

**IRON COUNTY COMMISSION MEETING
SEPTEMBER 28, 2026**

Minutes of the Special Iron County Commission meeting convened at 9:00 a.m.
September 28, 2026, in Commission Chambers at the Iron County Courthouse, Parowan, Utah.

Officers in attendance included:

Kenneth Robinson	Commission Chair
Michael Bleak	Commissioner
Paul Cozzens	Commissioner
Jonathan T. Whittaker	County Clerk

Also present:

Lucas Little	County Auditor
Terry Palmer	Building & Zoning
Sam Woodall	Deputy Attorney
Richard Wilson	Engineer
Lori Eichelberger	Justice Court
Brett Hamilton	Planner
Bruce Anderson	Public Works

Others in Attendance:

Bob Ballou	Rand Bettridge	Carson Brown
Jim Peters		

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INVOCATION

An invocation was offered by Terry Palmer.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Those assembled were led in the Pledge of Allegiance by Ken Robinson.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Michael Bleak made a motion to approve the minutes of the Iron County Commission meeting held on September 14, 2026. Second by Kenneth Robinson. Voting: Michael Bleak, Aye; Paul Cozzens, Absent, Aye; Kenneth Robinson, Aye.

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT

Michael Bleak made a motion to approve Claims for Payment from September 14, 2026, to September 27, 2026. Second by Kenneth Robinson. Voting: Michael Bleak, Aye; Paul Cozzens, Absent; Kenneth Robinson, Aye.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Terry Palmer, Iron County Building & Zoning Administrator, reported on the Building Department. As of September 24, 2026, Building & Zoning had issued 408 permits (417 in 2025), 153 permits for new single-family dwellings (128 in 2025), 4,209 completed project reviews, and 2,824 inspections. Terry noted that Trent Sukowaty, Building Inspector, was scheduled to take his Commercial Electrical & Commercial Building test in October. Upcoming projects included: BZI and South Central Communications were working on a project in the BZI Industrial Park; Silver Hills Industrial Park had 5 shops/businesses being built; Lakeside Industrial Park had 3 shops/businesses being built in the Harker Subdivision; AMPAC expansion was projected to be completed by the end of December; the Fremont Solar Project north of Paragonah was progressing; the Sonrise Christian Church was adding a large Chapel area; 2 Commercial permits were issued on Thursday, September 24th, and he had spoken with a Financial Company working on loan paperwork for the Pronghorn Data Center. Terry reported that the new Sheriff's Complex was progressing and explained the current status of work. In Code Enforcement Riley Westwood continued working on call-in complaints regarding nuisance problems in Iron County. Terry reported that the budget was on track. In Building Maintenance: Thayne Hainsworth and Landon Wall completed xeriscaping around the Justice Court Building parking lot, spent many hours preparing for the fair at the Iron County Fairgrounds, and assisted Bruce Anderson at the Road Department with installing new fencing. Mike Bleak expressed his appreciation for Riley Westwood, Iron County Code Enforcement, and Sam Woodall, Iron County Deputy Attorney, for handling a cockroach infestation in Iron County.

Brett Hamilton, Iron County Planner, reported that he continued to work on the draft Ordinance for the data center and strategic developments. Brett noted that the county held an Open House meeting to gather additional community feedback and input on the data center. He would present the draft Ordinance to the Iron County Planning Commission on October 8th, and to the Iron County Commission on October 12th for a potential vote. He explained that the moratorium ended November 22nd. If there were any changes, they could be made and still be presented to the commission on October 26th. There had been numerous community feedbacks and inputs that had been beneficial. The Planning Commission was trying to do their best to protect the interests of property owners, but also the interests of Iron County at large, to keep everybody protected and safe. Brett reported that, regarding the Data Center, over the course of the last year, there were approximately 5,500 emails and 2,000 phone calls. There was a discussion regarding the Open House.

