, Council Member Tamara Zander, City Manager Dustin Lewis, City Attorney Ryan Loose, Fire Chief Chris Dawson, City Engineer Brad Klavano, Director of Recreation Janell Payne, Public Works Director Raymond Garrison, Associate Director of Public Works Colby Hill, Police Chief Jeff Carr, Director of City Commerce Brian Preece, Associate Director of Finance Jeff Standiford, Senior Accountant/CDBG Coordinator Reid Sanderson, Director of Strategy & Budget Don Tingey, Communications Manager/PIO, Rachael Van Cleave, Senior Systems Administrator Phill Brown, GIS Coordinator Matt Jarman, Systems Administrator Ken Roberts, City Recorder Anna Crookston

Absent: Council Member Jason McGuire

Others: Sonia Lopez, Kyrene Gibb, Tatiana Gilchrist, Drew Milane

4:36 P.M.
REGULAR MEETING

A. Welcome, Roll Call, and Introduction - *By Mayor, Dawn R. Ramsey*

Mayor Ramsey welcomed everyone present and introduced the meeting.

B. Invocation – *By Council Member, Patrick Harris*

Council Member Harris offered the invocation.

C. Mayor and Council Coordination

Council Member Don Shelton mentioned attending a legislative wrap-up noting that a discussion on the state's budgeting process caught his attention. He explained that the state conducts an in-depth review of 20% of its budget each year, ensuring that the entire budget is reviewed every five years. This method, referred to as zero-based budgeting, involves assuming no funding for certain activities or purposes and then adding items back individually, evaluating their necessity and impact. He expressed interest in considering a similar approach for the city. He reflected on the city's use of priority-based budgeting but noted that beyond major categories like public safety, he was unsure of the specific line items associated with the other priorities. Despite reviewing the budget carefully, he acknowledged that he doesn't have detailed knowledge of how expenditures were categorized under each priority area.

City Manager Dustin Lewis explained that there are two philosophically different approaches to budgeting. He stated that when the city uses priority-based budgeting, it does not create separate

budgets for each strategic priority. Instead, each program is evaluated against the city's seven strategic priorities to determine its alignment and funding. Each program is assessed based on how well it aligns with key priorities, such as safe communities, open space, fiscal responsibility, and effective government. Programs are scored according to how many of these areas they impact. A higher score indicates the program touches on multiple priorities. He noted that budgeting can be approached in philosophically different ways.

Council Member Shelton suggested a more detailed, phased approach to budget review. He proposed dividing the budget into sections and examining one section in depth each year to better understand how individual programs align with City priorities. As an example, he noted uncertainty about how Summerfest supports those priorities or what its actual costs and revenues are. He clarified he is not opposed to the event but used it as a familiar example.

City Manager Lewis clarified that the City's priority-based budgeting process already includes a comprehensive annual review. He stated that the entire budget is evaluated in depth each year, not just in parts.

Council Member Shelton noted that while staff conducts an in-depth budget review, the Council itself does not. He expressed that the Council has an obligation to engage more deeply in the budget process than it currently does. He emphasized that this is not a criticism of staff, acknowledging the high level of trust the Council has in their work.

City Manager Lewis clarified that staff is willing to go through the detailed spreadsheets that comprise the priority-based budget and walk the Council through them, if that is the level of involvement they are seeking.

Council Member Shelton expressed interest in reviewing portions of the budget on a rotating basis. He suggested examining different sections periodically.

Council Member Johnson recommended organizing the budget review by department. She noted that this approach may be broad but could help cover a variety of areas effectively.

Council Member Shelton expressed support for the priority-based budgeting model. He stated that he appreciates the concept of linking each City activity to established priorities and values the clarity it brings to budget management.

City Manager Lewis explained that programs not aligning with strategic priorities are eliminated. He emphasized that staff relies on the Council to set these priorities, with all efforts geared toward achieving the Council's vision. He also expressed a wish that the state would adopt priority-based budgeting, suggesting it could lead to greater efficiencies compared to zero-based budgeting, where departments must argue for their funding.

