

Minutes of the Hurricane City Council meeting held on March 5, 2026, in the Council Chambers at 147 North 870 West, Hurricane, Utah at 5 p.m.

Members Present: Mayor Clark Fawcett and **Council Members:** Drew Ellerman, Joseph Prete, Dave Imlay, Lynn Excell, and Amy Werrett.

Also Present: City Manager Kaden DeMille, City Attorney Dayton Hall, Police Chief Kurt Yates, Public Works Director Mike Vercimak, Assistant Public Works Director Weston Walker, Streets Superintendent Hayden Roberts, City Planner Gary Cupp, Assistant Planner Fred Resch III, Power Director Mike Johns, Recreation Director Tiffani Wright, City Engineer Arthur LeBaron, Building Official Larry Palmer, HR Director Sel Lovell, Water Superintendent Kory Wright, Finance Manager Paige Chapman, Parks Director Darren Barney, and City Recorder Cindy Beteag.

AGENDA

5:00 p.m. Pre-meeting - Discussion of Agenda Items, Department Reports

Fred Resch III stated the Planning Commission approved a site plan for an office building next to IHC. The Beautification Committee is doing the SR-9 cleanup on April 21st.

Gary Cupp announced that staff will conduct a sign enforcement campaign next week. Mayor Fawcett added that he will include a mention of it in his weekly “In the Loop” announcement. Councilman Ellerman asked about banners and waving signs. Mr. Cupp said staff is considering banning fluttering signs. The Council should expect a discussion on sign regulations at the next agenda.

Arthur LeBaron thanked the Council members who assisted with the consultant selection for the Transportation Master Plan. He reported meeting with the Ballards and the Humphries regarding the 100 South project and believes they have reached a good understanding on ways the City can help them. He encouraged Council members to also speak with them. He noted that on SR-9 at 1150 West and westbound 700 West, UDOT has painted cross-hatched lines to prevent vehicles from pulling forward to turn right. He hopes the shoulder can eventually be converted into a right-turn lane.

Hayden Roberts reported that crack sealing has finished. They are identifying some areas where the asphalt needs to be torn out and redone.

Weston Walker reported that MS4 contractor training will be held on June 20th at St. George City Hall. He also noted that the State was in town last week conducting inspections on properties that abut the Virgin River. Additionally, construction plans have been approved for Culver’s, Silverwood Phase 2, and a couple of industrial lots.

Mike Vercimak stated they have had five to six projects request punch lists and they have held multiple preconstruction meetings.

Mike Johns stated that contractors are still installing distribution lines on Old Highway 91. He noted that the contractor will also be working at the Sky Mountain substation for some time and that he will provide the Council with the project timeline. He also introduced Alex Farnsworth as the new electrical engineer for their department.

Kory Wright reported that crews are pouring the floor at the Sky Ranch tank. The Dixie Springs well is nearly complete, with only the electrical work remaining. Work at the Sky Ranch and Goulds Wash wells has paused until some change orders are completed. He also noted that walls for the irrigation ponds are being poured two to three times per week, with about thirty of the eighty sections finished so far. Funding for the second phase of the water project has been approved, and he expects to receive it soon. The bids received a year ago are still holding, so no change orders are needed. Additionally, the department plans to replace over 1,000 meters with 4G meters over the next few months, with the goal of upgrading the entire city within two years.

Paige Chapman stated the budget work meeting is scheduled for March 30th @ the Hurricane City Storm Courts. She has sent out a calendar invitation to the Council.

Sel Lovell announced they hired Matthew Kuhlman for the golf maintenance part time position, but the court clerk, parks maintenance, and a few recreation assistant positions are still open. URS is doing a new roll out on their system tomorrow.

Larry Palmer reported that since the last meeting, thirty-one single-family home permits and two commercial permits have been submitted. He also reviewed the 2025 year-end report, noting permit activity for 345 single-family homes, 125 townhome units, 54 condo units, 31 commercial buildings, 16 apartment units, and 36 accessory dwelling units.

Chief Yates announced that the missing person from last week has been located and is safe. He reported a retail theft where a suspect stole a concrete saw and fled out the back door. Using license plate readers, officers identified the vehicle's make and model. The suspect is from out of state, and a warrant has been issued for their arrest. He noted that these readers are proving crucial for arrests statewide. He also reported an overdose death at a local motel, likely involving fentanyl. The drug task force is working to track down the dealers. Officers responded to a disorderly female at the Community Center who displayed a knife; she was taken into custody, and it was determined she needed mental health assistance, which she received. Additionally, a warrant was obtained for a fraud suspect who stole over \$70,000 from an elderly citizen, with efforts underway to bring them in. Officers will assist with traffic and other needs at Matt's Off Recovery Games. On city services, over 1,300 dog licenses have been purchased, with more still needed. Alcohol compliance checks were completed with no sales. He praised three stores that proactively reported the attempts.

Darren Barney stated the pickleball courts are progressing on schedule. Crews have completed storm drain repairs at Three Falls Park, coming in under budget, which allowed them to also fix the surrounding sidewalks. They are currently working on new roofs for the restroom at Pioneer Park, a museum display building, and a restroom at the ball fields. Councilman Prete

asked about recent vandalism. Mr. Barney noted it occurs almost daily and suggested offering a reward for citizens who report the perpetrators. Chief Yates added that security cameras have been very effective and recommended investing in full-time, visible cameras.

Kaden DeMille mentioned he is experiencing technical difficulties setting up tonight's online meeting but is working to resolve them. He reported that the pool bond bidding resulted in a 3.5% interest rate, which was well-timed as rates have already risen. The bond closing is scheduled for next week.

