

Kanosh Town Council Special Meeting

Meeting Minutes

August 19, 2026, 5:30 PM
55 North Main. Street, Kanosh, UT, US

Welcome and Call to Order of the Special Kanosh Town Engineering Bid Meeting

The Kanosh Town Council Special Meeting was called to order at approximately 5:30 PM on Wednesday, August 19, 2026, at 55 North Main Street, Kanosh, UT. Mayor Wenda Crabb presided.

Members present: Council Members present: Mayor Wenda Crabb, Council Members Josh Whitaker, Brian Batt, Tim White, and Dan DeGraffenried. Kanosh Town Clerk Kacie Whatcott was also in attendance.

Others in attendance: CERT Captain Geri Minton, Town Manager Lorin Shumway, Town Employee Jim Kooy, Forest Service Representative Brian Monroe, Stan Koyle, Hayden George, David Whitaker, Susie Perkins, Shannon Green, Bruce Whatcott, Layne Hansen with Fransen Engineering, Kelly Crane with Ensign Engineering, Assistant Project Manager for Sunrise Engineering Trent Brown, Project Manager for Jones & DeMille Jason Dodds, Technical Lead for Sunrise Engineering Ben Coray, Project Principal for Sunrise Engineering Jessie Ralphs, and Principal Engineer for MarcorSEN Engineering Marcor Platt.

The invocation was offered by Council Member Josh Whitaker.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Council Member Dan DeGraffenried.

Proposals Offered by Each Engineering Firm Present

Mayor Crabb opened the presentations by welcoming attendees and acknowledging the gravity of the decisions before the Council. She noted that the meeting would include remarks from invited guests: Brian Monroe of the U.S. Forest Service, Stan Koyle and Hayden George of the town's flood abatement team, and David Whitaker, a retired BLM fire restoration specialist. The purpose was to have experienced outside voices present to evaluate the proposals as they were heard.

***Layne Jensen (Franson Civil Engineers)**

Layne Jensen of Franson Civil Engineers presented on behalf of his firm. He noted that Franson Civil has been working with the Kanosh Corn Creek Irrigation Company for nearly seven years on the watershed project, giving his team an extensive pre-existing knowledge base of the local hydrology, ditch systems, debris basin, and flood modeling — work that would not need to be duplicated by a new team.

Layne emphasized that the firm's core work is water-related engineering, including dam rehabilitation, agricultural irrigation, and culinary water systems. He introduced the team that

would work on the project: himself as project manager, Lance Houser as hydrologist and emergency response specialist, Martilyn Neilsen as the hydrologic modeler, and Matt Gurr as designer and surveyor.

Layne walked the Council through the existing HEC-RAS watershed model, which has already been divided into sub-watersheds and calibrated, and explained that modifying it for a post-burn scenario — such as adjusting curve numbers to reflect a fully burned watershed — could be accomplished in a matter of days rather than weeks. He showed a map of existing-conditions flood modeling and highlighted the ditch distribution system, noting the critical balance point at which the ditch system transitions from protecting the town to funneling floodwater directly into it.

A significant portion of Layne's presentation focused on the debris basin. He described the Utah Dam Safety Engineer's 2011 inspection findings: seepage in the embankment foundation raises the risk of piping failure, the emergency spillway is undersized for events exceeding the 100-year flood on an unburned watershed (and significantly less on a burned one), and outlet capacity is deficient relative to current dam safety standards. Jensen explained that with the burned watershed, even moderate storms could produce flows that overtop the embankment.

Layne identified the activation of the existing flood channel (also called the High Line Ditch or auxiliary spillway) as the most critical near-term action. He noted that four undersized culverts currently cross the road at that location and are partially debris-filled, making them ineffective for passing significant flows. He proposed replacing them with a swale — a graded low-water crossing — as a faster and more reliable short-term option than a box culvert, which would be difficult to procure quickly. He also discussed installing log booms and debris screens around the primary and auxiliary spillways and working directly with Matt Call at Utah Dam Safety, with whom he has an established working relationship.

Layne noted a significant asset for all parties: the PL 566 program has already completed cultural resource clearances throughout the ditch system and around the debris basin, eliminating archaeological permitting as a constraint for any firm doing flood control work in those areas.

