

IRON COUNTY COMMISSION MEETING
August 24, 2026

Minutes of the Iron County Commission meeting convened at 9:00 a.m. August 24, 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
Kenneth Carpenter	Sheriff
Terry Palmer	Building & Zoning
George Colson	Emergency Management
Cassie Meredith	Emergency Management
Richard Wilson	Engineer
Wade Adams	Fleet Supervisor
Jennifer Bradbury	HR Director
Brett Hamilton	Planner
Candace Reid	Public Defender

Others Present:

Rand Bettridge	Carson Brown	Rob Dotson
Danny Stewart	Patty Truax	Kyle Verzello
Spencer Viernes	Bruce Washburn	

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INVOCATION

An invocation was offered by Danny Stewart.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Those assembled were led in the pledge of allegiance by Spencer Viernes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Michael Bleak made a motion to approve the minutes of the Iron County Commission meeting held on August 10, 2026. Second by Paul Cozzens. Voting: Michael Bleak, Aye; Paul Cozzens, Aye; Kenneth Robinson, Aye.

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT

Paul Cozzens made a motion to approve Claims for Payment from August 10, 2026 to August 23, 2026. Second by Michael Bleak. Voting: Michael Bleak, Aye; Paul Cozzens, Aye; Kenneth Robinson, Aye.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Jonathan Whittaker, Iron County Clerk, reported that the Clerk, Elections, Special Service District #3, and Sewer budgets were on track. The process under the Government Records Access and Management Act (GRAMA) and the Government Data Protection Act (GDPA) was moving forward, and he planned to report to the commissioners near the end of the year. Jon expressed his appreciation for Sam Woodall, Iron County Deputy Attorney, and Jennifer Bradbury, Iron County HR Director, for their assistance. He reported that the General Election was approaching and the database would be mailed out soon. Ballots would be mailed on October 13th, 21 days before the election. Jon noted that Jamie Memmott, a volunteer firefighter in Paragonah, was hired as a new Deputy Clerk, replacing Marissa Condie. Jon reported that the Local Emergency Preparedness Committee (LEPC) had been working on a project to help with Tier 2 tracking of hazardous substance locations that would be available to the firefighters to help with their safety.

George Colson, Iron County Emergency Management Manager, reported on the various projects and meetings he had been involved in since his last commission report. There was a budget adjustment under travel and vehicle maintenance due to the new hire of Cassie Meredith. George noted that he met with Rocky Mountain Power (RMP) executives for a discussion regarding the power outages that occurred during the Cottonwood Fire in Beaver. He conducted several emergency exercises, responded to the Summit Fire, the Sawmill fire, and assisted Spencer Rollo, Iron County Fire Warden, warning citizens in Hamblin Valley for the potential of evacuation as a result of the Chokecherry Fire, assisted the Clerk's Office with ballot collection during the Primary Election in June, and helped the Cedar City Police Department with traffic barriers for one of their activities. George reported that he and Cassie attended Genesis Evacuation Software training. George expressed his appreciation to Cassie for creating an Iron County Emergency Management Social Media account, including Facebook, Instagram, and X, for information before, during, and after emergencies. The site currently had approximately 700 followers across the platforms, up from 120 last quarter. He reported that he submitted the final report for the 2025 Emergency Planning Performance Grant (EMPG) and the 2026 EMPG Notice of Intent to apply for that grant. George updated the commissioners on the large Mobile Ambulance (kit to refit a school bus) program offered by the State Health Department. He noted that Cassie continued working with the Cedar City Fire Department and Cedar Highlands HOA to pre-stage a fire truck on the site to reduce response times in the event

of a fire, and submitted the WUI Map with the final compiled edits to the state, along with Iron County objections with sound reasoning to the State WUI map.

Wade Adams, Iron County Fleet Manager, noted that the Fleet Department budget was on track. There was an unforeseen issue right before the budget hearings last year where five or six vehicles were left out of the budget calculation, which would require a budget adjustment. Wade reported that 752 work orders had been completed, which included accidents, maintenance and repairs, graphics, miscellaneous projects, recalls, registrations, reservations, upfitting, and warranty work. Of the 752 completed work orders, 66 were related to vehicle upfitting, and 686 covered all the other fleet services and responsibilities. They replaced two Council on Aging (COA) transit vans and completed the fits on those to comply with ADA requirements. Two Meals on Wheels vehicles were purchased with the 5 County AOG grant and were being outfitted in Indiana. Wade noted that 2 Sheriff's vehicles were full-patrol outfitted had begun working on two additional vehicles, which left 12 more vehicles to outfit this year.