Richard Wilson, Iron County Engineer, noted that the High T Project was completed. The traffic light was placed on Iron Springs Road and Hwy 56. Richard reported that work on improvements to Iron Springs had progressed quickly and was expected to be completed out to Desert Mound by October 20th. There was more money allotted to Iron County, allowing them to go out to the Shooting Range road with the mill. There was a third lane being added at the landfill for a turning lane. This was done as part of the initial study and the gift of additional funds, which would not have to be matched by Iron County. There was a discussion regarding the Iron Springs Road infrastructure. Richard reported that Hayden Adams joined the Sign

Department and had been trained on approximately 85 to 90% of what needed to be done. Hayden had begun to inventory the roads. He spent the best part of Friday driving out to Modena, going all the way to Beaver, and would begin systematically looking at our signage. Brian Norton, Sign Technician, had been extraordinary, a self-starter and self-motivated. Latonya Heaton started last month as the new Administrative Assistant, to be cross-trained by Merilee Wilson, who would be retiring in December.

Michael Bleak, Iron County Commissioner, reported that he attended the Utah 2034 Champion Schools Kickoff, which was an initiative by the 2034 Olympics for school attendance and literacy in elementary schools across the state of Utah. Students would be rewarded for attendance and reading to improve literacy. Mike attended a meeting with the Fifth District Court to introduce plans for a new courthouse for them, which would be an ongoing discussion. He spent the better part of a day on a Color Country tour with Councilman Burton from Parowan City and his brother Rex. He met with Kelly Oldroyd to discuss Iron County's position on the proposed Brian Head expansion. Mike met with Zion Solar to get an update on their project, and they were beginning to move forward on the solar and battery storage. The Restaurant Tax Board had a preliminary meeting for their upcoming grant application process and grant program. Commissioner Bleak reported that he had a coordinating meeting with Terry Palmer, Building and Zoning, and Jennifer Bradbury, HR, to discuss upcoming needs in their departments, and met with Molly Halterman, Parowan City Mayor, Maria Twitchell, Tourism, and John Oglesby, Utah Summer Games Director, to discuss a possible Championship High School Facility in Parowan. He attended a meeting with Ken Robinson, Kelly Oldroyd, Maria Twitchell, and Congresswoman Malloy and some of her staff regarding the Brian Head expansion.

Paul Cozzens, Iron County Commissioner, noted that at the last commission meeting, he mentioned that it was time to begin looking into selling the existing jail, and suggested going to the Board of Realtors and having them send an email out to the realtors in the area and ask for bids on what they would charge Iron County, percentage-wise, to sell the jail. Terry Palmer, Iron County Building and Zoning, reported that the land could be worth a half-million, but the building was probably not worth much, and could be a liability. Nothing could be built on the front lawn, maybe a parking lot, because an irrigation line runs there. Commissioner Cozzens noted that he could call the Board of Realtors, if everyone agreed, and ask them to send an email out to all the realtors and say, "Give us a bid for what you would sell it for." Terry Palmer noted that Iron County could also list it on the website. There was a continued discussion about selling the existing jail. He reported that he attended the Data Center Open House and the Southwest Behavioral Health meeting this last week. He noted that Mike Deal, SW Behavioral Health Executive Director, would retire next April after 30 years. A statewide committee would be created to find a new director, and he explained the process of choosing a new director. Paul had participated in some calls with Rich Saunders, BrightNight Solar, and discussed the different ideas on solar and power generation, regarding their possible plans moving forward with a data center out by Newcastle.