Council Member Shelton expressed interest in receiving a proposal from staff on how the Council could conduct a deep dive into specific sections of the budget over time. He suggested focusing on areas such as the Trails Program to understand how they align with priorities and their costs. He emphasized that he doesn't think the Council should review the entire budget in depth annually, but rather select sections (e.g., a quarter or 20%) for more detailed analysis. He

noted that having a better understanding of program costs. He added it is important for responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars. He emphasized that this request isn't a reflection of questioning staff's trustworthiness but a need for systematic, detailed information.

City Manager Lewis confirmed that staff is able to provide detailed budget analysis. He stated that Council members can meet with staff, to review the specifics of every program in the city, including program costs, staff allocations, and alignment with strategic priorities. He noted that the City manages over 200 individual programs through the priority-based budgeting process. He reiterated that staff can provide detailed breakdowns for each of these programs upon request.

Council Member Shelton proposed that the Council review a portion of the City's programs each year, rotating through all of them over a four- to five-year period. He suggested that staff develop a proposal outlining a reasonable way to divide the programs and identify which sections could be reviewed annually in depth. This would allow the Council to better understand the cost and priority alignment of specific budget items.

City Manager Lewis stated that staff can provide detailed scoring data for all programs. This includes each program's priority ranking by quartile, whether it is federally or state mandated, and whether it is performed because it meets specific strategic priorities. He noted that this information is already available and can be shared with the Council.

Council Member Harris expressed support for the idea and suggested starting with non-mandated programs. He emphasized that beginning with programs the Council has influence over would be more useful than reviewing those that are federally or state mandated. He added that general information about mandated programs is already accessible if needed. He recommended categorizing programs by mandate status during the review process, this would allow the Council to focus its deeper analysis on non-mandated programs where they have more discretion.

City Manager Lewis suggested meeting with Council members to review the full scope of available program data before finalizing a review approach. He noted that seeing the information firsthand might help generate ideas about how best to proceed and how much time the Council would want to dedicate to the process. He emphasized that the priority-based budgeting process has helped the City achieve efficiencies over the past decade. He explained that deep program analysis allows staff to make informed recommendations about continuing, discontinuing, or reallocating programs. When new programs are proposed, they are evaluated against strategic priorities to determine whether they are a good fit. Some have moved forward after analysis, while others have not.

D. Discussion/Review of Regular Council Meeting:

Presentation Items:

- Recognition of Special Events Professional Award – Utah Recreation & Parks Association (URPA) Award presented to Natalie Domino.
- Proclamation in recognition of Arbor Day, April 25, 2025.

Action Item:

- **Resolution R2025-19**, Authorizing Mayor Dawn R. Ramsey to enter into an Interlocal Cooperation Agreement with Salt Lake County for services of the Salt Lake County Elections Division during the 2025 Primary and General Municipal Elections.

Public Hearing Item:

- Resolution R2025-11, Approving the use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and authorizing the City to enter into a Grant Agreement for the use of CDBG funds.

City Manager Lewis provided an update on the interlocal agreement with the county related to election services. He acknowledged that staff has been diligently working with the county to understand the financial details involved, but the information is still being gathered. Since the City Council only meets once in the month, and the interlocal agreement must be signed by May 1, prior to the next meeting, he recommended the Council pass a resolution authorizing the mayor to sign the agreement, but delay actual signing until the numbers are verified. This approach would allow staff additional time to confirm the data and ensure accuracy before submitting to the county. He noted City Recorder Anna Crookston has been coordinating with recorders from neighboring cities to compare and confirm figures. He noted that while there were initial concerns, staff is gaining clarity as they further analyze the calculations, and his confidence in the numbers is growing. He acknowledged cost increases are expected but emphasized the importance of ensuring they are reasonable and justified.

City Recorder Anna Crookston explained that the original agreement had been amended the previous day, and she has been working closely with City Attorney Ryan Loose to ensure the legal terms are acceptable. City Attorney Loose confirmed the agreement is legal as to form. Recorder Crookston acknowledged an increase in pricing for election services and shared that she has had multiple conversations with the county, most recently that afternoon. She noted that South Jordan is in a better position cost-wise compared to many other entities. In 2023, the cost was approximately \$2.22 per voter, whereas the current estimate is higher, but inflated to reflect a worst-case scenario. The county is attempting to avoid unanticipated mid-year billing adjustments, as seen in past years. For the first time, the county has provided three pricing options, rather than a single set figure, due to uncertainty around how many cities will have primaries, cancel elections, or opt for ranked choice voting. She emphasized that final costs will vary depending on these factors, but the goal is to prepare the City adequately. She also acknowledged the assistance of the City's Strategy and Budget team, especially Strategy & Budget Analyst Abigail Patonai, who has been instrumental in analyzing the pricing formulas. She assured the Council that staff is working diligently to confirm the City's position before recommending the mayor sign the agreement. She deferred to City Attorney Ryan Loose to address the legal terms, particularly the assurance that the City will only be paying actual costs.

