

**ESCALANTE CITY COUNCIL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 1, 2026
REGULAR MEETING/ELECTRONIC MEETING – 6:00 P.M.
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, Tara Woolsey, Marlene Stowe, Chad Lyman, Ryan Cottam, City Attorney Barry Huntington and City Recorder Stephanie Steed.

Also present were Bill Wolverton, Bill Weppner, Margie Weppner, Chad Cottam, Wade Barney, Mark Saunto, Gary Griffin, Peggy Griffin and Julie Brugger.

Melyssa Holbrook joined electronically.

Mayor Torgersen led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

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

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF AUGUST 18, 2026 MEETING

Council member Orme moved to approve the minutes of the August 18, 2026 meeting as written. Council member Stowe seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council members Woolsey, Orme, Lyman, Stowe and Cottam voting aye.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

WADE BARNEY

Mr. Barney expressed his appreciation for the city and for the crew sent to spray goatheads. Mr. Barney noted that he has tried to eliminate the Goatheads on his own without success, and thanked the Mayor and City Council for their efforts to get them under control. Mr. Barney said many residents support these efforts, adding that whenever he saw Terry Cooper working on it, he made sure to thank him. Mr. Barney said this is the best thing the city can do and that it is time to take the community back.

Mr. Barney expressed his appreciation to Stephanie Steed and Nancy Porter for their helpfulness each time he visits the office. Mr. Barney commended all of the city staff, describing them as the finest crew working for the municipality and reiterating his sincere thanks for their dedication.

MARGIE WEPPNER

Ms. Weppner said with the upcoming 25th anniversary of September 11 she would like to invite the community to participate in service activities and encourage neighbors to serve one another.

MARK SAUNTO

Mr. Saunto stated that nobody likes goatheads and that they cause a lot of grief for many people. Mr. Saunto said that goatheads are a problem and shared that he has been working to control them around his house. Mr. Saunto explained that the entire area along 300 West and near his property had formed a solid mat of weeds, so he took personal responsibility for managing it. Mr. Saunto expressed his view that the only reason he was attending the meeting was that the city is now working to address the issue as well. Mr. Saunto stated that he has been actively participating and talking to homeowners about the issue. Mr. Saunto highlighted the well-documented lethal effects of chemical spraying on bees and requested that the city ask homeowners for permission before spraying in front of their properties.

PEGGY GRIFFIN

Ms. Griffin noted her interest in following the ongoing discussion and suggested providing a timeline so community members know what to expect. Ms. Griffin expressed that she looks forward to future updates.

PLANNING AND ZONING ITEMS**PLANNING AND ZONING UPDATES**

There were no Planning and Zoning updates at this time.

SCHEDULED ITEMS**GARY GRIFFIN - DISCUSSION ON POISONOUS SPRAY**

Mr. Griffin expressed concerns regarding pesticide use and bee loss, noting that bees serve as an early warning indicator for environmental health. Mr. Griffin cited a recent U.S. beekeeper survey indicating that 62% of bee colonies died between June 2025 and January 2026.

Mr. Griffin explained his long history in Escalante and discussed the impacts of nuclear fallout on downwinders and shared that his wife passed away from exposure to toxic chemicals and radiation. Mr. Griffin said working at a hardware store he encouraged customers to seek safer alternatives to chemical weed killers like Roundup, though some preferred to purchase pesticides. Mr. Griffin explained that he uses alternative methods, such as a weed torch.

Mr. Griffin acknowledged the city's weed control efforts but expressed concern over the smell and health impacts of sprayed pesticides on the community and future generations. Mr. Griffin suggested allowing residents who wish to opt out of spraying to place a sign in their yard requesting that Terry Cooper bypass their property. Mr. Griffin said that he has lost over 10 honeybee colonies valued at \$200 each over 16 years of beekeeping and has stopped keeping bees to protect them from being killed. Mr. Griffin thanked the Mayor and Council for their consideration and requested that residents be permitted to display signs on their property if they prefer not to have herbicide sprayed. Mr. Griffin added that although he no longer keeps honeybees, he remains concerned about the issue.

