

Grand Junction City Council
Minutes of the Regular Meeting
November 20, 2024

Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, Moment of Silence

The City Council of the City of Grand Junction convened into regular session on the 20th day of November 2024, at 5:32 p.m. Those present were Councilmembers Scott Beilfuss, Cody Kennedy, Jason Nguyen, Dennis Simpson, Anna Stout, Council President Pro Tem Randall Reitz and Council President Abram Herman.

Also present were Interim City Manager Andrea Phillips, City Attorney John Shaver, Housing Manager Ashley Chambers, Principal Planner David Thornton, Community Development Director Tamra Allen, City Clerk Selestina Sandoval, and Deputy City Clerk Misty Williams.

Council President Herman called the meeting to order. He introduced several special guests to the City Council meeting, including two Stout Students and the Americorp Fellows, who led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a moment of silence.

Presentations

Housing Manager Ashley Chambers provided Council with a presentation on the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Competition.

The City of Grand Junction has been actively promoting ADUs as part of implementing the 2021 Adopted Housing Strategies. Recently, the City partnered with CMU Tech to encourage ADU construction through an innovative design competition. The initiative aimed to boost ADU development and anticipated offering the students ADU plans as pre-approved designs to simplify the process and cost for local developers and homeowners.

Goals for the competition included: Promote Innovation, Foster Sustainable and Affordable Design and Provide Learning Opportunities.

The ADU designs will be further developed into a pre-approved plan that will be featured on the City of Grand Junction website and available for no cost for future use by local developers and homeowners.

As part of the competition, CMU Tech students were invited to form groups to formulate a site plan, ADU design, and narrative for submittal for the competition. A review

committee of professionals in the field provided a planning site review for current planning and building standards to push students toward getting their ADU design "approved." Students with an approved plan presented their final designs to the Planning Commissioners at the Planning Commission Workshop on November 7th for scoring of their design. After each presentation, Planning Commissioners asked questions, provided additional feedback, etc. The City of Grand Junction received information that the CMU Foundation will match each scholarship award.

Council President Herman announced the winners who received the following awards:

1st Place: \$2,500

2nd Place: \$1,250

3rd Place: \$500

Proclamations

Proclaiming November 30, 2024, as Small Business Saturday in the City of Grand Junction

Council President Herman read the proclamation declaring November 30, 2024, as Small Business Saturday in the City of Grand Junction. Brad Stam, Director of Downtown Development Authority, and the proprietors of Triple Play Records and Hog & Hen were in attendance to receive the proclamation.

Proclaiming November 20 - 26, 2024, as the 7th Annual Interfaith Awareness Week in the City of Grand Junction

Council President Pro Tem Reitz read the proclamation declaring November 20-26, 2024, as the 7th Annual Interfaith Awareness Week in the city of Grand Junction. Sherry Cole was in attendance to receive the proclamation on behalf of the Interfaith Network.

Appointments

To the Commission on Arts and Culture

Councilmember Stout moved to appoint Hank Braxton, Kristin Mercer, Nora Hughes, Amy Gibson, and Libbie Early to full terms expiring February 28, 2028, and Dora Fang to a partial term expiring February 28, 2026, seconded by Councilmember Nguyen. Motion carried by a unanimous voice vote.

Public Comments

Public comment was heard from Stouts Students, Dustin Anzures and Elias Ferguson on behalf of Americorp, Mike Crum, Cris Silverberg, Niki Hunn, Jeremy Scheetz, Shane Burton, Rick Hamm, Jeb Zimmermann, Tad Hatter, Suzann Wilcox, and Rob Arnold.

Interim City Manager Report

Interim City Manager Andrea Phillips did not have a report for Council.

Boards and Commission Liaison Reports

Councilmember Beilfuss reported on the Small Business Expo at The Business Incubator, the opening of the Skate Park at Emerson Park, attending the Water Summit in Montrose, meeting with several groups regarding the homeless situation, the Forestry Board, the Commission on Arts and Culture, and hosting a group of Webelo Scouts at City Hall.

Council President Pro Tem Reitz reported on the Visit Grand Junction Board of Directors and provided updates on improvements seen because of the lodging tax passed in 2018, including several sports tourism events coming in 2025.

Councilmember Stout reported on the Air Service Alliance.

Councilmember Kennedy reported on the Grand Junction Regional Airport terminal expansion, acquisition of fire equipment, Delta's inaugural flight to take place on December 3rd, as well as downtown business problems with the homeless population.

