

**ESCALANTE CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JUNE 16, 2026
REGULAR MEETING/ELECTRONIC MEETING – 6:00 P.M.
PUBLIC HEARING/ELECTRONIC MEETING – 6:00 P.M.
ESCALANTE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS - 65 NORTH CENTER STREET**

Mayor Melani Torgersen called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Escalante City Council Chambers.

Present at said meeting were Mayor Torgersen, Council members Marlene Stowe, Chad Lyman, Ryan Cottam, City Attorney Barry Huntington and City Recorder Stephanie Steed. Council members Sally Orme and Tara Woolsey were excused.

Also present were Bill Weppner, Margie Weppner, Sam Spencer, Julia Spencer, Glen Wilson, Terry Brennan, Brent Pickering and Julie Brugger.

Melyssa Holbrook joined electronically.

Mayor Torgersen led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Council member Lyman moved to adopt the agenda as written. Council member Stowe seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council members Stowe, Lyman and Cottam voting aye.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF JUNE 2, 2026 MEETING

Council member Stowe moved to approve the minutes of the June 2, 2026 meeting as written. Council member Cottam seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council members Lyman, Stowe and Cottam voting aye.

OPEN PUBLIC HEARING

Council member Stowe moved to open the public hearing at 6:01 p.m. Council member Lyman seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council members Stowe, Lyman and Cottam voting aye.

RESOLUTION 2026-02 ADOPTING THE 2026-2027 BUDGET

City Recorder Steed explained Ordinance 2026-02 the 2026-2027 Budget.

BILL WEPPNER

Mr. Weppner asked how many years are left on the loan for the fire station. City Recorder Steed said two or three years.

ORDINANCE 2026-03 AMENDING ORDINANCE 8.04.230 WATER OUTSIDE MUNICIPAL LIMITS

Council member Lyman explained Ordinance 2026-03 Amending Ordinance 8.04.230 Water Outside Municipal Limits. Council member Lyman explained that the city is considering

amendments to this ordinance to permit Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) within the County. Council member Lyman said that ADU's would be prohibited from operating as short-term or nightly rentals, consistent with current regulations within City Limits.

SAM SPENCER

Mr. Spencer inquired whether existing rental businesses could be stopped and Mayor Torgersen replied that they could not. Mr. Spencer asked about the impact on residents near Center Street if 25 new homes are constructed on Center Street, would the city be able to supply water to existing homes alongside the new developments. Mr. Spencer asked if the affected public would be consulted prior to the sale and development of that land. Mayor Torgersen clarified that the discussion during this item on the public hearing is limited to the allowance of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs). Mr. Spencer asked if a later date would be provided for further discussion if the matter could not be addressed that evening.

JULIA SPENCER

Ms. Spencer said some individuals were unfamiliar with the process during the meeting. Mayor Torgersen explained that during a public hearing, only items specifically listed on the agenda may be discussed.

ORDINANCE 2026-04 AMENDING ORDINANCE 8.04.040 WATER CONNECTIONS - ONE METER PER PARCEL

Council member Lyman explained Ordinance 2026-04 Amending Ordinance 8.04.040 Water Connections - One Meter Per Parcel.

JULIA SPENCER

Ms. Spencer asked if the proposed ordinance would affect ranchers or property values. Council member Lyman said that since purchasing a water meter now requires house plans, it does impact property values. Mayor Torgersen explained that the city does not sell water meters without a valid building permit.

CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING

Council member Cottam moved to close the public hearing at 6:11 p.m. Council member Lyman seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council members Stowe, Cottam and Lyman voting aye.

DECISION ON RESOLUTION 2026-02 ADOPTING THE 2026-2027 BUDGET

Council member Stowe moved to adopt Resolution 2026-02. Council member Cottam seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council members Stowe, Cottam and Lyman voting aye.

DECISION ON ORDINANCE 2026-03 AMENDING ORDINANCE 8.04.230 WATER OUTSIDE MUNICIPAL LIMITS

Council member Lyman moved to adopt Ordinance 2026-03. Council member Stowe seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council members Lyman, Cottam and Stowe voting aye.

DECISION ON ORDINANCE 2026-04 AMENDING ORDINANCE 8.04.040 WATER CONNECTIONS - ONE METER PER PARCEL

City Recorder Steed said if this amendment passes it would also be for the Commercial/Residential (C/R) zone. City Recorder Steed asked the Council if they would like to change it to excluding the C/R zone. Council member Lyman said he likes the amendment the way it is. Mayor Torgersen said she would like to look at the amendment. City Attorney Huntington said he would suggest adopting as written and look at the need to amend it in the future. **Council member Lyman moved to adopt Ordinance 2026-04. Council member Stowe seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council members Stowe, Cottam and Lyman voting aye.**

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments at this time.

PLANNING AND ZONING ITEMS

PLANNING AND ZONING UPDATES

There were no Planning and Zoning updates at this time.

