



February 17th, 2026

4:00 WORK SESSION 5:00 REGULAR MEETING

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that the MORGAN COUNTY COMMISSION will hold a regular Commission meeting in the Commission meeting room at 48 West Young Street, Morgan, Utah.

Action Item(s) that includes Public Hearing(s) will be held at or after 6:00 PM

COUNTY COMMISSION

Commission Chair Matt Wilson
Commissioner Mike Newton
Commissioner Raelene Blocker
Commissioner Blaine Fackrell
Commission Vice Chair Vaughn Nickerson

OTHER EMPLOYEES

IT Director Jeremy Archibald
Administrative Manager Kate Becker (CAM)
Deputy Clerk/Auditor Cindee Mikesell
County Attorney Garrett Smith (CA)
Planning Director Josh Cook
Planner I Jeremy Lance
Clerk/Auditor Leslie Hyde
Fire Chief Brad Wilkes
Emergency Manager Erica White

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Debbie Sessions
Douglas Perkins
Randy Watt
Heidi Dorius
Matt Kendall
Kevin Kurtz
Heidi Nettleton
Ted Taylor
Dane Wilkinson

4:00 WORK SESSION

Planning Commissioner Randy Watt, EPA & Rifle Range

Meeting Summary: Firing Range Environmental & Financial Considerations

The meeting focused on the potential environmental, regulatory, and financial risks associated with closing or redeveloping a firing range. Randy Watt provided background on the range, noting it has been in operation for approximately 24 years and is significantly smaller than the Morgan County range.

A central theme of the discussion was compliance with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guidelines for firing range closure and land remediation. Randy emphasized that improper closure, abandonment, rezoning, or changes in land use could trigger EPA involvement, potentially leading to mandatory inspections and costly remediation requirements.

The EPA's "cradle-to-grave" liability principle was discussed, meaning the county would remain responsible for contamination on the property regardless of future sale, redevelopment, or transfer of ownership. As a result, actions taken now could have long-term financial implications for the county.

EPA Testing and Remediation Considerations

Impact of Rezoning or Annexation

Vaughn Nickerson raised concerns that potential city annexation or rezoning of the property could automatically trigger EPA review. Speaker 6 reiterated that changes in land designation or abandonment of the range could be interpreted as closure, increasing regulatory exposure.

5:00 COMMENCEMENT OF MEETING

(A) Opening Ceremonies

1. Welcome
2. Invocation and/or Moment of Reflection: **Hon. Commissioner Nickerson**
3. Pledge of Allegiance

(B) Consent Agenda Items

1. Approval of the Morgan County Commission Minutes from February 3rd, 2026.
2. Notice of vacancy on the Weed Abatement Board – Open to Submissions
3. Notice of vacancy on both the WPR Utility District and WPR Road and Fire District – Open to Submissions
4. Resignation of Aaron Rose from the Tourism Tax Advisory Board
5. Approval of an agreement between Morgan County and the Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands to cooperatively discharge their joint responsibilities for protecting non-federal land from wildland fire.
6. Approval of letter rescinding the provisional approval of Benjamin Gabbert for providing indigent defense services for the Morgan County Justice Court and conflict counsel pursuant to Section 3 item 6 of the Morgan County Public Defender Contract with McKay Group dated January 20th, 2026.
7. Approval of a letter of support for a trail through Snowbasin as request by the Eden Trails Foundation for their UORG grant application as this project will be in both Morgan and Weber Counties.

Commissioner Newton motioned to approve Consent Agenda Items

Seconded by Commissioner Blocker

VOTE:

Commission Chair Wilson AYE

Commission Vice Chair Nickerson AYE

Commissioner Blocker AYE

Commissioner Newton AYE

Commissioner Fackrell AYE

The Vote was unanimous. The motion passed.

(C) Commissioner Declarations of Conflict of Interest

Commissioner Blocker stated that she lives in the Cottonwoods

(D) Public Comments (please limit comments to 3 minutes)

Kobe Kimball, a local contractor and resident, addressed the commission regarding the county's fire ordinance requirements for private residences. He stated that while he follows commission meetings regularly to stay informed, he disagrees with how the current fire ordinance—particularly the square-footage requirements—was adopted. He noted that square footage does not necessarily reflect building footprints and argued that the standard creates unnecessary costs for homeowners. Kimball highlighted that required fire suppression or water system improvements can add approximately \$20,000–\$30,000 to the cost of building a home, which he believes is a significant burden for residents, especially those building permanent homes. Although he does not currently have a personal stake in the issue, he urged the county to consider revising the ordinance and suggested aligning more closely with the state fire code standard of 10,000 square feet, while acknowledging that local conditions may warrant some variation.

