

**ESCALANTE CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 20, 2026
REGULAR MEETING/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 Lenza Wilson, Marlene Stowe, Chad Lyman, City Attorney Barry Huntington and City Recorder Stephanie Steed. Council member Sally Orme arrived at 6:04 p.m. Council member Ryan Cottam was excused.

Also present were Ralph Perkins, Bill Weppner, Fran Wilson, Glen Wilson, David Cassidy, Claire Cassidy, Jenny Evans, DeEtte Spencer and Julie Brugger.

Mayor Torgersen led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

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

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 6, 2026 MEETING

Council member Wilson moved to approve the minutes of the January 6, 2026 meeting as written. Council member Stowe seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council members Wilson, Lyman and Stowe voting aye.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

JULIE BRUGGER

Ms. Brugger said she would like to request a public hearing regarding the future of the library building. Ms. Brugger said it is important to get community input on what to do with it.

RALPH PERKINS

Mr. Perkins introduced himself and announced the official launch of his campaign for the County Commissioner A seat, as Leland Pollock will not be running this year. Mr. Perkins stated his interest in understanding the needs and struggles of the community. Mr. Perkins invited anyone with comments to speak with him. Mr. Perkins emphasized his desire to know "what is going on in Escalante." and the importance of listening, expressing pride in his accomplishments on the school board. Mr. Perkins also expressed appreciation for the new elementary school and commented that he was glad the community supported it.

Council member Orme arrived at this time.

PLANNING AND ZONING ITEMS

PLANNING AND ZONING UPDATES

Council member Stowe explained the Planning Commission met last week and worked on some

ordinances and the annexation plan.

**DAVID & CLAIRE CASSIDY - MODULAR HOME, DECK AND UTILITY BUILDING
465 S 500 W (RR-1-10)**

Council member Stowe explained this project. Council member Stowe said this project meets all requirements and Planning and Zoning recommends it to the City Council for approval. Council member Lyman said he is concerned about the drainage due to the location. Ms. Cassidy said their property is in a low corner and Ryan Ellingford is their contractor and has stated there is no drainage issue. **Council member Wilson moved to approve the Municipal Project Approval Form for Mr. and Mrs. Cassidy. Council member Lyman seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council members Stowe, Lyman, Wilson and Orme voting aye.**

**MARK ALIPRANDINI - CONNECT EXISTING HOUSE AND GARAGE - 320 S 800 W
(RR-1-20)**

Council member Stowe explained this project. Council member Stowe said this project meets all requirements and Planning and Zoning recommends it to the City Council for approval. **Council member Stowe moved to approve the Municipal Project Approval Form for Mr. Aliprandini. Council member Orme seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council members Stowe, Lyman, Orme and Wilson voting aye.**

SCHEDULED ITEMS

DAVID & CLAIRE CASSIDY - NEW WATER SERVICE

City Recorder Steed explained the waterline is on the opposite side of the road so Mr. and Mrs. Cassidy are aware they will need to bore under the road. Council member Lyman asked if Mr. and Mrs. Cassidy are aware they will need to start the project because they only have so much time to get their building permit. Mr. Cassidy said they are aware of the time limit. **Council member Lyman moved to approve the new water service for Mr. and Mrs. Cassidy. Council member Stowe seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council members Lyman, Stowe, Orme and Wilson voting aye.**

DAVID & CLAIRE CASSIDY - NEW SEWER SERVICE

Council member Orme stated that Mr. and Mrs. Cassidy are responsible for their line and must have a city representative present when making the connection. **Council member Orme moved to approve the new sewer service for Mr. and Mrs. Cassidy. Council member Lyman seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council member Orme, Stowe, Wilson and Lyman voting aye.**

AIRPORT HANGER LEASE

Council member Wilson explained the lease agreement updates and requested the rent be set at \$200.00. Council member Wilson explained the increased rate is due to the City being responsible for mowing the property. Council member Wilson requested the City continue to pay for the power costs, as the fuel system is connected to the hanger's power. Council member Wilson said the rental of \$200.00 was determined after researching hanger rental rates at other local airports. **Council member Wilson moved to approve the revised lease agreement and to post for bids. Council member Lyman seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council members Wilson, Lyman, Stowe and Orme voting aye.**

