

**SANTA CLARA CITY COUNCIL  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 2026  
MEETING MINUTES**

THE CITY COUNCIL FOR SANTA CLARA CITY, WASHINGTON, UTAH, met for a Regular Meeting on Wednesday, May 13, 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  
Councilwoman Christa Hinton  
Councilman Mark Hendrickson

Excused: Councilman Dave Pond

Staff Present: Selena Nez, City Recorder  
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

Others Present: Theresa Fifth  
Steven Palmer

**1. Call to Order**

Mayor Jarett Waite called the regular scheduled meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. The mayor welcomed everyone and noted that a full council was present: Councilman Justin Caplin, Councilwoman Janene Burton, Councilwoman Christa Hinton and Councilman Mark Hendrickson. Councilman Dave Pond was excused, as he was out of town with family.

**2. Opening Ceremony**

Pledge of Allegiance: Councilman Caplin

Opening Comments: Councilman Caplin

**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 to receive public comments regarding the FY2026-2027 Tentative Budget**

Lance Haynie, Government Affairs Director, presented an interactive budget overview using a web-based visualization tool. He noted that since the Council's prior budget review, very little had changed, with the most significant update being the inclusion of the newly passed EMS tax in the budget figures.

Haynie walked through all major funds at a high level. The general fund grew from \$10 million to \$12 million, a 15 percent increase, driven primarily by the addition of three new fire department hires funded through the EMS tax. On the revenue side, a 17 percent increase resulted in a 75 percent reduction in the fund balance transfer, dropping from \$241,000 to \$59,000. The general impact fee fund remained largely

consistent, with parks and trails expenditures elevated due to planned projects including a columbarium, Tobler Park splash pad, and batting cages. The capital projects fund included a fire training facility update and parks expenditures totaling \$378,000. The water fund saw a modest decrease, while the sewer fund's operating expenses declined 19 percent. The electric fund, the city's largest enterprise fund, grew approximately 10 percent on both the revenue and expense sides. The storm water fund saw notable increases in both operating and non-operating expenses.

Councilman Caplin asked whether the interactive budget tool could be made publicly available. Haynie confirmed it could be published to the city website as an external link, giving residents the same interactive view presented to the Council. Mayor Waite and the Council expressed enthusiasm for the transparency this would provide and directed staff to publish it.

The public hearing was opened at 6:19 PM. No members of the public came forward to comment. The public hearing was closed.

## **B. Consent Agenda**

1. Approval of Minutes and Claims:
  - Claims through May 13, 2026
2. Calendar of Events:
  - May 25, 2026, Memorial Day (Offices Closed)
  - May 27, 2026, City Council Work and Regular Meeting
  - June 10, 2026, City Council Work and Regular Meeting

*Motion: Councilwoman Hinton moved to APPROVE the consent agenda as presented. Councilman Hendrickson 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 adoption of the FY2026-2027 Tentative Budget. Presented by Lance Haynie, Government Affairs Director.**

Mayor Waite noted that the budget had been presented during the public hearing earlier in the meeting and invited any further questions or discussion from the Council. No additional questions were raised, and Mayor Waite called for a motion.

*Motion: Councilman Hendrickson moved to APPROVED to adopt the FY2026-2027 Tentative Budget. Councilwoman Hinton 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 a donation to Snow Canyon High School Grad Night. Presented by the Grad Night Committee.**

Mayor Waite introduced the item and invited the committee representative to come forward. Theresa Fife, a Santa Clara resident living in Santa Clara, addressed the Council on behalf of the Snow Canyon High School Grad Night fundraising committee. Mrs. Fife explained that Grad Night is an annual event held the evening of graduation, running from 9:00 PM to 3:00 AM at a local rink. She described the event as a large, organized celebration designed to provide graduating seniors with a safe and structured place to gather and celebrate together, noting the theme for this year's event is a beach Hawaiian theme.

Ms. Fife stated that the committee was requesting a \$1,000 donation. She explained the intended use of the funds: a school counselor would individually reach out to every fee-waiver student to ask if they wished to attend, and donations would be used to cover the entrance fees for those students who lacked the financial means to pay. Any remaining funds would go toward covering costs associated with the event, including the venue rental, entertainment she noted a hypnotist was scheduled to appear at 2:00 AM and other event expenses.

Mayor Waite noted that the city had donated \$1,000 in prior years, and Mrs. Fife confirmed that she had appeared before the Council two years earlier with the same request. Mayor Waite confirmed that the donation comes from a dedicated budget line item set aside annually for donations and invited any further questions. None were raised.

