

**Tooele City Council  
Work Session Meeting  
Minutes**

Date: Wednesday, August 14, 2019  
Time: 5:00 p.m.  
Place: Tooele City Hall, Large Conference Room  
90 North Main St., Tooele, Utah

**City Council Members Present:**

Steve Pruden  
Scott Wardle  
Dave McCall  
Brad Pratt  
Melodi Gochis

**City Employees Present:**

Mayor Debbie Winn  
Glenn Caldwell, Finance Director  
Shannon Wimmer, Assistant Finance Director  
Michelle Pitt, Recorder  
Roger Baker, City Attorney  
Kami Perkins, Human Resource Director  
Jim Bolser, Community Development Director  
Steve Evans, Public Works Director  
Paul Hansen, City Engineer  
Darwin Cook, Parks and Recreation Director  
Jami Carter, Library Director  
Ron Kirby, Police Chief  
Adrian Day, Police Captain

Minutes prepared by Michelle Pitt

**1. Open Meeting**

Chairman Pruden called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

**2. Roll Call**

Steve Pruden, Present  
Scott Wardle, Present  
Brad Pratt, Present  
Dave McCall, Present  
Melodi Gochis, Present

### **3. Discussion:**

- Resolution 2019-58 A Resolution of the Tooele City Council Adopting the Proposed Tax Rate for Fiscal Year 2019-2020

Chairman Pruden asked for comments from City staff and Council so that a decision can be made on the tax rate and budget at their next meeting on August 21st.

Council Member Pratt said he was shocked by the amount of the tax rate when he learned it was 10.3%. He said he was against that and hoped they could find something lower. If the tax rate is lower, cuts would have to be made elsewhere, but he said he has not been able to come up with that solution.

Council Member Wardle asked questions of staff about certain equipment requests and other line items. He compared requests with what was spent last year and asked for explanations of why the increase was requested. Council Member Wardle said that the City needs to have a plan in place for equipment. He expressed frustration at the lack of information when trying to determine the budget this year. The Mayor explained that the budget process was done a little differently this year. Last year there were a lot of budget meetings with each of the Council receiving a copy of the department's requests and detail. It was a lot of information. This year, it was decided by her and Chairman Pruden that the department heads would present information about what was accomplished last year, and explain any big change requests in their budgets. Further information was not requested from the Council. Council Member Wardle said he didn't know there was further information available to request. Unfortunately budget meetings were not held.

Council Member Wardle recommended that a budget manager be hired for the Council to help put together information for them. They could assist the Council in preparing budget reports, planning, identifying priorities and preparing for the future. Chairman Pruden said that this person wouldn't be housed at City Hall. The Mayor asked for clarification of this position, and how they would get information other than from Finance. Council Member Wardle said he realized that staff was overburdened, so this employee would help ease that burden. This new person would need access to City software to be able to provide the information needed. Council Member McCall said that it was their job to go through information they're given, like they've always done. He didn't feel that anyone should be hired. He added that more meetings were needed to discuss the budget.

Chairman Pruden felt that the funding for the grant writer should be cut in half. Council Member McCall felt the grant writer should be taken off all together. He would like to work with the County to get a grant writer for all entities. Chairman Pruden said that January would bring a new mix on the Council. There should be some money left in that line item to deal with that position. Council Member Gochis felt that the grant writer was a good idea. She said that there is money available if someone has the expertise to apply for it. She realized that it's the Council's job to be fiscally prudent. She thought a budget manager position was not necessary because the City has staff capable to do those tasks. She would like to find ways to use local

resources, have a budget presented, and to apply for grants. She would like to delete the grant writer. Council Member Pratt agreed with the Chairman, to not completely delete the grant writer completely. He would like to cut it in half. Council Member Wardle said he would rather pay a grant writer by an hourly rate, than a percentage of the grant received. He emphasized that they need to improve the budget process and that they may need to hold monthly budget meetings. He said that the Council is the checks and balances of the budget. He said that the Council is being accountable, trying to get answers, and not attacking staff.

Mayor Winn said that they should form small committees with a couple of Council members assigned to each department. They could share information with the rest of the Council at monthly meetings. The Mayor explained that the Council receives daily purchase order summary reports, weekly check registers, and monthly detail budget reports. It is a lot of information to look over. She said that she and staff feel pressure when they get questions and requests for changes at the last minute. Mayor Winn stated that she thought everyone was on the same page, but when it was realized that the increase would be 10%, looking at the budget line item by line item was too late at this point. Last year the budget process went well, but she was told that the Council didn't want that lengthy process this year. She added that Ms. Wimmer has a great training program ready to put in place, with goals and deadlines of when things need to be met.

