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

THE CITY COUNCIL FOR SANTA CLARA CITY, WASHINGTON, UTAH, met for a Regular Meeting on Wednesday, September 23, 2026, at 6:00 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 Justin Caplin
Councilwoman Janene Burton
Councilwoman Christa Hinton
Councilman Dave Pond
Councilman Mark Hendrickson

Staff Present: Brock Jacobsen, City Manager
Selena Nez, City Recorder
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

Others Present: Mindy Batt
Jennifer Chaffee
Mary Ann Novak

1. Call to Order

Mayor Jarett Waite called the regular scheduled meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. The mayor welcomed everyone and noted that a full council was present: Councilman Justin Caplin, Councilwoman Janene Burton, Councilwoman Christa Hinton, Councilman Dave Pond, and Councilman Mark Hendrickson.

2. Opening Ceremony

Pledge of Allegiance: Councilman Pond

Opening Comments: Councilman Pond

3. Conflicts and Disclosures

No other conflicts were disclosed by council members.

4. Working Agenda

A. Public Hearing(s) 6:00 pm

1. None

B. Consent Agenda

1. Approval of Minutes and Claims:
   - September 9, 2026, City Council Work and Regular Meeting
   - Claims through September 23, 2026

2. Calendar of Events:
   - October 12, 2026, Columbus Day (Offices Closed)
   - October 14, 2026, City Council Work and Regular Meeting
   - October 27-28, 2026, Utah City League of Cities and Towns Annual Convention

- October 28, 2026, City Council Work and Regular Meeting (Cancelled)

Motion: Councilman Hendrickson moved to APPROVE the consent agenda as presented. Councilwoman Burton seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Hendrickson - Aye, Pond - Aye, Hinton - Aye, Burton - Aye and Caplin - Aye. Motion passed unanimously.

C. General Business

1. Introduction of Santa Clara Royalty and Youth Council. Presented by Councilwoman Burton.

Councilwoman Burton introduced the Santa Clara Royalty program director, Mindy Batt, and Youth Council director, Jennifer Chaffee, and welcomed the members of both groups to the meeting.

Mrs. Batt reported that the Royalty had been active since their installation on May 9, attending numerous city parades throughout the summer. She highlighted that the group won Best Float at the Washington County Fair and earned the honor for a second consecutive year at the Dixie Roundup parade. She also noted that three members of the Royalty volunteered with the Lions Club during Dixie Roundup, and that the Lions Club had subsequently invited the Royalty to their sponsorship night with an offer to fund the program.

The five members of the Royalty introduced themselves: Cortnie Kendrick, Miss Santa Clara; Jenna Jensen, First Attendant; Taija Batt, Second Attendant; Anna Ence, Miss Spirit; and Klara Frei, Miss Congeniality. Miss Kendrick described her platform for the year, "Healthy Holidays," which aims to shift the focus of holidays toward family and community connection rather than commercialization. Her first planned event is a Pumpkin Walk at the park across the street from City Hall, to be held October 27–31, inviting classrooms, businesses, and families to create displays for public viewing and voting.

Ms. Chaffee reported that the Youth Council has 15 members for the year, noting that two members, Ali Nicholson and Taylor Nielsen were unable to attend. She described the group's primary focus as community service, including annual activities at the Santa Clara Cemetery for Veterans Day and Christmas. Councilwoman Burton added that the program includes a trip to the State Capitol, where members hear from the Governor and state representatives and observe a mock council meeting competition. Councilman Hendrickson inquired about the civics education component of the program. Ms. Chaffee acknowledged that there is room to expand government education within the curriculum, and Councilwoman Burton noted that the Capitol conference serves as the group's main civic learning experience. She also shared plans for department field trips, including visits to the Power Department, Parks and Recreation, Public Works, and the fire and police departments. All members of the Youth Council introduced themselves. Taija Batt was introduced as the Youth Council Mayor for the year. Group photographs were taken with the City Council.

2. Discussion and action to approve a Proclamation for October Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Presented by the Dove Center.

Trudy Despain, Deputy Director of the Dove Center, addressed the Council on behalf of Executive Director Jillian. She read a prepared statement noting that domestic violence affects individuals, families, and communities throughout Southern Utah regardless of age, background, or circumstance. She reported that the Dove Center served 1,496 individuals over the past year, providing 42,792 individual services, with a five percent increase in total bed nights and growing demand for counseling and outreach services.

