

City of La Verkin

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La Verkin City Council Meeting Minutes Wednesday, May 20, 2026, 6:00 pm. Council Chambers, 111 S. Main, La Verkin, Utah

Present: Mayor Kelly Wilson; Council Members: Darren Prince, Micah Gubler, Amanda Barr, John Valenti; Staff: Kyle Gubler, Derek Imlay, Fay Reber, and Nancy Cline; Public: Ron Neumann.

A. Called to Order –Darren Prince gave the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance at 6:00 pm.

B. Presentation:

1. Scholarship recipients.

Mayor Wilson congratulated the scholarship recipients: Isaiah Iverson, Asher Blair, Riley Hanson, Anna Stout, and Emily Lisenby.

2. Chief Nuccitelli was unable to attend.

C. Consent Agenda: (Items on the consent agenda may not require discussion. These items will be a single motion unless removed at the request of the Mayor or City Council.)

1. Declarations of conflict of interest
2. Agenda
3. Meeting Minutes: May 6, 2026, work and regular meeting.
4. Checks & Invoices: \$ 503,078.32

The motion was made by Councilman Valenti to approve the consent agenda as written. Meeting minutes for May 6, 2026, work and regular meetings. Checks and invoices in the amount \$503,078.32, second by Councilman Prince. Roll Call Vote: Barr-yes, Valenti-yes, Prince-yes, Gubler-yes. The motion carried unanimously.

D. Public Hearing:

1. FY 2026-2027 Budget.

Kyle explained give the numbers one time, knowing that the budgeted revenue and the budgeted expense match for a balanced budget. General fund: \$3,168,922 dollars of revenue. Expense Fund total expenditure: \$92,700. The water fund: \$1,646,500. The sewer fund: \$958,000. The irrigation fund: \$157,500. The garbage fund was \$388,500. The drainage fund: \$282,000. The cemetery fund: 15,000. The total overall budget for all funds that the city is involved with is \$6,709,123. On a side note, in the water fund we are required now to put 5% into our savings account for future repairs and maintenance, and we budgeted that. It is included in this budget. That totals just under \$85,000 that will go into a savings account to be used for future repairs.

Public Hearing opened at 6:08 p.m.

No comments made.

Public Hearing closed at 6:09 p.m.

2. Disposition of Surplus property by public or private sale.

Derek explained the 1996 international dump truck is going to salvage, as you can see in those pictures it doesn't have an engine because we used to replace the one in our other dump truck. We just need to go through the process to get rid of it. We have a 1986 John Deere grader, a 1996 Ford bucket truck, a 2005 Chevy two-wheel drive and a 2000 bobcat.

Public Hearing opened at 6:09 p.m.

No comments made.

Public Hearing closed at 6:10 p.m.

E. Business:

1. Consideration and possible action to approve Resolution No. 2026-08 accept the FY 2026-2027 Budget.

The motion was made by Councilwoman Barr to approve Resolution No. 2026-08 accept the FY 2026-2027 Budget, seconded by Councilman Gubler. Roll Call Vote: Barr-yes, Valenti-yes, Gubler-yes, Prince-yes. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Consideration and possible action to approve Resolution No. 2026-09, a resolution declaring certain property to be surplus property and approving disposition by public or private sale.

The motion was made by Councilman Gubler to approve Resolution No. 2026-09 a resolution declaring certain property to be surplus property and approving disposition by public or private sale., seconded by Councilman Valenti. Roll Call Vote: Barr-yes, Valenti-yes, Gubler-yes, Prince-yes. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Consideration and possible action to approve a conditional use permit for The Zion Hot Springs sign.
Derek explained that the General Manager, Ron, applied for a conditional use permit for a new animated sign. It will be two-sided and 30 feet back from the sidewalk. They will remove the existing sign and put it at the entrance to the parking lot. The set back on this sign will allow better vision when turning onto SR9. It obeys the rules of the night sky ordinance. It will face North and South. Hurricane movie theater has a similar sign that sits right on the sidewalk. This is not comparable because it sits 30 feet back.

Councilman Valenti was concerned if they allow this that it would open a door for all businesses to have a big, animated sign.