Jennifer Bradbury, Iron County Human Resource (HR) Manager, reported that HR was currently under budget. Since the previous report in May, HR had posted, interviewed, and hired 17 Full-Time positions and 12 internal promotions/transfers, and was currently in the process of hiring/recruiting multiple Full-Time Corrections Deputies and 5 other Full-Time positions. Jennifer noted that the present employee turnover was 9.27% of positions, or 23 positions, compared to 8.47% or 21 positions in 2025. Jennifer noted that the Insurance renewal discussion with the Insurance Brokers (IMA) discussion would begin. The Iron County Insurance Committee would meet in the next few weeks to discuss options. Workers' Compensation EMOD for 2026 increased to .89, up from .87 in 2025. Jennifer reported on employee milestone anniversaries: Celebrating 5 years were Andy MacMullen in the Tourism Department, Devon Whitney in the Sheriff's Office-Corrections, Jeri Torsell in the DMV Department, and Luke Little in the Auditor's Office; Celebrating 15 years were Stephanie Orton in the Tourism Department, and Tom Byrd in the Sheriff's Office-Patrol; Celebrating 30 years was Terry Palmer in the Building Department.

Carson Brown, Southern Utah Representative for Senator Curtis's Office, explained that he had spent the past two years working for Congresswoman Celeste Maloy in Washington, D.C. before coming to work for Senator Curtis in Utah. Carson reported that he had been keeping track of the fire season in Utah and had learned some important lessons when it comes to working with FEMA. Senator Curtis was sponsoring a "Save Our Forest Act, in the Senate, which had just passed the House of Representatives. The bill had the endorsement of the Western Caucus in Washington, D.C., chaired by Congresswoman Maloy. This would help to prevent more fires and have the federal government better manage and partner with local communities. Carson reported on the state-sponsored Visa Pilot Program and noted that he was willing to coordinate on any issues that Iron County was having with federal agencies or answering questions.

Paul Cozzens, Iron County Commissioner, reported that he attended the Board of Health meeting this last week with the Steering Committee. Paul expressed his appreciation to Darren Bushman, 5 County AOG Executive Director, that he had been a breath of fresh air thus far in his leadership and was doing a terrific job.

Michael Bleak, Iron County Commissioner, reported that on August 11th, he and Commissioner Robinson attended the Congressional Ride Along in Garfield. They were able to meet with commissioners from 11 counties and Congressional Representatives from offices on the East Coast, from Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and several others. Congresswoman Maloy presented a great legislative update on public lands and just the impact in Utah. Utah Senate Representative John Johnson presented information on the impacts of legislative decisions and Presidential mandates on our public lands. Mike attended the Cedar City Airport Board meeting, where they continued to discuss how to move forward with the Control Tower Project. He had the opportunity to participate in the Cedar City Chamber Golf Tournament representing Economic Development. Mike also met with the chairs of the TRT and TRCCA boards, which were the hotel and restaurant tax and boards, along with John Oglesby, Utah Summer Games Director, and Maria Twitchell, Iron County Tourism Director. They discussed various projects,

traveled to Eagle Mountain City on the August 20th with the Chamber and Economic Development regarding the QTS Dada Center Project, and met with Jon Oglesby and Maria Twitchell to discuss needs for specific Utah Summer Games events.

Kenneth Robinson, Iron County Commissioner, noted that, as Commissioner Bleak reported, he had the opportunity to attend the Congressional Ride Along, which gave them the chance to examine the issues the West was facing regarding the vastness of some National Monuments and how they need to be managed. There have been Executive decisions made recently regarding the Monuments, public lands, and forest areas, and many issues that need to be addressed to manage our public lands better. Ken reported that he toured Align Steel and observed work done for the airline and defense industry, attended the new Sheriff's Complex meeting, and had multiple phone calls with different companies wanting to do projects in Iron County. One conversation was with E3, who has a presentation later on today's agenda. Ken expressed his appreciation to the Iron County Attorney's Office for the conviction made this week in the Kaylee Dutton homicide. He reported that Dallin Brooks, of the Attorney's Office, took top honors at Hell Week at SWAT School.