Heidi Nettleton, representing the applicant for a Development Agreement (DA) amendment, addressed the commission to clarify that the item was not scheduled for a public hearing at this meeting. She noted some confusion due to recent email communications and acknowledged that a presentation would not be appropriate at this time. Nettleton expressed concern about misinformation circulating publicly, including a petition related to the amendment, and requested to be placed on a future work session agenda. She stated that the amendment is complex and that it has been several months since the last work session in November, emphasizing the need to clarify outstanding issues and provide accurate information to the commission and residents.

(E) Action Items

- 1. Kate Becker** – Discussion/Decision – Morgan County Administrative Manager
Discussion and decision on **CR 26-13** establishing the Morgan County Rifle Range Advisory Committee to recommend and advise on the future use safety, and development of County shooting sports facilities.

Kate Becker (CAM) presented a resolution to create a **County Rifle Range Advisory Committee** to advise the commission on the future use, safety, and development of county shooting sports facilities. The proposed purpose of the committee includes evaluating the current range site for safety, noise, and fire risk; developing a long-term plan for modern shooting sports facilities; reviewing and recommending updates to drainage fees, scheduling priorities, and operational rules; and assisting with coordination related to fire and safety concerns. The proposed committee size would be **five to seven members**, with an odd number preferred, including representatives from the sheriff's office, the fire department, a local shooting sports organization, and at-large Morgan County residents.

Commissioner Wilson expressed strong support for forming the committee, noting it was long overdue and would benefit from the community's expertise. Commissioner Fackrell questioned whether multiple law enforcement-related positions were necessary and suggested that expanding the committee to seven members could allow for more at-large resident

representation. Kate Becker (CAM) explained that inclusion of the sheriff's office was important because the county range is used for required law enforcement firearms qualification, and any changes affecting that use could create additional county costs.

There was general agreement among commissioners that a **seven-member committee** would be preferable. Commissioner Blocker asked whether the shooting sports representative could include youth participation, such as 4-H shooting sports; Kate Becker(CAM) confirmed that the commission would have flexibility in appointing that position. Commissioner Nickerson supported the seven-member structure and suggested considering a representative connected to the firearms industry, such as someone affiliated with **Browning Arms Company** citing the value of industry experience and connections. Kate Becker (CAM) noted that the commission could make such an appointment without formally specifying it in the resolution.

Commissioner Newton motioned to approve CR 26-13 establishing the Morgan County Rifle Range Advisory Committee with Seven members.

Seconded by Commissioner Nickerson

VOTE:

Commission Chair Wilson AYE

Commission Vice Chair Nickerson AYE

Commissioner Blocker AYE

Commissioner Newton AYE

Commissioner Fackrell AYE

The Vote was unanimous. The motion passed.

2. Deputy Chief Erica White – Discussion/Decision – Emergency Management

Proposal and discussion on a change order to the flood mitigation – drainage improvement and culvert maintenance project on Morgan Valley Drive due to the discovery of a collapsed adjacent drainpipe.

Deputy Chief Erica White reported on recent flood mitigation work involving a culvert extension at the bottom of Hardscrabble Road under Kilburn's property, which was completed the prior week. During that work, staff discovered that an older pipe running beneath the road between Hardscrabble and Kilburn's property is actively eroding and likely to fail. If not replaced, the failure could wash out the roadway. Bret Heiner Morgan County Public Works requested **\$26,000** to replace the deteriorating pipe, noting the work would occur in May or June, once water levels recede, and would help avoid a much larger repair estimated at approximately **\$200,000**.

Kate Becker (CAM) confirmed that funding is available in the Flood Mitigation Fund (Fund 21). Of the approximately \$121,000 in the fund for the year, \$84,000 is already committed, leaving sufficient funds to cover the requested amount. Discussion followed regarding the appropriate pipe material. Questions were raised about using reinforced concrete versus metal pipe, with staff explaining that due to limited cover, roadway loading, and the presence of a high-pressure gas line beneath the road, a metal pipe is required. The existing pipe has been in place since the 1960s.

Kate Becker (CAM) clarified that the request would be handled as a change of order to the existing contract.

Commissioner Nickerson motioned to approve the change order for \$26,000 from Fund 21 to replace the culvert pipe

Seconded by Commissioner Blocker

VOTE:

Commission Chair Wilson AYE

Commission Vice Chair Nickerson AYE

Commissioner Blocker AYE

Commissioner Newton AYE

Commissioner Fackrell AYE

The Vote was unanimous. The motion passed.

