

Grand Junction City Council
Minutes of the Regular Meeting

January 21, 2026

Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, Moment of Silence

The City Council of the City of Grand Junction convened into regular session on the 21st day of January, at 5:30 p.m. Those present were Councilmembers Robert Ballard, Scott Beilfuss, Jason Nguyen, Anna Stout (virtual), Ben Van Dyke, and Mayor Pro Tem Laurel Lutz, and Council President Cody Kennedy.

Also present were City Manager Mike Bennett, Assistant City Attorney Jeremiah Boies, Engineering Manager Ken Haley, Human Resources Director Shelley Caskey, Principal Planner Tim Lehrbach, Principal Planner Daniella Acosta Stine, City Clerk Selestina Sandoval, and Deputy City Clerk Krystle Koehler.

Council President Kennedy called the meeting to order and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a moment of silence.

Proclamations

Proclaiming the Month of January 2026 as National Crime Stoppers Month in the City of Grand Junction

Council President Kennedy read the proclamation. Don Potter, Board Member for Crime Stoppers, accepted the proclamation.

Council took a short break at 5:33 p.m. due to an audio issue.

Council resumed at 5:41 p.m. there was still an audio issue preventing Councilmember Stout from participating, but Council President Kennedy proceeded.

Appointments

To the Planning Commission/Zoning Board of Appeals

Councilmember Van Dyke moved, and Councilmember Lutz seconded to appoint Caleb Abeloe as 1st alternate to the Planning Commission/Zoning Board of Appeals for a term expiring October 31, 2030, and to appoint Merritt Sixbey as 2nd alternate for a term expiring October 31, 2029. Motion carried 6-0 by a unanimous voice vote.

To the Commission on Arts & Culture

Councilmember Ballard moved and Councilmember Lutz seconded to reappoint Porcia Silverberg and Pamela Blythe to the Commission on Arts & Culture for full terms expiring February 28, 2029, and to appoint Gilberto Ramirez Macias and TJ Smith for full terms expiring February 28, 2029, and to appoint Bill Lebach for a partial term expiring February 28, 2028. Motion carried 6-0 by a unanimous voice vote.

Public Comments

Public comments were heard from Gabe Lord, Mary Shawcroft, Florence Irene Shields, and Paul Fox and Theresa Cambron.

City Manager Report

City Manager Mike Bennett invited community members to join him for his Books and Briefings event on Thursday, January 22, 2026, from 8:00 to 9:30 a.m. at the Barnes & Noble Café, located at 2451 Patterson Road.

The audio issue was resolved and Councilmember Stout was able to participate in the meeting.

Boards and Commission Liaison Reports

Councilmember Beilfuss reported on the Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration, and the homeless coalition.

Councilmember Ballard gave an update on the Forestry Board.

Councilmember Van Dyke gave an update on the Downtown Development Authority.

Councilmember Lutz reported on Visit Grand Junction, and Grand Junction Housing Authority.

Councilmember Stout reported on the Colorado Municipal League (CML) and she attended her meeting for Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.

Council President Kennedy reported on the Colorado Municipal League (CML) Mayor Summit, Grand Junction Regional Airport Authority, and noted that no decision has been made regarding the Museums of Western Colorado meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes

- a. Minutes of the January 7, 2026 Regular Meeting

2. Set Public Hearings

a. Legislative

- i. Introduction of an Ordinance Amending Sections of the Zoning and Development Code and 24 Road Corridor Design Standards (Title 21 and Title 25 of Grand Junction Municipal Code) Regarding Planned Development, Mixed-Use Downtown District Specific Standards, Short-Term Rentals, Accessory Uses and Structures, Shared Driveways, Multi-Unit Design Standards, Access to Public Streets, and Service and Storage Areas in the 24 Road Corridor and Setting a Public Hearing for February 4, 2026
- ii. Introduction of an Ordinance to Extend the Prohibition on the Establishment of any New or Relocation of Existing Gaming Arcades or Gaming Uses within the City of Grand Junction and Setting a Public Hearing for February 4, 2026

