

**IRON COUNTY COMMISSION MEETING  
MARCH 24, 2025**

Minutes of the Iron County Commission meeting convened at 9:00 a.m. March 24, 2025  
in Commission Chambers at the Iron County Courthouse, Parowan, Utah.

Officers in attendance included:

Paul Cozzens	Commission Chair
Michael Bleak	Commissioner
Ken Robinson	Commissioner
Jonathan T. Whittaker	County Clerk
Sam Woodall	Deputy County Attorney

Also present:

Karsten Reed	County Assessor
Lucas Little	County Auditor
Nichole Rosenberg	County Treasurer
Terry Palmer	Building & Zoning/Planning
Richard Wilson	County Engineer
McKayla Meinhardt	Deputy Auditor
George Colson	Emergency Manager
Jennifer Bradbury	HR Director
Bruce Anderson	Public Works Director

Others in Attendance:

Eric Atkin	Leslie Dennett	Tanner Edwards
James T Helsper, Jr.	Rachel Hunt	Mary Jo Montoya
Joseph Moore	Jeff Richards	Craig Thompson
Gerald VanIwaarden	Chuck Waddell	Joel Zander

**SYNOPSIS**

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**INVOCATION**

An invocation was offered by Joseph Moore.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Those assembled were led in the pledge of allegiance by Lucas Little.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Michael Bleak made a motion to approve the minutes of the Iron County Commission meeting held on March 10, 2025. Second by Kenneth Robinson. Voting: Michael Bleak, Aye; Paul Cozzens, Aye; Kenneth Robinson, Aye.

**APPROVAL OF CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT**

Kenneth Robinson made a motion to approve Claims for Payment from March 10, 2025 to March 23, 2025. Second by Michael Bleak. Voting: Michael Bleak, Aye; Paul Cozzens, Aye; Kenneth Robinson, Aye.

**DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

**Lucas Little, Iron County Auditor**, reported that he had been following Senate Bill (SB) 197 during the legislative session. This bill would affect 300-400 Iron County residents who apply for a property tax abatement through the Auditor’s Office. Luke explained that every year, the Auditor’s Office sent out applications to individuals who previously qualified for the Circuit Breaker Abatement Program by earning less than a specific amount in a given year, which was just above \$40,000 in 2024, and were 65 or older. The abatement might cover some or all of their property taxes, and the state would reimburse us that amount. Lucas stated that SB 197 prohibited anyone new from receiving the Circuit Breaker application after 2025. Those on the program in 2024 or added in 2025 would be able to continue receiving the abatement, but no new applications would be accepted after 2025. He noted that if you know anyone who had or might qualify for this program, please have them reach out to the Auditor’s Office this year so that they could apply for the program while it was still available. Luke expressed appreciation to Senator Evan Vickers, who was our only representative that voted against this bill. Luke continued to explain the ramifications of this bill. Senator McKay basically said, “There were a lot of older residents in large homes living alone, and they need to sell their home and downsize.” He reported that his office was working on closing out the financial records for Iron County’s year-end report. There were still some payments and receipts processing from last year before everything was ready for the Iron County audit, which would be on May 5<sup>th</sup>. He noted that the Auditor’s Office was processing property tax exemption applications for religious or charitable organizations. They were also working with the Treasurer's Office to prepare for the annual tax sale which will be held May 22<sup>nd</sup>. There were approximately 80 properties at this time. Luke reported that since implementing the sales tax for funding the new Sheriff’s Complex, which took effect in July of 2024, \$2,328,530.00 had been collected, and \$130.03 through the end of February, 2025. These funds would be placed in the Iron County budget under Fund Number 30 – Combined Debt Service Fund. This money would remain in this fund until the bond payments were due, and would be paid from this same fund. He noted that the first payment was made last week for \$1,993,511 which left a balance of \$335,000 towards the next payment due in September.