- 3. Casey Basaker** – Discussion/Decision – Morgan County Human Resources Manager
Discussion and decision on Resolution **CR 26-10** approving the Morgan County Employee Handbook in its entirety superseding all previous versions and amendments to said handbook.

The commission discussed next steps for reviewing the draft employee handbook. Commissioner Fackrell suggested postponing action and moving the item to a work session to ensure all commissioners had adequate time to review the document and confirm accuracy. Kate Becker (CAM) noted that the March 3 work session was already full, with the earliest available work session being late in March and outlined several procedural options: approve the handbook as presented, postpone it to a date certain, or schedule a special or earlier work session.

Commission Blocker asked whether commissioners were expected to focus on substantive policy issues or also act as editors for grammatical errors. Casey Basaker Morgan County Human Resource explained that while the handbook was drafted by staff, it is ultimately the commission's document, and commissioners should raise any substantive concerns or language issues that would affect their ability to approve it. He emphasized that the handbook is intended to be a living document, reviewed and updated annually to reflect legal changes and operational needs.

Following discussion, commissioners agreed that a formal work session was not necessary. Instead, they would review the handbook individually, submit comments and suggest changes by email, and address any significant issues directly with staff.

Commissioner Fackrell motioned to postpone CR26-10 to March 3

Seconded by Commissioner Nickerson

VOTE:

Commission Chair Wilson AYE

Commission Vice Chair Nickerson AYE

Commissioner Blocker AYE

Commissioner Newton AYE

Commissioner Fackrell AYE

The Vote was unanimous. The motion passed.

4. Morgan County Board of Equalization – Discussion/Decision – BOE Hearing

Discussion and decision on BOE Hearing **CR 26-2507-BOE** based on the approved late appeal CR 25-23-BOE from 12/16/2025 for Brooks Fornelius; Appellant is requesting a primary residence exemption for the tax year 2025.

Leslie A. Hyde Morgan County Clerk Auditor presented the application of Brooks Fornelius, who was granted permission by the Commission on December 16, 2025, to file a late appeal for a primary residential exemption due to a medical condition. The request before the Commission is to determine whether to approve the primary residence exemption for the 2025 tax year based on that unforeseen medical circumstance. It was clarified that the property is already classified as a primary residence for 2026, so the decision only affects the 2025 tax year.

Commissioner Nickerson motioned to go into BOE as BOE Board

Seconded by Commissioner Blocker

VOTE:

Commission Chair Wilson AYE

Commission Vice Chair Nickerson AYE

Commissioner Blocker AYE

Commissioner Newton AYE

Commissioner Fackrell AYE

The Vote was unanimous. The motion passed.

Commissioner Newton motioned to Approve primary residence exemption on CR 26-2507-BOE for the tax year 2025

Seconded by Commissioner Blocker

VOTE:

Commission Chair Wilson AYE

Commission Vice Chair Nickerson AYE

Commissioner Blocker AYE

Commissioner Newton AYE

Commissioner Fackrell AYE

The Vote was unanimous. The motion passed.

Commissioner Nickerson motioned to Move out of BOE and resume County Commission.

Seconded by Commissioner Fackrell

VOTE:

Commission Chair Wilson AYE

Commission Vice Chair Nickerson AYE

Commissioner Blocker AYE

Commissioner Newton AYE

Commissioner Fackrell AYE

The Vote was unanimous. The motion passed.

5. Josh Cook – Public Hearing – County Planning & Zoning

Cottonwoods Development Agreement Amendment: County Ordinance CO 26-02

THERE WILL BE NO PRESENTATION OR VOTE ON THIS ITEM. HOWEVER, SINCE IT WAS TABLED TO A DATE CERTAIN THERE IS STILL PUBLIC HEARING.

March 3 Matt Wilkinson May 19th Nettleton's

Commission returned to Agenda Item E5 to address how to proceed with two development requests that had previously been combined. Originally, about two years ago, the application involved only Matt Wilkinson's property. Later, the Nettleton's submitted a related request, and the two were merged because a potential one-for-one land swap was being discussed. Since the two applicants now have different timelines and needs, Josh Cook Morgan County Planner recommended separating the applications again.

The proposal was to move the Wilkinson request forward first and continue it to March 3, the next commission meeting. The Nettleton development agreement amendment would be continued to May 19 to allow time for their attorney to prepare a near-final agreement and for staff to complete negotiations. Josh Cook explained this approach would provide clearer information for the Commission and the public, reduce last-minute negotiation, and avoid re-noticing since both items had already been properly noticed and heard.

