

City of City of Willard
City Council Meeting March 12, 2026
Meeting minutes

Call to Order

Invocation

Invocation was offered by Council member Rex Christensen.

Pledge of Allegiance

Council member Jordan Hulsey led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Conflict of interest declaration

No conflicts of interest were declared.

Presentation of Citizenship Awards

Mayor Travis Mote along with Principle Tawnie Bowcutt presented citizenship awards to elementary school students who were recognized for their kindness, helpfulness, and good citizenship at school. The mayor praised the students as future community leaders who help and care for their classmates. Awards were presented to Madison Sved, Everly Gibson, Bruce Anderson, Cooper Anderson, Kathrine McRae, Camille Fairfield, Taylee Marsh, Whitney Cook, Henrick Hansen, Solo Ellsmore, and Maylee Sylvester. Photos were taken with the recipients.

Public Presentation

Diana Baker addressed the council regarding a new garbage can she received from the city. She expressed disappointment that the replacement can appeared to be used, with resin on the wheel and visible nicks and bumps. City staff clarified that it was indeed a new can made from recycled plastic materials and that the appearance was normal for these products.

Kaden Conover inquired about residential water bill increases that appeared to nearly double effective January 1st. He asked if the city was concerned about reaching state thresholds for utility-to-income ratios that could trigger certain funding requirements. Council member Mund explained that the referenced state legislation had failed. Mayor Mote clarified that base rates for water and sewer had increased by approximately \$12, with the larger portion of bills being sewer costs. The increases were implemented in January after being approved the previous summer, timed for the lowest usage period to help residents prepare for the higher season.

Planning Commission Report

Planning Commission member Ken Ormond reported on the previous week's meeting, which discussed the city's new economic development plan. A significant topic was whether South Willard would unite with Willard City, as South Willard was included in the survey data. City Manager Jeremy Kimpton volunteered to research the unification process. Mayor Mote noted that the county attorney was supposed to provide information on the voting process for South Willard residents to decide on joining the city, but that information was never received. The commission also discussed a conditional use permit application for Matt Francom welding shop, which was continued pending cleanup of the property.

New Business

Action Item: Discussion/Consideration of a final plat for The Orchards Subdivision Phase 3 located at approximately 300 South 300 West

City Planner Madison Brown provided an overview of the project, noting that developer Garth Day originally requested preliminary approval for phases 3 through 6, but the planning commission approved only phase 3 pending resolution of issues in phase 4. She confirmed that all requirements appeared to be in order, with final approval contingent on completion of improvements, engineer sign-off, and establishment of an escrow agreement.

Garth Day explained that water rights transfer was the primary outstanding item. He detailed that 206 acre feet of water had been verified by the state, and the city would be owed approximately 50 acre feet for phases 1, 2, and 3. Day requested clarification on whether the city preferred the required 50 acre feet or if additional water rights could be transferred to count against future fee-in-lieu requirements for open space. Mayor Mote indicated that 50 acre feet would suffice for now, with future negotiations possible for additional transfers.

Discussion ensued about water rights conversion from irrigation to municipal use. There was concern about potential reductions when converting irrigation rights to culinary water use, though Day expressed confidence in having adequate water rights with a substantial buffer.

Mayor Mote raised concerns about a wet spot behind the old milking parlor within the development area. Day confirmed they had worked extensively with the city engineer Zach Burke on this issue and were conducting enhanced geotechnical studies to address groundwater concerns, particularly for basement construction.

The council discussed road connections and infrastructure. This phase would connect to the existing stubbed road from phase 1 and extend northward, but would not complete the connection to Mountain Shadows Drive at 400 West. Several more phases would be needed before that connection could be completed, dependent on the completion of Deer Run subdivision's final phase and related sewer infrastructure.

Day explained that phase 3 represents the limit of current sewer capacity, and future phases cannot proceed until the Deer Run subdivision completes its northern boundary sewer connection. The development timeline indicated paving would likely occur by July or August, with houses built over approximately the following year.

The discussion included details about a small road dedication that would later be vacated to provide access to adjacent property owners (the Wades and Pischkes), which Day indicated was a mutually agreeable solution developed after considerable planning.