Derek replied this is the second animated sign that has come before them in 25 years. Davis Market being the first. He hasn't had other business apply for one. He doesn't think it will become the standard. If they don't want this type of signage then they need to change the sign ordinance to exclude them, right now it permitted through conditional use. They would have to have a logical reason to deny it.

Councilwoman Barr added that this technology wasn't available 25 years ago and that might be why they haven't had any other applications for them. Even though its 30 feet set back it doesn't blend into the property. She was concerned it was too big and too bright and would clash with the city.

Councilman Gubler commented that this doesn't go to planning commission but straight to city council. It's allowed in our ordinance due to a conditional use permit.

Derek replied that it's actually permitted, but it doesn't give the stipulations that the other signs do and that's why it comes to the council as a conditional use. If there are other things they want to add to it, there is some flexibility to do so. As of right now, those animated signs are permitted.

Fay explained that the law of conditional uses has changed greatly over the past several years and now according to Utah State laws if there's any way to mitigate any harmful effects of the proposed conditional use, the city is obligated to do that. In other words, they can't simply deny it because they don't like it or because there are some detrimental effects. If there's any reasonable way to mitigate those detrimental effects, then we're obligated to find ways to mitigate them.

Derek added that knowing where the setbacks are going to be sitting off so far and the way that it's facing is not going to harm any residential zones. It would affect commercial zones that are directly to the north and south of it.

Fay asked if they had submitted actual plans and specs of the sign. They would have to stick to those specifications.

Derek replied they have submitted specifications. He doesn't find it offensive or intrusive. He believes they need to help and support our local businesses, so the city could receive the revenue from them.

Ron Neumann added that he thought there were some misconceptions about the sign. The brightness of the sign is going to be very normal compared to the brightness that we already have in the present parking lot. It will catch your attention, and it will be flashing. The Hot Springs are reviewed as one of the highest talked about in Washington County. They do not get tourists from Zions because they don't know what the business is. With this sign they can see how beautiful it is with pictures and video. The other businesses in town can benefit because they will offer to advertise for them on the sign. This sign is a high valued item at \$400,000. He didn't think many businesses in La Verkin could afford that and he doesn't think that is an issue. Their goal is to boost not only their business but the ones around them. There is a new motel coming in because of the Hot Springs and the Spa across the street will benefit from advertising on the sign. If the surrounding businesses thrive that will bring more tax revenue to the city. They wouldn't put a sign in that was not appealing to the public.

Councilman Gubler asked Derek why it is a permitted use. Why isn't it allowed.

Derek replied he didn't know why the ordinance was drafted that way. There's a lot of code in there that he didn't understand because all of our code now is pretty much permitted. It's either permitted or it's not permitted. This is one of the only signs in there that actually doesn't give any criteria as to why they did that.

Fay added that it used to be that every zone had a list of permitted uses and conditional uses. And then cities and towns would use those conditional uses to impose all kinds of restrictions and things on people when they came in. The state legislature didn't like that. The state said if someone is proposing a conditional use and there is any way to mitigate the use through reasonable steps, the city is obliged to grant the conditional use with those steps. Therefore, a lot of cities have then taken out of ordinances any conditional uses and it's either permitted uses or not permitted. And that's why this sounds like it's just a holdover.

Derek added that the prior city attorney took our conditional uses and changed them to permitted uses. There are many ordinances that still have conditional uses that were never updated and taken out. That is what he assumed happened.

Mayor Wilson suggested they have never changed it because no one asked for a sign like this.

Councilman Gubler added that in his ten plus years it's the first time they have to decide whether we're going to give a conditional use for a sign. He thought it was an appealing sign; he liked the aesthetics of it. If it was right on State Street with that size, he wouldn't want it. They will all be passing it daily and they have never had a sign like this before and that's why this discussion is necessary.

Ron had discussed the sign with industry experts. There have been studies that stagnant signs didn't catch people's attention, but the video and picture signs had a positive feedback result and people considered them high class. That's the kind of experience they want to go to and the kind of town they want to be in.

Councilman Gubler replied that he can see the need for the sign. That from the highway or even the parking lot you can't tell what type of business it is.

