

Special Emergency Meeting of the Kanosh Town Council

Meeting Minutes

August 5, 2026, 8:30 PM
55 North Main. Street, Kanosh, UT, US

Welcome and Call to Order

Mayor Wenda Crabb called the Special Emergency Meeting of the Kanosh Town Council to order at 8:30 PM. Mayor Crabb noted that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the recent fire incident and to begin planning for probable flood events.

Roll Call to Establish a Quorum

Present: Council Member Dan DeGraffenried, Council Member Brian Batt, Mayor Wenda Crabb, Council Member Josh Whitaker, Council Member Tim White

A quorum was established with all five members present.

It was agreed to hold the special emergency meeting about the current fire and flood situation through a roll call vote as follows:

Mayor Wenda Crabb Aye

Council Members

Josh Whitaker Aye

Dan DeGraffenried Aye

Brian Batt Aye

Tim White Aye

The motion carried. Motion Passed.

Prayer

The opening prayer was offered by Council Member Dan DeGraffenried.

Pledge

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Council Member Josh Whitaker.

Fire Incident Discussion

Mayor Crabb opened the fire incident discussion, noting that the purpose of this portion of the meeting was not to solve problems but to record observations while they were fresh—things that went well and things that could be improved—for future reference and planning.

*Council Member Brian Batt:

Positives:

- Presence and cooperation of the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Forest Service, and other outside fire services.

- Overall attitude of the community and the Posse for keeping onlookers clear of fire access routes.

Negatives:

- Need to bring the town well fully online.
- Recruiting additional volunteer firefighters.
- Better fire equipment such as replacing tires on the tanker truck, obtaining a fire-department-equipped side-by-side, and improving radio communications in fire trucks, noting that one truck currently lacks an installed radio.
- Constructing an overfill pond near the new well house.

*Council Member Dan DeGraffenried:

Positives:

- General admiration for the collective effort and the spirit of cooperation he witnessed throughout the incident.

*Council Member Tim White:

Positives:

- The “fight” that our community has which helps us to pitch in and help out.

Negatives:

- Overcrowding some areas because everyone wants to help.
- Lack of cellular service in the area is a problem that may have caused coordination difficulties.

*Council Member Josh Whitaker:

Positives:

- Commended the volunteer fire department for its extraordinary effort and evident exhaustion.
- Praised the community's overall attitude of wanting to help rather than waiting to be helped.

Negatives:

- Concern about the difficulty of crossing 300 South during the initial flare-up, when traffic from onlookers made it nearly impossible to travel along that road.

*Fire Chief Lorin Shumway:

Positives:

- Gratitude to Corn Creek Irrigation for providing water shares to fill ponds for helicopter use and for providing a fill point when springs were at risk.
- Thanked surrounding communities—Fillmore, Holden, Delta, Scipio, Salina, Aurora, and Cedar City—for sending mutual aid. He specifically credited Cedar City firefighters for relieving him at the Town Springs after he had been awake for three days, allowing him to rest.

Negatives:

- He identified onlooker traffic blocking the hydrant on 300 South as a significant operational problem.

Fire Chief Lorin also strongly encouraged any community members with serious concerns about the fire response to document them in the form of a sworn affidavit. He warned the council and community that with the entire watershed now burned, flood risk would be the next critical challenge, noting that Corn Creek drainage is the second largest in the state and that even a small rain event would produce unprecedented runoff. He emphasized the significance of protecting the Town Springs, stating that firefighters saved an estimated 50 to 100 acres immediately surrounding the springs despite everything else in the area burning.

*Mayor Wenda Crabb:

Positives:

- Corn Creek Irrigation's rapid redirection of water to firefighting ponds.
- Fire Chief Lorin's persistent defense of the Town Springs.
- Mayor Gary Bishop for successfully arguing against a power shutoff.
- Impressive speed of response to the brush fire on 200 South.

Negatives:

- Allowing residents to water at night during fire events rather than suspending all outdoor watering.
- Updating the town's SAM account for government vendor eligibility.
- Significant need for permanent emergency cellular coverage for the area.
- Need for volunteer firefighter recruitment.

Capital Losses – Ranchers Current Report

Mayor Crabb reported on conversations with permittees who had cattle on the range in the affected area. Approximately 200 head of cattle are confirmed lost, with an additional estimated 1,650 head unaccounted for. Mayor Crabb noted she had communicated these figures to the Lieutenant Governor's office and the Governor's Office of Economic Support in order to facilitate whatever assistance might be available to affected ranchers.

Flood Abatement Plan

Mayor Crabb reported that with the entire watershed having burned, flood abatement was identified as the most urgent concern. The Millard County Commissioners have declared a state of emergency for the county, unlocking the state's disaster funding mechanism. Mayor Crabb further stated that she had independently declared a state of emergency for the Town of Kanosh earlier that day, noting that this declaration would be brought before the Council for ratification at the next regular meeting. She explained that the town-level declaration provides a cleaner, more direct channel for FEMA or other large agency funding in the event of a flood disaster, rather than having those funds routed through and distributed by the county. The Council raised no objections to the approach.