BILL WEPPNER - FIRE DEPARTMENT SCENE LIGHTING UNITS AND TOOLS

Mr. Weppner said the Fire Department is asking for approval for several purchases. Mr. Weppner said scene safety is one of the department's big focal points this year, and they would like to purchase two lithium battery-powered scene lights that help them when they are out on a rescue or running traffic on the highway. Mr. Weppner said the total expense of that would be \$1,324. Mr. Weppner said they also need some additional

tools, which would amount for \$120.99, and some C batteries, which are used to keep their SCPA's running while charging the lithium batteries. Mr. Weppner said the total expenditure would amount to \$1,528.86. **Council member Lyman moved to approve the purchases listed above for the amount of \$1,528.86. Council member Woolsey seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council member Orme, Stowe, Cottam, Woolsey and Lyman voting aye.**

SECURITY CAMERAS

City Recorder Steed presented two quotes from Geneva, a state-contract vendor using Verkada software, for city security cameras. City Recorder Steed explained the first bid (\$1,412.57) covers relocating two existing cameras to the City Office for general security and ballot box monitoring. City Recorder Steed said the second bid covers four cameras for the Wellness Center: one interior dome camera for the main room, one exterior entrance camera, and two optional mini hallway cameras. City Recorder Steed emphasized the need for at least two key cameras and noted that no cameras would be placed in the physical therapy room. City Recorder Steed explained that Verkada provides unified single-screen monitoring, 30–60 day cloud storage, night vision, mobile access, and law enforcement sharing with no extra monthly data fees beyond Wi-Fi, though a three-year licensing contract is required. City Recorder Steed explained that the previous cheaper Wellness Center system was unreliable and that the new system is for post-incident review. Mayor Torgersen highlighted public safety for the 24-hour facility. Council member Lyman suggested adding audio recording for the interior camera, and City Recorder Steed agreed to check the additional cost with Geneva, noting installation takes approximately one month from order placement. **Council member Lyman moved to accept both bids from Geneva and inquire about adding interior audio capability. Council member Stowe seconded the motion. Motion carried with Council members Cottam, Lyman, Woolsey, Orme and Stowe voting aye.**

DATA PRIVACY AWARENESS TRAINING VIDEO

City Recorder Steed noted that the Data Privacy Awareness Training Video is required for all personnel who handle confidential data. Following her introduction, City Recorder Steed presented the video.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS **ADMINISTRATIVE**

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

City Recorder Steed said the Annual Audit is scheduled for tomorrow.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Mr. Cottam explained Brent Pickering inspected the waterline area today and discovered that the lines were washed out due to recent rain and he has reached out to the county for assistance. Mr. Cottam reported the springs remain intact and are functioning properly.

Mr. Cottam said the well usage has decreased, and it has not been turned on for a week.

Mr. Cottam said the Casters were successfully installed on the benches at the community center.

Mr. Cottam said regarding the airport, Council Member Woolsey and himself met with an individual on-site and he also visited Bryce Canyon Airport. Mr. Cottam explained the Bryce Canyon Airport manager provided the City with surplus parts for the airport they no longer need and instructed him on operating and testing the runway lights using the radios.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

BILL WEPPNER

Mr. Weppner reported that since the previous meeting, the Fire Department responded to one false alarm, one vehicle fire, and one ambulance assist.

Mr. Weppner said four new members have joined the department and requested that anyone who sees them thank them and encourage their attendance at training sessions.

COUNCIL REPORTS

MAYOR MELANI TORGERSEN

Mayor Torgersen said 9/11 Day of Service is upon us and she would like to plan a clean up day. Town projects were discussed including yard cleanups, removing sagebrush at the sewer lagoon fence, and trash cleanup near the landfill. Council member Lyman expressed support for neighbors serving each other to build community. The 9/11 day of service will take place Friday from 4–6 p.m., followed by a dinner at the park pavilion.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHAD LYMAN

Council member Lyman reported on a meeting held with Curtis Nelson of Ensign Engineering, Brent Pickering, Stephanie Steed, and himself. Council member Lyman said the discussion focused on securing potential funding sources for alternative water supplies and water meter upgrades.