SCHEDULED ITEMS

TERRY BRENNAN - LOCAL CONSENT - RESTAURANT - LIMITED SERVICE

City Recorder Steed explained this item. **Council member Stowe moved to approve the Local Consent for Mr. Brennan. Council member Lyman seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council members Lyman, Stowe and Cottam voting aye.**

BILL WEPPNER - TOOLS AND CLOCK FOR FIRE DEPARTMENT

Mr. Weppner said the Fire Department would like to use the remaining budget balance of \$1,600.00 to purchase hand tools for the trucks, a clock, and a brass water fixture required for drafting water from a pond. **Council member Lyman moved to approve purchases discussed above for \$1600.00 Council member Cottam seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council member Stowe, Cottam and Lyman voting aye.**

RESOLUTION 2026-05 FINAL TAX RATE

City Recorder Steed explained Resolution 2026-05 Final Tax Rate. **Council member Lyman moved to adopt Resolution 2026-05. Council member Cottam seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council members Lyman, Stowe and Cottam voting aye.**

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

ADMINISTRATIVE

The Administrative department had nothing to report at this time.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Public Works Director Brent Pickering reported the current water regulations prohibiting watering between 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. will remain in effect. Mr. Pickering explained if drought conditions persist, watering schedules may be adjusted for different areas of town. Mr. Pickering said the City is working on delaying operating the well as long as possible. Council member Lyman said the City is looking into a filtration system for the well. Council member Lyman said the city continues to urge the community to practice water conservation.

Mr. Pickering reported the pickleball courts are finished and are scheduled to open tomorrow morning.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

BILL WEPPNER

Mr. Weppner reported that there has been one call-out since the last meeting, which was a false alarm caused by a dropped iPhone.

Mr. Weppner said the Fire Department is concerned regarding water access and identifying sufficient sources. Mr. Weppner explained a comprehensive list of all water sources in the valley has been compiled, and the department is in the process of contacting owners of wells or ponds to secure access. Mr. Weppner said he met with Myron Cottam with the school board and the school board has agreed to allow the department to investigate accessing water from the school well. Mr. Weppner said he would like Council member Lyman, Council member Cottam, Brent Pickering, and himself to review the operation and access requirements of the school well.

Mr. Weppner said the city fire hydrants require servicing, a task estimated to take the entire Fire Department several weekends to complete. Mr. Weppner requested any assistance or incentives the Council could provide. Council member Lyman asked about the water usage for this process. Mr. Weppner said it would require some water but they would attempt to minimize usage. Council member Lyman asked if the servicing could be delayed, but Mr. Weppner emphasized that the hydrants must be accessed and maintained. Mayor Torgersen suggested that if the fire department could work on the fire hydrants on a Friday, city employees could assist. Council member Lyman asked if water could be flushed into a tank or handled differently. Mr. Weppner explained that flushing is typically done onto the ground.

COUNCIL REPORTS

MAYOR MELANI TORGERSEN

Mayor Torgersen provided a brief educational reminder regarding meeting procedures. Mayor Torgersen explained that public comments must be made during the designated public comment period, and items not included on the agenda cannot be discussed by the Council. Mayor Torgersen explained there is to be no discussion during department reports from the public, however, the public is welcome to approach a Council member or herself after the meeting with questions or request to be placed on a future agenda. City Attorney Huntington confirmed these requirements are in accordance with the Utah Public and Open Meetings Act.

Mayor Torgersen announced that the upcoming 4th of July celebration will feature a parade and a brief program, though no fireworks will be held. Mayor Torgersen explained, following a suggestion from the President of the United States, a community dinner is scheduled for Sunday, July 5, at 4:00 p.m. Mayor Torgersen said the city will provide meat, water, pie and ice cream for the event. Mayor Torgersen said a special fast will also be observed to express gratitude and seek relief from the drought.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHAD LYMAN

Council member Lyman suggested several methods for efficient water usage, such as placing a bucket in the shower and using dishwater to water lawns or trees. Council member Lyman encouraged everyone to be frugal by actively seeking opportunities to conserve and reuse water.

COUNCIL MEMBER TARA WOOLSEY

Council member Woolsey was not present at said meeting.

COUNCIL MEMBER RYAN COTTAM

Council member Cottam had nothing to report at this time.

COUNCIL MEMBER MARLENE STOWE

Council member Stowe said on July 5th, the community dinner will be held at the park pavilion. Council member Stowe said attendees are encouraged to bring lawn chairs, and the event will include a short program followed by a potluck dinner.

COUNCIL MEMBER SALLY ORME

Council member Orme was not present at said meeting.

UNPAID BILLS

Council member Stowe moved to pay the unpaid bills. Council member Cottam seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council members Stowe, Lyman and Cottam voting aye.

Mayor Torgersen adjourned the meeting at 6:36 p.m.

/s/ Stephanie Steed
Stephanie Steed, MMC, UCC
City Recorder

Date minutes approved: 07/07/2026