**Terry Palmer, Iron County Planning/Building & Zoning Administrator**, reported that as of March 21<sup>st</sup>, 118 permits had been issued to date, compared to 111 permits in 2024. In new dwellings alone, they had issued 30 permits compared to 41 at the end of March last year, and 7 permits were issued for commercial projects. Nate Dennett, Chelsea Boxwell, and Trent Sukowaty continued to work toward certifications. Building and Zoning completed 135 Project

Reviews this year, compared to 104 last year. Conducted 674 inspections (including multiple stops at different houses) this year. The revenue collected was \$226,088,32. Terrible's Gas Station in Parowan was currently pouring the foundation. Another Terribles and one Maverik station would be built on the south end of Parowan town. Maverik completed their annexation into Parowan City and would be submitting plans for a permit. Inspections were being conducted on the Commerce Crossroad BZI project on the tenant improvement finishes. Future Projects: A Data Center planning would begin construction at the end of this year. Discussion, questions, and answers continued regarding the Data Center placement and power were had. An office complex for BZI had plans that were approximately 50% finished and would be delivered to Terry's office next week. Two large solar projects were beginning. Ampac had plans to expand its production line site by one-third. The Fabian project continued to consider our area for development. In code enforcement, Trent Sukowaty had been actively working with landowners to address property cleanup. There had been 42 violation notices sent out to date; most of the notices were on Lund Hwy. Terry wanted to post signs in problem areas throughout Iron County and requested the commissioners' input on this initiative. He proposed to revisit the Travel Trailer Ordinance due to increased issues and crime in the Cedar Valley Acres area. Terry reported that the budget was on track. There would be two mid-year budget adjustments for travel and training expenses and building maintenance due to unexpected equipment failures. He noted that one concern was the leaking roof on the Public Safety Building, and he explained the issues regarding a new roof. Terry Palmer reported that Reed Erickson had been heavily involved in Planning Commission meetings with multiple ongoing land projects. In terms of building maintenance, plans were in place to change cleaning companies for the Iron County buildings due to frequent complaints from multiple offices regarding the current company's performance and instances of missed scheduled cleanings.

**Richard Wilson, Iron County Engineer**, reported on the previous quarter. He reported that a Master Plan Consultant for the fairgrounds had been selected, and they met with him in a Zoom meeting held on Friday the 21<sup>st</sup>. There would be a tour of the fairgrounds and a formal meeting at the Iron County Courthouse on Friday. Jamie Evans, Iron County Fair Director, would conduct a discussion on Wednesday, April 2, at noon. He noted that interviews would be held tomorrow for the open Lead Excavator/Operator position. Richard explained that they had been working on a large culvert over the last three months on 800 South by the Transfer Station. It would be a much better crossing than it was for everyone involved. He reached out to the Fire Warden, Spencer Rollo, and discussed doing a controlled burn in the ditch before cleaning it out. Richard reported that at the last commission meeting, George Colson spoke on the acceptance of the FEMA application for Mitigation of Flooding on 4800 by Peak View. The state accepted the application and forwarded it to the federal government, which provided the funds. Richard reported that the "Safe Roads for All" study was almost complete with the questions and comment period. Kimley-Horn would present the final proposal for a solution, and Richard would ask the commissioners to adopt the plan during the next commission meeting. This would allow them to move forward to apply for implementation/demonstration funding. He noted that he would be presenting a proposal to adopt the planned Belt Route Alignment at the next commission meeting. There was further discussion regarding property and the Belt Route. Richard informed the commissioners that Stanley Engineering had been hired to oversee the design and management of the Iron Springs Road project. He would like to have the plans as soon as possible so they could go out to bid and lock in a contractor. Richard expressed his appreciation to Merilee Wilson for assisting him in modifying the encroachment permit application and managing the addressing.

