

CITY OF OREM
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
56 North State Street Orem, Utah
September 9, 2025

3:00 P.M. WORK SESSION - CITY COUNCIL CONFERENCE ROOM

CONDUCTING	Mayor Pro Tem Jenn Gale
ELECTED OFFICIALS	Chris Killpack, David Spencer, Jeff Lambson, Jenn Gale, LaNae Millett, and Tom Macdonald ABSENT David Young
APPOINTED STAFF	Brenn Bybee, City Manager; Ryan Clark, Assistant City Manager; Keri Rugg, Deputy City Manager; Steve Earl, City Attorney; Chris Tschirki, Public Works Director; Brandon Nelson, Finance Director; Marc Sanderson, Fire Chief; BJ Robinson, Police Chief; Bryce Merrill, Library and Recreation Director; Gary McGinn, Community Development Director; Peter Wolfley, Communications Manager, PIO; Teresa McKitrick, City Recorder

NOTE: The referenced report and presentation documents for each discussion may be viewed at orem.gov/meetings under “City Council Presentations”

myOrem Update Presentation *Presenter: McKay Barton, Software Development Project Manager*

Mr. Barton provided a status update on the My Orem Initiative, a new system scheduled to launch in January. The initiative's core purpose is to create a single, unified location and login for all city business interactions, replacing the current fragmented system of multiple websites and unique logins. The initial rollout will feature two major components: Utility Billing and the Business Licensing Program. The team is currently finalizing the business licensing side and will begin the utility billing rewrite this week. A major feature is the unified wallet, which will allow citizens to optionally store credentials and multiple payment methods (including credit cards and banking information) for seamless use across various city services—from utilities to the fitness center—without having to re-enter details repeatedly. Mayor Young praised the system, calling it a "great upgrade" for making payments centralized and organized. Councilmember Spencer also highlighted that the initiative provides a significant security benefit to the city by simplifying its public-facing programs, allowing the city to address potential threats much quicker than the current structure allows. The long-term plan is to continue rewriting and integrating all older applications into this new ecosystem over the next few years.

HeArt of Downtown Study/Civic Tour Discussion *Presenter: Gary McGinn, Community Development Director*

Mr. McGinn presented a detailed review of the summer tour of public spaces in Herriman and the Daybreak Ballpark, seeking specific feedback for the downtown development plan. A key takeaway was the success of the Ballpark's central plaza which provides year-round usage by converting from a summer stage/concert venue to a winter ice skating rink. The Council expressed strong support for designing a similar dual-use performance stage and ice rink/turf area in Orem's SCERA park to complement the SCERA Shell. Key operational notes from the tour included avoiding deciduous trees near the ice due to maintenance issues and ensuring proper Zamboni access. Design suggestions focused on creating a more continuous public space by relocating the current parking and retaining a seating pavilion for hosted events. For long-term success, the Council emphasized coordinating with UTA to adjust transportation access for events, linking to the successful model seen near the Ballpark's light rail, and finalizing the Active Transportation Plan to connect city parks safely. Strategically, the Council noted the Daybreak developers' choice to increase housing quality over extreme high density and affirmed Orem's focus will be on hosting a consistent schedule of medium-sized, family-friendly events, drawing 2,000 to 5,000 people per day, rather than massive weekend festivals. The discussion concluded with a note on the importance of proactively planning for the future by considering the acquisition of nearby properties as they become available for expanded public use. Staff will integrate this specific feedback into a refined concept for the consultant to draft.

501(c)(4) Update Presentation *Presenter: Steve Earl, City Attorney*

Mr. Earl provided the council with research on 501(c)(4) organizations, which are defined by the Internal Revenue Code as nonprofit, tax-exempt social welfare organizations, differing from 501(c)(3) charitable groups. The IRS defines a social welfare organization as one "primarily engaged in promoting...the common good and general people in the community," a broad category exemplified by groups like the National Rifle Association and the Sierra Club. While contributions to a 501(c)(4) are typically not tax-deductible, the entity itself is tax-exempt. The key distinction from 501(c)(3) organizations, which are strictly limited to charitable activities and cannot engage in any political campaign involvement, is that 501(c)(4)s are permitted to engage in political activity as long as it is not their primary purpose. This primary purpose is generally determined by how the organization spends the majority of its money.