b. Quasi-judicial

- i. Introduction of an Ordinance to Amend the Comprehensive Plan from Residential High to Mixed Use for 3.72 Acres Located at 377 and 379 29 Road and Setting a Public Hearing for February 4, 2026
- ii. Introduction of an Ordinance to Rezone 3.72 Acres from Residential Medium 12 (RM-12) to Mixed-Use Light Commercial (MU-2) located at 377 and 379 29 Road and Setting a Public Hearing for February 4, 2026
- iii. Introduction of an Ordinance Zoning the Morelli Annexation to Mixed-Use Light Commercial (MU-2), 2.56 Acres Located on Unaddressed Property Between 3105 E 1/2 Road and 3112 I-70B, Parcel Number 2943-103-00-101, and Setting a Public Hearing for February 4, 2026

3. Agreements

- a. Parking Agreement for Terminal Project

4. Procurements

- a. Authorize Construction Contract for Patterson Sidewalk Project – **Moved to the Regular Agenda**

- b. 400 Block Main Street Improvements

5. Resolutions

- a. A Resolution Authorizing a Third Extension of up to Six-months of the Travel and Tourism Memorandum of Understanding Concerning the 2018 Voter Approved Three Percent Lodgers Tax Increase
- b. A Resolution Authorizing the Sale by the City of Real Property Located at 536 1/2 Willow Road to Marcos Antonio Orellana and Ratifying Actions Heretofore Taken in Connection Therewith
- c. A Resolution Amending Resolution No. 81-25 to the City Council concerning the Annexation of Lands to the City of Grand Junction, Colorado, Exercising Land Use Control, and Amending Proposed Annexation Ordinance for the Fox Grove Annexation of 4.75 acres, Located at 3071 E 1/2 Road

Councilmember Nguyen moved, and Councilmember Lutz seconded to adopt Consent Agenda Item #1-5, excluding item 4.a. Motion carried 7-0 by a unanimous voice vote.

REGULAR AGENDA

4.a. Authorize Construction Contract for Patterson Sidewalk Project

This item is to consider authorization of a construction contract for the sidewalk improvements along the south side of Patterson Road from 24 1/2 Road to 25 1/2 Road. The proposed improvements will include the installation of a 10-foot-wide detached sidewalk with pedestrian lighting and rock landscaping. The sidewalk will be located within an easement granted by the Grand Valley Irrigation Company, which also serves as a utility corridor for the Independent Ranchman's Ditch and other public utilities.

Engineering Manager Ken Haley and Chief Financial Officer Jay Valentine were available to answer questions from Council.

Comments were heard from Councilmember Nguyen.

Councilmember Nguyen moved, and Councilmember Ballard seconded to adopt Consent Agenda Item 4.a. Motion carried 7-0 by a unanimous voice vote.

6.a.i. An Ordinance Authorizing the Scheduled Increase in Employer Contributions to Police & Fire 401(a) Plans

On January 7, 2026, City Council introduced an ordinance authorizing a scheduled increase in the City's employer contributions to the Police and Fire 401(a) retirement plans and set a public hearing for January 21, 2026. The ordinance aligns the Police and Fire 401(a) employer contribution schedule with the employer contribution schedule required under the Fire and Police Pension Association (FPPA) Defined Benefit Plan.

Human Resources Director Shelley Caskey gave a brief overview and was available to answer questions from Council.

The public hearing opened at 6:29 p.m.

No comments were heard.

The public hearing closed at 6:29 p.m.

There were no further comments heard from Council.

Councilmember Nguyen moved, and Councilmember Lutz seconded to adopt Ordinance No. 5297, an ordinance authorizing a scheduled increase to the City's Police and Fire 401(a) employer contribution, aligning the contribution schedule with the FPPA employer contribution schedule, on final passage and ordered final publication in pamphlet form. The motion carried 7-0 by a unanimous roll call vote.