Ms. Despain highlighted recent successes in expanding transitional housing, including a new building on Diagonal Street with four units for survivors and families, and an additional nine units of scattered-site transitional housing funded through federal grants. She also noted that the Kristy Suites unit was secured entirely through private local donations with no federal funding.

Mayor Waite read the full proclamation, which cited statistics on intimate partner violence in Utah, including that one in three women and one in four men will experience such violence in their lifetimes, that 60 to 75 percent of affected families have children impacted by the violence, and that domestic violence-related homicides account for over 40 percent of all homicides in Utah. Mayor Waite added personal remarks, noting his attendance at the opening of the Dove Center's new facility and the impact of their outreach materials displayed at his business.

Motion: Councilman Pond moved to APPROVE the Proclamation for October Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Councilwoman Hinton seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Hendrickson - Aye, Pond - Aye, Hinton - Aye, Burton - Aye and Caplin - Aye. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Discussion and action to approval a Proclamation declaring October 23-31, 2026, as Red Ribbon Week. Presented by Mary Ann Novak, St. George Elks Drug Awareness.

Mary Ann Novak, representing the St. George Elks Drug Awareness program, provided background on Red Ribbon Week, explaining that it originated in 1984 following the murder of DEA Agent Enrique Camarena by the Mexican cartel and was later declared a national observance by President Reagan during the last week of October. She noted the Elks organization's longstanding involvement in the program and its connection to domestic violence awareness efforts.

Ms. Novak read the proclamation, which called upon the community of Santa Clara to commit resources to ensuring the success of Red Ribbon Week and to encourage participation in drug prevention education activities not only during the observance but throughout the year. Mayor Waite read the resolving clause of the proclamation.

Motion: Councilwoman Burton moved to APPROVE a Proclamation declaring October 23-31, 2026, as Red Ribbon Week. Councilman Caplin seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Hendrickson - Aye, Pond - Aye, Hinton - Aye, Burton - Aye and Caplin - Aye. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Discussion and action to consider approval of an Award Bid for Substation Lines RFP. Presented by Gary Hall, Power Director.

Mayor Waite indicated that this item would be tabled pending receipt of outstanding bids.

Motion: Councilwoman Hinton moved to TABLE an Award Bid for Substation Lines RFP. Councilman Pond seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Hendrickson - Aye, Pond - Aye, Hinton - Aye, Burton - Aye and Caplin - Aye. Motion passed unanimously.

5. Discussion and action to consider affirming the City's Intent, pursuant to Utah Code § 11-48-103(2)(a)(i), to continue providing, maintaining and supporting 911 ambulance services within the City's municipal boundaries, as authorized by state law, as authorized by state law. Presented by Dan Cazier, Fire Chief.

Fire Chief Dan Cazier presented this item, explaining that it is required as part of the renewal process for the city's EMS transport license, which expires in November 2026 and must be renewed for the next four-year period. He provided context on Senate Bill 215, which took effect May 7, 2025, and simplified the relicensure process while requiring municipalities to formally identify and either directly provide or contract for ambulance service within their boundaries.

Chief Cazier clarified the distinction between 911 emergency transports and interfacility transports the latter involving transfers from medically managed facilities, such as the veterans home, to a hospital. He noted that the city's cost, quality, and access goals required under SB 215 had already been completed and submitted to the state. The action required of the Council was a signed document affirming that Santa Clara City intends to continue providing that service through its own fire department.

Councilman Caplin raised several questions, including whether providing ambulance services versus contracting with a private provider such as Gold Cross had been evaluated, and how the county-determined service area boundaries which extend beyond city limits to include areas such as Gunlock and west to the Nevada state line relate to this relicensure. Chief Cazier and City Manager Brock Jacobsen explained that the county is undertaking the same process concurrently and will issue an RFP for coverage of unincorporated areas. The city would have the option at that time to respond to that RFP or not. Chief Cazier noted that because fire response boundaries and EMS boundaries are distinct, the city would likely still respond to fire-

related calls such as vehicle extrications in those areas regardless of transport arrangements, and that having the transport paired with fire response allows the city to recoup revenue from those incidents.

Chief Cazier addressed the financial question directly, stating that EMS revenue currently funds approximately 6.5 staff positions and is projected to fund 7 positions in the coming year, with the city receiving ambulances and monitoring equipment through grants at little or no direct cost. He acknowledged that ongoing discussions with the county regarding fair compensation for service provided in unincorporated areas are continuing.

