SANTA CLARA CITY COUNCIL WORK MEETING
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2026
MEETING MINUTES

THE CITY COUNCIL FOR SANTA CLARA CITY, WASHINGTON, UTAH, met for a Work Meeting on Wednesday, September 23, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers located at 2603 Santa Clara Drive, Santa Clara, Utah. The meeting will be broadcasted on our city website at https://santaclarautah.gov.

Present: Mayor Jarett Waite
Councilman Mark Hendrickson
Councilman Dave Pond
Councilwoman Christa Hinton
Councilwoman Janene Burton
Councilman Justin Caplin

Staff Present: Brock Jacobsen, City Manager
Selena Nez, City Recorder
Matt Ence, City Attorney
Cody Mitchell, Building Official
Dan Cazier, Fire Chief
Casey Stratton, Public Works Director
Gary Hall, Power Director
Ryan VonCannon, Parks Director
Lance Haynie, Government Affairs Director
Jaron Studly, Police Chief

Other Present: Rick Rosenberg

1. Call to Order

Mayor Jarett Waite called the Santa Clara City Council Work Meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. Present from the council were Councilman Mark Hendrickson, Councilman David Pond, Councilwoman Christa Hinton, Councilwoman Burton and Councilman Justin Caplin.

2. Working Agenda

A. General Business:

1. Discussion regarding Water Shortage Drought Stages. Presented by Casey Stratton, Public Works Director.

Public Works Director Casey Stratton provided an overview of the Washington County Conservancy District's water shortage contingency plan, which was adopted in 2025. The plan establishes five drought severity stages using a tool that processes historical and current data to classify water supply conditions. Stage 0 represents normal conditions requiring no reduction; Stage 1 requires a 10% reduction in district water usage; Stage 2 requires 20%; Stage 3 requires 40%; and Stage 4 requires a 60% reduction. Stratton noted that if a municipality exceeds its reduced allotment, the cost of regional water increases dramatically 300% for 1–10% overage, 400% for 11–20% overage, and 500% for overages of 21% or more. Water budgets are issued to each municipality based on equivalent residential connections, or ERCs, where one ERC equals approximately 192,500 gallons per year, or 16,041 gallons per month.

Stratton reported that Santa Clara used only 13% district water in 2025 and that the Conservancy District has engaged an engineering firm to build individualized water budget models for each municipality, with results expected in the near future. He expressed confidence that Santa Clara's conservation habits may already place the city under the threshold required in Stage 1, though he

noted that in drier years, such as 2019, district water usage reached as high as 21%. He emphasized that a well malfunction during peak summer months could dramatically increase district water dependency and associated costs.

Mayor Waite asked whether district water usage varies by season, and Stratton confirmed that use is concentrated in mid-summer, coinciding with when drought stages would most likely be triggered. Councilman Pond asked about the city's full allotment, and Stratton explained that this figure is still being calculated by the Conservancy District's engineering models, which will factor in Santa Clara's approximately 3,400 water connections and a three-year historical average of district water usage.

Councilman Caplin noted his reading of the water budget methodology and raised the question of whether the budget is calculated against the city's total usage or solely its district water usage. Stratton confirmed that only district water usage is subject to the reduction requirements and potential overage charges. Caplin suggested this may mean Santa Clara is already well within any reduced allotment, given that the city self-supplies approximately 87% of its water. Stratton agreed that this was possible, though uncertainty around well reliability remained a concern.

Former Mayor Rick Rosenberg, who serves on the Washington County Water Conservancy District board, confirmed that the board has not yet formally discussed implementing drought stages but noted that preparatory conversations had already taken place. He shared a list of potential city-level conservation measures developed in earlier planning discussions with staff, including suspending construction water use and grading permits during peak season, deferring annual fire hydrant flushing to winter months, and asking residents to reduce outdoor watering days. He underscored that outdoor residential use is the largest contributor to overall city water consumption, and that in more severe drought stages, outdoor use would be eliminated entirely.