6.a.ii. An Ordinance Amending Sections of the Zoning and Development Code (Title 21 of the Grand Junction Municipal Code) Regarding Application Outreach Meetings and Accessible Parking

Two amendments were proposed in this item that are unrelated. A third amendment was originally published for the Planning Commission to consider; however, staff requested the Planning Commission not consider the issue pertaining to state law and irrigation easements and infrastructure, as staff was currently working on additional recommended revisions to this code text amendment with the Housing Affordability Committee Task Force. Because it had been published already, it remains in the materials for tonight, but Council did not act on this amendment at this time.

Amendment #1

Staff have identified two application types that presently require an application outreach meeting. In one case, an application for a Code Text Amendment, the requirement is impractical to implement and inconsistent with standard practice. In the other case, an application for Vacation of Easement, the requirement is disproportionate to the impact of the application type.

Amendment #2

Colorado House Bill 24-1173, signed into law in 2024, requires that local governments adopt the Colorado Electric Vehicle Charging Model Land Use Code, to adopt and/or maintain compliant definitions and standards for electric vehicle charging equipment, or to adopt a resolution or ordinance opting out of the requirements. The proposed amendment addresses requirements pertaining to accessible parking.

Principal Planner Tim Lehrbach gave a presentation and was available to answer questions from Council.

Comments were heard from Councilmember Beilfuss and Council President Kennedy.

The public hearing opened at 6:40 p.m.

No comments were heard.

The public hearing closed at 6:40 p.m.

Councilmember Van Dyke moved, and Councilmember Nguyen seconded to adopt Ordinance No. 5298, an ordinance amending Title 21 Zoning and Development Code, regarding Application Outreach Meetings and Accessible Parking, on final passage and ordered final publication in pamphlet form. The motion carried 7-0 by a unanimous roll call vote.

Council took a short break at 6:44 p.m.

Council resumed at 6:50 p.m.

6.a.iii. An Ordinance Amending Sections of the Zoning and Development Code (Title 21 of the Grand Junction Municipal Code) Regarding Pre-Application Outreach Meetings and General Meetings

The Housing Affordability Code Task Force is requesting to amend the Zoning and Development Code (ZDC) to eliminate the mandatory pre-application meeting requirement. Pre-application meetings were introduced with the 2023 ZDC and are currently required for major site plans, major subdivisions, and planned developments. While the requirement was intended to improve clarity, consistency, and the completeness of development applications early in the process, staff experience and applicant feedback indicate that the benefits of mandatory meetings have been inconsistent as there are variations in the submittal readiness and outcomes.

Staff supports this amendment and has recommended removing the mandatory requirement for pre-applications as well as removing all references to the optional general meeting that will allow staff to continue offering pre-application and general

meetings as optional services tailored to project complexity and applicant needs, rather than as a procedural prerequisite embedded in the code. Principal Planner Daniella Acosta Stine gave a presentation and was available to answer questions from Council.

Comments were heard from Councilmember Beilfuss.

The public hearing opened at 6:57 p.m.

Public comment was heard from Mark Austin.

The public hearing closed at 6:59 p.m.

Councilmember Lutz moved, and Councilmember Nguyen seconded to adopt Ordinance No. 5299, an ordinance amending Title 21 Zoning and Development Code, regarding Application Outreach Meetings and Accessible Parking, on final passage and order final publication in pamphlet form. The motion carried 7-0 by a unanimous roll call vote.

6.a.iv. An Ordinance Setting the Interim City Attorney Salary

On January 7, 2026, by and with Resolution 03-26 the City Council appointed Jeremiah Boies as Interim City Attorney. Pursuant to GJMC the salary of the City Attorney is to be set by ordinance.

City Manager Mike Bennett gave a presentation and was available to answer questions from Council.

Comments were heard from Councilmember Ballard, Beilfuss, Stout and Council President Kennedy.

The public hearing opened at 7:19 p.m.

Public comments were heard from Dennis Simpson and Jack Byrum.

The public hearing closed at 7:24 p.m.