When asked about timeline, Layne indicated that running the modified burn-scenario hydrology and evaluating the splitting structure could be accomplished within a few days to one week. He estimated the nearest-term technical work — defining the swale elevation and producing a model — at less than a week from project start.

In response to a question from Council Member Josh Whitaker, Layne clarified that for long-term solutions a box culvert would be preferable, but the swale is the better short-term option due to procurement lead times. He also confirmed that the PL 566 cultural clearance would apply to all engineering firms, not exclusively to Franson Civil.

***Ensign Engineering**

Kelly Crane of Ensign Engineering arrived slightly late, having been expected at 6:15 PM. The presentation was brief. Ensign noted they had visited the site on the prior Monday with Council Member Josh Whitaker and David Whitaker, and had assembled a team that included Bowen Collins for hydrology and hydraulics analysis. Kelly acknowledged the severity of the burn and praised the community's rapid response to date.

Ensign proposed to conduct a full hydrology and hydraulics analysis of the watershed — estimated at approximately 80 square miles of drainage area — and noted that assembling a

complete model would likely take one to two months. Kelly acknowledged, in response to a direct question from Council Member Josh Whitaker, that many of the immediate actions would not require a completed model and that some work could begin sooner; however, the full analytical model would require that timeframe.

Kelly discussed options for the debris basin, recommending that an excavator be kept on standby to actively divert debris flows into the northern portion of the basin while keeping the main channel open. He also discussed the High Line Ditch and the potential to redirect flows to the north, and he touched on the upper tributary structures, describing the range of NRCS-eligible measures including PAL structures, WASCObS, and debris basins that could slow debris in the upper watershed.

When asked about work on Forest Service land, Kelly stated that Ensign had worked frequently with the Forest Service on similar structures, that these types of measures are typically approved, and that emergency NEPA authorities can accelerate those clearances significantly. He indicated that for many of these structures, the cultural resource review may be as simple as a desktop analysis.

***Sunrise/Jones and DeMille**

Since Marcor Platt from MarcorSEN Engineering had been caught in traffic and was going to be late, Sunrise/Jones and DeMille went next.

The joint team of Sunrise Engineering and Jones and DeMille included Trent Brown (Sunrise, assistant project manager), Jason Dodds (Jones and DeMille, lead project manager and former NRCS watershed engineer who previously served Millard County), Ben Coray (Sunrise, Kanosh resident of nearly seven years and the local boots-on-the-ground representative), and Jesse Ralphs (Jones and DeMille, vice president of Central Utah operations). The team noted that together their two firms employ over 90 licensed engineers and more than 650 staff, and that they are already under contract with Millard County for the longer-term EWP project covering the same fire area.

Jason Dodds walked the Council through the three phases of the overall flood protection process: (1) immediate response — already underway; (2) the exigent EWP project — the 90-day NRCS-funded emergency phase being discussed tonight; and (3) the longer-term EWP project through the county. He explained that the NRCS exigency process covers technical assistance at 100 percent and financial assistance at a 75/25 split. He noted the team had already requested a 90-day extension (rather than the standard 10-day window) and that the NRCS-sponsor agreement was expected within 10 to 14 days of submission. He emphasized that only work performed after the agreement is signed is eligible for reimbursement.

Dodds stressed that for the 90-day exigent phase, a full H&H model is not required; the scope of work consists of debris removal, obstruction removal, clearing and snagging, and open-channel work — measures for which the team could produce designs within approximately two weeks of contract award. He stated that FEMA floodplain maps and existing NRCS data are sufficient to direct those immediate measures.

Ben Coray presented the team's Damage Survey Report (DSR) map, which had already been submitted to the NRCS national office for review. The map identified specific locations throughout the canal and ditch system where clearing, obstruction removal, and channel improvements could be implemented immediately within the exigent timeframe.

The team addressed the High Line Ditch culvert situation directly, recommending against a box culvert for the short term due to plugging risk from high-debris flows and the associated hazard if the auxiliary spillway becomes blocked while the dam has known structural deficiencies. They advocated for a low-water crossing as the preferred long-term solution because it remains visible, can be cleared quickly with an excavator, and does not create an enclosed plugging risk. For the immediate term, they recommended obstruction removal from the existing culverts.