Motion: Council member Rodney Mund moved to approve The Orchards Subdivision Phase 3 final plat located at 300 South 300 West. Council member Mike Braegger seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Action Item: Presentation of audit file for fiscal year 24/25 budget by Ulrich & Associates

Heather Christopherson from Ulrich & Associates presented the independent audit for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025. She thanked Interim City Recorder Diana Mund and City Manager Jeremy Kimpton for their cooperation during the first year working with the city. The audit resulted in a clean opinion with no state findings, though there were minor recommendations for improving internal controls.

Key highlights included:

- The financial statements present fairly in all material respects
- The management discussion and analysis on pages 3-8 provides the most comprehensive overview for general readers

- The city's fund balance is approximately 22-23% of general revenues, well within the state maximum of 35%
- The utility fund showed a negative operating income of \$220,000, indicating that service charges weren't fully covering costs during the audit period, though rate increases have since been implemented
- The goal for utility funds is to charge enough to cover expenses, capital replacement, and debt service

Council members inquired about year-to-year comparisons and expressed satisfaction that recent rate increases were moving the city in the right direction financially. The presentation concluded with no formal action required, as state law only mandates that the audit be presented to the city council.

Action Item: Discussion/Consideration of a dedicated park bench for and on behalf of Marlene Braegger Jones to be placed in the Willard Historic Cemetery

Council member Mike Braegger requested approval for placing a memorial bench for his mother in the historic cemetery rather than in the park as previously discussed. After consulting with family and community members, he determined the cemetery was more appropriate given his mother's extensive time spent there. He confirmed that his family would fund the bench and concrete base through donations received, and would coordinate with public works on placement to avoid interference with grave markers. The Daughters of Utah Pioneers chapter is also planning to add commemorative elements to the cemetery.

Motion: Council member Mund moved to approve proceeding with the memorial bench project for Marlene Braegger Jones in the Willard Historic Cemetery. Council member Rex Christensen seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council member Braegger abstaining.

Action Item: Consideration of Ordinance No. 2026-03 amending Section 24.80.150, Section 24.080.050(D)(5), Section 24.24.190, Section 24.84.090, and Section 24.72.070(C) of the Willard City Zoning Code relating to guarantees for subdivision improvements

City Attorney Amy Hugie explained that the ordinance removes the ability for developers to use bonds for subdivision improvement guarantees due to their difficulty in administration. The city would require only two methods as allowed by state code: escrow accounts or lines of credit specifically dedicated to subdivision improvements. Additionally, the city would provide a standardized subdivision improvement guarantee form rather than allowing developers to bring their own, ensuring consistent language and better control over the process.

The standardized form would include comprehensive exhibits such as property descriptions, cost estimates for improvements, approved subdivision plans, and insurance documentation. City Manager Jeremy Kimpton noted that most developers already default to escrow or line of credit options rather than bonds, making this change administratively easier for staff while providing better tools for managing subdivision improvements.

The process includes a 10% warranty holdback for two years after completion, with funds released incrementally as improvements are completed and approved by the city engineer.

Motion: Council member Mike Braegger moved to approve Ordinance 2026-03 amending the specified sections of the Willard City Zoning Code relating to subdivision improvement guarantees with an effective date upon passage. Council member Rex Christensen seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Action Item: Consideration of Ordinance No. 2026-04 amending Section 24.80.130 of the Willard City Zoning Code to include additional language relating to deferments of design and construction standards

City Attorney Amy Hugie explained that this ordinance creates a mechanism for deferring certain subdivision improvements (specifically sidewalks, curbs, and gutters) for smaller subdivisions under specific circumstances. The deferrals would only apply to subdivisions of three lots or fewer that meet strict criteria including being adjacent to paved roads built to city standards, not requiring new street dedications, and being reviewed by public works.

If a deferment is granted, deed restrictions would be placed on all lots requiring future installation of the deferred improvements when the city determines it necessary. Property owners would be responsible for costs and the city would have lien rights if payments aren't made within 30 days of invoicing.

Council members reviewed the comprehensive staff report with frequently asked questions. There was discussion about ensuring the planning commission has clear guidance and discretion in applying these standards, particularly regarding compatibility with surrounding infrastructure. The ordinance is designed to help smaller subdivisions in areas like old town where full infrastructure may not currently exist while preserving the city's ability to require improvements in the future.

The council discussed scenarios where existing properties might face similar requirements and confirmed that the ordinance includes provisions for interest on unpaid assessments as allowed by state law.