Commissioner Nickerson raised concerns about how the Wilkinson property became part of the development agreement when it was never sold. Josh Cook Morgan County Planner explained there had been an option agreement at one point, but it was never exercised. More importantly, the county cannot locate the required owner affidavit authorizing the developer to act on the landowner's behalf for the land use application. Josh noted that they cannot confirm the owners ever formally consented, and because property interests generally must be in writing, there is no documentation showing the property was properly encumbered.

This raised broader concerns among commissioners about how the property was included in project materials and whether buyers relied on representations of amenities, such as a golf course or equestrian center, that depended on land the developer never acquired. Questions were raised about where responsibility or liability might fall if buyers were shown features that were never secured. Garrett Smith Morgan County Attorney clarified that the county is not a party to private contracts or marketing representations and is limited to processing land use applications based on the information submitted.

Commissioner Newton added that the more significant planning issue may be that the project's density calculations were based on total acreage. If some acreage is removed, the number of allowable units may need to be reduced or the project adjusted.

Garrett Smith Morgan County Attorney noted that additional research and documentation have been prepared and could be shared but emphasized that the county's authority is limited because it was not involved in the private agreements between developers and landowners.

Commissioner Newton March 3 Matt Wilkinson and May 19th Nettletons

Seconded by Commissioner Nickerson

VOTE:

Commission Chair Wilson AYE

Commission Vice Chair Nickerson AYE

Commissioner Blocker AYE

Commissioner Newton AYE

Commissioner Fackrell AYE

The Vote was unanimous. The motion passed.

6. Chief Brad Wilkes – Discussion/Direction – Morgan County Fire Chief

Discussion and direction on possibly modifying County Ordinance CO 24-05 pertaining to Fire Sprinkler System requirements.

1) Why this discussion was scheduled

- Chief Brad Wilson, new in the role, provided a written recommendation: *“If I were to write this ordinance today, this is what I’d recommend.”*
- He spent the prior two weeks reviewing Morgan County’s current approach, what nearby agencies do, and updated state requirements—especially changes tied to **HB 48**.

2) Item #1 — Proposed sprinkler / fire-separation framework

Goal: align Morgan County more closely with state code and **WUI (Wildland-Urban Interface)** requirements while avoiding unnecessary cost burdens.

Current situation

- Morgan County currently requires sprinklers over 3,600 sq ft (per the Chief).

Chief’s recommended structure (high level)

- **A. 3,600–6,000 sq ft**
 - Require 2-hour fire separation at the 3,600 sq ft increment (compartmentalization) instead of sprinklers.
 - No sprinklers unless the structure is in a high-hazard WUI area (based on URAP wildfire risk maps under HB 48).
- **B. WUI requirements tied to URAP percentiles**
 - Chief stated the 95th percentile affects about 178 buildings countywide (estimate).
 - If expanded to the 90th percentile, it could be about ~450 properties (estimate).
 - Within the 90th percentile / high-risk WUI:
 - 13D sprinklers required
 - Non-combustible exterior requirements (no wood siding/shingles/trim; fire-resistant materials per code)

- Staff clarified HB 48 includes an appeal process for parcels in the percentile (not automatic/unchangeable).
- **C. 6,000–10,000 sq ft**
 - Mostly unchanged except requiring fire separation every 3,600 sq ft (continued compartmentalization).
- **D. 10,000+ sq ft**
 - Sprinklers required (Chief compared this scale to “small hotel/lodge” type risk).
 - Continue compartmentalization (separation every 3,600 sq ft).
 - Possible limited flexibility on separation layout if a full sprinkler design makes it impractical, but no exception to sprinklers over 10,000.

Why the Chief prefers separation in many cases

- Compartmentalization buys time and is typically less costly than installing sprinklers throughout.
- He emphasized sprinklers mainly control/check a fire; they don’t necessarily “put it out.”

3) Key question raised: additions/remodels and “retroactive sprinklers”

- Question raised: If a home is 4,000 sq ft and adds 1,500 sq ft, does that trigger sprinklers for the whole home under current rules?
- Staff/building did not have a definitive answer during the meeting.
- Suggested direction: make the sprinkler ordinance explicitly apply to new construction, and address additions/remodels separately (grandfathering/nonconforming concepts discussed).

4) Item #2 — Peer review / third-party plan review proposal

Problem described: inconsistent fire approvals/non-approvals in the past created risk for the county.

Proposal

- Require a third-party peer review for projects needing fire suppression systems.
- Developer/contractor pays; reviewer provides a letter confirming compliance with:
 - Morgan County adopted ordinances
 - IFC (International Fire Code)
 - WUI code
- Fire staff focuses on inspections/enforcement, not detailed plan review.
- Chief noted reduced county liability if an independent reviewer misses something.
- Would accept recognized fire protection engineering firms and allow others if properly licensed/pre-approved (including likely requiring Utah stamping for out-of-state engineering).