Mayor Fawcett explained that Dayton Hall reviewed the code to compare the various City boards and created a spreadsheet showing the differences. He will share it with the Council for review and comments, aiming to make the boards consistent. He also met with staff to discuss the vacation rental process. Some changes will be coming to the Council, including possibly issuing a fine or similar penalty instead of revoking a license. Additionally, he met with the Spilsburys regarding Neighborhood Six. They are exploring options to get the development started and are seeking full preliminary plat approval. Details are being finalized and will be brought back to the Council.

Dave Imlay stated the City had the ribbon cutting for the Storm Courts today. It was very successful and will be a great asset to the city.

Lynn Excell mentioned he met with Planning Director Gary Cupp and feels he has a strong handle on operations, including code enforcement. Mayor Fawcett added that he would like to review the nuisance code with the Council.

6:00 p.m. - Call to Order –

Mayor Fawcett welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

Prayer: Pastor Kevin Brownlee

Pledge: Kaden DeMille

Declaration of any conflicts of interest

None declared.

Minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting for February 19, 2026

Dave Imlay motioned to approve the February 19, 2026, minutes as written. Seconded by Lynn Excell. Motion carried unanimously.

Swearing in of Officer Ethan Rowell

Chief Yates introduced Officer Ethan Rowell, who began in October and just graduated from the POST Academy last week. Raised in Fillmore, he has served in the National Guard since 2023. Officer Rowell was then sworn in by City Recorder Cindy Beteag.

Introduction of the 2026 Hurricane City Royalty and presentation of the 2025 scholarships - Dena Humphries

Dena Humphries thanked her assistant, Kylie Stokes, for her support. She then introduced Lizzy Scholzen as Miss Hurricane, Ann Metcalf as 1st Attendant, Ava Stewart as 2nd Attendant, and Elody Heaton as Miss Congeniality, noting that the pageant is also a scholarship program. The new royalty will serve the City for the coming year.

She also recognized the previous year's royalty, thanking them for their service and introducing them as they received their scholarships. Mayor Fawcett presented a check and expressed his appreciation for their contributions.

Presentation and update on the SR-9 Zion Canyon Technology project

John Kissinger, the lead designer, introduced himself and Nancy Cozzens and Ava Pecora. He explained this is an important communications project that extends fiber through Zion National Park. He showed a map of the project area. The design is now complete. Ms. Cozzens showed a video of the proposed project where they will install over 50 feet of fiber optic lines. She passed out information on how to contact them. She explained they will start construction this spring and they will send updates weekly. Mr. Kissinger continued by stating the advertisement for the project will be released next week and it must be completed by December 2026.

Public Forum – Comments From Public

No comments.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Consideration and possible approval of Resolution 2026-15 Approving an increase in Water Rates - Kory Wright

Kory Wright explained that the Water District will raise the water rate by 11 cents per thousand gallons on July 1st for both potable and secondary water. Staff presented a corresponding 11 cent increase in the City's rates to the Water Board, which recommended the increase but declined to recommend the automatic 2% annual increase, noting a need to review numbers to see if a larger increase is necessary. This increase will apply citywide, not just in District-served areas. Councilwoman Werrett noted that rates have increased about 2% annually over the past five years, totaling roughly 10%, and said the Water Board wanted more information on why yearly increases are needed. Mayor Fawcett highlighted concerns about aging infrastructure in the Dixie Springs area, stating that a 2% increase wouldn't cover the replacement costs. Mr. Wright said the numbers are nearly ready and he hopes to present them at the Water Board's next meeting. He noted that over \$110,000 was spent on repairs in that area last year, with some damages recurring, and that transmission lines are the biggest concern. Councilman Ellerman preferred smaller annual increases rather than a large lump sum. Mayor Fawcett added that while past increases have helped stay ahead, they aren't enough for the needed improvements, so a thorough review is necessary. Councilman Imlay pointed out that if the City does not approve the increase, the Water Department would have to cover the District's rate increase.

Dave Imlay motioned to approve Resolution 2026-15 Approving an increase in Water Rates. Seconded by Amy Werrett. It was clarified that the increase would not include a 2% annual increase. Motion carried unanimously by a roll call vote.

2. Consideration and possible approval of awarding the consultant selection for the Transportation Master Plan Update - Arthur LeBaron

Arthur LeBaron explained that the Transportation Master Plan update is due, noting it hasn't been fully updated since 2019, aside from a 2021 effort to integrate the Active Transportation Plan. The update was advertised after securing a grant from Dixie MPO, and he has applied for another grant, which is still pending. He said the City received strong proposals, making selection difficult. Avenue Consultants scored the highest, evaluated by seven staff and Council members, and are the recommended firm. The update will evaluate crossroad sections, update the traffic model, review signal placement, and include a major focus on pavement management. The project is expected to take about a year. Councilman Imlay asked about funding and pricing. Mr. LeBaron explained that City procurement code requires professional services to be selected based on qualifications first, with pricing negotiated afterward. The City has \$100,000 budgeted, a \$30,000 grant, and he has requested an additional \$100,000 from UDOT, which should cover the project. He is also requesting another \$100,000 in next year's budget as a backup in case the grant is not awarded.

Lynn Excell motioned to award the consultant selection to Avenue Consultants for the Transportation Master Plan Update. Seconded by Drew Ellerman. Motion carried unanimously by a roll call vote.

3. Mayor, Council, and staff reports

None

4. Closed Meeting held pursuant to Utah Code section 52-4-205, upon request

Drew Ellerman motioned to go into a closed session at 6:57 p.m. to discuss pending litigation, purchase of real property, and a proposed development agreement. Seconded by Joseph Prete. Motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment: Joseph Prete motioned to go out of a closed session and adjourn at 8:00 p.m. Seconded by Drew Ellerman. Motion carried unanimously.