Mayor Young initiated a line of questioning to understand how a 501(c)(4) organization's primary purpose is determined (by majority spending) if their donors aren't disclosed. He affirmed that the lack of donor visibility is the source of the term "dark money" and expressed a strong commitment to transparency, which led the city to create a transparency portal. He voiced concern that the introduction of a 501(c)(4) creates an "invisible area of donors," making it impossible to "follow the money" and know who is influencing local elections. He later pressed for clarity on who paid for an inflammatory "push-pull" survey. Citing a past incident where a local group's expenditures were announced well *after* an election, he emphasized the need for

pre-election clarity. He then tasked Mr. Earl with researching the laws in New York and Connecticut on 501(c)(4) disclosure to see if a similar transparency mechanism could be implemented at the municipal level before the current election ends.

Mr. Earl confirmed that 501(c)(4)s are required to report expenditures related to political activity to the IRS on Form 990, which is public information, but they are generally not required to disclose their donors. He further clarified that "political activity" is largely defined as supporting elections, candidates, or ballot propositions, not broad issue advocacy like lobbying for gun rights. He acknowledged that New York and Connecticut have adopted regulations requiring additional disclosure from 501(c)(4) donors, but noted it's unclear whether a local government regulation would survive a legal challenge, suggesting the state level might be more effective.

Councilmember Macdonald added to the explanation of political expenditures, noting that 501(c)(4)s cannot make direct campaign contributions but *can* pay for independent expenditures to support or oppose candidates, provided these actions are absolutely not coordinated with the candidates. He provided examples of coordination, such as asking a candidate what message to put on a billboard. Mr. Macdonald later corrected himself, explaining that the group in question ("Stronger Together Community") is a 501(c)(4) that claims not to make campaign contributions, while its sister organization, "Stronger Orem," is a transparent Utah PAC that *does* support candidates. He admitted he didn't know the reporting deadline for the PAC's expenditures.

Councilmember Millett criticized the lack of donor disclosure, confirming that unlimited, undisclosed donations are the "hubbub" surrounding 501(c)(4)s. She questioned the timing of disclosure filings, pointing out that waiting until the following April after a November election renders the information useless for voters. She then shifted the discussion to a specific local group, presenting evidence that its in-kind donations to three candidates (totaling over \$27,000) in the 2023 election were not disclosed until December, after the election. She advocated for a municipal ordinance to create greater transparency and "guardrails" against such confusion and "shade behavior," regardless of potential legal challenges, as she believes the community deserves clear information.

Other council members added to the discussion. Councilmember Spencer supported the call for transparency, stating, "Where does the money come in... if they're not doing anything, why would they not let us know?" Councilmember Gale raised caution, questioning whether the council should "redefine the reporting requirements" for a federal 501(c)(4) designation at a local level. Councilmember Lambson requested that Mr. Earl gather more information and provide a "hard legal opinion" on the best options for pursuing transparency, specifically referencing the precedents in New York and Connecticut. Councilmember Killpack acknowledged the federal law constraints versus the "citizen request" for transparency, stating he was waiting for more legal information.

Constitution Month Activities Presentation *Presenter: Pete Wolfley, Communication Manager*

Mr. Wolfley provided an update on the city's third annual "Celebrate Constitution Month" initiative, designed to help residents engage with and learn about the U.S. Constitution. A key resource is the website, orem.gov/constitution, which lists all activities. The month's events include various service projects tied to the Day of Caring and 9/11 Day of Service, and the powerful Healing Fields Display of American flags at University Place, which includes educational components. The city is also promoting the UVU Center for Constitutional Studies conference focused this year on George Washington. For families, the library will offer a week of Constitution-themed books and resources. Furthermore, the annual Constitution Art Contest is underway for submissions from both children and adults. To enhance community discussion, the city is producing a video featuring a BYU law professor explaining how the Constitution affects local, city-level activities. Finally, Mr. Wolfley offered to arrange for a military veteran to speak at the next City Council meeting about the significance of swearing an oath to the Constitution. Mayor Young praised the initiative's success, noting it has gained momentum every year since it began three years ago.