**Bruce Anderson, Iron County Public Works Director**, reported that the Road Department had been working on the Little Eden Subdivision, in Enoch had to put a concrete structure at the end of an inlet. It could then be paved in mid-July. Work on the Pinto Road project was complete. Some trees had been removed, and the Forest Service paid for that work. There was a discussion regarding a Pulverized Coal Injection (PCI) mine in Modena Canyon. Richard Wilson assisted Bruce with the engineering Request for Proposal (RFP) for Gold Springs Road, which was approved by the BLM. An Alignment and a Hydrology Study to

determine what size of pipe was needed to cross underneath the road. He reported that one new employee was beginning on the 31<sup>st</sup>, but the Road Department was still down six employees. The road department was currently working on the west end of Midvalley Road past Three Peaks with 2000 feet of new chip seal to improve the road for the National High School Bike race. The chip seal was approved through the BLM to improve the road. They would be working on Sage Road with a new chip seal that was just over a mile long. He noted that oil bids, chip bids, and asphalt bids had returned and were slightly lower than last year. Bruce reported that there were roughly 70 lane-miles of chipping to be done this year. Two would be in subdivisions. A micro-seal would be tried at the Monarch Meadows and Bridal Path subdivisions. In Lanfill, Bruce had to collect water samples on Wednesday. The Director of the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) was visiting some of the rural landfills. He reported that the Utah rural landfills were trying to work with the state for an electronic recycle program for small batteries, as they continue to create fires in the landfills. Bruce explained the issues with lithium ion batteries. He noted that Cedar City had purchased one of the roll-off trucks which left one truck to sell. Bruce reported that SB 63 – Waste Tire Recycling Amendments did not pass in the legislature this year, but it was expected to pass in the 2026 March Legislative Session. He expressed his appreciation to Senator Evan Vickers for sponsoring the bill and working with him. Bruce noted that the Landfill budget was on track and morale at the Landfill and Road Departments was doing well. There was some discussion regarding recycling of tires.

**Michael Bleak, Iron County Commissioner**, reported that the dedication of the new terminal at the Cedar City Airport would be soon. Mike noted that the Cedar City Airport, by volume, was the busiest airport in the State of Utah with Southern Utah University (SUU) Aviation and private aviation. The airport continued to press the FAA for a control tower. Without a control tower, the Cedar City Airport was an uncontrolled airport. He reported that he attended the joint Transient Room Tax (TRT) and Tourism, Recreation, Culture & convention Tax (TRCC) meeting to discuss, with SUU, a project to expand some of their athletic facilities. SUU was planning to redo the softball complex to make it look more professional. The largest project was a revamp of the general use gymnasiums, and placing a cover over the outdoor football/soccer field for year-round use. He explained that the work was important to open up the Centrum to draw in larger events. SUU had to turn away a National Cheer competition last month for lack of programming space. Commissioner Bleak reported that the FEMA funds were granted, but it had to go through State requirements before the state would release the funds. He also attended the Iron County GOP Convention.

**Kenneth Robinson, Iron County Commissioner**, noted that he attended a Farm Bureau meeting and heard a presentation from Stephanie Hill. She was taking the “Cedar Mountain Group” to Washington D.C. this week to meet with several Senators and Congress to address issues with the Sheep and Wool industry. Ken reported that he attended a Department of Agriculture (DOA) meeting held at the Heritage Center, where they addressed the drought situation facing Southern Utah and programs that were available throughout the state. He noted that he had met with Kelly Pearson, DOA Acting Director, who suggested that Iron County consider declaring a state of emergency to the state for the drought situation in Southern Utah. Ken would be meeting with Mr. Pearson this week via phone to address how to approach that. He attended the GOP meeting and was able to speak with Representative Celeste Maloy to discuss needs in small rural areas for the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices that could help the area.

**Paul Cozzens, Iron County Commissioner**, noted that construction of the new Sheriff's Complex continued to move forward. Paul reported that he attended weekly meetings with the Architect, Layton Construction, and Babcock Design regarding the new Sheriff's Complex. He was working with Mike Platt from Platt & Platt on crossing the railroad tracks west of the complex site. He explained that Horrocks Engineers was hired to be a liaison between Iron County and Union Pacific and hoped Mike Platt would have the design this week. Paul reported that the commissioners had dinner last week with Senator Curtis, which gave them an opportunity to discuss the issues facing the sheep industry and agriculture in Iron County. He expressed his appreciation to Commissioner Bleak for barbecuing the steaks. Paul attended the