City Attorney Loose provided clarification on the pricing structure outlined in the interlocal agreement. He confirmed that the agreement includes language stating the City will be charged actual costs, but noted that Salt Lake County uses a unique pricing formula that differs from surrounding counties. Neighboring counties like Davis and Utah typically charge a flat rate per active voter, defined as those who have voted in recent elections, regardless of the city. In contrast, Salt Lake County's model is more complex, and City staff is working to reverse-engineer that formula to fully understand how the costs are calculated. He stated that while they are approximately 89% confident in their understanding, staff recommends delaying the mayor's

signature until full clarity is reached. He supported moving forward with approving the resolution to authorize the mayor to sign, but emphasized the importance of completing due diligence before the agreement is finalized. He also pointed out that language related to ranked choice voting has been removed from the agreement, as there has been no indication from the Council that the City intends to pursue that voting method at this time.

Council Member Harris asked if there is an increase for the cities who opt in for ranked choice voting.

City Attorney Loose clarified that ranked choice voting does not increase costs because the ones participating do not have a primary. However, the cost estimate fluctuates based on participation levels. The county has created three pricing tiers: a base price, high participation, and low participation.

City Attorney Loose noted that a \$20,000 non-refundable base fee is required, which covers initial filing costs, even if no election takes place. He expressed that he is pushing the county for transparency regarding this base fee and requested more detailed invoices to understand its breakdown. City Recorder Crookston addressed the \$20,000 base fee and her initial concerns about its fairness. She explained that after questioning the county, she learned that the fee covers pre-election preparations, such as ordering supplies and programming, which the county starts well in advance. She emphasized that the city cannot cancel an election until after the write-in period ends, which is well into the county's election preparations. Therefore, the \$20,000 fee is meant to cover those upfront costs, even if no election ultimately takes place. She noted the county has assured them that an itemized breakdown of the fee will be provided. However, if the city does proceed with an election, the \$20,000 will be credited toward the final bill for election costs.

E. Presentation Items:

E.1. Bingham Creek Regional Park Authority board member appointment. (By Director of Strategy & Budget, Don Tingey)

Sonia Lopez, a West Jordan resident of 26 years, expressed her enthusiasm for the development of the Bingham Creek Regional Park and her desire to contribute to the community's growth. As a working professional, she emphasized the importance of parks to her family and community. She highlighted her extensive experience with county parks, offering valuable insights into what could enhance the west side of the city. She also mentioned that she is bilingual in Spanish, which would allow her to assist community members who may face language barriers. She expressed her passion for the community and her eagerness to contribute, thanking the Council for their consideration.

Mayor Ramsey thanked Ms. Lopez for her willingness to step forward and be considered for an appointment, acknowledging that good people who are willing to serve make the community great.

Council Member Zander asked Ms. Lopez to elaborate on her experience with parks, specifically how she believes her experience could be relevant and beneficial to serving on the regional park board.

Ms. Lopez shared ideas to enhance the park's inclusivity and community connection. She suggested multi-use features such as an ice rink that could convert into a skate park in warmer months, and highlighted the importance of adding more inclusive amenities for children of all abilities, including interactive musical elements. As a runner, she also proposed incorporating signage along the trails that shares local history and celebrates the community's identity. With continued development and nearby changes like the Salt Lake Bees' relocation, she emphasized the value of reflecting neighborhood pride and creating a space that fosters a sense of belonging.

Council Member Harris asked how Ms. Lopez's professional experience lend you to be able to do well in this role.

Ms. Lopez said in her current role she works in trust and safety within the tech industry, facilitating challenging conversations between companies and clients, acting as a neutral third party to help reach balanced outcomes. She added this experience has strengthened her ability to remain objective, think critically, and consider the broader impact of decisions. These skills would translate well to this role, allowing to evaluate community needs thoughtfully and help guide park development in a way that benefits everyone.