COUNCIL MEMBER TARA WOOLSEY

Council member Woolsey reported that she and Chad Cottam had a meeting with the airport manager from Bryce and he provided numerous recommendations.

Council member Woolsey said there was an inspection at the Airport on Sunday.

COUNCIL MEMBER RYAN COTTAM

Council member Cottam had nothing to report at this time.

COUNCIL MEMBER MARLENE STOWE

Council member Stowe had nothing to report at this time.

COUNCIL MEMBER SALLY ORME

Council member Orme had nothing to report at this time.

UNPAID BILLS

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

CLOSED MEETING

There was no Closed Meeting at this time.

Mayor Torgersen adjourned the meeting at 6:52 p.m.

Stephanie Steed, MMC, UCC
City Recorder

Date minutes approved:

DRAFT

P.O. BOX 18 ESCALANTE, UT 84726



Phone: (435) 826-4644 F:435-826-4642

CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA ITEM REQUEST

1. The undersigned, request(s) the opportunity to present the following matter in city council meeting (please be as clear and specific as possible)

Constitution Week Proclamation

2. The undersigned requests 2 minutes for presentation.

Dated this 31 day of Aug, 20 2010.

Printed Name HARRIET PRISKA Daytime Phone Landline

Signature Harriet Priska Evening Phone _____

Please note: Items on the agenda for city council meeting are set at the discretion of the mayor. If the mayor approves the above request, you will be on the next agenda. If the request is not approved, you will NOT receive any further notification.

The remaining portion of this form is for office use only

DECISION ON REQUEST FOR APPEARANCE

☐ The above item is APPROVED for hearing before the city council. The city recorder is instructed to place the item on the next available council agenda for _____ minutes.

☐ The above item is NOT APPROVED for hearing before the city council.

Dated this _____ day of _____, 20____.

[Signature]
MAYOR



PROCLAMATION FOR CONSTITUTION WEEK

WHEREAS: September 17, 2026, marks the two hundred and thirty-ninth anniversary of the drafting of the Constitution of the United States of America by the Constitutional Convention; and

WHEREAS: It is fitting and proper to accord official recognition to this magnificent document and its memorable anniversary; and to the patriotic celebrations which will commemorate the occasion; and

WHEREAS: Public Law 915 guarantees the issuing of a proclamation each year by the President of the United States of America designating September 17 through 23 as Constitution Week,

NOW, THEREFORE I, Melani Torgersen by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Escalante do hereby proclaim the week of September 17 through 23 as

CONSTITUTION WEEK

AND ask our citizens to reaffirm the ideals of the Framers of the constitution had in 1787 by vigilantly protecting the freedoms guaranteed to us through this guardian of our liberties, remembering that lost rights may never be regained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Escalante to be affixed this 15th day of September of the year of our Lord two thousand twenty six.

Seal:

Signed: _____

Melani Torgersen, Mayor
Escalante City Mayor

Attest: _____

Stephanie Steed, MMC, UCC
City Recorder



CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA ITEM REQUEST

1. The undersigned, request(s) the opportunity to present the following matter in city council meeting (please be as clear and specific as possible)

CASSIE MACK
Scarecrow contest

2. The undersigned requests 10 minutes for presentation.

Dated this 10 day of Sept, 2026.

Printed Name CASSIE MACK Daytime Phone 1-801-233-1111

Signature Cassie Mack Evening Phone _____

Please note: Items on the agenda for city council meeting are set at the discretion of the mayor. If the mayor approves the above request, you will be on the next agenda. If the request is not approved, you will NOT receive any further notification.

The remaining portion of this form is for office use only

DECISION ON REQUEST FOR APPEARANCE

☒ The above item is APPROVED for hearing before the city council. The city recorder is instructed to place the item on the next available council agenda for _____ minutes.

☐ The above item is NOT APPROVED for hearing before the city council.

Dated this 10 day of September, 2026.