PUBLIC HEARING, DISCUSSION, AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF A PROPOSED ZONE CHANGE (ORDINANCE 2026-19), TO THE IRON COUNTY ZONING MAP – ZONE CHANGE FROM RURAL AGRICULTURE 20 (RA-20) ACRES TO RESIDENTIAL 1 (R-1) ACRES FOR APPROXIMATELY 20 ACRES, LOCATED AT 3831 W 4000 NORTH, CEDAR CITY, IRON COUNTY, UT. Applicant: Scott Day

Brett Hamilton, Iron County Planner, explained that the location of the property was between 4100 West and Lund Highway and was 20 acres. Of the 20 acres, approximately five acres were currently developed. Brett reported that north of the project was the Equestrian Trails Ranch Project and the two parcels were part of Phase 1 of that development. The proposed zoning change to R1 was to align with the property to the north. He noted there was existing sewer and water that run along 4000 North. This would be on the 4500 West water connection line, and it may exceed the total number of connections, which would be an item of consideration. The water line is through Cedar Valley Water Conservancy. The Zone change was presented and discussed at the Iron County Planning Commission (ICPC) on August 13th, and recommended approval to the Iron County Commission.

Kenneth Robinson, Iron County Commission Chair, declared a Public Hearing open regarding Ordinance 2026-19.

No public comments were offered.

Kenneth Robinson, Iron County Commission Chair, declared the public hearing closed.

Michael Bleak made a motion to approve Ordinance 2026-19 as presented. Second by Paul Cozzens. Voting: Michael Bleak, Aye; Paul Cozzens, Aye; Kenneth Robinson, Aye.

PUBLIC HEARING, REGARDING POSSIBLE IRON COUNTY 2026 MID-YEAR BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION 2026-5 ADOPTING THE IRON COUNTY 2026 BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Lucas Little, Iron County Auditor, explained that a Budget Adjustment was presented at mid-year and December as well. Luke reported adjustments to the Balance Fund, the Building and Zoning Department, Liquor Tax Grant deposit to the Jail account, Emergency Management, Fixed Asset Equipment, Utah Association of Counties Program, Local/Private Grants, Ropes Expense, School Guardian Program, Small Equipment, Sheriff's Complex Construction, Landfill Closure Reserve, Interest Income, Administrative Fees for rPlus Appaloosa 2, Uniform Allowance, and Laundry Service

Kenneth Robinson, Iron County Commission Chair, declared a Public Hearing open regarding Resolution 2026-5.

No public comments were offered.

Kenneth Robinson, Iron County Commission Chair, declared the public hearing closed.

Paul Cozzens made a motion to approve the Iron County 2026 Mid-Year Budget Adjustments as presented. Second by Michael Bleak. Voting: Michael Bleak, Aye; Paul Cozzens, Aye; Kenneth Robinson, Aye.

IRON COUNTY RESOLUTION 2026-5

A RESOLUTION OF THE IRON COUNTY COMMISSION AUTHORIZING ADJUSTMENTS TO THE 2026 DEPARTMENTAL BUDGETS.

Whereas, approved, but under-budgeted or unbudgeted adjustments to cover incurred expenses for goods and services have been requested for 2026 budget items; and

Whereas, adjustments must be made to authorize unexpected or approved expenditures above those appropriated in the original budget,

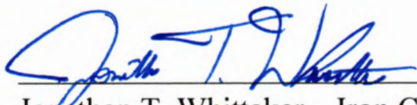
Now, Therefore, be it hereby resolved by the Board of Iron County Commissioners that the 2026 budget of Iron County is hereby amended to reflect changes in the adopted and approved 2026 budget to actual expenditures as calculated and filed in the Iron County Auditor's Office.