Council President Herman reported on the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) tree lighting on November 23, the Parade of Lights on December 7th, and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes

- a. Minutes of the October 21, 2024, Special Meeting
- b. Minutes of the October 28, 2024, Special Meeting
- c. Summary of the November 4, 2024, Workshop
- d. Minutes of the November 6, 2024, Regular Meeting

2. Set Public Hearings

- a. Legislative

- i. Introduction of an Ordinance Amending Title 21 Zoning and Development Code, Chapter 21.05 Site and Structure Development Standards, to Modify and Clarify Provisions Relating to Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements, and Setting a Public Hearing for December 4, 2024
- ii. Introduction of An Ordinance Amending Title 21 Zoning and Development Code to Modify and Clarify Various Provisions Relating to Application Outreach Meetings, Withdrawn Applications, Public Notice, Minor Plat Amendments, Simple Subdivisions, Administrative Changes to the Comprehensive Plan, Non-Administrative Comprehensive Plan Amendments, Conditional Use Permits, Permitted Encroachments, Mixed-Use Districts Regulations, Public, Civic, and Institutional Campus (P-2) Zone District Regulations, Principal Use Table, Use-Specific Standards for Industrial Uses, Accessory Uses and Structures, Accessory Use-Specific Standards, Temporary Uses and Structures, Shared Driveway (Autocourt) Standards, Residential Compatibility Standards, Preservation of Significant Trees, Off-Street Parking and Loading, Measurements, and Definitions, and Setting a Public Hearing for December 4, 2024

3. Agreements

- a. An Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) Concerning the Adoption of the Local Match Funding for Grand Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (GVMPO) for FY 2025
- b. An Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) Concerning the Adoption of the Local Match Funding for Grand Valley Transit (GVT) Public Transit Services for FY 2025
- c. A Multi-Year Axon Master Services and Purchase Agreement for the Continued Provision of Body-Worn Cameras, Tasers, and Related Services to the Grand Junction Police Department – **MOVED TO REGULAR AGENDA**

4. Procurements

- a. Construction Contract for Parks Pedestrian Lighting Improvements Project

5. Resolutions

- a. A Resolution to Extend the Dos Rios Part II Land Sale

- b. A Resolution Authorizing the Interim City Manager to Submit a Grant Request to the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) for the More Housing Now and Land Use Initiative Grant
- c. A Resolution Adopting the City of Grand Junction Legislative Policy
- d. A Resolution Supporting and Adopting the Mesa County Safety Action Plan

Councilmember Simpson requested that Item 3.c. be removed from the Consent Agenda.

Councilmember Kennedy moved to adopt Consent Agenda Items 1 through 5, excluding item 3.c. seconded by Councilmember Nguyen. Motion carried by a unanimous voice vote.

REGULAR AGENDA

3.c. A Multi-Year Axon Master Services and Purchase Agreement for the Continued Provision of Body-Worn Cameras, Tasers, and Related Services to the Grand Junction Police Department – MOVED FROM CONSENT

The Grand Junction Police Department has been utilizing body-worn cameras from Axon Enterprise Inc. since 2019, significantly enhancing accountability and transparency within the department. These cameras also provide critical evidentiary support in court cases. Following the passage of Senate Bill 217, all sworn officers are equipped with body-worn cameras. Tasers, also supplied by Axon since 2004, remain an essential tool for managing violent and resistant suspects.

Axon's Tasers offer a non-lethal alternative between physical force and deadly force, reducing injury risks to both officers and suspects. The devices are integrated with Axon's body-worn cameras, automatically activating the cameras when a Taser is deployed, a feature unique to Axon products. The equipment lifecycle is typically 3–5 years, and this contract ensures regular updates and replacements.

In November 2020, City Council authorized staff to enter into a 10-year sole-source contract with Axon for body-worn cameras, Tasers, and all associated costs, contingent on annual appropriations. In early 2024, Axon notified the City of unpaid invoices for 2021-2023 due to a transition to a new financial system that failed to generate invoices.

Through contract re-negotiations, the City and Axon have agreed to a new 10-year contract that includes a reduced amount for previous years spread over the new contract period. This contract is also subject to annual appropriations. The first year of the contract is 2025 and the annual amount of \$450,000.06 is included in the proposed 2025 budget.

Councilmember Simpson voiced his concerns about this contract's length and how the cost is budgeted. Comments were shared by Council President Herman, and Councilmembers Simpson, and Nguyen. City Attorney Shaver clarified the particulars of the contract, and Chief Smith explained the pros and cons.

Councilmember Stout moved to approve Consent Agenda Item 3.c., seconded by Councilmember Nguyen. The motion passed by voice vote 6-1, with Councilmember Simpson voting no.