MAYOR

ESTIMATE

Ellingford Construction Inc
PO Box 152
Escalante, UT 84726-0152

ellingford.construction@gmail.com
+1 (435) 896-3313

Bill to
Stephanie Steed
Escalante City

Ship to
Stephanie Steed
Escalante City

Estimate details
Estimate no.: 1041
Estimate date: 09/13/2026
Expiration date: 10/11/2026

#	Product or service	Description	Qty	Rate	Amount
1.	Sales	Prep, and pour an 18'x30'x4" un-reinforced slab in the space between the parking lot, sidewalk and pickle ball courts.			\$6,400.00
Total					\$6,400.00
				Expiry date	10/11/2026

Accepted dateAccepted by



INVOICE

Invoice #:	130
Invoice Date:	08/31/26
Amount Due:	\$6,500.00

Bill To:
Escalante city

Due Date
08/31/26

Item	Description	Quantity	Price	Amount
	BID FOR GAZEBO CONCRETE PAD concrete: 7 yards, rebar, pad prep, skid steer, road base, pad will be 14'x26'x4" in. we will install vapor barrier under pad. we can install pavers or just pour walkway to pad from existing concrete. i would need half upfront and half upon completion. thanks	1	\$6,500.00	\$6,500.00

Subtotal:	\$6,500.00
Sales Tax:	\$0.00
Total:	\$6,500.00
Payments:	\$0.00
Amount Due:	\$6,500.00

To pay online, go to <https://paymentportal-b1.bofa.bill.com/p/008b1FSSJPYQHDEF1wi4>

SECTION 1: AMENDMENT “5.11 RETIREMENT BENEFITS AND PENSIONS” of the Escalante Policies & Procedures is hereby *amended* as follows:

A M E N D M E N T

5.11 RETIREMENT BENEFITS AND PENSIONS

Full-time employees shall participate in the Utah State Retirement System under the rules, procedures, and agreements applicable thereto.

Exemption from Participation in the Utah Retirement Systems (URS)

The following positions may be exempted from participating in the Utah Retirement Systems:

- a. Elected Officials:
- b. Appointed Officials:

Utah State Retirement Systems (URS) Eligibility for Participation – Elected and Appointed Officials Council Members (elected officials) in Escalante City are part-time positions and do not meet the eligibility requirements for Tier 1 or Tier 2 participation. Appointed Officials are required to meet the eligibility requirements established by URS for Tier 1 or Tier 2 participation.

Tier 2 Retirement System: Appointed officials whose position is full time, as certified and documented with the Utah retirement system, who initially begin employment on or after July 1, 2011, participate in the tier 2 retirement system. All tier 2 participants must make an election to participate in either the tier 2 hybrid retirement system or the tier 2 defined contribution (DC) plan within the first twelve (12) months of employment.

- City Recorder - Full Time - Eligible
- City Treasurer - Full Time - Eligible
- Elected Officials - Part Time - Ineligible

Employee optional savings plan

Escalante City will match up to 5% per paycheck with a 1% increase every four years of employment up to 10% for one option below, however the employers match will be put in the 401k plan.

- 401K
- 457
- ROTH IRA
- ROTH 401K
- ROTH 457



Escalante Home Center
425 East Highway 12
P.O. Box 319
Escalante UT 84726
435-826-4004
Fax: 435-826-4005



QUOTE

2609-133466

PAGE 1 OF 1

SOLD TO

ESCALANTE CITY
P.O. BOX 189
56 N 100 W
ESCALANTE UT 84726

JOB ADDRESS

ESCALANTE CITY
P.O. BOX 189
56 N 100 W
ESCALANTE UT 84726
435 826-4644

ACCOUNT

JOB

2-00040	0
CREATED ON	09/04/2026
EXPIRES ON	09/09/2026
BRANCH	2000
CUSTOMER PO#	FENCING
STATION	LE5
CASHIER	NC
SALESPERSON	
ORDER ENTRY	NC
MODIFIED BY	

1

Item	Description	D	Quantity	UM	Price	Per	Amount
720928	2-PT 12.5GA BARB WIRE		4	RL	117.4900	RL	469.96
764666553620	6' #133 STAND T-POST		130	EA	7.0400	EA	915.20
					Subtotal		1,385.16
					5 0.00% EXE: 12296615- 002-STC	Sales Tax	0.00
					Total		1,385.16

Buyer: BRENT PICKERING

PLUS cedar post
for braces

Signature