***CCI – Outline Plan for Diverting Water**

- **Above the Dam:**

Hayden George (Corn Creek Irrigation board member) presented an assessment of conditions and recommendations for upstream mitigation. He reported that while Adelaide Canyon and the Levitt's area survived the fire, the overall situation above the dam is severe. His primary recommendation was to clear the stream channel of burned trees from the dam upstream to at least the Levitt's area—removing debris within approximately 20 to 50 feet of the stream bottom—and to construct small boulder check dams or catch basins at roughly quarter-mile intervals to slow water velocity and capture debris. He noted this approach mirrors work performed following the Marysville fire. He emphasized that the Town's debris basin, which recently passed dam safety inspection, is designed to hold water temporarily and is in reasonable condition, but that the sheer volume and acreage of the burned watershed means that upstream debris mitigation is critical.

Hayden identified the Town Springs as the most vulnerable infrastructure element. He described the creek's current S-curve alignment running directly toward Springs 1, 2, and 3, and proposed reinforcing the north bank using riprap and boulders to redirect flow southward, potentially sacrificing Spring 4 to protect the higher-producing

springs. He acknowledged this was not a plan developed by an engineer but was based on direct observation and experience, and recommended expert review.

Discussion among Hayden George, Fire Chief Lorin, Council Member Josh Whitaker, and others examined the hydraulic capacity of existing infrastructure. The High Line Ditch has a capacity of approximately 440 CFS constrained by existing culverts, while the primary spillway has a capacity of approximately 2,300 CFS at crest. It was noted that any flow exceeding the ditch and culvert capacities would push water into town, and that plugged culverts and bridges—not raw water volume—are the primary flooding mechanism, as demonstrated in recent Beaver flood events.

The potential for channeling water to bypass the springs by cutting along the south foothill near the swimming hole was discussed. Fire Chief Lorin expressed interest in examining this option, noting it may be feasible if solid rock outcroppings could anchor any diversion. Both Hayden and Fire Chief Lorin agreed that even if such a bypass is constructed, reinforcement of the spring bank area would still be necessary, as catch basins can fail.

- **Below the Dam:**

Stan Koyle(Corn Creek Irrigation) noted several choke points in existing ditch infrastructure, including a 60-inch culvert at Staples Lane insufficient to handle full ditch capacity, concerns about the Hatton Ditch corner near the Ruben Anderson property, and the need to clear debris from ditches throughout the system. He noted that the Watterson property ditch had been directed to be cleared but had not yet been completed. He identified three locations suitable for stationing equipment during a high-water event. The old pipe remaining in the debris basin was also flagged as something that should be removed to ease cleanup of wood and debris that may accumulate there.

Council Member Dan DeGraffenried proposed forming a small, experienced advisory committee to physically walk the canyon, assess conditions firsthand, and develop a prioritized map of proposed mitigation locations to present to the Forest Service. A sheet was passed around for those that had specific knowledge and skills to volunteer to be a part of this committee and those persons were as follows: David Whitaker, Paul Davis, Ben Coray, William Morgan, Bruce Whatcott, Clair Crook, Franklin Barlow, Jonathan Barney, Rodney Whatcott, Tim White, and Hayden George.

It was clarified that Forest Service representatives had indicated verbal authorization for mitigation work could be granted quickly once proposed locations were identified on a map, without requiring full engineering review. A meeting with Forest Service officials was confirmed for 9:00 AM the following morning. The urgency of preparing a map of proposed work sites before that meeting was emphasized.

Ben (town water system contractor/engineer, last name not stated in record) agreed to serve as acting chair of the reconnaissance group for the following morning's site visit and noted he could also operate a county drone for aerial reconnaissance of the canyon early in the morning before air operations commenced.

***Kanosh Town – Report on Ready Status in a Flood Event**

Ben reported on the status of the town well. The contractor, Tushar Contracting, was on-site completing electrical work. The final panel had arrived that day and was being installed. The chlorinator was also being installed. The well was expected to be pumping by Friday, with bacteria testing to follow. Ben indicated he would request emergency lab processing from the

Richfield lab on Saturday. With verbal authorization already received from District Engineer John Chartier, the well was expected to be fully operational and ready to deliver water to tanks by Monday. Ben also noted that once chlorinators in the new well house are operational, spring water can be routed through the new building as well, consolidating water treatment and reducing the risk posed by potential flooding of the older spring building.

Regarding sandbags and sand supplies, Fire Chief Lorin reported that the town currently has approximately 8,000 sandbags on hand, with access to approximately 10,000 more. Two loads of sand are staged on the north end of town, with acknowledgment that substantially more would be needed for large-scale filling operations. It was noted that the county may have a bag-filling machine available. A community member suggested filling at least 1,000 bags and staging them in advance. The council discussed the balance between filling bags proactively versus waiting for a more certain weather forecast. The consensus was to focus primary energy on larger physical mitigation work while also getting sandbags staged and ready for rapid deployment. Mayor Wenda Crabb asked if there would be a volunteer to take responsibility for coordinating the sandbagging effort. Brad Freeman volunteered which was greatly accepted.

Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Council Member Dan DeGraffenried and seconded.

The motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned.

Mayor Crabb thanked all attendees and directed individuals who had signed up for the reconnaissance committee to remain briefly after adjournment to coordinate the following morning's activities.

Minutes prepared by the Kanosh Town Council recording clerk. Subject to approval at the next regular meeting of the Kanosh Town Council.