There was a discussion about the trucks requested for animal control and parks. The Council suggested taking the money out of the individual budgets and using the \$77,000 in the general fund that was saved from last year's budget. Ms. Wimmer recommended leaving \$35,000 in a fund so that a vehicle can be purchased each year. The money can be moved to the department that needs it the most each year. Ms. Wimmer said that the police cars are not on a replacement rotation. Next year, the City will need to bring them up to date and will need at least \$100,000 more to do that. She also recommended that the Council consider taking the \$188,000 in the budget to replace equipment, rather than using it to reduce the tax rate. The Chief said he will be requesting 6 vehicles next year.

Council Member Pratt said that he has had discussions over the past month with the school and others, and he would like to add in line items in CTC's budget for GGC and facilitator wages. He further explained that he discussed this with the school system who said that their family program is different than the City's GGC program. He complimented CTC in the good changes they have made in the community.

Council felt that with the budget cuts discussed, they could drop the tax rate to 6%. Council Member McCall would like to keep the tax rate at 10% to keep the City ahead, so the same situation of where the City was a couple of years ago didn't happen again. Council Member Gochis said that she felt comfortable with the money they took from the enterprise fund to take care of equipment needs. She was aware that the accountant told the City that we need to stay with the certified tax rate, but she was in favor of finding additional monies to cut so that the tax rate could be around 4%.

Council Member Pratt agreed, saying that in order to make this work, the City can't go down to the rate received from the State. Some of the cuts discussed are easy to make, and won't be detrimental to the City or the citizens. He said he was in favor of a 4-6% increase.

Ms. Carter presented the Council with a scenario of cutting her current tax down to 5%, saying that would save her only \$2 per month. She indicated she would rather the Council do the 10% and be able to replace old equipment like police cars.

Council Member Wardle admitted that the Council did not get the understanding of the certified tax rate. Next year the Council needed to look at revenue growth rather than tax rate. He said he had trouble throwing money at a problem, without a plan to replace things like bad equipment. He said that the Council is told that everything is bad. Citizens have made it clear that the tax increase was painful last year. Even if the Council drops the rate to 4% or 6%, the City still needs a commitment to plan together. With a commitment from the administration to have a plan he would feel better in giving the 10.3% tax increase.

Ms. Perkins reminded the Council that employee costs keep going up, with increased insurance rates and retirement costs, at approximately \$115,000 each year.

Council Member Gochis recommended a 5% increase. Council Member McCall recommended 6%. Council Member Pratt 6%; Council Member Wardle 10%, and Chairman Pruden 6%.

The majority was that the tax rate be adjusted to 6%.

After much discussion, it was decided by the Council that the following changes be made to the budget:

The remaining funds from Road C would be used for a salt rack at \$125,000.

The General Fund would be amended as:

Grant Writer be reduced from \$60,000 to \$30,000

Move \$1,500 from subscriptions and memberships in the Attorney's budget to their miscellaneous equipment for iPads needed to accommodate new software they are getting.

Reduce sidewalk replacement program by \$15,000.

Reduce streets operation and maintenance by \$10,000.

Add \$7,963 for Guiding Good Choices and Facilitator wages back in to CTC's budget.

Move police overtime for the homecoming parade from non-departmental to the City Council's budget, at \$2,000.

Remove the judgment payment for the Aposhian lawsuit, because it has been settled.

Change the Capital Projects Fund as:

Remove \$38,000 for the animal control truck

Remove \$40,000 for brick cleaning for City Hall

Add in \$856,700 from the sale of Skyline, remaining insurance savings, and the sale of the ball field to Council Projects.

Council Member McCall added that the Council shouldn't say that they'll hold the certified tax rate, but instead look at the certified tax rate and evaluate it every year. He felt that they needed to be willing to do a small increase every year.

- Resolution 2019-57 A Resolution of the Tooele City Council Adopting the Final Budget for Tooele City for Fiscal Year 2019-2020

Based on the changes made tonight, the Council will be ready to adopt the budget at their next meeting on August 21st.

#### **4. Adjourn**

**Council Member Pratt moved to close the meeting.** Council Member Gochis seconded the motion. The vote was as follows: Council Member McCall "Aye," Council Member Wardle "Aye," Council Member Pratt "Aye," Council Member Gochis "Aye," and Chairman Pruden "Aye."

The meeting closed at 6:46 p.m.

*The content of the minutes is not intended, nor are they submitted, as a verbatim transcription of the meeting. These minutes are a brief overview of what occurred at the meeting.*

Approved this 21st day of August, 2019

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Steven Pruden, Tooele City Council Chairman