



Hildale City Council Meeting

Wednesday, September 10, 2025 at 6:00 PM
320 East Newel Avenue, Hildale City, Utah 84784

Minutes

Welcome, Introduction and Preliminary Matters: Mayor Jessop

Mayor Donia Jessop called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

Roll Call of Council Attendees: City Recorder

PRESENT

Mayor Donia Jessop
Council Member Luke Merideth via Zoom
Council Member JVar Dutson
Council Member Darlene Stubbs
Council Member Brigham Holm

ABSENT

Council Member Terrill Musser

Pledge of Allegiance: By Invitation of Mayor Jessop

Council Member Stubbs led the Council and the public in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Conflict of Interest Disclosures: Mayor and Council Members

None

Special Recognitions:

1. City Council Community Recognition and Appreciation Award

Mayor Jessop honored the Hildale/Colorado City Fire Department and EMS. She noted the timing was significant, as September includes the anniversary of the 9/11 attacks and the upcoming 10-year anniversary of the September 15, 2015 flood that devastated the community. She recalled how the fire department, alongside thousands of community volunteers, worked together during the flood, marking the beginning of Hildale's transformation and demonstrating that the community is all one family.

Mayor Jessop shared endorsements from medical professionals who work with the department:

- Dr. Patrick Carroll, Neonatologist and NICU Director: Praised the department as "top-notch," highlighting their professionalism and skill in managing newborn transports.
- Dr. Mike Wilson, Emergency Department Physician: Noted that the EMS crews take their roles very seriously and love to learn and serve their community.
- Dr. Brad Crosby, ER Doctor and Medical Director: Remarked on their exceptional dedication to training and community service.
- Darren Bushman, retired Director of the Utah Bureau of EMS: Stated the department "stands as one of the most qualified and dedicated Fire and EMS in the state of Utah."

Mayor Jessop presented the Community Recognition and Appreciation Award to the department as a symbol of the community's deepest gratitude for their service, sacrifice, and unwavering dedication.

Chief Jesse Barlow accepted the award on behalf of the department. He thanked the Mayor and Council, stating the recognition is a testament to the department's commitment and the community's unity. He acknowledged the 10th anniversary of the 2015 flood, a tender event where the community's strength emerged. He also paid tribute to the 343 firefighters who died on September 11, 2001, whose legacy inspires service with integrity and bravery.

Chief Barlow provided an overview of the department:

- It consists of over 80 dedicated volunteers.
- The roster includes 29 paramedics (with 6 more in training), 21 Advanced EMTs, 26 EMTs, and 54 firefighters.
- The current members represent a combined 646 years of service.
- The department responds to approximately 1,200 calls annually.
- A recent recruitment campaign has drawn 16 new individuals eager to join.

Chief Barlow then introduced the present members, recognizing their rank and years of service

Chief Barlow explained the department's ranking structure and the extensive certification required for each role. The Council and attendees took a group photograph with the department members to commemorate the occasion.

Public Presentations:

None

Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings: Council Members

2. City Council meeting minutes of: 06/25/25, 07/09/25, 08/06/25.

Motion made by Council Member Holm to approve City Council meeting minutes of: 06/25/25, 07/09/25, 08/06/25, Seconded by Council Member Stubbs.

Voting Yea: Council Member Merideth, Council Member Dutson, Council Member Stubbs, Council Member Holm

Oversight Items: 10 minutes - Mayor Jessop

3. Financial Report and Invoice Register

Mayor Jessop noted that based on guidance, a motion to approve the invoice register is no longer required, as it is a report for the Council's review. City Attorney Shawn confirmed that Council Members are free to ask questions about the register and can approve the overall financial report if they choose. Council Member Dutson asked for a clarification of the invoice approval process to ensure sufficient checks and balances are in place.

City Recorder Maxene Jessop outlined the triple-check process:

1. Department heads review and approve invoices for their respective departments.
2. All invoices are sent to the City Recorder for a full review before any payment is processed.
3. After checks are printed, they are reviewed and signed by the City Treasurer.
4. A second signature is then required from either the Mayor or the City Recorder before disbursement.

She stated this process ensures multiple layers of oversight on all payments.

Financial consultant Kipp added that his role, as defined in his contract, includes reviewing the city's internal controls. He affirmed that the City Recorder's role in this process is significant and that she does not personally prepare any checks.

City Attorney Guzman explained that the state legislature tightened rules on government investments following the Orange County, California bankruptcy, leading to the creation of the conservative and secure PTIF.

