

**ESCALANTE CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
MAY 19, 2026  
REGULAR MEETING/ELECTRONIC MEETING – 6:00 P.M.  
WORK MEETING - IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE REGULAR MEETING  
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 Sally Orme, Marlene Stowe, Ryan Cottam, City Attorney Barry Huntington and City Recorder Stephanie Steed. Council member Chad Lyman was excused.

Also present were Tara Woolsey, Brent Pickering, Wally Dodds, Richard Crawford, Victory Crawford and Callie Ward.

Ashley Coombs and Micheal joined electronically.

Mayor Torgersen led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

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

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF APRIL 21, 2026 MEETING**

Council member Orme moved to approve the minutes of the April 21, 2026 meeting as written. Council member Cottam seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council members Orme, Stowe and Cottam voting aye.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**WALLY DODDS**

Mr. Dodds said he is running for County Commissioner and wanted to introduce himself and ask the community about their support from the County and if there are any questions they may have.

**PLANNING AND ZONING ITEMS**

**PLANNING AND ZONING UPDATES**

There were no Planning and Zoning updates at this time.

**SCHEDULED ITEMS**

**APPOINT COUNCIL MEMBER**

Mayor Torgersen noted that Tara Woolsey was the sole applicant for the City Council vacancy and invited her to introduce herself and share her reasons for seeking the position. Ms. Woolsey said she loves this community, and that she wants to be a part of shaping it, keeping it what it is today. Council member Orme moved to appoint Tara Woolsey as the new City Council member. Council member Stowe seconded the motion. Motion carried with



**Council members Stowe, Cottam and Orme voting aye.** City Recorder Steed administered the Oath of Office to Ms. Woolsey.

### **2026-2027 TENTATIVE BUDGET**

City Recorder Steed explained the tentative budget and asked the Council if they had any questions. Council member Orme asked if the tentative budget accounted for the upcoming changes to employee benefits. City Recorder Steed confirmed that the budget includes all 401K adjustments and potential employee insurance costs. Council member Orme asked about the allocated funds regarding landfill maintenance, City Recorder Steed replied that \$25,000.00 has been set aside for that purpose. Council member Stowe questioned if there were provisions for Christmas lights, and City Recorder Steed noted a \$5,000.00 allocation. Council member Cottam expressed appreciation for City Recorder Steed's effort in preparing the budget. City Recorder Steed reminded the Council that as a tentative budget, adjustments can still be made during the Public Hearing prior to final adoption. **Council member Stowe moved to adopt the 2026-2027 Tentative Budget. Council member Cottam seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council member Orme, Stowe, Cottam and Woolsey voting aye.**

### **BILL WEPPNER - FIRE DEPARTMENT BATTERIES AND CHARGER FOR SCBA'S**

City Recorder Steed explained this item and said there are funds in the budget for it. **Council member Orme moved to purchase the batteries and charger for the Fire Department. Council member Stowe seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council members Woolsey, Cottam, Stowe and Orme voting aye.**

### **PURCHASE SKID STEER**

#### **PUBLIC WORKS EMPLOYEE BRENT PICKERING**

Mr. Pickering explained the options for a skid steer and said he would suggest the Case 370B for \$90,900.00. Mr. Pickering said they would also like to purchase a brushhog attachment for the skid steer, intended for mowing at the airport and in areas of town inaccessible to the street mower. City Recorder Steed asked how much the brushhog would cost, Mr. Pickering said approximately \$10,000.00. City Recorder Steed confirmed that the current budget can accommodate the skid steer purchase, but expressed uncertainty regarding available funds for the brushhog this fiscal year. Following a request for City Recorder Steed to review the budget, it was determined that the brushhog will be acquired during either the current or the subsequent budget year. **Council member Stowe moved to purchase the Case Skid Steer for \$90,900.00. Council member Orme seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council members Cottam, Stowe, Orme and Woolsey voting aye.**

### **EMPLOYEE INSURANCE BENEFITS**

The Council reviewed the insurance benefit options presented by City Recorder Steed. Council member Orme suggested a simplified \$500.00 flat incentive for those opting out of coverage instead of the current \$400.00 individual and family proposal. Mayor Torgersen explained that the County provides a \$900.00 family incentive and expressed that offering such an option encourages employees to use alternative insurance while saving the city money. Council member Orme asked if an \$800.00 monthly incentive would be more cost-effective than providing insurance, City Recorder Steed confirmed if employees received \$800.00 for opting out it would save the city money, noting that individual plans exceed \$1,200.00 per month. **Council member Orme moved to approve the updated insurance benefits for eligible**



employees, which covers 100% of the premium costs, and for those opting out of insurance, the city provides \$400.00 for individuals and \$400.00 for families (including spouse and/or dependents), totaling a maximum of \$800.00 in lieu of coverage. Council member Cottam seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council members Stowe, Woolsey, Orme and Cottam voting aye.