Taste of Orem Presentation *Presenter: Kenice Whitaker, Events Manager and Sydney Bailey, Events Coordinator*

Ms. Whitaker and Ms. Bailey delivered a status report on the inaugural Taste of Orem festival, which is scheduled to run on September 19th and 20th. The event is designed to celebrate Orem's diverse culture, cuisine, and arts, beginning with a kickoff concert on Friday evening (5:00 PM – 10:00 PM) in partnership with the Utah Live Concert Foundation. The main Food Festival takes place Saturday (12:00 PM – 8:00 PM), featuring 20 confirmed local, brick-and-mortar Orem restaurants. Attendees purchase tickets—with a half-sheet of 20 tickets typically satisfying one adult—to sample mini-entrees, and any leftover tickets can be donated toward the Gold Star Monument. Pre-sale tickets are available at orem.gov/taste and have already surpassed \$6,000 in sales. The festival also strongly highlights culture, including performances and booths from groups representing Haitian, Latin, and Polynesian backgrounds, along with family activities like an "Adopt a Llama" workshop and local art vendors. While reporting a positive social media response and strong city staff preparation, the presenters acknowledged the challenges of this first-year event, including a time crunch, navigating new vendor contracts, and securing staffing buy-in from restaurants. Logistically, public parking will be available as the Senior Center and North parking lots will be entirely open, with only the South lot reserved for vendors and sponsors. Mayor Young praised the team for their work, recognizing that the initiative is poised to become a significant community gathering.

United Way Community Assessment Report Presentation *Presenter: Bill Hulterstrom, United Way*

Mr. Hulterstrom of United Way presented the findings of their triennial study on community issues and public perception in Utah County, specifically focusing on the mounting stresses hitting families. The data shows that while growth remains the dominant public concern,

the nature of that growth has shifted since the pandemic, with outside migration now being the primary driver instead of the county's traditionally high natural birth rate. This population surge, coupled with the county's remarkably low average age of 25.5, has exacerbated the crisis in housing costs, which have risen by 72% since 2015, making housing the number one need reported via 211 services. Compounding these financial pressures is a steep decline in mental and emotional well-being, with nearly a third of high school students reporting feelings of sadness or hopelessness, reflecting parallel stress and anxiety in parents. Mr. Hulterstrom highlighted a major problem: while issues like mental health and declining kindergarten readiness are worsening, public concern is plummeting due to "issue fatigue." The most critical finding focused on a growing loneliness epidemic, which is associated with serious health outcomes and is reflected by 55% of residents finding it difficult to make friends in their neighborhood. Mr. Hulterstrom concluded that the city must focus on two core principles to build better neighborhoods: 1) proactively creating social capital by fostering neighborly connection (which reduces crime and EMS calls) and encouraging self-efficacy, 2) ensuring residents feel their voice and 3) contribution matter. He urged the Council to utilize civic events, deliberate design choices (like park bench placement), and public modeling by city staff to proactively facilitate connections and address this widespread isolation.

CITY COUNCIL / STAFF REPORTS (BOARDS & COMMISSIONS, NEW BUSINESS, ETC.)

Councilmember Gale provided updates on three key city groups, starting with the Events Commission, which is currently focused on executing its first major effort: the inaugural Taste of Orem festival. Next, the National Resources Advisory Commission met recently and engaged in a discussion with staff member Mr. Merrill concerning the outdoor space near the library, specifically where the nursery is currently located. The commission's advice was solicited on how to make this area more sustainable. Finally, the Youth Council held its first enthusiastic and energetic meeting of the year last week, bringing together students from across the community. After participating in an Orem trivia game, the new Youth Council members are scheduled to come to a future City Council meeting.

AGENDA REVIEW & PREVIEW OF UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS

6:00 P.M. REGULAR SESSION - COUNCIL CHAMBERS

CONDUCTING	Mayor David A. Young
ELECTED OFFICIALS	David Young, Chris Killpack, David Spencer, Jeff Lambson, Jenn Gale, LaNae Millett, and Tom Macdonald
APPOINTED STAFF	Brenn Bybee, City Manager; Ryan Clark, Assistant City Manager; Keri Rugg, Deputy City Manager; Steve Earl,

City Attorney; Chris Tschirki, Public Works Director; Brandon Nelson, Finance Director; Marc Sanderson, Fire Chief; BJ Robinson, Police Chief; Bryce Merrill, Library and Recreation Director; Gary McGinn, Community Development Director; Peter Wolfley, Communications Manager, PIO; Teresa McKittrick, City Recorder

CALL TO ORDER

INVOCATION / INSPIRATIONAL THOUGHT – Todd Covington

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / FLAG CEREMONY – Police and Fire Honor Guard