Motion: Council member Rodney Mund moved to adopt Ordinance 2026-04 amending Section 24.80.130 of the Willard City Zoning Code to allow for deferral of certain subdivision improvements under specific conditions, with the amendment to include interest language as discussed. Council member Jacob Bodily seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Action Item: Discussion/Consideration of appointment of Craig M. Call with Anderson Call & Wilkinson, P.C. as land use hearing officer

Mayor Mote explained that the previous hearing officer, Dave Church, had retired due to medical issues, necessitating a replacement. Craig M. Call comes highly recommended and would charge \$125 per hour. State law requires the city to have a land use hearing officer available.

Motion: Council member Rex Christensen moved to approve the appointment of Craig M. Call as the city's land use hearing officer. Council member Jacob Bodily seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Next Meeting Agenda

City Attorney Hugie noted she would be absent for the next meeting due to travel to Mexico. The March 26th meeting will include a public hearing on an ordinance regarding UTA tax repeal and approval of a new interlocal agreement. She confirmed there would be no back fees associated with the UTA matter and that Perry's separate issues with UTA would not affect Willard's situation.

Upcoming events

No upcoming events were reported.

Minutes

Approval of February 26, 2026, minutes

Motion: Council member Mike Braegger moved to approve the February 26, 2026 meeting minutes. Council member Jacob Bodily seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Staff Reports

Public Works

Public Works reported having plenty of salt on hand

Police Department

Police Officer Jordan Harper reported that both patrol vehicles were operational, and that Officer Tyler Prange was completing training and would be independently patrolling within two weeks. A background check was in progress for a fifth officer position.

Fire Department

Chief Van Mund had nothing to report

City Manager

City Manager Jeremy Kimpton announced the implementation of new city email addresses for all council members to comply with state law requirements for government officials. He explained the system would use Microsoft Office suite and provided login credentials. The emails are required for all city business to maintain separation from personal communications and ensure proper record retention for public records requests.

Kimpton also discussed progress toward more paperless meetings, including potential use of iPads and shared document systems. He noted that facility planning discussions were ongoing with engineering consultants.

The manager confirmed that a meeting had been scheduled with Wasatch Civil to discuss impact fee updates and that additional sources had been identified to assist with that process.

City Planner

No additional report was provided.

City Attorney

No additional report was provided beyond items covered in new business.

City Interim Recorder

No report was provided.

Council Member Reports

Jacob Bodily

No report.

Rod Mund

Council member Mund inquired about the status of the facilities plan and suggested a spring project to improve the appearance of the dike area, potentially making it a landmark rather than an eyesore. He noted that materials and rough measurements had been discussed.

Mike Braegger

No additional report.

Rex Christensen

Council member Christensen reported changes in the sewer board leadership. Board Chair Josh Braegger's term as chair had ended and Board member Nathan Tueller was now the chair with Board member Rex Christensen serving as vice chair. Josh Braegger remains on the board as an at-large member.

Jordan Hulsey

Council member Hulsey reported that her children were doing well when asked.

Mayor's General Correspondence and Information

Mayor Mote addressed several topics including agricultural easements and their role in the city's master planned community (MPC) ordinances. He referenced the city's vision statement and general plan, which emphasize protecting agricultural lands and maintaining rural character. He explained that agricultural easements represent property rights that can be sold or transferred while maintaining agricultural use, and that deed restrictions can limit certain activities while preserving farming rights.

The mayor stressed the importance of consistency with the city's vision and existing ordinances when evaluating MPC applications, noting that any MPC must provide compatibility with surrounding land uses and conform to general plan guidelines.

Regarding Fourth of July planning, Mayor Mote highlighted the need for community support for organizers Terry and Marjorie Ross, who have managed the event for many years. He noted the need for assistance with obtaining bingo prizes and managing games and booths. The council discussed strategies for recruiting volunteers through social media and newsletters, focusing on specific task assignments rather than general committee requests.

The mayor also addressed noise complaints about motorcycles traveling through town at late hours, particularly around 1:00 AM. While acknowledging the challenges of enforcing noise ordinances without proper equipment, he suggested increased patrol presence during nighttime hours to address potential speeding violations that often accompany the noise issues. Police Officer Harper confirmed plans to increase enforcement on the north end of town where speeds up to 80 mph have been observed.

Consideration of Motion to Enter a Closed Session

No motion was made to enter closed session.

Adjourn

Motion: Council member Mike Braegger moved to adjourn the meeting. Council member Jacob Bodily seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned.