

**SANTA CLARA CITY COUNCIL
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22, 2026
MEETING MINUTES**

THE CITY COUNCIL FOR SANTA CLARA CITY, WASHINGTON, UTAH, met for a Regular Meeting on Wednesday, April 22, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers located at 2603 Santa Clara Drive, Santa Clara, Utah. The meeting will be broadcasted on our city website at <https://santaclarautah.gov>.

Present: Mayor Jarett Waite
Councilman Justin Caplin
Councilwoman Janene Burton (zoom)
Councilwoman Christa Hinton
Councilwoman Dave Pond
Councilman Mark Hendrickson

Staff Present: Brock Jacobsen, City Manager
Selena Nez, City Recorder
Matt Ence, City Attorney
Jim McNulty, Planning Director
Cody Mitchell, Building Official
Dan Cazier, Fire Chief
Casey Stratton, Public Works Director
Gary Hall, Power Director
Ryan VonCannon, Parks Director
Lance Haynie, Government Affairs Director
Rich Rogers, Police Captain

1. Call to Order

Mayor Jarett Waite called the regular scheduled meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. The mayor welcomed everyone and noted that a full council was present: Councilman Justin Caplin, Councilwoman Janene Burton via Zoom, Councilwoman Christa Hinton, Councilman Dave Pond, and Councilman Mark Hendrickson.

2. Opening Ceremony

Pledge of Allegiance: Councilman Hendrickson

Opening Comments: Rabbi Helene Ainbinder, Beit Chaverim Jewish Community of Greater Zion

3. Conflicts and Disclosures

No other conflicts were disclosed by council members.

4. Working Agenda

A. Public Hearing(s) 6:00 pm

- 1. Public Hearing is to receive public comments regarding approval of a Resolution on the City Council's proposed to Impose an Emergency Services Sales and Use Tax pursuant to Utah Code § 59-12-2402. The proposed emergency services sale and use tax would be imposed at a rate of .33 percent.**

Prior to opening the public hearing, Government Affairs Director Lance Haynie presented a data overview that had been reviewed at a prior work meeting. The presentation addressed general fund financial performance, noting that the city has consistently drawn from fund balance, making departmental growth difficult. Tax revenue analysis showed that approximately 48 percent of the general fund is derived from taxes, with property and sales tax comprising the largest share.

Haynie presented projections for the proposed 0.33 percent tax rate, which was estimated to generate approximately \$330,000 in the first year roughly equivalent to the cost of three firefighters. A comparison to a full 1 percent rate, which would generate approximately \$1.2 million, was also presented. Data on concurrent fire and EMS calls showed the department responds to overlapping calls approximately 10 percent of the

time, with 22 such occurrences in the prior month alone. Call volume overall has trended upward, driven by new development including the Black Desert resort and a new retirement facility.

A trade-area analysis using aggregated user location data was also presented, showing that the majority of sales tax revenue in Santa Clara originates from residents of St. George (41 percent of all trade area visitors) and Ivins (21.3 percent), with Santa Clara residents representing a minority of shoppers at each commercial node. Councilman Caplin asked for clarification on the methodology, and Haynie confirmed the data was derived from mobile device location aggregation rather than credit card transactions.

The Mayor opened the public hearing at approximately 6:17 PM. Rick Rosenberg, a Santa Clara resident and member of the public safety committee, addressed the Council in full support of the proposed 0.33 percent rate, citing the demonstrated need within the fire department. He added a request that the Council continue to pursue funding from Washington County, expressing the view that western county residents were effectively subsidizing emergency services without adequate county contribution.

No additional public comments were received, and the public hearing was closed.

B. Consent Agenda

1. Approval of Minutes and Claims:
 - April 8, 2026, City Council Work and Regular Meeting
 - Claims through April 22, 2026

2. Calendar of Events:
 - May 13, 2026, City Council Work and Regular Meeting
 - May 25, 2026, Memorial Day (Offices Closed)
 - May 27, 2026, City Council Work and Regular Meeting

Motion: Councilwoman Hinton moved to APPROVE the consent agenda as presented. Councilman Caplin seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Hendrickson - Aye, Pond - Aye, Hinton - Aye, Burton - Aye and Caplin - Aye. Motion passed unanimously.

C. General Business

1. Discussion and action to consider a Proclamation proclaiming April 2026 as Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Presented by Brennen Dougherty with Southwest Forensic Nursing & Healthcare.

A representative from Southwest Forensic Nursing and Healthcare, family nurse practitioner Naomi, introduced her organization as a nonprofit providing 24/7, 365-day care to survivors of sexual and domestic violence in Iron and Washington Counties at no cost to patients. She expressed appreciation for the support of first responders and community partners, particularly the Dove Center.

Mayor Waite read the proclamation into the record, recognizing the prevalence of sexual violence in Utah, the need for prevention and survivor support, and honoring the work of forensic nurses and advocates. Councilwoman Hinton thanked the presenter for the organization's work in the community.

Motion: Councilwoman Hinton moved to APPROVE the Proclamation proclaiming April 2026 as Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Councilman Hendrickson seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Hendrickson - Aye, Pond - Aye, Hinton - Aye, Burton - Aye and Caplin - Aye. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Discussion and action to consider approval to Impose an Emergency Services Sales and Use Tax pursuant to Utah Code § 59-12-2402 a rate of 0.33 percent and approve Resolution No. 2026-11R. Presented by Brock Jacobsen, City Manager.

Following the close of the public hearing, the Council moved directly to deliberation on this item. The discussion was substantive and at times spirited, reflecting genuine disagreement about fiscal approach while sharing a common foundation of support for public safety.

Mayor Waite offered two observations from personal experience: that sales tax discrepancies of this scale are rarely noticed by consumers, and that the quality of fire service in Santa Clara has improved markedly over his ten years on the Council. He also referenced a constituent who had to wait over 20 minutes for a Gold Cross ambulance, underscoring the risk of relying on mutual aid.

Councilman Pond reported that every resident he had spoken with supported the measure once it was explained to them. Councilman Hendrickson noted that one resident initially opposed it, but changed her position after learning that the majority of the tax burden would fall on non-residents shopping in Santa Clara rather than on city residents directly. He also expressed support for eventually pursuing the full 1 percent. Councilwoman Hinton noted that she had testified before a legislative committee on behalf of this bill and emphasized that, unlike a property tax increase which would be borne entirely by Santa Clara residents, this mechanism allows the city to capture revenue from the broader visitor and regional population.

Councilman Caplin stated he remained personally inclined against tax increases but acknowledged that most residents he spoke with were not opposed. He raised several points of hesitation: the growing commercial base could increase sales tax revenue without this measure; the county should be pressed harder for financial contributions; and the possibility of reducing the geographic service area citing a letter from Gunlock might yield cost savings. These arguments generated significant pushback from other Council members.

Fire Chief Dan Cazier clarified that regardless of any transport license boundaries, the department would continue to respond to calls in surrounding unincorporated areas due to mutual aid obligations and state licensing requirements. He noted the Gunlock letter contained inaccuracies. Government Affairs Director Lance Haynie reinforced that removing areas from the EMS transport license would not reduce operational responses, only the ability to bill for transport, meaning the city would still bear costs without recovering revenue.

City Manager Brock Jacobsen noted that the proposed budget as presented draws approximately \$360,000 from fund balance, and that adoption of the 0.33 percent tax at \$330,000 in projected first-year revenue would bring the city nearly to a balanced budget. He confirmed the tax would not increase expenditures, only add a dedicated revenue stream, and that it does not apply to groceries or fuel. He also noted the tax carries a ten-year sunset and would require reauthorization.

Councilwoman Burton, attending remotely, expressed appreciation for the range of perspectives and indicated she was leaning toward supporting the measure.

Motion: Councilman Pond moved to APPROVE to Impose an Emergency Services Sales and Use Tax pursuant to Utah Code § 59-12-2402 a rate of 0.33 percent and approve Resolution No. 2026-11R. Councilman Hendrickson seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Hendrickson - Aye, Pond - Aye, Hinton - Aye, Burton - Aye and Caplin - Nay. Motion carried 4-1.

3. Discussion and action to consider approval to add the Emergency Services Sales and Use Tax pursuant to Utah Code to the November Ballot and approve Resolution No. 2026-12R. Presented by Brock Jacobsen, City Manager.

City Manager Jacobsen introduced this item as an opportunity to give residents a voice on whether to authorize the tax at the maximum statutory rate of 1 percent, which would generate approximately \$1.2 million annually, by placing the question on the November 2026 ballot. He noted the 0.33 percent already approved by the Council could remain in place while the larger question is decided by voters.

Councilman Hendrickson and Councilwoman Hinton expressed strong support for presenting the full 1 percent to voters, with Hinton noting that residents should be allowed to engage with the question directly in an election. Councilman Caplin stated he was willing to support placing the measure on the ballot but would have preferred a lower percentage, continuing to express concern that if the 1 percent passed and Ivins City did not similarly increase its contribution, the additional revenue would effectively offset general fund expenditures rather than directly enhancing fire and EMS capacity. Jacobsen acknowledged that concern but

explained that EMS tax revenue is legally restricted to fire and EMS purposes, and that even where it offsets existing allocations, it frees other funds for deferred equipment, staffing, and capital needs within the department.

Councilman Pond noted that a fund balance could be built up for future apparatus purchases and station construction and read from the Utah Code to confirm that if the ballot measure passed and later failed renewal after ten years, the Council could still reauthorize the 0.33 percent rate independently. Councilwoman Burton, participating remotely, said she supported letting the question go to voters and acknowledged Councilman Caplin's concerns as valid points of debate. The Mayor noted that if the 1 percent failed at the ballot, the law did not appear to prohibit placing a revised lower rate before voters at a future election.

Councilman Hendrickson made a motion at the full 1 percent rate, which was amended to include a precise statutory reference.

Motion: Councilman Hendrickson moved to APPROVE to add the Emergency Services Sales and Use Tax pursuant to Utah Code to the November Ballot and approve Resolution No. 2026-12R. Councilwoman Hinton seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Hendrickson - Aye, Pond - Aye, Hinton - Aye, Burton - Aye and Caplin - Aye. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Discussion and action to consider approval to Adopt the Restated Public Safety Agreement with Ivins City. Presented by Brock Jacobsen, City Manager.

City Manager Jacobsen presented the restated agreement, which consolidates two previously separate agreements, the combined police services agreement from July 2012 and the fire and EMS agreement from January 2018, into a single, unified document. The work was the product of an extended collaborative process involving the Public Safety Work Group, representatives from both city councils, and department heads.

Among the key changes Jacobsen highlighted: the new agreement is a six-year term, replacing the prior structure that, despite nominally being a long-term agreement, created annual anxiety among staff about its continuity. Cost allocation has been revised from a utility-connection and population basis to a weighted formula combining population (at 67 percent) and call volume by origin (at 33 percent), smoothed over a five-year rolling average to avoid large single-year swings. The formula is further capped so that any change in cost allocation between the cities cannot exceed 1 percent per year. Population figures will be drawn from the State Tax Commission.

Budget increases are now formally constrained to the prior year's CPI index plus the percentage population increase from the Tax Commission. Any increase above that threshold requires approval from both city councils through the work group process. Fixed facility costs, buildings, utilities, furnishings are borne solely by the city in which the facility is located and are excluded from the shared cost pool. Grants follow the standard cost allocation formula, with the exception of EMS tax revenue, which stays with the municipality that enacted it.

The agreement establishes formal meeting schedules for the Public Safety Work Group, including budget-season meetings in February and April, and introduces an annual joint meeting of both city councils and mayors each October, designed as a department highlight and celebration rather than a policy session, rotating between host cities. The termination provisions were also strengthened, and any departing party must offer the other city an opportunity to maintain the agreement or individual service components.

Jacobsen noted that when Ivins City adopted the agreement the prior week, it passed 5–0 and included one substantive change: a request that an agenda be distributed to all council members of both cities at least three business days before each work group meeting. Councilman Pond suggested aligning this with Utah's standard 24-hour public meeting notice requirement for consistency. That modification was accepted and incorporated into the motion. City Attorney Matt Ence confirmed he had reviewed the agreement and was comfortable with its final form.

Councilman Pond reflected on the collegial spirit of the work group process, noting that counterparts from Ivins, including Councilmen Hurt and Scott and Mayor Smith demonstrated a genuine desire to remain together and had engaged in good-faith give-and-take throughout. Councilwoman Hinton acknowledged the significant work done by prior work group participants before her tenure. Fire Chief Cazier expressed

gratitude on behalf of his department, noting that moving from a one-year to a six-year agreement directly addresses one of his long-standing recruitment challenges.

Motion: Councilwoman Hinton moved to APPROVE to Adopt the Restated Public Safety Agreement with Ivins City. Councilman Pond seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Hendrickson - Aye, Pond - Aye, Hinton - Aye, Burton - Aye and Caplin - Aye. Motion passed unanimously.

5. Reports

A. Mayor / Council Reports

Staff Reports

Various department heads provided updates:

Government Affairs Director Lance Haynie reported:

- Indicated he has nothing further to add beyond what had already been discussed

Police Captain, Rich Rogers reported:

- Provided an update on the department's new traffic counting device (JMAT unit), explained the device can identify vehicle types, speed, traffic volume and time of day patterns

Parks Director, Ryan VonCannon reported:

- Announced that a recently vacated position has been filled, new hire Porter Hall

Power Director, Gary Hall reported:

- Provided an update on the generator repair project
- Noted radiators have been moved and the City is awaiting pipe fitters for reconnection
- Stated a test run will occur prior to the summer run season
- Reported four City employees are assisting Washington City with transmission line work
- Noted this provides valuable field experience for apprentices
- Announced the City received the RP3 (Reliable Public Power Provider) designation for the next three years
- Reported strong results from the 2025 reliability benchmarking report

Public Works Director, Casey Stratton reported:

- Announced crack sealing will conclude the following week
- Reported slurry seal is scheduled to begin the third week of May
- Noted the southern end of Santa Clara Parkway was temporarily closed for utility tie-ins, stated the roadway was expected to reopen the following day
- Reported a planned lane shift on Rachel Drive for asphalt patching

Fire Chief, Dan Cazier reported:

- Just wanted to express his appreciation to council
- Notes they hired some seasonal employees
- Announced hiring 4 relatively newer seasonal employees
- Ivin's City has decided to remodel and add on to station 32 on Center Street

Building Official, Cody Mitchell reported:

- Reported 73 single-family homes and townhomes have been permitted
- Noted two applications are under plan review
- Reported seven permits are awaiting payment
- Announced upcoming City Hall facility projects: both projects are anticipated for mid-May
 - Parking lot crack seal, slurry seal and re-stripping
 - Kitchen flooring replacement

Planning Director, Jim McNulty reported:

- No report

City Manager, Brock Jacobsen reported:

- Attended the Utah City Managers Association conference
- Noted keynote sessions focused on conflict competence and difficult conversations
- Indicated interest in incorporating onboarding materials for newly elected officials

Animal Services Update:

- Reported current contribution to animal control is approximately \$22,000 annually
- Explained the agreement originated around 2014–2015 with Ivins under a no-kill philosophy
- Noted Ivins is requesting an increase to approximately \$90,000
- Stated this is based on Santa Clara accounting for about 33% of shelter animals
- Announced scheduled tour and meeting:
 - Santa Clara facility at 3:00 PM
 - Ivins Animal Shelter at 3:30 PM
 - Public Safety Work Session meeting at 4:00 PM at Ivins City Hall

Additional Meeting Notice:

- Announced a special meeting scheduled for Monday, April 27 at 5:00 PM
- Stated the purpose is to consider a moratorium ordinance on hillside and sensitive area development

Mayor / Council Reports

Councilman Justin Caplin reported attending the Patriots Day event, which he characterized as excellent, and noted his attendance at the UAMPS Toolkit Conference and an upcoming league conference. He also reported meeting with Public Works Director Stratton regarding water issues.

Councilwoman Janene Burton expressed her enjoyment of participation on the 250th Anniversary Committee and noted she had missed the Patriots Day event due to a bobcat that had been roaming her neighborhood and had taken a neighbor's cat. She provided an update on a youth council initiative involving a pet wall of fame, the proceeds of which were intended to benefit the animal shelter and a police K-9 training program. She offered a personal reflection on the difficulty of grief following the passing of her son.

Councilwoman Christa Hinton reported attending the Patriots Day celebration, the Strong Towns breakfast featuring a discussion with the author of Strong Towns moderated by St. George council members Larkin and Tanner, the UAMPS Toolkit meeting, the Canyon to Canyon mural grand opening in St. George, and a Virgin River Land Trust community meeting at which Santa Clara's work in the lava field was highlighted. She also noted the upcoming Southern Utah caucus at the league conference, which she encouraged all council members to attend given its anticipated focus on water issues.

Councilman Dave Pond reported attending the Liberty Gala dinner presented by United We Pledge, the Patriots Day event where he encountered Ivins Councilman Hurt, who expressed admiration for the event and a Solid Waste District board meeting. He noted that the district's semi-annual hazardous waste drop-off event saves an estimated \$20,000 to \$25,000 in disposal costs and reported on a new battery recycling agreement with a Salt Lake City facility that provides packing materials at no cost and helps reduce fire risks in trucks and at the landfill.

Councilman Mark Hendrickson reported attending the UAMPS Toolkit Conference, the Patriots Day event, the Dove Center Gala noting that the Dove Center provided approximately 36,000 services in the county last year across domestic violence situations while operating with only 36 beds, and is raising funds to build a new 100-bed facility and announced that the first CARES community event, associated with Governor Cox's foster care initiative championed by Abby Cox, would be held on May 14 at 7:00 PM at City Hall.

Mayor Waite reported that the Patriots Day celebration was outstanding, that he had spoken at the Virgin River Land Trust annual meeting where Santa Clara's lava field was featured prominently in the organization's annual report, that he had attended a DTEC meeting, and that he had found a recent discussion on nuclear energy at the UAMPS Municipal Toolkit encouraging with respect to its potential future role in Utah's energy mix.

6. Closed Meeting Session

Mayor Waite confirmed a closed meeting session at 8:16 pm with taking a quick break before going into the closed meeting.

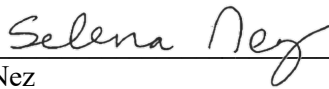
Motion: Councilman Pond moved to go into Closed Meeting Session to Discuss Imminent Litigation and real property values. Councilwoman Hinton seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Hendrickson - Aye, Pond - Aye, Hinton - Aye, Burton - Aye and Caplin - Aye. Motion passed unanimously.

The City Council was in Closed Session from 8:26 p.m. to 8:46 p.m.

7. Adjournment

Motion: Councilman Caplin moved to adjourn. Councilman Pond seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

The City Council meeting was adjourned at 8:46 p.m.



Selena Nez
City Recorder

Approved: _____ May 27, 2026