6. Public Hearings

a. Legislative

i. An Ordinance Amending Title 31 One Grand Junction Comprehensive Plan (Comprehensive Plan) Including Chapter 31.04 Comprehensive Plan and Chapter 31.08 Grand Junction Circulation Plan (Circulation Plan)

The planners, engineers, and traffic experts of the City of Grand Junction and Mesa County formed a technical advisory committee to take a fresh look at the transportation systems for motorized travel within the Urban Development Boundary (UDB) and other areas. This item proposes amendments to the Circulation Plan's Street Plan Functional Classification Map. Any approved changes to the map would update the Street Plan Functional Classification Map adopted in 2018 and as amended. The 2018 map found on page 35 and page 104 of the Comprehensive Plan will then be replaced with the 2024 Street Plan Functional Classification Map.

Principal Planner David Thornton presented this item and was available to answer Council's questions.

The public hearing opened at 7:43 pm.

No public comment was heard.

The public hearing closed at 7:43 pm.

Council President Pro Tem Reitz moved, and Councilmember Simpson seconded to adopt Ordinance No. 5239 approving the request to amend Title 31 One Grand Junction Comprehensive Plan, including Chapter 31.04 and Chapter 31.08 Grand Junction Circulation Plan, specifically 31.08.080(c) and 31.08.080.150 Appendix A, City file number CPA-2024-583, on final passage and ordered final publication in pamphlet form.

Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

7. Resolutions

a. **A Resolution Conditionally Committing City Funding for the Liberty Apartments by Aspire Residential, LLC**

Prior to the start of the regular meeting, Aspire Residential, LLC (“Developer”) modified its request for the City to contribute \$885,531 to the Phase I portion of the Project, including 72 units. Phase 2 funding will be contingent on future council approval, with an estimated ask of approximately \$900,000. Aspire shared a letter outlining the incentive ask per unit. Under the primary financing approach, which utilizes the CHFA Prop 123 Equity program, the Developer is now proposing the Project be rent-restricted using either Proposition 123 Equity Program or Concessionary Debt. Those programs require either:

- Rental rates at 90% AMI (Area Median Income) Average for all units for a period of 30 years (Proposition 123 Equity Program); or,
- 20 percent of units (38) at 80 percent AMI for a period of 30 years (Proposition 123 Concessionary Debt.)

John Gargas was in attendance virtually and presented the incentive request update.

Public comment opened at 8:08 pm.

Comment was heard from Mike Crum.

Public comment closed at 8:11 pm.

Community Development Director Tamra Allen was available to answer questions from Council.

Council discussed the request and budget impacts, the necessity of affordable housing (particularly for workforce income brackets), and the housing shortage’s impact on economic growth and workforce retention. Council asked if the Developer would commit to a certain number of units at 60% AMI and he agreed to at least six units.

Councilmember Nguyen moved, and Councilmember Stout seconded to adopt Resolution No. 83-24, a resolution committing funding for the Liberty Apartments by Aspire Residential, LLC.

City Attorney Shaver noted that the motion should include provisions for the modifications discussed during the meeting, including the new requested amount, conditional upon receipt of Proposition 123 funding and compliance with the commitment to six units at 60% AMI. Councilmembers Nguyen and Stout agreed.

The motion carried by voice vote 6-1, with Councilmember Simpson voting no.

b. A Resolution to Appoint a Hearing Officer in and for the City of Grand Junction, Colorado Cannabis Licensing Authority

Ordinance 5064 provides for and establishes a local Cannabis Licensing Authority for hearing and deciding certain matters related to cannabis licensing and enforcement in the City. The Ordinance, which is in accordance with the Colorado Constitution and Colorado law, creates and vests the Hearing Officer with certain authority. The vesting of that authority follows from and with the City Council appointment of the Cannabis Licensing Authority.

With the adoption and approval of the Resolution, the City Council would appoint Sam Starritt as the Hearing Officer for the Grand Junction Cannabis Licensing Authority. Mr. Starritt would succeed Hearing Officer Rubinstein following her resignation.

Mr. Starritt is a private attorney in the City and presently serves the City as the Hearing Officer for Liquor and Beer licensing matters. Mr. Starritt has no actual or apparent conflicts of interest and is ready, willing, and capable of serving to administer the law relative to cannabis business licensing and operations.

City Attorney John Shaver was available for questions from Council.

Public comment opened at 8:29 pm.

Comment was heard from Mike Crum.

Public comment closed at 8:30 pm.

Councilmember Stout moved and Councilmember Nguyen seconded to adopt Resolution 84-24, a Resolution Appointing Sam Starritt as the Hearing Officer for the City Cannabis Licensing Authority. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

8. Non-Scheduled Comments

No comments were heard.

9. Other Business

Councilmember Kennedy spoke about the Resource Center, the problems that surround it, and the opportunity to have a special meeting regarding its future. Comments were heard from Councilmember Stout, Council President Herman, and Councilmember Simpson.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:39 pm.

Selestina Sandoval

Selestina Sandoval, CMC

City Clerk