Council Member Zander asked what experience Ms. Lopez has with pickleball.

Ms. Lopez shared that she was excited to start playing pickleball this summer, but a recent running injury has temporarily sidelined her and she'll be in a boot for the next couple of months. Once recovered, she looks forward to learning the sport. She appreciates how accessible and family-oriented pickleball has become, noting that seeing friends and families involved has sparked her interest as well.

Council Member Zander emphasized the importance of board members having a strong understanding of pickleball and its unique accessibility across all ages and abilities. She noted that pickleball stands out as a multigenerational sport, with children and adults often playing together, which makes it especially valuable to the community. She stressed the critical need for more courts throughout the county, pointing out that current facilities are insufficient and that residents are frequently left waiting to play. She expressed her desire for board members to actively advocate for more courts and for the county to commit to meeting growing demand.

Ms. Lopez affirmed her awareness of the high demand for pickleball courts and fully supported the need for expanded access. She expressed strong enthusiasm for pursuing additional courts, highlighting the positive impact they've had in other areas. She emphasized her desire to bring similar opportunities to the west side, ensuring residents don't have to travel far outside the city to enjoy the sport and its benefits.

Council Member Harris asked Ms. Lopez whether she had previously served on any governmental committees or participated in other forms of public service.

Ms. Lopez responded that she has not yet served on any governmental committees or in an official public service role, but emphasized that this would be her first opportunity to do so. She expressed strong enthusiasm about getting involved, stating that she would love to expand her involvement and help wherever she can, potentially even moving toward greater participation in city-level initiatives in the future.

Council Member Johnson inquired how Ms. Lopez became aware of the opportunity to serve on the board.

Ms. Lopez explained that she became aware of the opportunity through social media, where she saw a post about the search for a board member. She followed the provided link to the website, reviewed the posting, and completed the application.

Mayor Ramsey thanked Ms. Lopez for her willingness to serve and acknowledged the challenge of finding individuals willing to donate their time for such roles.

E.2. Y2 Analytics Resident Survey. (By Director of Strategy & Budget, Don Tingey & Y2 Analytics)

Director of Strategy & Budget Don Tingey introduced Kyrene Gibb, Y2 Analytics Vice President of Research.

Kyrene Gibb introduced Tatiana Gilchrist, Y2 Analytics Director of Research, and Drew Milane, Intern. Ms. Gibb reviewed prepared presentation (Attachment A).

Mayor Ramsey inquired about residents' responses to the survey, questioning whether a lack of participation was due to residents feeling less concerned about the issues or simply not being interested in taking the time to fill it out. She acknowledged that understanding the reasons behind low engagement could be challenging.

Ms. Gibb explained that the low response rate could be attributed to non-response bias, where individuals who don't respond may have different motivations from those who do, making it difficult to know why they didn't engage. She noted that the first wave of responses typically comes from either highly enthusiastic or disgruntled individuals, while follow-up reminders tend to bring in more moderate voices. This suggests that those who decline to respond may not have strong negative feelings toward the city. She highlighted that this year, 1,819 residents began the survey, and 1,035 completed it, representing a positive panel refresh rate. Ms. Gibb emphasized that new panel members might have less experience or familiarity with the city, which can cause slight dips in some metrics. She continued reviewing Attachment A.

Mayor Ramsey pointed out that it was interesting that the district with the smallest number of residents unsure about the city's direction was district 4, despite it having the newest residents. She noted that she would have expected the opposite outcome, given the newer residents in that area.

Ms. Gibb explained that the majority of residents feel the city is either somewhat better or about the same as it was five years ago. She emphasized that a stable quality of life rating and a large

portion of residents expressing that the city is heading in the right direction are both positive indicators. She reminded everyone that even responses indicating "about the same" as five years ago are still considered positive. She continued reviewing Attachment A.

Mayor Ramsey expressed interest in seeing how resident attitudes might change once major infrastructure projects, like the opening of 9800 South and Bangor Highway, are completed, and traffic is no longer rerouted. She noted that once projects like 1300 West and the sewer project are finished, residents may have a smoother experience driving through the city. She hoped that this could lead to a year where residents feel the improvements, potentially leading to higher satisfaction and better numbers.