The council discussed directing staff to issue a request for proposals for an engineering study to build Santa Clara's formal drought response plan. Stratton noted that the city has surplus conservation funds held by the Conservancy District approximately $59,000 to $63,000 remaining after current turf buyback commitments that can be accessed for conservation-related projects such as this. Staff were asked to prepare an RFP and bring proposals back to the council for review. City Manager Brock Jacobsen suggested a 30-day RFP window, and the consensus was to proceed with soliciting bids from qualified engineering firms, with one firm already having expressed interest after performing similar work for Washington City.

Councilwoman Burton raised resident concerns about development density and its effect on water usage. Stratton referenced recent countywide data showing that despite several thousand new residences being added in the prior year, total water use actually decreased due to stricter water conservation requirements in new construction. Mayor Waite noted that based on a quick calculation, the remaining turf buyback funds would support approximately 35 households at the average payout of $1,700, equating to roughly two to three more years of program activity at the current rate of participation.

2. **Discussion regarding City Code, Chapter 5.04.100, Revocation or Denial of Business License. Presented by Brock Jaconsen, City Manager and Jim McNulty, Planning Director.**

City Manager Brock Jacobsen explained that staff had identified an issue in reading through the city's business licensing code: under the current language, the authority to revoke or deny a business license renewal rests with the city council rather than city staff. Jacobsen and City Attorney Matt Ence agreed this arrangement was problematic, as it placed both the initial decision and the appeal with the same body. The proposed change would transfer the denial and revocation authority to staff, with any appeal then brought to the city council. Jacobsen expressed that he was genuinely surprised this had been the existing arrangement, noting it had apparently gone unnoticed for years due to how rarely revocations occur.

The specific code changes proposed by City Attorney Ence included removing references to city council as the decision-making body in the revocation section, revising the notice provisions so that

city staff issues written notice of intent to deny or revoke along with an explanation, and adding a new appeal provision allowing an applicant to appeal an administrative denial to the city council within 14 days of staff action.

Councilman Caplin raised a concern about timeliness, noting discomfort with a business remaining in an unresolved status for an extended period. He asked whether a deadline for staff to act on a renewal application could be incorporated. City Attorney Ence suggested tying a deadline to receipt of the application, and Jacobsen recommended 30 days as a realistic window given that the majority of renewals arrive simultaneously in January and one staff member handles all business licensing. Councilman Pond suggested 45 days as a workable deadline, which would carry the review period through mid-February and allow a clean March 1st expiration date for any application that had received no response. The council found this approach reasonable.

Jacobsen also proposed language to address businesses that do not file for renewal at all, with the consensus being that such licenses should be considered expired rather than formally revoked, since the city takes no action and the license simply lapses without renewal. City Attorney Ence agreed that treating non-renewal separately from a denial was the cleaner approach. Staff were directed to incorporate these adjustments a 45-day review window, a March 1st deemed-expired date for non-filers, and the appeal provisions and bring the revised ordinance language back for council adoption.

3. **Discussion regarding Chapel Street and Tobler Park. Presented by Brock Jacobsen, City Manager and Ryan VonCannon, Parks Director.**

City Manager Jacobsen briefed the council on staff's ongoing work to refine the alignment of Chapel Street as it extends south through the area that includes the historic Hafen orchard and the future Tobler Park. The previously proposed alignment ran directly south through the property, which would have consumed a substantial portion of the orchard. Following an on-site visit by Jacobsen, Parks Director Ryan VonCannon, Public Works Director Stratton, and another staff member, an alternative alignment was developed in coordination with an engineering firm. The revised proposal shifts the road to the east earlier, bending it away from the orchard and saving an estimated 30 to 40 feet of orchard land that would otherwise be lost.

Jacobsen noted that the adjacent property owner, Ned Hafen, has an approved three-lot subdivision in development, and that staff are coordinating timing with the Hafen project to potentially combine mobilization and reduce costs for both the city's Chapel Street segment and the subdivision's required frontage improvements. No formal design for Tobler Park has been established at this time, and Jacobsen indicated that grading and retaining wall needs would be evaluated as part of the design process, given a four-to-five-foot grade differential between the road level and the park area.