Councilwoman Hinton expressed strong support for maintaining the current service model, emphasizing that the goal is not merely cost savings but best value for residents. She noted the approximately four-minute response time and the quality of care built through the combined Santa Clara–Ivins Fire & Rescue department. Mayor Waite offered a specific example shared by a resident in which a dispatch to Saint George for a Gold Cross ambulance resulted in a roughly one-hour response time to an injury at Snow Canyon, contrasting that with the four-minute response local units would have provided.

Councilman Caplin clarified that his questions were not an attack on the department but a desire to ensure the city is making the best decision for both resident safety and fiscal responsibility. Chief Cazier welcomed the questions and affirmed that the department would not shy away from scrutiny.

Motion: Councilman Hendrickson moved to APPROVE the City's Intent, pursuant to Utah Code §11-48-103(2)(a)(i), to continue providing, maintaining and supporting 911 ambulance services within the City's municipal boundaries, as authorized by state law. Councilwoman Hinton seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Hendrickson - Aye, Pond - Aye, Hinton - Aye, Burton - Aye and Caplin - Aye. Motion passed unanimously.

5. Reports

A. Mayor / Council Reports

Councilman Justin Caplin offered no report.

Councilwoman Janene Burton reported on her ongoing work with the Youth Council and Royalty, noting the group's preparation for Swiss Days participation, upcoming field trips to city departments, and the coordination by Lainee Frei assigning youth members to various roles during the event.

Councilwoman Christa Hinton reported on the following activities: attendance at the America 250 lecture featuring retired Judge John Walton; participation in the ULCT five-and-six-member council webinar; attendance at the Five County AOG event at Bryce Canyon on September 10, including breakout sessions on conflict competence and advocacy; the St. George City 9/11 Memorial Program; the LPC meeting and her league board meeting; and noted that the LPC is taking its meetings on the road, with Santa Clara hosting on November 16. She also noted the Santa Clara 250 committee would be recognized at Swiss Days dinner the following evening.

Councilman Dave Pond reported on his attendance at the America 250 lecture and the LPC meeting and noted that he anticipates a significant amount of AI-related legislation in the coming session, with topics including the use of AI for plan review in the context of housing and land use.

Councilman Mark Hendrickson reported on attending the RISE conference hosted by the Chamber of Commerce, the America 250 lecture, and a local economic development walk along Santa Clara Drive with approximately 20 economic development professionals. He announced that the grant application for the Santa Clara Cattle Company / Frei's Beef USDA project has been submitted and that the cured beef product would be available for purchase at Frei's Fruit Stand within the week. He noted a meeting with Colette Cox to develop plans for downtown commercial emphasis, with the intention of presenting a dual shopping district concept "Shop Under the Sycamores" and "Shop on the Rocks" to the Council. He also referenced economic development presentations from Cole West and Intermountain Healthcare observed at a Black Desert meeting.

Mayor Waite reported on two DTEK meetings since the last session. At the first, the board approved two requests from Santa Clara: a shift of funds from the Pioneer Parkway widening project (which had grown cost-prohibitive) to the Tuacahn Wash Trail, and a revised scope for the Hamlin Parkway project, which will now complete only the segment from Rachel Drive to a planned roundabout on the SITLA parcel approximately one-third of the originally planned road due to increased construction costs. He attended the UAMPS conference, the opening night for the America First Performing Arts Center (noting Santa Clara and St. George were the only cities to donate), the public safety work group with Santa Clara and Ivins, the Washington County Mayor's Association meeting at the county jail with a tour of the new addition and a briefing on plans to expand the county task force, and the America 250 lecture. He also reported speaking on KDXU radio on August 4, attended a Utah Infrastructure Agency meeting where bonding limits were discussed, attended the RISE conference, and spoke to the St. George Sunshine Rotary. He reported on a second DTEK meeting featuring a presentation on advanced air mobility, noting Utah is among a handful of states designated as test beds for drone deliveries and air taxi technology, and that UDOT has assembled a municipal toolkit to help cities develop relevant ordinances. Finally, he reported on a Habitat Conservation Advisory Committee meeting at which a presentation on Gila monster genetics was given and noted that the Northern Corridor case is currently in summary judgment with a ruling expected in the first quarter of 2027, subject to potential appeal.

6. Closed Meeting Session

Mayor Waite confirmed no closed meeting session.

7. Adjournment

Motion: Councilwoman Hinton moved to adjourn. Councilman Pond seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

The City Council meeting was adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

Selena Nez
City Recorder

Approved: October 14, 2026