Ben Corey addressed the town's water system, noting that the well building floor elevation had been raised significantly during construction and is protected, that air vents on the spring line have been extended to five feet above grade, and that isolation valves have been installed at the springs.

The team strongly advised against routing floodwater through the newly installed irrigation pipelines, emphasizing that post-burn flows carry rock, sediment, and debris — not clean water — and that enclosing that material in pipelines would cause severe damage.

On the question of funding and cost to the town, Jason Dodds explained that their engineering fees for the exigent phase are covered under the NRCS technical assistance provision at no cost to the municipality. He stated the team would work aggressively to structure match requirements using in-kind labor, state DEM funding, and other non-federal sources to minimize or eliminate out-of-pocket expense to Kanosh. He confirmed that a cap on town funds could be incorporated directly into the engagement agreement.

Regarding upper tributary work, Dodds acknowledged the value of check dams and sediment control structures upstream but noted the complexity of implementing NRCS water and sediment control basin (WASCOB) standards within a 90-day window, particularly given cross-agency (NRCS/Forest Service) coordination requirements. He committed to exploring those options and to working with the Forest Service to identify feasible solutions, but could not guarantee they would fall within the exigent scope.

***MarcorSEN Engineering**

Marcor Platt of MarcorSEN Engineering presented last as he was late for his original time slot.

Marcor is a Kanosh native who lived in town from first grade through his junior year of high school, presented next. He noted that his firm specializes in structural and civil engineering with hydrologic and hydraulic modeling capabilities, and that he had recently completed a fire-related watershed study at the Ashley National Forest.

Marcor walked the Council through the three watersheds feeding into Kanosh — the Dry Wash watershed, the Kanosh watershed, and the Paiute Village watershed — and noted that all three appeared to be essentially entirely within the Widemouth Fire burn perimeter. He described the anticipated increase in runoff peak, volume, and timing that results from a high-severity burn, illustrated by a hydrograph comparison.

His proposed approach centered on a five-question framework: quantifying the post-burn runoff increase, assessing impacts on the debris basin, determining how much flow will pass through the 5-foot culvert toward town, evaluating creek capacity, and modeling the town drainage system. He discussed using the NRCS curve number method and a 100-year design storm.

Marcor acknowledged that a formal burn severity map was not yet available but said his team would not wait for it — they would use satellite imagery and conduct field infiltration tests to

characterize burn severity themselves. His hydrologic modeling engineer had already begun work on the watershed.

He offered a preliminary cost estimate of \$40,000 to \$80,000 for the full study, noting the wide range reflected uncertainty in data quality. He also briefly mentioned the earthen dam's known seepage issue, suggesting that addressing it could relieve pressure on the culvert routing water into town.

In response to Mayor Crabb's question about slowing water in the upper watershed, Marcor acknowledged it was a good idea but stated his firm's focus was on the town's immediate choke points and diversion opportunities rather than retention upstream.

Invited Expert Commentary

*David Whitaker, retired BLM fire rehabilitation specialist and brother of Mayor Crabb, addressed the Council following the presentations. He drew on 25 years of BLM experience installing erosion control structures following wildfires. He described the effectiveness of earthen check dams in small upper-watershed tributary drainages, explaining that when properly constructed with compacted lifts and armored spillways, they can dramatically reduce the volume and debris load reaching the main channel. He cited a specific example above a community near Oak City where a series of such structures reduced debris flow impacts to near-zero from a subsequent storm more than twice as large as the one that had previously nearly destroyed the community's water supply. He advocated for a two-pronged approach — protecting the canyon mouth while simultaneously installing upper-watershed check dams — and stated that, in his experience, such structures are most effective when installed in the first fall following a fire, in advance of spring snowmelt runoff.

*Brian Monroe, District Ranger for the U.S. Forest Service, spoke briefly in support of the overall direction of the presentations. He confirmed that his emergency NEPA authorities are currently in effect, and that proposals submitted promptly would be reviewed under emergency timelines. He cautioned that delay in requesting approvals would undermine the emergency justification. He confirmed that Kendall Bagley of the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources is already pursuing Watershed Restoration Initiative funding for seeding and chaining on Forest Service lands. He noted that Forest Service funding streams — BAER (Burned Area Emergency Response, one-year window from containment) and BAR (Burned Area Recovery, multi-year congressional appropriation) — are both active and that the Forest Service chief is aware of Kanosh's situation. He expressed enthusiasm for the engineering concepts discussed, particularly the rolling dip/low-water crossing concept for the High Line Ditch as well as flood control in upper tributaries as this was time sensitive and should be done quickly.