Bruce Anderson, Iron County Public Works Director, reported on the Road Department with completed projects: the Gold Springs project, with all the signs up. There was a small section that still needed seed on the rehab, which would be done in October; 5600 West in Beryl, Kevin Woods Road, signs were up, and the road was striped. They had received several compliments on the road, and chipping, flushing, and striping were complete for this year. He noted that he previously reported that a new state mandate required any road posted over 35 miles an hour to be striped. A crew would do skin patching next month. Bruce reported that the landfill received the reimbursement from the Sawmill fire. He expressed his appreciation to Spencer Rollo, Fire Warden, for helping with the reimbursement. Current projects included: work on mountain roads in the Right Hand Canyon by Kanarraville, and Bear Valley Road between Little Creek and Hwy 20; work on the coverts on the west side of Paragonah Frontage Road; and a cattle guard was placed in Dry Lakes, with mowing and some patching there. He reported that the rise in fuel prices was a major issue in the landfill and road budgets and would require a budget adjustment. Bruce reported on the Landfill. All the equipment was working well. Metal recycling netted \$89,800, which Luke Little, Iron County Auditor, received. Bruce

reported that fires at the landfill continued to be a problem. He explained the different ways fires were caused and the issue with lithium batteries. They had bull-hogged trees all around the landfill, which was close to 100 acres now. Bruce noted that they continued to keep busy with cleanups around the county of illegally dumped tires and trash. Paul Cozzens asked Bruce if slurry road maintenance worked better versus a chip seal. Bruce explained the difference between the two. He noted that slurry worked better on low-speed roads, but the friction was not good on high-speed roads. Commissioner Cozzens asked if Bruce was still looking at a portable crusher to maintain these roads. Bruce reported that he was trying to buy one, but he could rent one, and the maintenance was much less expensive. He explained how they use the crusher.

Kenneth Robinson, Iron County Commissioner, noted that he met with VanTrust and discussed the sewer line, and they were moving forward with that project. As Commissioner Bleak mentioned, they attended a meeting with Parowan City, and Brian Head about the Brian Head Expansion Project. He attended the 5th District Court meeting regarding their proposed new expansion. Ken reported that Senator Rex Ship organized an Open House meeting with Mike Schultz, SUU, and local officials. They reported on what was happening with the state legislature, data centers, and water issues.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were offered.

INTRODUCTION OF JIM PETERS, WHO WILL BE PRESENTING THE CORE RESPONSIBILITIES OF A JUDICIAL ASSISTANT

Lori Eichelberger, Iron County Justice Court, noted that Jim Peters had been with the Utah State Courts since 2007; for the last 10 years he had been the Iron County Justice Court Administrator. Lori turned the time over to Mr. Peters. Jim noted that he had been with the Judicial Courts for 19 years now, and he wanted to focus primarily on the importance of a Judicial Assistant because there was so much more to it than making copies. What they do is a highly specialized and technically demanding role. Jim reported on the Core responsibilities of a Judicial Assistant, which included: Mastering multiple technical systems, exercising delegated Legal Authority, and properly classifying documents. Managing High legal risk and the real-world impact of errors, complying with strict financial accounting and audits, and intensive tracking and analytical reporting. He noted that Judicial Assistants were subject to three different audits at the state level. Jim reported that Lori Eichelberger, from his perspective, runs one of the best offices in the state. She and her staff were absolutely amazing. Mr. Peters reported on the Importance of Judicial Assistants. He explained that a Judicial Assistant performing as expected ensures that due process was followed and legal rights were protected, warrants were not issued inappropriately, criminal history information was correct, and defendants were not harmed by preventable mistakes. A well-trained Judicial Assistant ensured that confidentiality was maintained as required by law; appeals, reversals, and additional court workload were reduced or eliminated; delays were minimized, and the court runs efficiently; other government systems have reliable information; public confidence in the court was strengthened; and public confidence in Iron County and government was strengthened.

DISCUSSION REGARDING A POTENTIAL SEWER AGREEMENT WITH VAN TRUST

Sam Woodall, Iron County Deputy Attorney, noted that a meeting was held last week with VanTrust that was productive. Their intent was to work with Iron County to ensure that sewer connections could be provided for their project, and to provide a proposed agreement today, which may have been satisfied at the meeting. Richard Wilson, Iron County Engineer, explained that VanTrust drafted a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for their attorneys to review before it was brought before the commission. No action was taken.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF UPDATING THE IRON COUNTY FEE SCHEDULE

Lucas Little, Iron County Auditor, reported that there were Fee updates to the Iron County Fee Schedule in the following departments: Attorney's Office, Building & Zoning, and the Landfill. The Iron County Fee Schedule would be published on the Iron County Website: www.ironcounty.ut.gov.