Council Member Dutson asked about surcharges from the Utah State Treasurer. It was further clarified that the specific surcharges in question are related to court fines (e.g., speeding tickets) that the city collects and is required to remit to the state.

The council was given a "heads up" that beginning in fiscal year 2026, Washington County will start charging administrative fees on pass-through taxes to cover their personnel costs. This may result in a slight reduction in tax revenues received by the city.

Motion made by Council Member Dutson to approve the Financial Report & Invoice Register, Seconded by Council Member Stubbs.

Voting Yea: Council Member Merideth, Council Member Dutson, Council Member Stubbs, Council Member Holm

Motion Carries

4. City Admin and Department reports

Mayor Jessop invited the Council to review the Department Reports on their own time.

5. Discussion on setting up a joint work session with City Council and Planning Commission. Possibly October 22nd.

Mayor Jessop proposed a joint work session between the City Council and the Planning & Zoning Commission. The purpose of the session is to discuss the future growth of the community, review the General Plan, and align on a shared vision, especially in light of new funding for Maxwell Park and efforts by the Utility Department to secure master plan grants.

The proposed date for the joint session is the next scheduled work session on Wednesday, October 22nd. Council Member Dutson requested that utility staff, such as Jerry Postema or Nate, be present. There was a discussion about the meeting's duration and start time. To accommodate a thorough discussion, potentially lasting up to five hours, it was suggested to start earlier than the typical 5:00 PM. A start time as early as 2:00 PM was considered to accommodate those with work schedules. The council was agreeable to an earlier start time. No motion was required for this scheduling item.

Public Hearing:

6. Hildale City Council will hold a public hearing during the regular public meeting to receive public comment concerning possible Base Rate Additions of 2.5" up to 12" meter base rates.

Motion made by Council Member Stubbs to open the public hearing, Seconded by Council Member Holm.

The City Attorney advised that the Mayor could open the public hearing without a formal motion.

Mayor Jessop declared the public hearing open.

Utility Director Jerry Postema explained that the purpose of the hearing was to consider adding base rates for water meters ranging from 2.5 inches to 12 inches. He stated that these larger meter sizes were not included in the 2024 rate case because none were in the city's system at the time, which was an oversight. The proposed additions, developed with the rate study company RCAC, are intended to fill this gap for future needs.

With no public comment, Mayor Jessop declared the public hearing closed.

7. Consideration, discussion and possible approval of 2.5" meter - 12" Meter base rates.

Utility Director Jerry Postema presented the item for council consideration. He directed the council to the packet, which included the justification for the new rates and a memo from the Utility Advisory Board. He noted the board's primary concern was that the tiered water usage rates remain unchanged, which they will. The proposal only adds new base rates for larger meters.

Council Member Dutson questioned the \$1,000 hydrant meter deposit, noting it is \$500 in the Las Vegas area. Director Postema explained that the city's cost to purchase the meter is over \$1,100, and the \$1,000 deposit helps cover the replacement cost if a meter is broken or not returned. He confirmed the deposit is fully refundable upon the meter's safe return.

Council Member Merideth asked for clarification on the difference between a base rate and a water rate. Director Postema explained that the base rate is a "readiness to serve" charge, reflecting the cost of having infrastructure in place to meet the potential instantaneous demand of a specific meter size. The water rate is the charge for the actual volume of water consumed. The City Attorney added an example of second-home owners who pay a base rate for service availability even if they use no water for months.

Council Member Dutson initially sought clarification that the council was not re-approving previously set rates, which was confirmed.

Council Member Merideth expressed significant concern over the proposed rates, stating that his research indicated they were substantially higher than those in neighboring municipalities. He cited that St. George's 12-inch meter base rate is approximately \$2,000 per month and Kanab's 8-inch meter base rate is between \$600 and \$700, whereas Hildale's proposed rates are four to ten times higher. He noted that large meters serve not only large businesses but also apartment complexes and non-profit social service organizations. Citing the large discrepancy and lack of a clear explanation for it, he stated he was not comfortable approving the rates without further information and suggested tabling the item.

Council Member Holm and Mayor Jessop responded that comparisons to other cities are not always appropriate, as Hildale's system, topography, and infrastructure needs are unique. They emphasized that the rates were determined by an independent, professional study specific to Hildale's system capacity and capital needs. Council Member Holm noted the logic of the percentage-based increase, which reflects the potential impact on the system, and stated his trust in the professional recommendation. He also pointed out that very few of these large meters are expected to be installed in the near future.

Council Member Dutson sided with Council Member Merideth, expressing discomfort with rates that are significantly higher than neighboring communities and stating he would vote to table the matter.