Ron added that customers thought it was a medical center and even an emergency room. The fact is the hot springs sit way down in the canyon. The only way to see them is from the bridge. The public has no clue what the property offers. That's why we're solving it with the video screen. He reported that Hot Springs are doing extremely well. What we want to do is capture more tourism to the national park and get less spent dollars there and more in the town of La Verkin. They are on track for 250,000 visitors this year but would like to be at 300 or 400,000 next year.

Councilman Gubler was originally concerned about the traffic coming onto 300. He lives a few blocks from there and it hasn't impacted on the neighborhood at all. The only impact is people pulling out onto SR 9.

Ron added that the intersection was talked about a lot and they would be willing to help pay for a stop light if UDOT ever let them put one in.

Councilman Gubler agreed it needs a stoplight with the angle of the intersection and if it's an elderly driver trying to see at that angle along with the amount of traffic it's a dangerous intersection.

Mayor Wilson added that he brought it up to the state and the governor's office, and they almost refused to do anything with it because our studies indicate that we don't need it. The state basically said there haven't been enough severe accidents there yet. The city will keep pushing for it.

Ron agreed and added that it was a busy intersection before they opened. River Rock has a big business, and it was needed way back when they came in.

Kyle mentioned the state told him they wanted to wait a year from when the Hot Springs opened and have a counter on the road to see how many people pass through there. They might have a camera also that will see how many people turn into the Hot Springs. But if they do it in the winter rather than the summer it will be fewer numbers.

Councilman Prince concerns were already brought up the sign not looking out of place. He was concerned about the property Northeast of the sign if they built residential there, they might get light from the sign. To have the light projected North and South so they don't get the glare.

Fay suggested the motion include the conditions they discussed.

The motion was made by Councilman Prince to approve a conditional use permit for The Zion Hot Springs sign with the condition to mitigate any glare which is an unreasonable detriment to the neighboring property, seconded by Councilman Valenti. Roll Call Vote: Barr-No, Valenti-yes, Prince-yes, Gubler-yes. The motion passed.

4. Discussion regarding the Ultra Water Efficiency Standards.

Mayor Wilson suggested these standards would only apply to properties on the Top Side because the lower bench has secondary irrigation which already gives the homeowners a break on their bills. He also thought it would be per subdivision not individual properties. More expensive subdivisions wouldn't want it so they could have pools. This makes the water district responsible for policing it. This would be recorded on their plat. They get a break on their impact fees.

Fay explained that early on in the subdivision process with the city's help, we identify those subdivisions that want to take advantage of this program. We contact the water conservancy district, and then when they're developing the plats or notes on the plats, there are agreements that the water conservancy district will enter into with the HOA or any of those kinds of entities, and so forth.

Mayor Wilson added that if they adopt that, that will give us extra connections that we will get from the water district, if they go to a .39 instead of a .59.

Kyle clarified there is the surplus charge that's going to be handled because we will have people that violate that and have high usage whether it's from a water break or whatever reason. If they use more water than the water that's committed there is a surplus charge that does go to the water district. It needs to be clarified that the city also gets the tier schedule. We're not giving away what water rate we will get as a city. We'll still collect ours, and the water districts will be above and beyond what we already have. We're not giving away the extra money to the water district.

Mayor Wilson pointed out that the rise in rates will have an impact on those who choose the ultra-efficient subdivisions. Last year when the rates increased the citizens who didn't use irrigation services or had leaks received big bills and fixed the problems.

Kyle added that this is for residential areas not parks or commercial properties.

Councilman Valenti asked if the pool arrangements that were in the policy itself and the parks and such, limited the ability to grow big lawns. That's per development agreement and they can also apply that way.

Mayor Wilson responded that it would. The size depends on how many were in the subdivision. It's pretty specific as to what it requires and what it wouldn't be. We're seeing more and more, especially with the way things are going now, that conservation. Water conservation is becoming more critical, especially this year. Over time, we're going to see more and more desert landscapes and things like that. We're fortunate down here. We have a secondary system, and we can have green lawns and irrigate our trees. We'll probably put it on the agenda next time to pass it. We just want to make sure that it's going to be per subdivision, and it'll be at the option of the developers if they decide that's the way they want to go. And that way when people buy the lots, they know exactly what they're getting into.