GOP Convention, the Farm Bureau meeting, the Behavioral Health meeting, and the Steering Committee meeting. Commissioner Cozzens had the opportunity to speak with Senator Lee while he was in Washington, D.C. Senator Lee was focused on public lands and the Antiquities Act, trying to downsize some of Utah's Monuments (Grand Staircase and Bears Ears). He also spoke to him about the HOUSES Act. The HOUSES Act “would make small tracts of federal land available to communities to address the housing shortage or affordability. This allowed parcels of federal land to be purchased by a state or unit of local government at a reduced price, giving flexibility to address housing constraints. The land requires that land be used for housing, subject to a density requirement, and protects against development of expensive second homes on the purchased parcels.”

Commissioner Bleak reported that the Utah State Mountain Bike Race that was previously mentioned generated \$1.2M, of which \$800K was used in lodging from one weekend of bike races this last summer.

### **PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING AMENDMENTS TO THE 2025 BUDGET**

Lucas Little, Iron County Auditor, reported that amendments to the budget included: Revenue - CIB Grant-Fire Study, new position in the Attorney’s Office with medical savings, Early Intervention Program Grant, and to balance the Fund; Expense – one new part-time Victim Advocate, one full-time assistant position to part-time, add one new attorney, new Attorney, new part-time Victim Advocate, remove one full-time position, addition of a contract position for Mike Edwards, adding of the Fire Feasibility Study contract, addition of three new Correction Deputies (salary & wages, benefits), an Inmate with a high medical expense and no longer in jail, \$2,760 annual fee for jail standards and inspections, SAR Topo for emergency services mapping, Lixipol software, early intervention program, state mandate grant, remaining of the first responders mental health grant, add liquor tax money received at the end of 2024 to be spent in 2025 budget of \$108,504.16, and add \$58K for Fairgrounds master plan study.

Paul Cozzens, Iron County Commission Chair, declared a Public Hearing open regarding budget amendments.

No Comments were offered.

Paul Cozzens, Iron County Commission Chair, declared the Public Hearing closed.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mary Montoya, representative of Rainbow Ranchos, noted that she was here today to request the commissioners for help and advice on how the residents could address and resolve numerous issues that had happened in their neighborhood in the last couple of years. Mary listed the concerns: 1. Vicious dogs that had attacked multiple people, dogs, and chickens. A neighbor’s dog was attacked and killed by these dogs yesterday; 2. Sanitary concern that this lot was condemned years ago because of septic issues and where their sewage was being dumped; 3. Unpermitted additions to the original single-wide trailer; 4. Three camp trailers were being used lived in as permanent residents; 5. Fire hazard with plywood additions to the camp trailers for additions; 6. Illegal activities during the night. A SWAT team came to this location on February 14<sup>th</sup> and arrested individuals.

Commissioner Bleak reported that he was the liaison for the Sheriff’s Department and Building and Zoning. He asked if he could meet with Mary Jo after the Public comments.

James T. Helsper Jr., resident of Cedar Highlands, noted that he was on the Board of Directors for Cedar Highlands. He was concerned that the building was getting out of hand. There were 90 homes built in Cedar Highlands, and nine homes were currently being built. James reported that when Iron County reviewed Cedar Highlands for road maintenance, one criteria was that 50% of the lots had to have a Habitable home. With the increased traffic from residents and recreational vehicles, the HOA was requesting that, in light of the exceeding 50-60% criteria, the commission revisit Iron County’s Policy on road maintenance in Cedar Highlands.

Commission Cozzens recommended that Mr. Helsper speak with Richard Wilson, Iron County Engineer, who was present today. Commissioner Bleak noted that this was an issue

worth discussing and he would like to set up a meeting in a couple of weeks with all persons who would be connected to this issue.

Craig Thompson, a citizen of Iron County, reported that he was concerned with public safety on West View Drive. Road use continued to increase, especially heavy equipment, and something needed to be done. Weeds were out of control, and he wondered who was responsible for the upkeep. The commission and law enforcement seem not to care about those who live there. Something needs to be done soon.