Action: Discussion/Approval as Directed by Council Members

Following the presentations, the Council discussed the four proposals. All members independently expressed a preference for the joint Sunrise/Jones and DeMille team. Key points raised in deliberation included:

- Council Member Brian Batt appreciated the combined team's depth of resources and their demonstrated experience responding to active post-fire flood events in Paiute County.

- Council Member Josh Whitaker noted that all firms were somewhat lacking in addressing upper watershed mitigation, and that he and David Whitaker had agreed a two-pronged approach was essential. He supported Sunrise/Jones and DeMille primarily due to their existing county relationship and their willingness to explore collaboration with Franson Civil.
- Council Member Tim White noted that the team answered his questions thoroughly during the presentation and highlighted their local presence and experience.
- Council Member Dan DeGraffenried, while also supporting Sunrise/Jones and DeMille, raised a concern that a large team could generate unexpectedly high costs. He noted that Franson Civil's billing rates were comparatively lower. However, he acknowledged that the team's funding expertise could offset higher hourly costs, and the promise of full technical assistance coverage was significant.
- Mayor Crabb noted a personal lean toward Franson Civil due to cost, but was ultimately persuaded that Sunrise/Jones and DeMille's existing engagement in the project and ability to mobilize immediately outweighed that concern. She also emphasized the desire to include upper watershed mitigation as a condition of the engagement.

Council members requested and received confirmation from Jason Dodds that: (1) the engagement agreement can include a cap on town out-of-pocket expenditures; (2) the town, as sponsor, retains authority to approve or decline individual measures; and (3) the team would make best efforts to pursue upper tributary mitigation under the exigent scope and, if not feasible there, through the longer-term county EWP project.

Motion to select Sunrise Engineering and Jones and DeMille Engineering as the engineering firm for emergency flood abatement services, based on a finding that an emergency exists and that normal procurement procedures would cause an unacceptable delay; to limit initial authorization to the emergency flood abatement work described in the presentations; to include a cap of \$100,000 in town funds as the maximum out-of-pocket expenditure; and to direct the engineering team to include efforts toward immediate flood mitigation in the upper tributaries, was made by Mayor Crabb and seconded by Council Member Josh Whitaker. All council members voted in favor as noted below: (Council Member Dan DeGraffenried had left before the voting took place)

Mayor Wenda Crabb	Aye
Council Members	
Josh Whitaker	Aye
Brain Batt	Aye
Tim White	Aye

Discussion on Town Flood Plan

Mayor Crabb introduced the Town Flood Emergency Mitigation Plan, a flood chain-of-command document developed by Brad Freeman. She described it as a detailed, operational plan for mobilizing the community during an active flood event, including designated division managers, a rapid flood mitigation team, logistics and equipment operator groups, and block-level flood captains.

Discussion arose regarding the appointment of a Flood Chief to lead the operational structure. Council Member Batt noted that his concurrent membership on the town fire department could create a conflict, as a flood event and a fire event could be simultaneous. Brad Freeman explained the command hierarchy: the mayor oversees communications and external coordination, the Flood Chief manages on-the-ground operations, and division managers and team leaders report up through that structure. The Council agreed that appointing the Flood Chief could be tabled to a subsequent regular meeting, while adoption of the plan itself could proceed tonight.

Motion to accept the Emergency Flood Mitigation Plan as outlined in the flood chain-of-command document was made by Council Member Brian Batt and seconded by Council Member Tim White. All council members voted in favor as noted below:

Mayor Wenda Crabb	Aye
Council Members	
Josh Whitaker	Aye
Brain Batt	Aye
Tim White	Aye

Adjourn

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Council Member Tim White and seconded by Council Member Brian Batt. All council members voted in favor as noted below:

Mayor Wenda Crabb	Aye
Council Members	
Josh Whitaker	Aye
Tim White	Aye
Brian Batt	Aye

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:33 PM.