### **LANDFILL CONTRACT**

Council member Orme proposed establishing a 1099 contracted position to manage the landfill opening and closing. Council member Orme said with the Public Work Department back down to three employees, having a contracted position for the landfill would save the crew significant time. Council member Orme said the position would require a personal vehicle for a few hours a day, six days a week, and would report to Brent Pickering. Council member Stowe supported the idea as it would free up the current staff. Brent Pickering mentioned that last summer, the landfill saw no use during its four-hour Saturday opening. Council member Cottam emphasized the need for an organized approach to ensure materials are placed correctly. **Council member Orme moved to issue an RFP for the landfill contract. Council member Woolsey seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council members Stowe, Cottam, Woolsey, and Orme voting aye.**

### **DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE**

City Recorder Steed said the budget and financial reports are available for review.

City Recorder Steed said she will schedule the budget hearing for June 16, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

### **PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

#### **BRENT PICKERING**

Mr. Pickering reported issues with the sewer system, noting that paper towels and wipes are being flushed but are not flushable.

Mr. Pickering explained that water restrictions have been issued with no outside watering during the hours of 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

### **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

#### **BRENT PICKERING**

Mr. Pickering said maintenance on fire hydrants is ongoing by the Fire Department, though concerns have been raised about continuing these efforts during the current water restrictions. Mr. Pickering suggested that while the hydrants should be greased and tested for functionality, they should not be flushed to conserve water.

### **COUNCIL REPORTS**

#### **MAYOR MELANI TORGERSEN**

Mayor Torgersen reminded everyone of the annual Splash Pad Day June 5. Mayor Torgersen said there will be snow cones, popcorn, hotdogs and the Coalition will be giving out beach towels.

#### **COUNCIL MEMBER CHAD LYMAN**

Council member Lyman was not present at said meeting.



**COUNCIL MEMBER TARA WOOLSEY**

Council member Woolsey had nothing to report at this time.

**COUNCIL MEMBER RYAN COTTAM**

Council member Cottam informed the Council that the County crew is scheduled to return to the city for chip sealing operations on the remaining roads once their current projects in Tropic and at Hole in the Rock are concluded. Council member Cottam mentioned the cul-de-sac by the City Race Track, and Mayor Torgersen inquired about the road leading to the water tanks, which Council member Cottam confirmed both would be included. Public Works employee Brent Pickering stated he would be available to assist the County crew if needed.

**COUNCIL MEMBER MARLENE STOWE**

Council member Stowe reported on her attendance at the Utah League of Cities and Towns Conference, where she and Council member Cottam participated in a four-hour training session focused on conflict competence. Council member Stowe explained that while speaking with vendors, she identified a potential grant opportunity to acquire playground equipment for the old elementary school. Council member Stowe said she also received training regarding impact fees and housing. Council member Stowe said that the training was beneficial and would like to see other members attend in the future.

**COUNCIL MEMBER SALLY ORME**

Council member Orme had nothing to report at this time.

**UNPAID BILLS**

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

**Mayor Torgersen adjourned the meeting at 6:39 p.m.**

Mayor Torgersen called the work meeting to order at 6:48 p.m. in the Escalante City Council Chambers.

Present at said meeting were Mayor Torgersen, Council members Stowe, Cottam, Woolsey, Orme, City Attorney Huntington and City Recorder Steed. Council member Lyman was excused.

There was no one else present.

The work meeting was to work on Surplus Items and Ordinances.

The work meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

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Stephanie Steed, MMC, UCC  
City Recorder

Date minutes approved:





**Garfield Memorial Health Care Foundation**

200 North 400 East • PO Box 389 • Panguitch, Utah 84759 • (435) 676-8811

We are delighted to announce that *GMHCF (Garfield Memorial Health Care Foundation)* will be hosting our series of fundraisers again this year, and we would like to extend an invitation for your participation. We would like to say a huge **THANK YOU** for all your support throughout the years that has allowed us to do great things!