LANDFILL FEES

Council member Orme said she is concerned with the ongoing cost of managing items with refrigerant in them at the landfill. Council member Orme explained it will be necessary to hire certified personnel to handle the removal of these items, with an estimated cost of \$25.00 per unit. Council member Wilson asked if coordinating with surrounding cities on this issue would be beneficial. Council member Orme said she would like to suggest that a city employee could be trained and certified to perform this task. Council member Orme explained once the refrigerants are removed the items will be left at the site and subsequently crushed. Council member Wilson asked if the city could accept units if the refrigerant had already been evacuated before being brought in. Council member Orme said a certified individual would still need to inspect the unit due to existing State requirements. City Recorder Steed reviewed other landfill facilities fees. This item was discussed at length. **Council member Orme moved to add the following Landfill Fees to the City fee schedule, \$25.00 for any item that may contain refrigerant and \$2.00 per tire. Council member Stowe seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council members Stowe, Lyman, Orme and Wilson voting aye.**

UTAH RETIREMENT SYSTEM EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

City Recorder Steed explained Utah Retirement System (URS) is offering new retirement options, such as Roth 401K and Roth 457. City Recorder Steed said with the URS new software they can implement a match increase over time if the Council is interested in doing an automatic escalation annually for employees. This item was discussed at length and the council agreed to consider implementing these changes by April 1st, with further discussion on the specific match structure to be held at the next meeting. **Council member Lyman moved to table this item until the next meeting. Council member Stowe seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council members Stowe, Lyman, Wilson and Orme voting aye.**

CITY PROPERTY - 10 N 300 E

Mayor Torgersen provided an update on the Old Elementary School property, noting that the cost estimate for removing asbestos and hazardous materials came in lower than anticipated. Mayor Torgersen suggested that City employees could handle the removal of the hazardous materials. Mayor Torgersen explained if the City agrees to pay for asbestos removal, the County has offered to assist with the building's demolition. Council member Wilson said he supports the demolition, stating the building is in poor condition, which was the reason for constructing a new Elementary School. City Recorder Steed informed the Council that City Treasurer Nancy Porter would contact the State to inquire about a grant to help fund the asbestos removal. Mayor Torgersen added that City Treasurer Porter has been working on this matter for about a year and a half, and the City will need to budget for the asbestos removal cost. **Council member Wilson moved to proceed with the removal of asbestos and hazardous materials, and look at allocating the necessary funds in next year's budget. Council member Lyman seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council members Lyman, Stowe, Orme and Wilson voting aye.**

DEPARTMENT REPORTS**ADMINISTRATIVE**

City Recorder Steed informed the Council that the grant application to renovate the old community center was unsuccessful.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

The Public Works Department was not present at said meeting.

FIRE DEPARTMENT**BILL WEPPNER**

Mr. Weppner reported a false alarm at the high school last week. Council member Wilson explained in the City Ordinance there is a distinction between a false alarm and an incident where someone intentionally or accidentally triggers the alarm.

Mr. Weppner said the Fire Department is seeking reimbursement from the U.S. Fire Administration for expenses related to fighting a fire last summer on federal land. Mr. Weppner said they have not yet received a response to their submission and request to work with Commissioner Taylor and possibly Celeste Malloy to follow up with the U.S. Fire Administration.

Mr. Weppner briefed the Council on the potential effects of House Bill 48, which concerns modifications to the wildland-urban interface, particularly regarding fire suppression funding. Mr. Weppner explained that the city will be required to develop a plan and fully understand the resulting obligations. Mr. Weppner said a primary concern for the Fire Department is that the city could be rated as "high risk," potentially leading to increased fees. Mr. Weppner said the Department is unsure how insurance companies will utilize this plan to determine their rates.

COUNCIL REPORTS**MAYOR MELANI TORGERSEN**

Mayor Torgersen had nothing to report at this time.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHAD LYMAN

Council member Lyman reported that he is coordinating with the county and Brown Brothers to arrange for the production of chips for the remaining roads. Council member Lyman said the material will be transported from Johns Valley.

COUNCIL MEMBER LENZA WILSON

Council member Wilson reported the core drilling at the airport was completed last week.

Council member Wilson said the parts for the Sphere One fuel tank are expected to arrive shortly, and the tank should be operational within the next few days.

COUNCIL MEMBER RYAN COTTAM

Council member Cottam was not present at said meeting.