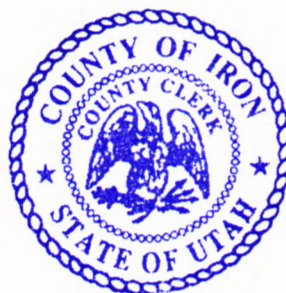
RESOLVED, ADOPTED, AND ORDERED this 24th day of August, 2026.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
IRON COUNTY, UTAH

By: 
Kenneth Robinson - Chairman

ATTEST:


Jonathan T. Whittaker – Iron County Clerk



Kenneth Robinson	<u> Aye </u>
Michael P. Bleak	<u> Aye </u>
Paul Cozzens	<u> Aye </u>

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No Public Comments were offered.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF UTAH INDIGENT DEFENSE GRANT NUMBER 27D18, COVERING JULY 1, 2026 TO JUNE 30, 2027

Candace Reid, Iron County Public Defender, explained that the Indigent Defense Committee (IDC) grant was awarded somewhere between May and June. She was presenting the Grant Acceptance Agreement before the commission today for their signatures. Candace reported that the IDC grant funded three positions for the Public Defense; one was Ron Noyes in the District Court.

Michael Bleak made a motion to approve the Utah Indigent Defense Grant Number 27D18 as presented. Second by Paul Cozzens. Voting: Michael Bleak, Aye; Paul Cozzens, Aye; Kenneth Robinson, Aye.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF CONTRACT FOR POSITIONS: PUBLIC DEFENSE ADMINISTRATOR, PUBLIC DEFENDER, AND SOCIAL WORKER CONTRACT

Candace Reid, Iron County Public Defender, explained that this contract was for her position. Candace handles managerial work across multiple counties for Indigent Defense and carries a caseload in Juvenile Court for Child Welfare and Delinquency.

Paul Cozzens made a motion to approve the Contract for Public Defense Administrator, Public Defender, and Social Worker as presented. Second by Michael Bleak. Voting: Michael Bleak, Aye; Paul Cozzens, Aye; Kenneth Robinson, Aye.

DISCUSSION REGARDING RESOLUTION 2026-4, AMENDMENT OF PROPERTY INTO THE IRON SPRINGS INLAND PORT PROJECT AREA

Danny Stewart, Inland Port Authority, introduced Spencer Viernes and Kyle Verzello, who would report on Project Juniper. He turned the time over to Spencer. Spencer Viernes noted that Project Juniper was an opportunity for Economic Development collaboration. It exists due to market demand, supply constraints, and the competitive landscape. He reported on the Opportunity in Power availability, Industrial Facility Development including: Data Centers, Advanced Manufacturing, Steel and Heavy Industrial, and Waste Processing and Recycling; The Supply Problem: The intersection of them all produces very few viable sites, which included 1) Power Capacity, 2) Water Access, 3) Rail & Transport, 4) Permitting Pathway, 5) Community Acceptance, and 6) Business Environment. He noted that Markets under Pressure with Data Center Markets were facing converging constraints with Industrial Markets. Spencer reported that Project Juniper was located on approximately 830 acres in Iron County with an additional 2K acres plus of expansion area. The site was selected for its characteristics that were individually common but rarely found together at this scale. He reported on the Driving value for the local community; IPA as an Economic Development Tool; Public infrastructure; Private Capital Expenditure; New Assessed Value; Tax differential capture; Infrastructure dedicated to Iron County and Municipal Entities; Power Transmission; Generation Architecture; Natural Gas Power Plants in Utah; and Water availability through partnership with Cedar Valley Water Conservancy. There was a discussion regarding water use. Spencer reported on the Fiber Network and Connectivity; Data Centers-Fiscal Engine of the Campus; The Campus Ecosystem; working within Iron County's framework through Strategic Development Zone ordinance, Development agreement, and Interlocal agreement; and the Educational and Workforce partnerships. There was a discussion on the various topics presented.

REVIEW PER UCA §10-2-804 AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF AN ANNEXATION INTO CEDAR CITY CREATING AN ISLAND OF ANNEXED LAND. VANTRUST PROPOSED ANNEXATION