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## *Save the Date*

**GMHCF Bob Lowe Memorial Golf Tournament**

**June 19, 2026 - 9:30 am**

**Cove View Golf Course**

**Richfield, UT**

**GMHCF Dinner with Live & Silent Auctions**

**August, 13 2026 - 6:00 PM**

**Ebenezer's Barn & Grill**

**Bryce Canyon, UT**

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**SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR SPONSORSHIP PACKAGE DETAILS**

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### **Sponsorship Package \***

- ☐ **GOLD SPONSORSHIP (\$1,500):** Includes BOTH events with promotional advertisement at both: Golf foursome and lunch AND GMHCF Dinner - table for eight
- ☐ **SILVER SPONSORSHIP (\$750):** Includes your choice of ONE event with promotional advertisement at that event. (Please select ONE): Golf foursome and lunch OR GMHCF Dinner - table for eight
- ☐ **Other: GOLF FOURSOME AND LUNCH (\$300), SPONSOR A GOLF HOLE (\$100), FOUNDATION DINNER TABLE FOR 8 (\$320), FOUNDATION DINNER, PER PLATE (\$40 x \_\_\_\_\_ number of tickets)**

**If you selected "other" or "silver sponsorship", please indicate what you you'd like to include in your sponsorship:**



**ESCALANTE CITY  
ORDINANCE 2026-04**

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ESCALANTE ORDINANCE 8.04.230 SUPPLY  
WATER OUTSIDE MUNICIPAL LIMITS AND PROVIDING REPEALER WITHIN  
THE CITY OF ESCALANTE, STATE OF UTAH.**

**WHEREAS**, the City Council, as the governing body of the City of Escalante, State of Utah, specifically finds that it is in the best interest of the safety and welfare of the citizens of the City of Escalante to amend the following Ordinance; and

**WHEREAS**, The City Council and Mayor wish to adopt such an Ordinance.

**NOW THEREFORE**, be it ordained by the Council of the Escalante City, in the State of Utah, as follows:

**SECTION 1:        AMENDMENT** “8.04.230 Supply Outside Municipal Limits” of the Escalante Municipal Code is hereby *amended* as follows:

**BEFORE AMENDMENT**

8.04.230 Supply Outside Municipal Limits

The municipality may furnish water service for a single family dwelling from its water system to persons outside the municipality in accordance with the provisions of this chapter.

- A. No water service shall be granted for any new subdivision outside the municipality.
- B. No water service shall be granted for the sole purpose of a business.
- C. No water service shall be granted for the sole purpose of stock watering.

**AFTER AMENDMENT**

8.04.230 Supply Outside Municipal Limits

~~The municipality may furnish water service for a single family dwelling from its water system to persons outside the municipality in accordance with the provisions of this chapter. No water service shall be granted for any new subdivision outside the municipality. No water service shall be granted for the sole purpose of a business. No water service shall be granted for the sole purpose of stock watering.~~

**General Limitation**

The City may, at its sole discretion, extend culinary water service beyond municipal boundaries only for the purpose of serving one (1) single-family dwelling unit on a legally created parcel. Irrigation, landscaping, stock watering, or outdoor watering systems incidental



to the single-family dwelling unit shall be permitted.

### **Single Connection Requirement**

Any extension of water service approved under this section shall be limited to one (1) service connection per parcel. No additional or secondary connections shall be permitted.

### **Permitted Uses**

The following uses shall be permitted on parcels receiving water service under this section, provided they are subordinate and incidental to the primary single-family dwelling and do not require a separate water connection:

- A. One (1) Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU), whether attached or detached. The ADU shall not be sold separately and shall remain under common ownership with the primary dwelling. The ADU shall pay a monthly base water rate. The ADU and/or the primary single-family dwelling shall not be used, advertised, or operated as a nightly rental, short-term rental, vacation rental, or any form of transient lodging.
- B. Accessory buildings and structures, including but not limited to garages, shops, barns, and agricultural buildings, provided they do not require independent water service connections..

### **Prohibited Uses and Connections**

Water service extended outside city limits under this section shall not be used for, nor shall the City approve or allow:

- A. more than one (1) water connection per parcel;
- B. any use that requires separate or additional water connections beyond the single approved connection;
- C. commercial uses, including but not limited to hotels, motels, or any form of transient lodging;
- D. any subdivision or arrangement intended to serve more than one dwelling unit with separate service; or
- E. dwelling used, advertised, or operated as a nightly rental, short-term rental, vacation rental, or any form of transient lodging;
- F. any use that would require or result in additional equivalent residential connections (ERCs).

### **No Expansion of Service**

Approval of a water extension under this section shall not constitute a commitment by the City to provide additional capacity, upsize infrastructure, or allow future connections to the extended line.

### **Covenant and Notice**



As a condition of approval, the property owner shall record a notice or covenant, in a form approved by the City Attorney, stating that:

- A. water service is limited to one (1) connection serving a single-family dwelling and any permitted subordinate uses. The single-family dwelling shall not be used or operated as a short-term or nightly rental.;
- B. one (1) ADU is permitted but shall not be used for short-term or nightly rental purposes; and
- C. no additional connections or expanded uses are permitted under City code.

**Violation**

Any violation of this section shall be grounds for termination of water service and subject to enforcement as provided in this code.