COUNCIL MEMBER MARLENE STOWE

Council Member Stowe said she will arrange a public meeting to discuss the library. Council

Member Stowe explained the building inspection revealed several issues. Council Member Stowe said she could not access the back room due to not having a key. Council member Stowe said the east exterior has noticeable cracks, the roof needs repair due to missing shingles, the carpets, walls, and ceiling are in good shape, but the bathroom needs fixing. Council Member Stowe reported the library has three rows of books, a copy machine, a computer and a desk. Mayor Torgersen said the copy machine, computer and desk belong to the City.

COUNCIL MEMBER SALLY ORME

Council member Orme had nothing to report at this time.

UNPAID BILLS

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

Mayor Torgersen adjourned the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

Stephanie Steed, MMC, UCC
City Recorder

Date minutes approved:

Help Your Employees Build Tax-Free Retirement Income

Roth 401(k) and 457(b) Plans: Why You Should Offer Them

What They Are

Roth 401(k) and Roth 457(b) plans are retirement savings options that allow employees to contribute **after-tax dollars** and enjoy **tax-free withdrawals** in retirement.



How They Benefit Employees

- » **Tax-Free Growth:** Contributions grow tax-free, and qualified withdrawals are 100% tax-free
- » **No Income Limits:** Unlike Roth IRAs, high earners can contribute
- » **Diversification:** Offers tax diversification alongside traditional pre-tax 401(k) and 457(b) contributions
- » **Maximize Savings Potential:** Generous contribution limits

How They Benefit Employers

- » **Attract and Retain Talent:** Enhance your benefits package and show employees you care about their financial future
- » **Encourage Engagement:** More savings options can boost overall employee participation and engagement in your retirement plans
- » **No Cost to You:** No additional cost for employers to offer these plans alongside traditional 401(k) and 457(b)

Which Employees Can Benefit Most?

- » **Younger employees** currently in lower tax brackets
- » **High-income earners** seeking tax diversification
- » **Employees expecting** higher taxes in retirement



Learn more:

www.urs.org/us/newroths

Hourly wage: \$20.00

Hours worked: 40 hrs/week × 52 weeks = 2,080 hrs/year

Annual pay:

\$20 × 2,080 = \$41,600 per year

- **401(k):**
 - Employee starts at **5%**
 - Employer **matches the same percentage**
 - Employee contribution **increases by 1% every 5 years**
 - Employer match follows the same %

 - **No wage increases, no investment growth (this is contributions only)**
-

Contribution schedule (30 years)

Years	Employee %	Employer %	Total %	Annual Contribution
1–5	5%	5%	10%	\$4,160 (\$2,080 Each)
6–10	6%	6%	12%	\$4,992 (\$2,496 Each)
11–15	7%	7%	14%	\$5,824 (\$2,912 Each)
16–20	8%	8%	16%	\$6,656 (\$3,328 Each)
21–25	9%	9%	18%	\$7,488 (\$3,744 Each)
26–30	10%	10%	20%	\$8,320 (\$4,160 Each)

- Starting wage: **\$20.00/hour**
- Hours worked: **2,080/year**
- Annual raise: **3%**
- Employee contribution: starts at **5%**, increases **+1% every 5 years**
- Employer match: **100% match of employee**
- Percent shown below is **combined** (employee + employer)
- **No investment growth** — contributions only

- \$20/hour starting wage
- 2,080 hours/year
- 3% raise every year
- Employee starts at 5%, increases **+1% every 5 years**
- Employer matches **100% of employee contribution**
- No investment growth (contributions only)

Employee vs Employer Contributions — Year by Year

Year	Employee %	Annual Pay	Employee	Employer \$	Total \$
1	5%	\$41,600	\$2,080	\$2,080	\$4,160
2	5%	\$42,848	\$2,142	\$2,142	\$4,285
3	5%	\$44,133	\$2,207	\$2,207	\$4,413
4	5%	\$45,457	\$2,273	\$2,273	\$4,546
5	5%	\$46,821	\$2,341	\$2,341	\$4,682
6	6%	\$48,226	\$2,894	\$2,894	\$5,787
7	6%	\$49,673	\$2,980	\$2,980	\$5,961
8	6%	\$51,163	\$3,070	\$3,070	\$6,140

3 Business And License Regulations

3.04 General License Provisions

3.08 Alcoholic Beverages

3.12 Retail Tobacco Specialty Business

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3.20 Municipal Energy Sales And Use Tax

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3.28 Resort Communities Tax

3.32 Sexually Oriented Businesses And Employees

3.36 Professional Dancers

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3.04 General License Provisions

3.04.010 Definitions - General License Provisions

3.04.020 License Required; Failure To Comply

3.04.030 Application For License

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3.04.110 Separate Businesses, Licensed Premises

3.04.120 Renewal Of License Certificate

3.04.130 Denial Or Revocation; Conditions

3.04.140 Appeal Of Denial

3.04.150 Penalty

3.04.010 Definitions - General License Provisions

For the purposes of this chapter, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

BUSINESS. All activities engaged in within this City carried on for the purpose of gain or economic profit, except farming and ranching

operations. Wholesale operations are also excluded if no place of business is maintained in the City.