5. Consideration and possible action to set a public hearing for June 3, 2026, to amend the FY 2025-2026 budget. Kyle explained this is the year end budget that cleans up all the changes throughout the year.

The motion was made by Councilwoman Barr to set a public hearing for June 3, 2026, to amend the FY 2025-2026 budget, seconded by Councilman Valenti. Roll Call Vote: Barr-yes, Valenti-yes, Prince-yes, Gubler-yes. The motion carried unanimously.

6. Consideration and possible action to set a public hearing for June 3, 2026, to approve 2.5% COLA compensation For Statutory employees: City Manager, Treasurer, Recorder, Director of Operations, Director of Recreation, and Police Chief.

Kyle explained its state law that statutory employees have to have a public hearing for increases to their wage. When they do the merit increase there will also be a public hearing again for these employees.

The motion was made by Councilman Gubler to set a public hearing for June 3, 2026, to approve 2.5% COLA compensation For Statutory employees: City Manager, Treasurer, Recorder, Director of Operations, Director of Recreation, and Police Chief, seconded by Councilman Prince. Roll Call Vote: Barr-yes, Valenti-yes, Prince-yes, Gubler-yes. The motion carried unanimously.

F. Mayor & Council Reports:

Mayor Wilson: Discussed having the packets only done electronically. The council was in favor of this. He asked if the council was interested in having a tour of the Ash Creek Sewer facility. The council decided June 7, 2026, at 3:30.

Kyle Gubler: reported the Wanless park bathrooms are ready, but we are waiting on the cameras before we open them. He received a proposal for a billboard on I15 for La Verkin to advertise.

Fay: Nothing to report

Pectol: Not in attendance.

Barr: Nothing to report.

Valenti: reported on the planning commission meeting of May 13, 2026. He toured the Mosquito abatement lab. Mosquitos kill more people than anything else.

Gubler: Reported the America 250 celebration starts on July 3rd. An America 250 block party, a concert, the bell inauguration, food trucks. Then we'll have the festivities the next day, on the Fourth of July. We have done this before. At six p.m. on Friday night, the third is when things will start. Starting earlier than that on Flag Day, which is June 14th. Running through that date, if you walk from here out to the city offices, there'll be some signs posted up with some QR codes, where you can scan it and get information about the America 250 Timeline Walk. They can enjoy a stroll through La Verkin and 250 years of American history. So that will run for about three weeks. Who is available to be on the city float the morning of the fourth. The parade starts at 8:00. We need to be there at 7:30 for the lineup. Also if any of us are available to help by serving cake and ice cream in the park after at the end of the parade. They have 18 youth council members and 9 junior youth councils. They have a big bell to hang. It needs to be lower, so Maridee is still working on that.

Prince: ZCR meeting discussed the Zion Corridor Trail. John Valenti added they are working on the underpasses and they will pave it all. June 7th buses and RV's won't be allowed through the tunnel. Some discussion about limiting the dispersed camping. They're talking about two central campgrounds: one up on Gooseberry and one down below. There's an appeals process. And right now, there's been some people that are challenging their ability to end the dispersed camping. Prince also attended a meeting on how to maintain the trails. We took a good look at the rim to river trail, and

they had some suggestions on how to avoid some of the problems we're having with water deteriorating the trail quickly. The builders of the trail were there and gave us a proposal to put some more steps in there and make it not so steep so that people wouldn't fall. They have a machine that can tear up the top part of that soil and cement it and make it a hard surface. He met with Commissioner Iverson and James Marvin, a resident here in town, who came over to the county to talk to us about that trail from Confluence up to the park. He had made a suggestion that we keep shooting for the five bridges and the eleven million dollars. But in the meantime, we build a hard dirt trail and get some bridges there that are more just pass bridges, like a swinging type bridge that are much, much, much cheaper. And just make it so we can use the trail. Making that available to the public with just a hard dirt trail. Maybe put some good signage so that there's times when it will be flooding and to be very careful. But it'd be fun to use that trail.

G. Citizen Comment & Request for Future Agenda Items:

No comments

H. Adjourn:

The mayor closed the meeting at 7:08 p.m.

June 3, 2026

Date Approved

ATTEST:

Nancy Cline
Nancy Cline
City Recorder

Kelly B. Wilson
Mayor Kelly B. Wilson