*Motion: Councilman Henrickson moved to APPROVE a donation to Snow Canyon High School Grad Night of \$1,000.00. Councilwoman Hinton seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Hendrickson - Aye, Pond - Aye, Hinton - Aye, Burton - Aye and Caplin - Aye. Motion passed unanimously.*

### **3. Audit Presentation. Presented by Steven Palmer, Hinton Burdick.**

Mayor Waite introduced Steven Palmer, who delivered the audit presentation on behalf of the firm. Mr. Palmer opened by noting that the firm's name had changed: effective January 1st of the current year, Hinton Burdick merged with Squire. He assured the Council that all partners and staff came over in the merger and that the level of service and personnel the city had previously worked with would remain unchanged.

Mr. Palmer stated that the city passed its audit with no problems and proceeded to explain the three reports issued as part of the engagement. The first and most significant report is the independent auditor's report, in which the firm expresses its opinion on the city's financial statements. He was pleased to report that after completing all auditing procedures, the firm issued an unmodified opinion a clean opinion meaning that, in the firm's professional judgment, the financial statements were materially correct.

The second report covers internal control over financial reporting and compliance. Mr. Palmer noted the two most common categories of finding that can be communicated in such a report are material weaknesses and significant deficiencies, and he was pleased to report that nothing came to the firm's attention requiring communication in either of those categories.

The third report is one required specifically by the State of Utah, through which the state auditor's office provides an audit program of items to be checked. Again, Mr. Palmer reported that nothing was noted in that review requiring communication to the Council.

Mr. Palmer then walked the Council through the city's financial position at a high level. He noted that the city's total equity assets minus liabilities stood at nearly \$68,000,000 at the close of the fiscal year, and that the net position had increased by just over \$9,000,000 during fiscal year 2025, which he characterized as a positive indicator of improving financial health. He noted that governmental activities, primarily the general fund, saw net position increase by approximately \$4,000,000, while business-type activities the utility funds increased by a little over \$5,000,000.

Mr. Palmer reviewed five-year trend charts for several funds. He observed that the general fund had been very consistent over the prior five years in terms of assets, equity, liabilities, and cash, with revenues maintaining a healthy margin above expenses in fiscal year 2025. The water fund showed healthy cash growth in fiscal year 2025, though most of the cash was restricted, primarily for debt service and impact fees, and operating revenues and expenses were close to breakeven. The sewer fund trend was reviewed similarly. The electric fund was also near breakeven on operating revenues and expenses, and all \$3,700,000 of cash in the electric fund was restricted at the close of the fiscal year.

Mr. Palmer drew the Council's attention to the storm water fund, noting that for fiscal year 2025, it experienced a net operating loss, with operating expenses exceeding operating revenues. While not by a large margin, he noted that this had been the case for a couple of consecutive years and was something to continue monitoring. He also noted that all cash within the storm water fund was restricted, with no unrestricted cash.

Mr. Palmer closed by expressing his gratitude to the city, the Council, and especially the city's employees for their cooperation and responsiveness throughout the audit process, acknowledging that audits place significant demands on staff. He invited the Council to reach out to him at any time throughout the year, not only at audit time, as a continuing resource.

Mayor Waite asked if there were any questions from the Council. None were raised. Mayor Waite remarked that the Council was very pleased to receive a clean report and recalled that there had been findings in prior years, stating that management was to be commended for the improvements made over time. Mr. Palmer echoed that sentiment, noting that the city's management had worked diligently to address prior findings.

## 5. Reports

### A. Mayor / Council Reports

**Councilman Justin Caplin** reported attending the city's Arbor Day celebration and the planting of the Liberty Tree as part of the America 250 committee activities. He also attended the Arbor Day event in St. George with his family, and suggested the city explore a similar community tree-planting program. He noted attending the America 250 quilt exhibition, a SAR and DAR youth pizza party, and most of a visit by Congresswoman Malloy, though he was occupied with a phone call for the substantive portion of her visit. He also attended sessions at the Utah League of Cities and Towns mid-year conference, including Councilwoman Hinton's affordable housing panel.