Michael Bleak made a motion to approve the update to the Iron County Fee Schedule as presented. Second by Kenneth Robinson. Voting: Michael Bleak, Aye; Paul Cozzens, Absent; Kenneth Robinson, Aye.

DISCUSSION REGARDING VACATING TWO ROAD SECTIONS IN CHEKSHANI CLIFFS

Richard Wilson, Iron County Engineer, explained that this road vacation had been discussed between himself and Bruce Anderson, Iron County Public Works Director, for the last several months. The Chekshani Cliffs subdivision was about 30 years old, and they had initially planned to do some activity centers and riding arenas as part of the development, which never came to fruition. The mentioned road had not been used and was deteriorating. Rich reported that the staff believed that it was not in Iron County's best interest to continue to have that road on the road system because it was a dedicated road that was falling apart. Richard continued to report on the concerns from residents and the purpose regarding vacating the two road sections. This item would be on the November 9th Iron County Commission Agenda for a possible vote. No action was taken.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE RATIFICATION OF SEWER UPSIZING REIMBURSEMENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN IRON COUNTY, CEDAR CITY, AND BZI

Sam Woodall, Iron County Deputy Attorney, explained that the Agreement was brought before the Commission in April of this year and we discussed what Iron County position was on the split percentage cost share. The developer was proposing to install a new sewer infrastructure for its approximately 825-acre development project located at 1356 N Iron Springs Road, Cedar City. Cedar City and Iron County seek to have the sewer infrastructure within the project upsized to accommodate additional off-site uses. Both had determined that it was in the best interest of the public health, public safety, and general welfare of Cedar City and Iron County that they reimburse the developer for the cost of upsizing the sewer infrastructure for the following amounts. Cedar City to pay 62.3% or \$796,912.41, and Iron County to pay 37.7% or \$482,240.74. The agreement was approved by Cedar City, and Commissioner Robinson signed off on the agreement, which was the purpose of the ratification.

Paul Cozzens made a motion to approve the ratification of the Sewer Upsizing Reimbursement Agreement as presented. Second by Michael Bleak. Voting: Michael Bleak, Aye; Paul Cozzens, Aye; Kenneth Robinson, Aye.

NON-DELEGATED ITEMS

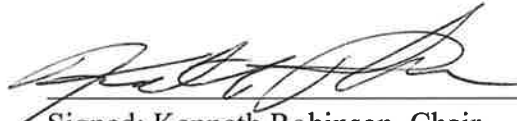
County Boards:

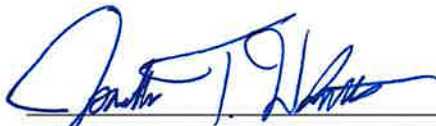
Michael Bleak made a motion to create a Commission Liaison to the Cedar City Mayor, which would be the Iron County Commission Chair. Second by Paul Cozzens. Voting: Michael Bleak, Aye; Paul Cozzens, Aye; Kenneth Robinson, Aye.

Paul Cozzens requested that there be some type of recognition to members of the Iron County Planning Commission (ICPC) Board when their term was over. He noted that the term on the ICPC was 3-9 years, which was volunteer service. Members on the board consistently get verbally abused by citizens whenever they disagree with what was required of them. It would continue as a result of the Data Center issue. Paul reported that Mark Halterman's term was up on October 8th after 9 years of volunteer service. Luke Little, Iron County Auditor, explained that when an employee retires, there was a gift given to them. He noted that he would meet with Commissioner Cozzens to discuss the process.

ADJOURNMENT

Kenneth Robinson, Iron County Commission Chair, declared adjournment.


Signed: Kenneth Robinson, Chair


Attest: Jonathan T. Whittaker, Clerk