Councilmember Nguyen moved, and Councilmember Stout seconded to adopt Ordinance No. 5300, an ordinance setting the Interim City Attorney's Salary on final passage and ordered final publication in pamphlet form. The motion carried 7-0 by a unanimous roll call vote.

6.b.i. A Resolution Accepting the Petition for the Annexation of 2.56 Acres of Land and an Ordinance Annexing the Morelli Annexation, Located

Between 3105 E 1/2 Road and 3112 I-70B – Parcel No. 2943-103-00-101

The Applicants, The Morelli Family Trust, U/A, and Carla A. Morelli, requested annexation of an approximately 2.56-acre parcel between 3105 E ½ Road and 3112 I-70B. The subject property is vacant. Annexation is requested to zone the property for mixed-use or commercial development. The property is Annexable Development per the Persigo Agreement. The request for zoning will be considered separately by the City Council and will be heard in a future Council action.

Principal Planner Tim Lehrbach gave a presentation and was available to answer questions from Council.

There were no comments heard from Council.

The public hearing opened at 7:35 p.m.

No comments were heard.

The public hearing closed at 7:35 p.m.

Councilmember Ballard moved, and Councilmember Van Dyke seconded to adopt Resolution No. 08-26, a resolution accepting a petition to the City Council for the annexation of lands to the City of Grand Junction, Colorado, the Morelli Annexation, approximately 2.56 acres, located between 3105 E ½ Road and 3112 I-70B, Parcel No. 2943-103-00-101. Motion carried 7-0 by a unanimous voice vote.

Councilmember Ballard moved, and Councilmember Van Dyke seconded to adopt Ordinance No. 5301, an ordinance annexing territory to the City of Grand Junction, Colorado, the Morelli Annexation, approximately 2.56 acres, located between 3105 E ½ Road and 3112 I-70B, Parcel No. 2943-103-00-101, on final passage and ordered final publication in pamphlet form. The motion carried 7-0 by a unanimous roll call vote.

6.b.ii. A Resolution Accepting the Petition for the Annexation of 4.75 Acres of Land and Ordinances Annexing and Zoning the Fox Grove Annexation to Residential Medium 8, Located at 3071 E ½ Road

The Applicant, Grand Junction Real Estate Investments LLC, requested annexation of approximately 4.75 acres at 3071 E ½ Road. The subject property is occupied by a single-unit residence and accessory structures. Annexation is requested to zone and subdivide the property for residential development. The property is Annexable Development per the Persigo Agreement. The request for annexation is being considered concurrently by the City Council with the zone of annexation request.

Principal Planner Daniella Acosta Stine gave a presentation and she and applicant Steve Voytilla were available to answer questions from Council.

There were no comments heard from Council.

The public hearing opened at 7:43 p.m.

No comments were heard.

The public hearing closed at 7:43 p.m.

Councilmember Van Dyke moved, and Councilmember Lutz seconded to adopt Resolution No. 09-26, a resolution accepting a petition to the City Council for the annexation of lands to the City of Grand Junction, Colorado, the Fox Grove Annexation, approximately 4.75 acres, located at 3071 E ½ Road. The motion carried 7-0 by a unanimous voice vote.

Councilmember Van Dyke moved, and Councilmember Nguyen seconded to adopt Ordinance No. 5302, an ordinance annexing territory to the City of Grand Junction, Colorado, the Fox Grove Annexation, approximately 4.75 acres, located at 3071 E ½ Road, on final passage and ordered final publication in pamphlet form. The motion carried 7-0 by a unanimous roll call vote.

Councilmember Van Dyke moved, and Councilmember Ballard seconded to adopt Ordinance No. 5303, an ordinance zoning the Fox Grove Annexation to Residential Medium 8 (RM-8) zone district, on final passage and ordered final publication in pamphlet form. The motion carried 7-0 by a unanimous roll call vote.

7. Non-Scheduled Comments

No comments were heard.

8. Other Business

Councilmember Ballard announced he will deploy with the National Guard to Egypt starting in April for one year and will continue to serve on Council remotely whenever possible.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

Selestina Sandoval, MMC

City Clerk