PLACE OF BUSINESS. Each separate location maintained or operated within Escalante, Utah from which business activity is conducted or transacted.

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. 2000-17 on 12/5/2000

Amended by Ord. [2025-06](#) on 6/17/2025

3.04.020 License Required; Failure To Comply

A.

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. 2000-17 on 12/5/2000

Amended by Ord. [2025-06](#) on 6/17/2025

3.04.030 Application For License

A.

A. Applications for a business license shall include the following information:

1. general applicant information;
2. general business information, including applicable sales and use tax, transient room tax, and/or restaurant tax numbers issued from the Utah State Tax Commission; and
3. payment of the business license application fee as outlined in the Escalante, Utah Fee Resolution.

B. Upon staff approval, the City Clerk shall add the business license application to the agenda for the next regularly scheduled City Council meeting.

C. The City Council shall consider each application individually. If the

City Council rejects any application, it must state its reason for doing so with particularity in a letter to the applicant. If the City Council accepts any application, the City Clerk may issue a business license to the applicant upon receipt of the business license fee.

- D. The approval of a business license application by the City Council shall be the final authorization for said entity to conduct business. No business license shall be approved by the City Council until all other applicable City department and external approvals (local or State health departments, State or Federal agencies, other permits or licenses, etc.) have been granted.

HISTORY

*Adopted by Ord. 2000-17 on 12/5/2000
Amended by Ord. [2025-06](#) on 6/17/2025*

3.04.040 Fee For License

- A. Imposed: There is hereby imposed and levied an annual business license fee on the types of businesses and in the amounts described in the Escalante City fee schedule

HISTORY

*Adopted by Ord. 2000-17 on 12/5/2000
Amended by Ord. [2022-01](#) on 2/15/2022
Amended by Ord. [2025-06](#) on 6/17/2025*

3.04.050 Notice To Applicant Of Issuance Or Denial

HISTORY

*Adopted by Ord. 2000-17 on 12/5/2000
Amended by Ord. [2025-06](#) on 6/17/2025*

Business License

- A. All license certificates shall be issued under the seal of the city and shall contain the following information:
1. The name of the person to whom such certificate has been issued;
 2. The name of the business, if applicable;
 3. The type of business activity;
 4. location of business
 5. City assigned business license number;
 6. The term of the license with commencement and expiration dates.
- B. Every business license shall be displayed in a conspicuous place of the building, room or office of the place where the business is carried on.
- C. No license granted or issued under any of the provisions of any ordinance of the City shall be in any manner assignable or transferable or authorize any person other than the person therein mentioned or named to do business.
- D. A business license may be revoked or denied by the City Council for:
1. The failure of the licensee or applicant to comply with the requirements of this or any other City Ordinance, or with the requirements of any State law;
 2. Unlawful activities conducted or permitted on the premises where the business is conducted;
 3. Failure to provide proof to the Clerk's Office that the associated business is current on all applicable Utah State tax filing and payment confirmations;
 4. any other violation of this Ordinance, other applicable City Ordinance or State or Federal law.
- E. A separate license must be obtained for each separate place of

business in the City.

- F. Wherever any person is engaged in two or more businesses within the same location in the City, such person shall not be required to obtain a separate license for conducting each of such businesses, but shall be issued one license which shall specify on its face all of such businesses.
- G. Where two or more persons conduct separate businesses at the same location, each shall obtain a license for their respective business.
- H. Business licenses shall be valid only for the year they are issued in and shall expire on December 31st of each year. Business licenses shall be renewed annually in accordance with this Ordinance.
- I. The City may issue temporary business licenses may be issued by the City Clerk upon staff approval and payment of the temporary business license application fee as outlined in the Escalante, Utah Fee Resolution.
 - 1. City Council approval shall not be required for temporary business license applications.
 - 2. Persons operating temporary businesses must have a temporary license at the location of their business.