5) Item #3 — Subdivision water supply (discussion starter; acknowledged as controversial) Chief’s concern

- Rural residential zoning can allow subdivisions (example: 14-lot) with no hydrants, tanks, or adequate water protection.
- He worries that this will create long-term taxpayer burden when infrastructure must be added later.

Example from Weber Fire District/Huntsville

- Over 3 lots require a fire water system (tank + hydrants).
- Mentioned 240,000-gallon minimum tank model (linked to 2,000 GPM for two hours worst case).
- Chief does not want subdivision fire protection relying on small 13D tanks.

Commissioner Newton’s caution

- Many county water systems have smaller tanks (50k–100k).
- Concerned strict subdivision requirements could make building harder countywide or push developers toward larger/higher-density projects just to afford infrastructure.
- Noted some areas can combine systems (Mountain Green/Highland example), but remote areas (Croydon/Porterville) can’t.

Public comment (Speaker 12)

- Supported the water-supply concern, citing a recent fire where they ran out of water and could not complete firefighting.

6) Fire department priorities explained

- Chief emphasized priorities:
 - Life safety (rescue/getting people out)
 - Exposure protection (preventing spread to nearby structures/vegetation)
 - The structure itself is often a loss; water supply is critical for safe operations.
- Staffing realities mean Morgan County can’t operate like a big city—so adequate water becomes even more important.

7) Direction / next steps

- Consensus: focus first on Item #1 and Item #2; treat Item #3 as a longer, more involved policy effort.
- Staff task: produce a URAP map showing the 90th percentile (there was a brief verbal mix-up mentioning “98th,” but the repeated discussion target was 90th).
- Continue the conversation with public input and return with clearer answers, including how additions/remodels are handled.

7. Kate Becker – Discussion/Decision – Morgan County Administrative Manager

Discussion and approval of awarding RFPs pursuant to the Morgan County Purchasing Policy:
Grant Administrator Services: Grant Support

- Budgeted: 10-4640-120-000
- a) Airport Berm Beautification & Acoustic Barrier: Arete Landscapes
Budgeted: 38-4550-260-000
 - b) Animal Control Veterinary & Housing Services: Mountain Green Animal Hospital
Budgeted: 10-4214-260-000
 - c) Impact Fee Facilitates Plan & Analysis and County Fee Assessment: LRB Finance
Budgeted: 10-4150-310-000
 - d) County Library Foyer Ceiling Restoration: ACS
Not Budgeted: _____
 - e) County Library Gutter & Downspout Replacement: ACS
Not Budgeted: _____
 - f) Election Security Addition: To Be Determined
Budgeted: 44-4410-310-000

Kate Becker (Cam) presented the bid results and requested commission approval for several projects and contracts.

For the **airport beautification berm**, the lowest bid was rejected because the bidder calculated the work for 1,600 square feet instead of the required 16,000 square feet. The lowest responsive and qualified bid was from **Averitt Landscapes**, and the project is already budgeted.

For **animal control services**, two proposals were received. **River Valley** bid \$4,500 per month with a 20–50% discount on additional services, while **Mountain Green Animal Hospital** bid \$1,000 per month with a 10% discount. Mountain Green Animal Hospital was the lowest bid.

For the **impact fee facilities plan and county fee assessment**, two bids were submitted: one for \$132,000 and **LRB Finance** at \$74,000 for the same scope, making LRB the lowest.

The **county library ceiling restoration** received only one bid for \$24,108, which includes replacing damaged sheetrock and repainting.

For the **library gutter and downspout project**, there was also only one bidder. Staff requested authority to **negotiate the scope and price** rather than award the full bid, because the work may be accomplished more efficiently by cleaning the internal gutters with a pressure washer and repairing only what is necessary.

Commissioners Nickerson and Wilson reviewed the bids for the **election security addition**, and the lowest qualified candidate was **ACS**.

Staff requested approval to:

- Award the **grant support/administrator contract** (budgeted)
- Award **Averitt Landscapes** for the airport berm (budgeted)
- Award **Mountain Green Animal Hospital** for animal control (budgeted)
- Award **LRB Finance** for the impact fee and fee study (budgeted)
- Identify a funding source for the **library ceiling restoration**
- Authorize **negotiation** for the library gutter/downspout project
- Award the **election security addition** to ACS

A question was raised about the election security project scope and completion timeline. The project was originally required to be completed by **June 2026** due to an election scheduled for June 23. Commissioners discussed separating the critical area that must be finished before the election from non-critical portions, with details to be addressed during contract negotiations. Final contract terms will return to the Commission for review.