Motion made by Council Member Stubbs to approval of 2.5" meter up to a 12" Meter base rates,
Seconded by Council Member Holm.

Voting Yea: Mayor Jessop, Council Member Stubbs, Council Member Holm

Voting Nay: Council Member Merideth, Council Member Dutson

The vote resulted in a 2-2 tie.

Mayor Jessop cast the tie-breaking vote. She explained her vote in favor of the motion, stating that the professional study was complete and its findings would not change if the matter were tabled. She further noted that two businesses are currently waiting for these rates to be established for their 4-inch meters. One of these businesses has been unable to be billed for a base rate for two years because the rate had not been set by the Council.

Motion Carries

Appointments to Boards or Commissions:

None

Unfinished Council Business:

8. Consideration, discussion and possible approval of City Attorney's amended contract.

City Attorney Shawn Guzman presented an amended contract for his services. He explained that the amendment does not change the terms of the agreement or his hourly rate of \$200. The changes consist of minor language adjustments, such as the term "leased employee," which were requested by the city's insurance broker for their records.

Council Member Dutson confirmed with Mr. Guzman that the hourly rate was remaining the same.

Motion made by Council Member Dutson to approve City Attorney's amended contract, Seconded by Council Member Stubbs.

Voting Yea: Council Member Merideth, Council Member Dutson, Council Member Stubbs, Council Member Holm

Motion Carries

New Council Business:

9. Discussion and ratification of the SRTS Grant awarded to Hildale City for FY26.

Mayor Jessop announced that Hildale City has been awarded a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) grant for Fiscal Year 2027. The city was awarded \$152,000, which was more than the \$109,140 originally requested. The grant will fund the construction of a new sidewalk segment to connect an existing path from the school area to the sidewalk leading to the library. This will resolve a safety issue where students currently must walk through a planter box and the street. The city's required match of 6.77% (approximately \$10,280) can be met through in-kind services and supplies from city staff and resources. The funding cycle begins July 1, 2026, with project completion by 2027. The Mayor requested ratification of her acceptance of the grant.

Council Member Stubbs expressed her excitement for the grant, noting the significant safety improvement it will provide for children walking in the area.

Motion made by Council Member Dutson to approve ratification of the SRTS Grant awarded to Hildale City for FY26, Seconded by Council Member Stubbs.

Voting Yea: Council Member Merideth, Council Member Dutson, Council Member Stubbs, Council Member Holm

Motion Carries

10. Consideration, discussion and ratification of the Mayor's signature for the Olympus Insurance Proposal.

City Attorney Shawn Guzman presented on the city's insurance renewal package from the broker, Olympus. He stated that he and the Mayor had reviewed the package and raised questions to ensure there was no double coverage, particularly concerning police officers under the interlocal agreement with Colorado City. He reported on the urgent need to renew the city's insurance policy with Olympus Insurance. He explained that due to timing constraints, the renewal documents were signed by Mayor Jessop on August 20th, just before the August 22nd deadline, and prior to formal council approval. He requested the council ratify the Mayor's signature. The City Attorney assured the council that in the future, the renewal process would begin in January or February to allow for a more thorough review and timely approval before the budget is finalized.

Motion made by Council Member Holm to approve the ratification of the Mayor's signature for the Olympus Insurance renewal, Seconded by Council Member Dutson.

Discussion: Council Member Dutson thanked the Mayor for ensuring the renewal was completed on time.

Voting Yea: Council Member Merideth, Council Member Dutson, Council Member Stubbs, Council Member Holm

Motion Carries

11. Consideration, discussion, and possible approval of a first amendment to the existing contracted agreement with Campbell Architecture for additional professional services related to the Maxwell Park Expansion project in the amount of \$17,625.

Riley, representing Campbell Architect, presented a proposal for a first amendment to their existing contract. The amendment is for additional professional services related to the Maxwell Park expansion project in the amount of \$17,625. He explained that the funds would support outreach efforts, including generating media content and videos, to aid in securing additional funding for the project, such as EDA grants and federal legacy park funds.

Motion made by Council Member Dutson to approve of a first amendment to the existing contracted agreement with Campbell Architecture for additional professional services related to the Maxwell Park Expansion project in the amount of \$17,625, Seconded by Council Member Holm.

Voting Yea: Council Member Merideth, Council Member Dutson, Council Member Stubbs, Council Member Holm

Motion Carries

12. Consideration, discussion and possible approval of Utility Department Technicians Wage Adjustments.

Utility Director Jerry Postema requested a 2.5% wage scale adjustment for the Utility Department technicians. He noted that this staff group was not included in a wage adjustment provided to other city staff in the previous year.