HISTORY

*Adopted by Ord. 2000-17 on 12/5/2000
Amended by Ord. [2025-06](#) on 6/17/2025*

3.04.070 Inspections

HISTORY

*Adopted by Ord. 2000-17 on 12/5/2000
Amended by Ord. [2022-01](#) on 2/15/2022
Amended by Ord. [2025-06](#) on 6/17/2025*

3.04.080 Term Of License

Renewed license certificates shall be valid through December 31 of the year of renewal, unless revoked pursuant to this chapter. New license certificates issued between January 1 and September 30 shall be valid through December 31. Licenses issued after September 30 may be prorated and issued through December 31 of the year following the year of issuance.

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. 2000-17 on 12/5/2000

Amended by Ord. 2004 Code on 1/1/2004

3.04.090 Display Of License

Every business license shall be displayed in a conspicuous place of the building, room or office of the place where the business is carried on.

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. 2000-17 on 12/5/2000

Amended by Ord. [2025-06](#) on 6/17/2025

3.04.100 Branch Establishments

A separate license must be obtained for each branch establishment or separate location in which business is engaged in, within the city, as if such branch establishment or location were a separate business. Each license authorizes the licensee to engage only in the business licensed at the location and in the manner designated in such license.

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. 2000-17 on 12/5/2000

Amended by Ord. [2025-06](#) on 6/17/2025

3.04.110 Separate Businesses, Licensed Premises

Where two (2) or more persons conduct separate businesses at the same location, each such person shall obtain a separate license for each such business and must pay the required license fee for such business.

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. 2000-17 on 12/5/2000

3.04.120 Renewal Of License Certificate

A. Renewals for a business license shall include the following information:

1. The licensee shall provide proof to the Clerk's Office that the associated business is current on all applicable Utah State tax filing and payment confirmations; and
2. The licensee shall pay the nonrefundable processing fee upon submittal of the business license renewal application to the City Clerk's Office as outlined in the Escalante, Utah Fee Resolution.
3. The City Clerk's Office shall ensure applicable Utah State tax filing and payment confirmations are completely current, and the business license renewal application fee is paid prior to issuance of the new business license.

HISTORY

*Adopted by Ord. 2000-17 on 12/5/2000
Amended by Ord. 2004 Code on 1/1/2004
Amended by Ord. [2025-06](#) on 6/17/2025*

3.04.130 Denial Or Revocation; Conditions

HISTORY

*Adopted by Ord. 2000-17 on 12/5/2000
Amended by Ord. [2025-06](#) on 6/17/2025*

3.04.140 Appeal Of Denial

Appeals from land use decisions made under this Ordinance shall be governed by the Escalante, Utah Code and State law.

HISTORY

*Adopted by Ord. 2000-17 on 12/5/2000
Amended by Ord. 2004 Code on 1/1/2004
Amended by Ord. [2025-06](#) on 6/17/2025*

3.04.150 Penalty

PROHIBITED ACT. Any person found guilty of violating any part of this Ordinance, either by failing to do those acts required herein or by doing a prohibited act, shall be guilty of a Class B Misdemeanor. Each day such violation is committed or permitted to continue shall constitute a separate violation. Nothing in this Section is intended nor shall be construed as limiting the methods of enforcement available to the City under Escalante, Utah Code or State law.

LATE PENALTY. Any license fee due on January 1st that is paid later than January 30th, of any license year shall be considered late, and a late penalty of an additional \$100.00 shall be assessed for each renewal application.

ENFORCEMENT. The City Council shall not issue a business license to any person or entity that fails to comply with the provisions of this Ordinance. Any business operating within the City of Escalante, Utah without an approved business license shall be officially served by the Sheriff's Department and ordered to cease and desist operations immediately. The City Council may consider revocation of a business license at any time.

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. 2000-17 on 12/5/2000

Amended by Ord. 2004 Code on 1/1/2004

Amended by Ord. [2025-06](#) on 6/17/2025

3.08 Alcoholic Beverages

3.08.010 Definitions - Alcoholic Beverages

3.08.020 License Required

3.08.030 Classifications Of Licenses

3.08.040 Application For License

3.08.050 Fee For License

3.08.060 Purchase Of Beer For Resale

3.08.070 Sale Of Beer/Alcohol On Election Day

3.08.080 Penalty