**Councilwoman Janene Burton** reported speaking at SUU's Veterans and Senior Conference on May 1. She announced the results of the city's royalty competition: Courtney Kendrick was named queen, Jenna Jensen first attendant, Tasia Bate second attendant, Anna Ents Miss Spirit, and Clara Frei Miss Congeniality. She noted attending the America 250 quilt and art exhibitions and praised both. She reported that the youth council held its year-end party at the Entrada pool notable as the filming location for High School Musical and that youth council members would be volunteering at the city cemetery on May 23 to place and later remove flags on veterans' graves.

**Councilwoman Christa Hinton** reported briefly joining the visit by Congresswoman Malloy and noted that the Congresswoman was engaged with city departments and impressed by the information shared. She attended Ivins' State of the City, where Mayor Smith highlighted the Santa Clara–Ivins public safety partnership as a model for delivering quality services at lower cost. She reported on the America 250 Quilt Show, which drew over 200 attendees during the day, followed by a well-attended lecture by Vince Brown on the Civil War. She noted upcoming America 250 events: a Liberty Village discussion lecture on Wednesday, June 3, and Movie in the Park featuring Johnny Tremain on Saturday, June 6 at 8:00 PM. She attended the Utah League of Cities and Towns mid-year conference, where she was asked to present on the city's America 250 activities and received significant interest from other municipalities afterward. She also moderated the creative land use solutions for affordable housing panel, noting interesting ideas were presented. She attended a tour of the Santa Clara–Ivins animal shelter and a subsequent public safety work group meeting, and reported on her Utah Adventure Commission meeting, reminding the Council of the \$21–23 million in annual outdoor grants available and expressing willingness to advocate for any eligible city projects.

**Councilman Mark Hendrickson** echoed prior comments on the quilt exhibition and the America 250 events, noting that attendees at the League of Cities and Towns conference repeatedly remarked that Santa Clara was leading those efforts. He highlighted the affordable housing panel moderated by Councilwoman Hinton as particularly valuable and mentioned he was already pursuing follow-up work on the Flex Ready concept presented there. He reported attending the Washington County Flood Control Authority meeting, where the board is engaged in a comprehensive bylaws revision. He noted the significance of the city's administrative role over those funds, while also recognizing the strategic foresight of prior city leaders in forming those regional alliances. He acknowledged missing the Congresswoman Malloy visit due to travel.

**Mayor Waite** reported attending the Utah League of Cities and Towns conference, including the affordable housing session and an AI decision-making class. He summarized that the AI session offered both encouragement to use artificial intelligence for streamlining municipal processes and a caution about legal liability risks when AI is used in decision-making, given the difficulty of auditing its reasoning. He attended the public safety work group meeting on animal control, reporting that a proposed joint agreement with Ivins would cost the city approximately \$90,000 annually compared to the current expenditure of \$30,000–\$40,000. Staff are reviewing alternatives, including renegotiating rates and examining the subsidy currently extended to the county. He reported a breakfast meeting with the hospital president, at which he inquired about the hospital's property at Pioneer Parkway and Red Mountain. He was told the hospital, now at capacity, is considering spinning out services to that site, likely in the form of a clinic offering imaging and pediatrics, though no formal plans are set. He visited Uncle and Annie's, a business on Santa Clara Drive, and relayed a concern from the owner that road closure signs are sometimes placed too close to their parking lot entrance, occasionally blocking access, and asked staff to address signage placement with the responsible parties. He reported on the America 250 Liberty Tree planting and royalty pageant, the Washington County Mayors

Association meeting which centered on a discussion of the merits of a three-member county commission versus a five-member county council, with no formal action taken and a CIB funding training. He also attended a meet-and-greet at Black Desert with the Shivwits Band, where regional leaders gathered informally to build relationships. Finally, he reported attending a Canyon View neighborhood meeting where residents expressed concern about rats moving from city-owned lava lands into their backyards. He noted the matter was raised with staff and that while pest control remains the responsibility of individual property owners, the city will explore whether any action can be taken to address the source. Mayor Waite also informed the Council that he would be on vacation from May 24 through June 2 and that Councilman Pond would serve as Mayor Pro Tem during that period.

Councilwoman Burton added a note that the current week is Police Appreciation Week and encouraged recognition of the police department.

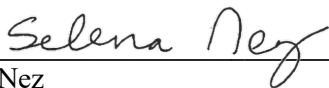
## 6. Closed Meeting Session

Mayor Waite confirmed no closed meeting session.

## 7. Adjournment

*Motion: Councilwoman Hinton moved to adjourn. Councilwoman Burton seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.*

The City Council meeting was adjourned at 6:49 p.m.



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Selena Nez  
City Recorder

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ May 27, 2026