Council Member Dutson expressed his strong support for the adjustment, thanking Director Postema and the Mayor for bringing it forward and acknowledging the hard work of the utility staff. Council Member Stubbs also thanked Director Postema and the utility staff for their dedication and certifications. Council Member Dutson then asked to amend the motion to make the wage adjustment retroactive to August 1st.

Motion made by Council Member Dutson to approval of Utility Department Technicians Wage Adjustments retroactive to August 1, Seconded by Council Member Stubbs.

Voting Yea: Council Member Merideth, Council Member Dutson, Council Member Stubbs, Council Member Holm

13. Consideration, discussion and possible approval of Utility Director's contract addendum.

Mayor Jessop presented a proposed addendum to Utility Director Jerry Postema's contract. She explained that Director Postema is increasing his commitment to the city from two weeks per month to three or four weeks per month, stepping back from other obligations to focus on Hildale's needs. His expanded role will include leading critical infrastructure projects such as the Transportation Master Plan and the Storm Water Master Plan.

The proposed addendum includes a \$3,000 monthly increase to his retainer, bringing the total to \$8,000 per month. Mayor Jessop noted that the cost of hiring an outside engineering firm for these master plans would be approximately \$100,000 each. She clarified that Director Postema's compensation is paid for through grant administration funds he secures, not from the city's general fund or utility rates. The Finance Advisor confirmed the funds are available.

Council Member Dutson expressed his struggle with the significant percentage increase but acknowledged Director Postema's vital expertise and the necessity of completing master plans to secure state funding.

Director Postema explained that his salary has been structured to be covered by grant administration funds from the grants he writes for the city. He cited bringing in over \$3 million in grants in the past four years and noted a current \$4 million CIB grant application is ranked number one, which will include funds for oversight and administration to cover his salary.

Council Member Stubbs expressed her trust in Director Postema and her support for the addendum, given his experience and the availability of funds.

The Mayor clarified the motion should be to approve the addendum increasing the monthly retainer to \$8,000, retroactive to August 1st.

Motion made by Council Member Holm to approve Utility Director's contract addendum, retroactive back to August 1st, Seconded by Council Member Dutson.

Discussion: Council Member Dutson inquired about reimbursement for expenses. Director Postema confirmed that pre-approved travel and accommodation expenses are reimbursed, and the Finance Director confirmed these expenses are also paid from grant funds.

Voting Yea: Council Member Merideth, Council Member Dutson, Council Member Stubbs, Council Member Holm

Motion Carries

14. Consideration, discussion and possible approval to ratify the intent to apply for the Governors Office Economic Opportunity (GOEO) Rural Community Opportunity Grant.

Mayor Jessop presented an item to ratify an "Intent to Apply" for a GOEO Rural Community Opportunity Grant. She explained that this is the same grant source that funded the city's innovation center. The city

initially planned to seek funds for a commercial kitchen to support food trucks, but after consulting with Colette Cox of the GOEO, the focus was shifted to seeking support for the industrial park, which was deemed to have a higher probability of being funded.

Mayor Jessop stated that due to a one-day deadline, she worked with Riley to prepare and submit the intent to apply. A price breakdown for the proposed project was included in the council packet.

7:55 Council Member Merideth left meeting early and will be back for the closed session.

Mayor Jessop introduced an opportunity to apply for a \$300,000 grant from the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity (GOEO), titled the Rural Community Opportunity Grant. The application is due October 31st, with awards announced at the end of December. The funds would be used for a comprehensive study of the Hildale industrial park.

Mayor Jessop invited Riley, a consultant, to speak on the matter.

Riley explained that the grant would fund a multi-professional assessment of the approximately 70 parcels in the industrial park, 50 of which have buildings. The assessment would include:

- A marketability analysis by real estate professionals.
- An evaluation by mechanical and electrical engineering professionals to identify necessary upgrades.
- Architectural and cost estimation services for potential improvements.
- A civil engineering review of roads, utilities, and capacity limitations.
- A comprehensive review of ownership, leases, and tax statuses for each parcel.

The goal is to compile all this information into a GIS database, creating a succinct and accessible resource for businesses interested in locating to Hildale. This planning phase will also contribute to the city's overall master plan.

Council Member Dutson expressed support for pursuing the grant.

Motion made by Council Member Dutson to ratify the intent to apply for the Governors Office Economic Opportunity (GOEO) Rural Community Opportunity Grant, Seconded by Council Member Stubbs.