Director Tingey shared that improvements in traffic flow were more noticeable when certain roads, like 11400 South and 10400 South, were opened, leading to better traffic conditions. This year, the term "traffic flow" appeared more consistently in resident comments, indicating that it had become a more prominent concern or focus compared to previous years where traffic was simply mentioned in passing.

Ms. Gibb continued reviewing Attachment A.

Council Member Zander inquired if the exact wording used in the survey included terms like "How happy am I with fire and emergency medical?" to clarify whether that specific phrasing was used in the survey.

Ms. Gibb responded that, while some questions may be shortened for visual purposes, the wording used for service ratings in this case was the exact phrasing presented in the survey. She continued reviewing Attachment A.

Council Member Zander asked if the parking comments, specific to the urban center, would be shared with the Larry H. Miller group. City Manager Lewis confirmed that the city has already shared these comments with them.

Ms. Gibb continued reviewing Attachment A, noting that there is a significant opportunity gap in communications, particularly with text messages from the city. She highlighted that about twice as many residents express interest in receiving information via text compared to those who are currently receiving it.

Mayor Ramsey clarified that the city would be happy to send text messages if residents opted in, as the city cannot send messages without residents self-selecting to opt in.

Council Member Zander asked if there was an estimate available regarding the number of residents who might opt in for text message communication, suggesting that this could be something the city could promote more.

Mayor Ramsey noted that the opt-in for text message communication has been heavily promoted through the newsletter and on social media.

Communication Manager Rachael Van Cleave noted that the city has approximately 26,000 general city contacts, which include emails. However, the number of SMS contacts is still not as high as desired.

Ms. Gibb continued reviewing presentation Attachment A, highlighting that the city's social media accounts are well-aligned with the preferences of residents, as the share of those who rely on or prefer to use the accounts is balanced. While social media ranks lower overall as a primary communication channel, most residents prefer to hear from the city once a month.

Council Member Harris mentioned that issues he is contacted about are typically reported on Friday afternoons, when residents have trouble getting in touch with people to report problems. He inquired about any potential thoughts or solutions for this timing issue.

Assistant City Manager Jason Rasmussen asked if there was any sense of whether the issues reported on Friday afternoons were urgent and required immediate response, or if there was a general understanding of the nature of the contacts.

Council Member Harris mentioned that the issues typically arise when older residents are unable to get in touch with anyone on Friday afternoons. While the information is available on the website, some residents may not have accessed it, leading to the problem.

Ms. Gibb continued reviewing presentation Attachment A, sharing the findings on South Jordan's social media presence, noting that about a third of residents follow the city social media accounts. The lack of social media engagement is attributed to a mix of younger, newer residents who haven't connected with the city yet and older residents who prefer traditional communication methods like emails and newsletters.

Ms. Gibb identified the greatest opportunity for improvement as enhancing communication around the city's long-term vision. She emphasized that when residents express concerns about growth and traffic, it's important they understand the city is actively planning and taking steps to address these challenges. She noted that effectively sharing this vision, especially with newer residents, can help build trust and patience, reassuring the community that the current difficulties are being addressed through thoughtful, proactive planning.

Director Tingey stated that council members would receive an email containing the presentation materials, the full survey report, including verbatim responses, and additional supporting documents. One of those documents will include survey results broken down by council district, allowing council members to review data specific to their respective areas.

Council Member Zander inquired about the geographic distribution of survey respondents, referencing the initial slide that displayed responses across the city. She asked if there was a percentage breakdown available, particularly because her district includes a newer growth area.

Ms. Gibb responded that the survey response rates were fairly evenly distributed across all five council districts, with each district comprising approximately 20% of total responses. She noted that each district received between 180 and 230 responses.

Council Member Harris emphasized the investment made by the city in conducting the survey and encouraged city staff to review the results for actionable insights. He suggested that staff return to the council at a later date with potential recommendations or initiatives that could be implemented based on survey findings.

Council Member Zander motioned to adjourn the April 1, 2025 City Council Study Meeting. Council Member Johnson seconded the motion. Vote was 4-0, unanimous in favor. Council Member McGuire was absent from the vote.

ADJOURNMENT

The April 1, 2025 City Council Meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.