Joseph Moore, resident of Rainbow Ranchos, reported that he lived 2 houses away from the property that was previously mentioned. Joseph was in his yard working on his car and turned around and the dogs were stalking him. His wife had incidences with them circling around her. She was told by law enforcement that unless the dogs bites someone or have video proof there was nothing they could do. He was also concerned with the septic system because he lived down-stream from the property. Something needed to be done and soon before it gets out-of-hand.

Eric Atkin, a citizen of Iron County, was concerned about the public comments about having travel trailers on property and nuisance of the dogs. He was concerned with the verbiage of the Travel-Trailer Ordinance and having to have a permit to enjoy ones property. He encouraged the commissioner to read section one of the constitution.

Tanner Edwards, resident of Rainbow Ranchos, stated that he hoped the presence here illustrated the significance with the situations that had arisen in their neighborhood. He was concerned with the many legal issues and ramifications associated with the property and people living there. This needed to be addressed before something worse were to happen.

Richard Wilson, a citizen of Iron County, was very concerned with the grand opening of Dollar Loan Center. If you were to read the small print, it states the interest rate on a \$500 loan was 275%. This was just legalized loan sharking. Richard was also concerned about protecting our children. He gave an example from Alabama where a 32 year old man had set his room on fire to be rescued. The man reported that he had been held hostage in the basement for the last 20 years since he was 12 years old. When the firemen carried him out they thought that he was a teenager at 5'8 and only 68 lbs. We talk about property rights, but we forget about the children that were forced to live in these situations and need to be protected from perhaps less than caring parents. As a society we need pay more attention to our neighbors and the misdeeds of adult and to protect our children.

### **IRON COUNTY VETERANS, UPDATE ON THE VETERANS ART CENTER**

Gerald VanIwaarden, vice president of the Iron County Veterans, reported that they had obtained the rights to purchase a 20-acre property located on Old Hwy 91 and Ravine Road north of Enoch. All Representatives in Utah had been contacted and were all on board for this center. The Southern Utah Veterans Association (SUVA) had begun their capital campaign to raise funds for the property and Veterans Art Center. Gerald turned the time over to Chuck Wadell, President of the SUVA. Chuck reported that SUVA was working diligently to get this project up and running. This center was a community project that would help everyone in the community, not only the veterans, but our senior citizens, first responders, homeschooled children, and our children who were contemplating suicide. Chuck turned the time over to Joe Zander, SUVA Special Projects. Joel shared some personal experiences of how the layout of the Veterans Arts Center would affect and help people who needed any assistance. The center would include a woodworking area, crafts, a metal shop, ceramics, arts & painting, rooms for counseling and PTSD, a multi-purpose room, and a kitchen. The building would be approximately 30 square feet, and there were plans for a 300-seat open Amphitheater and a full-size replica of the Vietnam Memorial in Washington D.C. Joel reported that they had contacted the Veterans Administration about the possibility of building a VA Medical Clinic on the property. He noted that persons who suffer from PTSD tend to isolate themselves. Isolation turns to depression, which oftentimes, unfortunately, leads to people taking their own lives. The purpose of the center will be to provide healing and a social network.

**DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL TO INCREASE THE COMPREHENSIVE CREDIT LIMIT WITH THE STATE BANK OF SOUTHERN UTAH (SBSU)**

Lucas Little, Iron County Auditor, explained that there were 2 Iron County accounts with the State Bank of Southern Utah (SBSU). One was the Sheriff’s Department, and the other was the General Iron County Account. He was requesting an increase in the Sheriff’s Department account from \$40K to \$80K and an increase in the General Account from \$150K to \$225K.

Michael Bleak made a motion to approve the increase of the Comprehensive Credit Limit with the SBSU. Second by Kenneth Robinson. Voting: Michael Bleak, Aye; Paul Cozzens, Aye; Kenneth Robinson, Aye.