Voting Yea: Council Member Dutson, Council Member Stubbs, Council Member Holm

Motion Carries

15. Consideration, discussion and possible approval of CivicReach Contract.

Luke Merideth returned at 8:10 pm.

Mayor Jessop introduced a proposal to approve a contract with Civic Reach, a company owned by Michael Hammon. She praised Mr. Hammon for his three months of volunteer work, highlighting his ability to listen, develop effective solutions, and provide training for city staff. She stated he has been instrumental in improving processes and communications, and that he cares deeply for the community and its people.

Michael Hammon addressed the Council, explaining that his involvement began after hearing community concerns and being contacted by the Mayor for a video project. He saw a larger opportunity to improve communication and support the city's competent staff. He noted his work on utility explainer videos and the joint city statement following a recent indictment. Mr. Hammon stated his goal is to provide the support the staff needs to excel.

Council Member Dutson expressed strong support for Mr. Hammon's professionalism and the positive impact he has had, but raised concerns about the city's tight budget and affordability.

Mr. Hammon acknowledged the city's financial constraints and stated that the contract includes an intent to transition his compensation entirely from city funds to grant funding in the future.

Mayor Jessop clarified the contract terms:

- A monthly fee of \$2,500, effective September 1, 2025.
- The cost would be split, with \$1,500 from the Joint Utility budget and \$1,000 from the General Fund.

- The contract terminates on December 31, 2025, at which point it can be revisited.

Mayor Jessop noted that Mr. Hammon's work had already resulted in a \$7,000 annual savings on another contract, which helps offset the cost. Utility Director Jerry Postema confirmed that funds were available in the part-time employee line item of the joint utility account to cover the expense. It was also noted that Colorado City Mayor Ream was supportive of the arrangement.

Motion made by Council Member Dutson to approve the CivicReach Contract starting September 1st, subject to legal review, Seconded by Council Member Holm.

Voting Yea: Council Member Merideth, Council Member Dutson, Council Member Stubbs, Council Member Holm

Motion Carries

Public Comments: 3 minutes each - Discretion of Mayor Jessop

Jared Nicol addressed the Council. He alleged that the city has already been paying Michael Hammon, citing invoice registries. He presented a document outlining concerns with a recent subdivision, which he believes violates city code 152-39-4 regarding flag lots, stating they should be a "last resort" and not for increasing profitability. He argued that because land was dedicated for public purposes, the development should have gone through the full subdivision process, including review by the Utility Department, which he claims did not happen. Mr. Nicol questioned the decision to move the public comment period to the end of the meeting after 10 years. He also questioned the recent increase to Utility Director Jerry Postema's base pay, noting that his contract already allows for additional compensation through grant administration fees and travel reimbursement, which he claimed could amount to an additional \$30,000 per year. He criticized the lack of specific new duties outlined in the contract amendment to justify the pay increase. He stated he would be in contact with the City Attorney regarding these matters.

Council Comments: For items not on the agenda (10 minutes total)

Council Member Dutson spoke about recent tragic events, mentioning the "assassination of Charlie Kirk" and the deaths of two officers in Tremonton, Utah. The Council Member requested a moment of silence.

Mayor Donia Jessop concurred with Council Member Dutson's sentiments and led the Council and public in a moment of silence in honor of Charlie. The Mayor noted that it had been a difficult day and informed the Council that she had already issued an order for city flags to be flown at half-mast, in anticipation of the Governor's official directive.

Council Member Stubbs gave recognition to the Hildale Fire and EMS departments for volunteering to serve breakfast at the upcoming Air Show and Fly-In, expressing appreciation for their service.

Calendar of Upcoming Events: 5 minutes - Mayor Jessop

16. City Council Calendar

Mayor Jessop discussed the months events.

Closed Meeting: Request a closed meeting to discuss litigation, security, property acquisition or sale or the character and professional competence or physical or mental health of an individual.

Motion made by Council Member Dutson go into a closed meeting to discuss litigation, Seconded by Council Member Stubbs.

Voting Yea: Council Member Merideth, Council Member Dutson, Council Member Stubbs, Council Member Holm

Motion Carries

Adjournment: Mayor Jessop

Meeting adjourned at 8:31 pm.

Agenda items and any variables thereto are set for consideration, discussion, approval, or other action. Council Members may be attending by telephone. Agenda is subject to change up to 24 hours prior to the meeting.

Minutes were approved at the City Council Meeting on _____.

Maxene Jessop, City Recorder

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION: The City of Hildale will make efforts to provide reasonable accommodations to disabled members of the public in accessing City programs. Please contact the Records office at 435-875-2323, at least 24 hours in advance if you have special needs.

Pending For Approval