It was also confirmed that airport-related costs will come from the airport account, supported in part by grant funding.

Commissioner Newton motioned to approve awarding of the RFP as recommended by the county administrator

Seconded by Commissioner Fackrell

VOTE:

Commission Chair Wilson AYE

Commission Vice Chair Nickerson AYE

Commissioner Blocker AYE

Commissioner Newton AYE

Commissioner Fackrell AYE

The Vote was unanimous. The motion passed.

8. Kate Becker – Discussion/Decision – Morgan County Administrative Manager

Approval of the pass 2026 Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity through Business Growth Grants as reviewed and recommended by the Morgan County Community and Economic Opportunity Board at its February Meeting.

Kate Becker (CAM) reported that the Community and Economic Opportunity Board received **56 applications** for the business growth grants. The original budget for this round was **\$75,000**, with an additional **\$50,000 set aside for a second (fall) round**. The board is recommending awards totaling **\$78,111** to specific businesses. The extra **\$3,111** above the current budget would be covered by the funds reserved for the fall round.

Commissioner Fackrell asked whether one recipient, Deb's Spicy Pie, could be required to extend its operating hours as part of receiving funding. Kate Becker (CAM) clarified that operating hours cannot be required as a condition of the grant. Other commissioners noted that the business now appears to stay open later than in previous years, addressing the earlier concern. Commissioner Blocker also commented positively on the strong response, noting that applications increased from about **29 last year to 56 this year**, indicating growing awareness and interest among local businesses.

Commissioner Blocker motioned to approve 2026 Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity through Business Growth Grants awards as recommended.

Second by Commissioner Newton

VOTE:

Commission Chair Wilson AYE

Commission Vice Chair Nickerson AYE

Commissioner Blocker AYE

Commissioner Newton AYE

Commissioner Fackrell AYE

The Vote was unanimous. The motion passed.

9. Kate Becker – Discussion/Decision – Morgan County Administrative Manager

Request to authorize the Morgan County Manager with support for Deputy County Attorney Janet Christoffersen to negotiate the final details of the Kent Smith Park rental with Mountain Green Sewer Improvement District.

Kate Becker (CAM) informed the Commission that the Mountain Green Sewer Improvement District requested a meeting the following morning to finalize remaining details for the **Ken Smith Park rental agreement**. Because the discussion may involve negotiation, staff requested **formal authorization from the Commission to negotiate**.

Kate Becker (CAM) proposed participating in the meeting and including Jan Christoffersen, who has been working on the detailed redline edits, either in person or by phone. The goal is to finalize the terms and bring a complete agreement back to the Commission for review at the **March 3 meeting**.

Commissioner Fackrell motioned to approve Morgan County Manager with support for Deputy County Attorney Janet Christoffersen to negotiate the final details of the Kent Smith Park rental with Mountain Green Sewer Improvement District.

Seconded by Commissioner Newton

VOTE:

Commission Chair Wilson AYE

Commission Vice Chair Nickerson AYE

Commissioner Blocker AYE

Commissioner Newton AYE

Commissioner Fackrell AYE

The Vote was unanimous. The motion passed.

Kate Becker (CAM) provided several operational updates affecting county facilities and projects.

At the fairgrounds, recent damage occurred, and the county will be submitting an insurance claim. At the same time, the county is already in the process of applying for a grant to construct new restrooms and a new exhibit building, so both efforts will move forward.

At the airport, new safety signage has been ordered after incidents involving children riding bikes and small vehicles on active taxiways and residents walking dogs near aircraft operations. A recent incident involved children crossing the runway while a plane was landing, creating serious safety concern. Kate noted that additional measures, such as installing gates, may be considered in the future, but signage is the immediate step.

The airport landscaping berm project, recently awarded, will create a visual and acoustic buffer between the airport and nearby residents. The project has a 120-day completion window and is expected to be finished around March–April.

Regarding the previously discussed taxiway extension near the Nine Line lease area, staff reviewed the agreement and found that it does not require the airport to complete the extension immediately. The airport does not have funding for the project this year, so it will need to be budgeted in the future year. Because the airport is already using a grant this year for crack sealing and slurry work, it will not be eligible to apply for another grant for the extension until next year. Kate also noted that the Commission will need to decide how far the taxiway should be extended, as prior discussions considered multiple options.

Kate Becker (CAM) reported that the county has met with a company called Nearmap regarding updated aerial flyover imagery. There is an opportunity for Morgan County to participate in a scheduled April flight by joining Davis and Weber Counties.