Councilman Caplin expressed support for the revised alignment, noting the original straight-through route had seemed unnecessary when he first saw it, and asked whether the road could shift even further east. City Attorney Ence noted for the record that the city had exercised good foresight in acquiring the Arlo and Ramona Hafen home while Ramona was still living there, crediting both the staff who facilitated the acquisition and the Hafen family for their willingness to work with the city. He noted that this early action had made the current flexibility possible. The council expressed general support for the revised alignment and directed staff to continue advancing the design.

3. Staff Reports

Various department heads provided updates:

Police Chief, Jaron Studley reported:

- The department’s annual state threat assessment has not yet been received. If it does not arrive in time, the prior year’s plan will be used.
- Assisted in the successful apprehension of a U.S. Marshals fugitive who was found going through vehicles in Santa Clara.

- Officer Jon Ward completed his five-year tenure on the St. George Metro public order team and was recognized with an award during his final shift.
- The joint annual state-of-the-department meeting with the Ivins City Council is scheduled for October 22 at 5:30 PM at the Ivins City Center Street Station, followed by a private dinner for both councils at the police department. The public is invited to the presentation portion.

Government Affairs Director Lance Haynie had nothing to report

- Provided an update on recent FCC proposed rulemaking regarding wireline deployments, including a proposed 120-day shot clock and fee limitations for pole attachments.
- Staff submitted comments and provided examples to the City's legislative delegation regarding concerns with preserving the City's franchise fee authority and ability to charge for utility strike repairs.
- Provided updates on large-load energy consumer legislation and federal grant simplification efforts.
- Reported that the City's sensitive lands map update is nearing completion.
- Reported on an infrastructure initiative to migrate hosted services from external cloud providers to in-house servers, resulting in cost savings and improved performance. Some integration challenges with Esri software remain.

Parks Director, Ryan VonCannon reported:

- Resurfacing of the final two courts at Gubler Pickleball is being completed.
- Allied Fencing will replace the lower chain link sections of the backstops at Gubler in time for the Senior Games beginning October 5.
- Provided an update on the impact fee analysis, including a revised methodology for cemetery plot calculations based on projected plot counts rather than acreage per resident.
- The revised methodology has significantly increased eligible impact fee funding for columbariums and trail projects.

Power Director, Gary Hall reported:

- Crew work on the Silver Reef subdivision is nearly complete.
- A new vacuum trailer purchased through the capital equipment account has been received.
- Preparations are underway for Swiss Days power connections, with the goal of eliminating the need for generators at vendor sites.

Public Works Director, Casey Stratton reported:

- Upcoming coordination meetings with UDOT are planned to advance the Hamlin Parkway and Tuacahn Wash Trail projects.
- Both projects received DTEQ approval and are moving into environmental review.

Fire Chief, Dan Cazier reported on:

- Burn season has opened, and several City burn projects are being scheduled.
- The part-time administrative assistant position closed with 14 applicants.
- All wildland deployment crews have returned to town, and the department anticipates the wildland fire season may be concluding.
- The department responded to 14 fires, with multiple crews participating in several assignments.

Building Official, Cody Mitchell reported:

- Santa Clara's FEMA flood map revision submissions were confirmed to be in order following the September 15 Washington County community meeting hosted by the Utah Division of Emergency Management.
- Residential housing permits have picked up after a slow start to the fiscal year, with 14 permits issued, pending payment, or in review.

City Manager, Brock Jacobsen reported:

- The annual audit has been completed on-site, with auditors finishing their fieldwork and a few remaining data items outstanding.
- A KUTV news story was published regarding the large power bill incurred by the City in July related to a failing transformer at the generation building.
- Clarified that no rate changes to residents are anticipated.
- The transformer replacement will be funded through available funds or bonding.
- The Power Cost Adjustment mechanism is designed to spread any rate impact across a six-month rolling average, mitigating the effect on residents.
- Swiss Days preparations are underway, with tents, tables, and chairs having arrived.
- The community kickoff dinner is scheduled for the following evening, with the Volunteer of the Year, Grand Marshals, and royalty to be announced.
- Council members were reminded of travel arrangements for the upcoming League of Cities conference.

4. Adjournment

Mayor Waite adjourned the work meeting at 5:09 p.m., noting they would reconvene at 6:00 p.m. for the regular meeting.

Selena Nez
City Recorder

Approved: October 14, 2026