MAYOR'S REPORT/ ITEMS REFERRED BY COUNCIL

Tribute to Andrew Jacobs *Presenter: Tom Macdonald*

The City Council honored the life and legacy of Andrew Dwayne "Andy" Jacobs, a beloved, lifelong Orem resident who passed away last month at the age of 50. Andy's greatest devotion was to his family, leaving behind his wife, Cami, four children, two in-laws, and a grandson, Cooper, born shortly after his passing. Andy's lifelong passion for running began at age eight and led him through Orem City Track Club, Orem High School, and onto Utah Valley's first men's cross country team. His most enduring legacy, however, was his two decades as a coach for Orem High School's cross country and track teams, where he won multiple state titles. Beyond his success on the field—which earned him the competitive moniker "a pain in the butt" from rivals—Andy served as a mentor, role model, and father figure to thousands of athletes and community members. He was celebrated for his infectious enthusiasm, unshakable optimism, and genuine care, which extended to all his professional and church service. The tribute concluded by reminding the community that Andy's challenge to all is to "fill his running shoes, not in miles, but in kindness, encouragement and everyday positivity," inviting all to "love like Andy." His family was present and recognized with applause.

Lifesaving Recognition Presentation *Presenter: Marc Sanderson, Fire Chief, Lon Myers, Assistant Fire Chief, and Chris Shields, Director of EMS Relations*

Chief Sanderson introduced a special life-saving recognition ceremony for the coordinated efforts that saved the life of local resident David Snow. David, a passionate cyclist, suffered a cardiac arrest while on a bike ride to celebrate his 61st birthday. The successful resuscitation was detailed by Ms. Shields, Director of EMS Relations for Timpanogos Hospital. The chain of survival began when David, experiencing chest pain, called his wife, Karna Kay, who set out to find him. Simultaneously, runner Susanna Trenzner, making several uncharacteristic decisions (running despite the heat, bringing her phone, and extending her route), found David on the trail. After a brief encounter with fellow trail-goer Kevin Okeh, David

collapsed. Susanna immediately called 911 at 3:33 PM, and Dispatcher Finn guided Kevin through the steps to begin CPR. Karna Kay arrived moments later to the sight of her husband receiving CPR.

The coordinated emergency response was swift and thorough: Orem Police Master Officer Smith arrived to take over chest compressions, assisted by Master Officer Robertson. Ten minutes after cardiac arrest, Orem Fire Department Critical Care Paramedics arrived and took over, performing 27 minutes of continuous CPR and multiple advanced life-saving procedures, including use of the Lucas mechanical CPR device and two defibrillation shocks. Against all odds, at 4:00 PM, David achieved Return of Spontaneous Circulation (ROSC). He was stabilized and transported to the Timpanogos Hospital Emergency Department, where an EKG revealed a 100% occluded LAD, the "widow maker" heart attack. The hospital team rushed him to the Cath Lab for two stents, followed by therapeutic hypothermia in the ICU. David was discharged after nine days in the ICU, a "true miracle" of survival. The ceremony concluded with the presentation of awards to all involved—bystanders Susanna Trenzner and Kevin Okeh, Dispatchers Finn and Farrell, Orem Police, Orem Fire's Critical Care team, and Timpanogos Hospital staff—celebrating their skill, dedication, and teamwork, which kept a family whole.

9/11 Day of Service Presentation *Presenter: Keri Rugg, Deputy City Manager*

Ms. Rugg addressed the Mayor and Council, emphasizing the privilege of serving alongside the city's dedicated employees. Her primary message was an announcement regarding 9/11 Day of Service and Remembrance, an annual observance federally recognized in 2009 that aims to transform the anniversary of the September 11th terrorist attacks from a day of tragedy into a day of positive action, unity, and compassion. Orem has participated in this effort for many years and is known as a JustServe community. Ms. Rugg then invited the public to participate in several service projects scheduled for Saturday, September 13th. These projects include cleanups at the Vineyard Shoreline Trail, SCERA park and shell, Nielsen's Grove Park, and Foothill and Palisade Park, as well as a celebration of service at the Sharon Stake and a project with Kids On The Move. She encouraged the public and council members to sign up for any of these opportunities at justserve.org by searching for "Orem Vineyard 911 daily service."