**PRESENTATION OF THE IRON COUNTY 2025 MID-YEAR BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION 2025-3, ADOPTING THE IRON COUNTY 2025 BUDGET AMENDMENTS**

Kenneth Robinson made a motion to adopt the Iron County 2025 budget amendments to actual expenditures and calculated as presented by Lucas Little, Iron County Auditor. Second by Kenneth Robinson. Voting: Michael Bleak, Aye; Paul Cozzens, Aye; Kenneth Robinson, Aye.

**CONVENE AS THE BOARD OF EQUALIZATION (BOE)**

Paul Cozzens, Iron County Commission Chair, declared the convening as the Board of Equalization (BOE).

**DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF 2025 PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN SUBMITTED BY RELIGIOUS, EDUCATIONAL, OR CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS REQUESTING TAX EXEMPT STATUS ON PERSONAL OR REAL PROPERTY FOR THE 2025 TAX YEAR**

McKayla Meinhardt, Iron County Deputy Auditor, reported on the new applications for 2025 exemptions: Cedar City Housing Authority (2), Cedar Charter Holders/American Preparatory Academy, and the Canyon Creek Women’s Crisis Center (3). There were no changes to the existing exemptions.

Michael Bleak made a motion to approve the 2025 Property Tax Exemptions, which had been submitted by Religious, Educational, or Charitable organizations requesting Tax-Exempt status on Personal or Real Property for the 2025 Tax Year as presented. Second by Kenneth Robinson. Voting: Michael Bleak, Aye; Paul Cozzens, Aye; Kenneth Robinson, Aye.

**RECONVENE AS THE IRON COUNTY COMMISSION**

Paul Cozzens, Iron County Commission Chair, declared the reconvening of the Iron County Commission.

**PERSONNEL**

Jennifer Bradbury, Iron County Human Resource (HR) Director, presented the new hire of Cyrus Naone as a Part-Time Meals on Wheels Driver for Council on Aging, effective March 31<sup>st</sup>. This was a backfill of a vacant position; the new hire of Victoria Garcia as a Part-Time Front Desk Clerk, a newly approved new position for the Council of Aging, effective March 18<sup>th</sup>; the new hire of Patricia Horchstein as a Part-Time Animal Shelter Technician, for the Sheriff’s Department – Patrol, effective March 17<sup>th</sup>. This was a backfill of a vacant position; the promotion of Charles Day from a Full-Time Deputy 3 to Corporal in the Sheriff’s Department - Patrol; Eric Rohmann from a Full-Time Deputy 3-K9 to Corporal in the Sheriff’s Department – Patrol; and Dean Monteleone from a Full-Time Deputy 1 to Corporal for the Sheriff’s Department - Patrol, effective March 16<sup>th</sup>; the new hire of Clint Goodman as a Full-Time Road Maintenance Technician for the Road Department, effective March 31<sup>st</sup>. This was a backfill of a vacant position; Interim pay for Attorney Office Manager, Susan Carter, for completing duties performed in the absence of a Children’s Justice Center Director, effective March 16<sup>th</sup>.

Kenneth Robinson made a motion to approve Personnel changes as presented by Jennifer Bradbury. Second by Michael Bleak. Voting: Michael Bleak, Aye; Paul Cozzens, Aye; Kenneth Robinson, Aye.

**NON-DELEGATED ITEMS**

Boards:

Paul Cozzens explained that Reed Erickson, Iron County Planner, had contacted him and reported that Lane Sutherland had resigned from the Iron County Planning Commission (ICPC). Dennis Gray was asked to replace Lane on the ICPC, and he accepted.

Michael Bleak made a motion to appoint Dennis Gray to the Iron County Planning Commission (ICPC). Second by Kenneth Robinson. Voting: Michael Bleak, Aye; Paul Cozzens, Aye; Kenneth Robinson, Aye.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Paul Cozzens, Iron County Commission Chair, declared adjournment.

  
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Signed: Paul Cozzens, Chair

  
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Attest: Jonathan T. Whittaker, County Clerk