Previously, similar imagery for the assessor's office was estimated at about \$260,000 and was not pursued due to cost. By joining the regional effort, the estimated cost for Morgan County would be significantly lower, between **\$25,000 and \$50,000**.

The updated imagery would allow the assessor's office to identify property changes, new structures, and other improvements without needing to physically visit each parcel. It would also provide current GIS imagery for residential areas.

Kate Becker expects to bring a formal request to the Commission at the **March 3 meeting** and wanted to provide advance notice due to the relatively low cost compared to prior estimates

Kate Becker (CAM) requested a **closed session** to discuss the acquisition and disposition of real property.

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Blocker- Discussed SB 78, sponsored by Senator Dan McKay, which would eliminate state-subsidized property tax abatements and shift full responsibility to counties. Under the proposal, counties would have local control to continue an abatement program if they choose, but it would no longer be supported by state funding.

The bill would also increase transparency by requiring counties to show, on tax notices, how much each taxpayer contributes toward the abatement program. In addition, the original proposal removes the current property tax deferral program.

Salt Lake County requested that the deferral option be restored and suggested creating a **state revolving loan fund of about \$20 million** to reimburse taxing entities for deferred taxes.

Senator McKay indicated he would consider that option only if **all 29 counties formally support it**, requiring written commitments.

Commissioners noted that the bill will likely come forward for county positions, and there was discussion about whether a letter of support would be needed. The Utah Association of Counties (UAC) may coordinate a response, but individual counties may still need to sign on or provide formal support. The overall discussion highlighted the significant policy shift toward local responsibility and the need for counties to decide their position.

Staff reported that the county has met with a company called Nearmap regarding updated aerial flyover imagery. There is an opportunity for Morgan County to participate in a scheduled April flight by joining Davis and Weber Counties.

Previously, similar imagery for the assessor's office was estimated at about \$260,000 and was not pursued due to cost. By joining the regional effort, the estimated cost for Morgan County would be significantly lower, between **\$25,000 and \$50,000**.

The updated imagery would allow the assessor's office to identify property changes, new structures, and other improvements without needing to physically visit each parcel. It would also provide current GIS imagery for residential areas.

Staff expects to bring a formal request to the Commission at the **March 3 meeting** and wanted to provide advance notice due to the relatively low cost compared to prior estimates.

Commissioner Nickerson- The Weed Abatement Board recently met with representatives from Summit County and Davis County and gathered useful information on best practices. One key topic was managing weeds along the railroad, including the use of helicopter spraying. The estimated cost would be about \$30–\$35 per acre, with the possibility of billing the railroad directly. The contractor used in Summit County is experienced working around railroad corridors and estimated the entire Morgan County rail line could be treated in roughly one to one-and-a-half hours.

The board also discussed creating a loaner program for backpack sprayers to help residents manage weeds on their own properties. The county's weed supervisor will research costs and begin developing a small starter program. The overall approach emphasized that the county should lead by maintaining its own properties while also helping residents manage theirs. Residents can already access a \$10,000 Conservation District grant that reimburses up to \$250 for herbicide purchases.

Other control methods discussed included biological controls, such as insects that target specific invasive plants, and the possible use of goats or sheep for difficult terrain. Staff also noted the importance of revegetation with native grasses after weed removal to prevent invasive species from returning.

A specific concern was raised about yellow star thistle, which can be toxic to horses and should be addressed early before it spreads. Regarding Dyer's woad, UDOT and Weber County have increased spraying efforts in the canyon and have already reduced its presence. The state is also looking for larger infested properties (about 5–10 acres or more) where they can test different treatment methods.

Additional updates included a legislative effort to allow donation of meat to food pantries, which is being explored for inclusion this session.

Commissioners also reported on legislative activity. A county-supported bill (HB 445) passed out of committee with strong support. Other legislation being monitored includes property tax relief and abatement measures (SB 78 and SB 97), road closure authority requiring state agencies to obtain approval from local legislative bodies (HB 444), water-related legislation including HB 505 (Water Amendments) and HB 439 (water planning related to buoy systems), and ongoing discussions about regional trail planning through Wasatch Front initiatives.

Overall, the updates reflected active progress on weed management coordination, resident assistance programs, and close monitoring and advocacy on several legislative issues affecting the county.

Commissioner Fackrell- Commissioners reported that strong testimony was given before the legislative board in support of House Bill 445, and the presentation was well received. The bill has since passed out of committee with a 7–2 vote and is moving forward, with growing support also noted through earlier discussions with the Utah Association of Counties.