Rob Dotson, representing Platt & Platt, thanked the commissioners for allowing him the opportunity to come back regarding the request for annexation. The annexation request was still in play. This property itself would bring about 16 million square feet of industrial, light industrial space to the community and provide for multiple jobs. In previous conversations, there were concerns specifically about annexing an island into Cedar City. Paul Cozzens noted that he had some concerns about creating the island and setting a precedent: curb and gutter and sidewalks would need to be put in, people's taxes increasing, maintenance of Iron Springs Road, and a sewer line that would be adequate for their project, and who would be paying for it. Richard Wilson, Iron County Engineer, reported that Iron County was responsible for \$500K for the Iron Springs Road improvements, which were currently in progress, and asked whether Cedar City was going to reimburse Iron County for that section of road. Richard read a letter he wrote: "The creation of an island within the county sets a concerning precedent and creates significant unresolved legal, financial, infrastructure, and jurisdictional issues between the city and the county. At present, there are no agreements in place between the county and the city addressing the following critical issues related to the annexation of property islands: Road maintenance, Tax Sharing, Sewer upsizing costs, Trading or Consolidating Islands, and Additional unforeseen concerns. The developers should not be allowed to create additional city islands until these issues have been resolved through binding formal agreements between the city and county. Moving forward without such agreements would be fiscally irresponsible, invite future disputes, and impose potentially high costs on taxpayers. It would also establish a troubling precedent for future annexations and make already fragmented boundaries even more difficult to correct. The county has commissioned a Capital Facilities Plan Study that is expected to be completed by the end of 2026. The county should wait for the study's findings before taking this unprecedented action. Approving the annexation now, before the county has completed its analysis of future infrastructure and service needs, would be premature and could undermine responsible long-term planning. The county and the city have equal ability to negotiate funding benefits with the Inland Port Authority and establish a PID Agreement to fund public infrastructure. Therefore, the developer would not be disadvantaged by remaining under county jurisdiction. There is no demonstrated need to create a city island to secure infrastructure funding or support development. Finally, the city and developer should be required to fully disclose to the county all agreements, negotiations, incentives, concessions, and other arrangements related to the proposed creation of this island. The county should not approve the annexation without complete transparency and a clear accounting of its long-term financial and public-service impacts." There was a discussion regarding the sewer connection and upsizing costs, stormwater control, law enforcement jurisdiction, differences in zoning, land use regulations, inconsistent permitting, and code enforcement regarding the annexation. There has not been any direct negotiation or attempt to work out the fine details with the city at this point. Richard expressed that the decision should be put on hold until the Capital Facilities Plan was finalized.

Michael Bleak made a motion to deny the request for an annexation into Cedar City, creating an Island of annexed land. Second by Paul Cozzens. Voting: Michael Bleak, Aye; Paul Cozzens, Aye; Ken Robinson, Aye.

PERSONNEL

Jennifer Bradbury, Iron County HR Director, presented the promotion of Kyle Barrett from Full-Time Deputy to Full-Time Corporal in the Sheriff's Department-Patrol, effective August 16th; the promotion of Eli Brown from Full-Time Landfill Technician 1 to Full-Time Landfill Technician 2 in the Landfill Department, effective August 16th; the new hire of Stephanie Hunter as a Part-Time Legal Assistant in the Attorney's Office, effective August 17th. This was a backfill of a vacant position; the transfer of LaTonya Heaton from Full-Time Apprentice Appraiser to Full-Time Administrative Assistant for the Engineer Department, effective August 17th; the new hire of Evan Gray as a Seasonal Outdoor Maintenance Technician in the Parks & Recreation Department, effective August 17th. This was a backfill of a vacant position; the new hire of Jennifer Bishop as a Full-Time Judicial Assistant in the Justice Court, effective August 31st. This was a backfill of a vacant position; the promotion of Michael Mechem from Deputy 1 to Deputy 2 for the Sheriff's Department-Corrections, effective August 30th; the new hire of Trishelle Parsons as a Full-Time Deputy 1 in the Sheriff's Office-Corrections, effective September 13th. This was a backfill of a vacant position; the re-hire of Justin Hatch as a Part-Time Reserve Deputy 1 in the Sheriff's Office-Corrections, effective August 16th; the promotions of Kobe Brunson, Braxton Brindley, and Chris Copeland from Full-Time Maintenance 1 to Full-Time Maintenance 2 in the Road Department, effective August 30th.

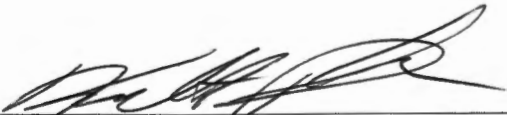
Paul Cozzens made a motion to approve the personnel change as presented. Second by Michael Bleak. Voting: Michael Bleak, Aye; Paul Cozzens, Aye; Kenneth Robinson, Aye.

NON-DELEGATED ITEMS

No Non-Delegated items were offered.

ADJOURNMENT

Kenneth Robinson, Iron County Commission Chair, declared adjournment.


Signed: Kenneth Robinson, Chair


Attest: Jonathan Whittaker, Clerk