MyHometown New Neighborhood Presentation *Presenter: Keri Rugg, Deputy City Manager and Jim Barry, MyHometown Orem City Chair*

Ms. Rugg introduced Mr. Barry to discuss the opening of a new My Hometown neighborhood in Orem, noting that this initiative strongly supports the City Council's goal of creating more connected neighborhoods. Mr. Barry then provided an update on the new community, mentioning that its Community Resource Center (CRC) and initial classes had just started that evening. The new community has grown rapidly, starting with two directors and now engaging over 75 missionaries and volunteers. Despite a heavy rainstorm, the grand opening was a success, drawing over 700 attendees. An open house for the CRC followed, and 95 students have already signed up for classes. Overall, the two My Hometown communities have

contributed over 10,000 hours of service this year, taught 322 students, and worked on over 20 unique homes. Recent service projects have included sod donation, landscape trimming, rebuilding and painting a deck, building a new fence, adding a wheelchair ramp, and hauling away large debris. Additionally, the initiative has hosted community activities like "Flowers and French Toast" and a pool party. Mr. Barry concluded by expressing optimism that the service hours would at least double next year. Councilmember Millett observed a pattern of extreme weather events coinciding with My Hometown presentations, suggesting the initiative is "taking our town by storm."

Summer Reading Wrap Up *Presenter: Meghan Flinders-Peay, Patron Experience*

Ms. Flinders-Peay, the Programming Librarian, delivered a report on the Orem Library's 2025 Summer Reading Program, themed "Color Our World," which focused on art and creativity and was deemed a huge success despite ongoing library construction that required many programs to be held off-site. The program saw over 3,300 patrons register, collectively reading an astonishing over 3,254,459 minutes. The library hosted over 30 programs across two months, including a kickoff event at the Hillcrest Center featuring a storytime, puppet show, and a special appearance by the City mascot, Mero. A major highlight was co-sponsoring the popular butterfly house at OremFest with the city events team, which served as a great promotion opportunity. The teen-led programs included an "Art Night" and a fun evening making fairy gardens at Timpanogos Park, while tweens enjoyed an event themed after the *Wings of Fire* book series. The library also catered to adults with programs like a cut paper art night. The program wrapped up with a finale at the Orem SCERA Pool, attended by approximately 1,300 challenge finishers who received prizes and a custom City of Orem coloring book. Survey results showed the program's impact: 74% of patrons read more because of the challenge, and 92% plan to participate again, with many citing the program as a wonderful source of family bonding and a strong reading motivator for children. The library is already at work planning the 2026 Summer Reading Program, which will be themed "Unearth a Story," focusing on paleontology and archaeology.

PERSONAL APPEARANCES

No Personal Appearances

CONSENT ITEMS

Approval of Meeting Minutes for August 26, 2025

Public Works Advisory Commission Reappointments for Joseph Gordon, Robert Moore, Gary Morley, and Brent Tobler

ORDINANCE - Business Licensing Revocation Amendments

Ms. Millett moved to approve the consent items. **Seconded by** Ms. Gale. Those voting yes: David Young, LaNae Millett, David Spencer, Tom Macdonald, Jeff Lambson, Chris Killpack and Jenn Gale. The motion **passed**.

CITY MANAGER INFORMATION ITEMS


Mr. Bybee promoted the upcoming annual Day of Service on Thursday, which will feature a couple hundred employees going out to serve the community through various city projects. He emphasized that while there are many community concerns the true solution is "serving others and serving our community." He concluded by expressing great pride in the "Orem team of servants," recognizing them as the best team of public servants in the state.

ADJOURN TO A CLOSED SESSION IN THE SUMMIT CONFERENCE ROOM

Mr. Macdonald moved to adjourn to the Summit conference room to discuss pending or reasonably imminent litigation; the character or professional competence of an individual; or the purchase or lease of real property, **seconded** by Mr. Killpack. Those voting yes: David Young, LaNae Millett, David Spencer, Tom Macdonald, Jeff Lambson, Chris Killpack and Jenn Gale. The motion **passed**.

(These minutes were created with the help of AI)

PASSED and APPROVED on this 18th day of November 2025.


David A Young, Mayor

ATTEST:


Teresa McKittrick, City Recorder



COUNCIL MEMBER

Mayor David A. Young
Chris Killpack

AYE NAY ABSTAIN ABSENT

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David Spencer
Jeff Lambson
Jenn Gale
LaNae Millett
Tom Macdonald

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