Several other bills are being monitored. SB 78 relates to property tax relief and the abatement program, while SB 97 is a similar measure with uncertain direction and may be opposed.

HB 444 addresses road closures and would require the state to obtain approval from the local legislative body before closing any road. This would give counties more local control and prevent state agencies from unilaterally closing routes.

Water-related legislation is also under review, including HB 505 (Water Amendments) and HB 439, which involves water planning and the buoy system.

There were also discussions with regional partners about active transportation and trail planning through the Wasatch Front, including potential trail connections through the canyon.

Overall, commissioners reported that most key legislative issues are being actively tracked and are generally under control.

Commissioner Wilson- Commissioner Willson reported progress on trail planning efforts. He and Lilia met with a representative from the railroad, including a Zoom meeting due to the individual being out of state, and then followed up with an in-person meeting with county staff. They are working from a map to identify ways to bridge gaps and create continuous trail connections. He noted that the process is slow, but progress is being made.

He also expressed appreciation that the airport beautification project is finally moving forward, noting it has been discussed since early in his time on the Commission and that nearby residents will benefit from the improvements.

Finally, he mentioned that the Weber Human Services meeting had been postponed and rescheduled for later in the week.

Commissioner Newton- Commissioner Newton provided an update on the Taggart River access improvement project. Public Works has been actively working on the site this winter, taking advantage of lighter snow removal demands.

Crews have moved a large amount of material, significantly widening the access road to improve traffic flow in the area. Approximately \$27,000 has been spent so far on materials and hauling rock.

Paving cannot be completed until warmer weather, but the improvements to date have made a noticeable difference and the project is progressing well.

Commissioner Newton motion to go into closed session for the purpose of discussing the acquisition or disposition of real property

Second by Commissioner Nickerson

VOTE:

Commission Chair Wilson AYE

Commission Vice Chair Nickerson AYE

Commissioner Blocker AYE

Commissioner Newton AYE

Commissioner Fackrell AYE

The Vote was unanimous. The motion passed

Close Session ends at 7:23 pm

Commissioner Nickerson motion to go out of closed session for the purpose of discussing the acquisition or disposition of real property

Second by Commissioner Fackrell

VOTE:

Commission Chair Wilson AYE

Commission Vice Chair Nickerson AYE

Commissioner Blocker AYE

Commissioner Newton AYE

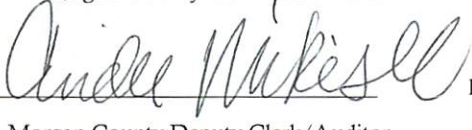
Commissioner Fackrell AYE

The Vote was unanimous. The motion passed

Adjourn – 7:00 pm

Note: The Commission may vote to discuss certain matters in Closed Session (Executive Session) pursuant to Utah Code Annotated §52-4-205.

APPROVED:  DATE: 3/3/24
Morgan County Commission Chair

ATTEST:  DATE: 3/03/2024
Morgan County Deputy Clerk/Auditor

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, persons needing auxiliary services for these meetings should call Kate Becker at 435-800-8724 at least 24 hours prior to this meeting. This meeting is streamed live.

If you want to participate virtually in any public comment listed on this agenda, you need to contact Jeremy@morgancountyutah.gov at least 48 hours before the scheduled meeting.

Morgan County Commission Meeting

Tuesday, February 17th, 2026

5:00 P.M.

Morgan County Council Meeting Room

48 West Young Street

Morgan, UT 84050

PLEASE SIGN IN

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| 1. <u>Douglas Perkins</u> | 22. _____ |
| 2. <u>Randy Watts</u> | 23. _____ |
| 3. <u>Debbie Sessions</u> | 24. _____ |
| 4. <u>Heidi Dorius</u> | 25. _____ |
| 5. <u>Matt Kendall</u> | 26. _____ |
| 6. <u>KEVIN KURTZ</u> | 27. _____ |
| 7. <u>Heidi Nettleton</u> | 28. _____ |
| 8. <u>Leslie Hyde</u> | 29. _____ |
| 9. <u>TED TAYLOR</u> | 30. _____ |
| 10. <u>DANE WILKINSON</u> | 31. _____ |
| 11. _____ | 32. _____ |
| 12. _____ | 33. _____ |
| 13. _____ | 34. _____ |
| 14. _____ | 35. _____ |
| 15. _____ | 36. _____ |
| 16. _____ | 37. _____ |
| 17. _____ | 38. _____ |
| 18. _____ | 39. _____ |
| 19. _____ | 40. _____ |
| 20. _____ | 41. _____ |
| 21. _____ | 42. _____ |