

**Town of Yucca Valley
Town Council Meeting Minutes
October 21, 2025**

Call to Order

Roll Call

Present: Merl Abel, Jeff Drozd, Rick Denison, Jim Schooler

Absent: Robert Lombardo (Arrived at 6:10 PM)

Pledge of Allegiance

Led by Council Member Schooler

Presentations, Introductions, Recognitions

1. **California Intergovernmental Risk Authority (CIRA) Update- Amy Conley, General Manager**

California Intergovernmental Risk Authority (CIRA) General Manager Conley provided an overview of the organization and the benefits to the Town of Yucca Valley for being a member of the organization.

Mayor Drozd opened public comments. With no members of the public wishing to speak, public comments were closed.

Approval of Agenda

2. **Agenda Approval**

Motion: Approve the meeting agenda as prepared.

Result: (Yes 4, No 0, Abstained 0)

Mover: Mayor Pro Tem Merl Abel

Second: Council Member Jim Schooler

Ayes: Abel, Denison, Drozd, Schooler

Consent Agenda

3. **Approval of Meeting Minutes- June 17, 2025**

Mayor Drozd opened public comments on the consent agenda items. With no members of the public wishing to speak, public comments were closed.

Motion:

Approve the meeting minutes of June 17, 2025 as presented.

Result: Passed (Yes 4, No 0, Abstained 0)

Mover: Council Member Jim Schooler

Second: Mayor Jeff Drozd

Ayes: Merl Abel, Jeff Drozd, Rick Denison, Jim Schooler

4. Approval of Meeting Minutes- August 19, 2025

Motion:

Approve the meeting minutes of August 19, 2025 as presented.

Result: Passed (Yes 4, No 0, Abstained 0)

Mover: Council Member Jim Schooler

Second: Mayor Jeff Drozd

Ayes: Merl Abel, Jeff Drozd, Rick Denison, Jim Schooler

5. Ordinance 331- Second Reading- Encroachments and Excavations

Motion:

Adopt Ordinance 331

AN ORDINANCE OF THE YUCCA VALLEY TOWN COUNCIL AMENDING CHAPTER 12.60 (ENCROACHMENTS AND EXCAVATIONS) OF TITLE 12 (VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC) OF THE YUCCA VALLEY MUNICIPAL CODE TO ADD A NEW SECTION 12.60.295 GOVERNING STREET RESTORATION

Result: Passed (Yes 4, No 0, Abstained 0)

Mover: None

Second: Council Member Rick Denison

Ayes: Merl Abel, Jeff Drozd, Rick Denison, Jim Schooler

6. Resolution appointing new Alternate Board member to the California Intergovernmental Risk Authority

Motion:

Adopt Resolution No. 25-26 appointing an Alternate Board Member to the Board of Directors of the California Intergovernmental Risk Authority.

Result: Passed (Yes 4, No 0, Abstained 0)
Mover: Council Member Jim Schooler
Second: Mayor Jeff Drozd
Ayes: Merl Abel, Jeff Drozd, Rick Denison, Jim Schooler

7. Approval of the amended 2025/26 Authorized Position List and revised job descriptions.

Motion:

- Adopt Resolution No. 25-27 authorizing positions for fiscal year 2025/26 and the approval of two revised job descriptions,
- Amend the FY2025-26 General Fund budget to accommodate the authorized positions personnel costs, as identified in Exhibit A

Result: Passed (Yes 4, No 0, Abstained 0)
Mover: Council Member Jim Schooler
Second: Mayor Jeff Drozd
Ayes: Merl Abel, Jeff Drozd, Rick Denison, Jim Schooler

8. Authorization to Purchase Engineering Plotter, Kip 740C Series

Motion:

- Authorize the purchase of the Kip 740C Series plotter for the Engineering Division in the amount of \$31,185.04.
- Amend the FY2025-26 General Fund Budget, allocating a total of \$31,228 for the equipment purchase as identified in Exhibit A.

Result: Passed (Yes 4, No 0, Abstained 0)
Mover: Council Member Jim Schooler
Second: Mayor Jeff Drozd
Ayes: Merl Abel, Jeff Drozd, Rick Denison, Jim Schooler

9. Yucca Mesa & Buena Vista Intersection Improvements Project, Town Project No. 7073.

Award of Construction Contract

Motion:

- Amend the FY2025-26 Special Revenue Fund Budget Measure I Fund 524, allocating \$320,000 of undesignated reserve funds to accommodate the total project cost of \$420,000
- Adopt Resolution 25-28 to amend the Measure I Five-Year Capital Improvement Program and Expenditure Strategy for Fiscal Years 2025/2026 to 2029/2030 by adding the Yucca Mesa & Buena Vista Intersection Project with total construction amount of \$420,000
- Approve the award of a construction contract with LCR Earthwork & Engineering of Norco, California, in the amount of \$354,650.00 to construct Yucca Mesa & Buena Vista Intersection Project;
- Authorize construction, construction contingencies, and inspection costs in the total amount of \$420,000.00; an
- Authorize the Mayor, Town Manager, and Town Attorney to execute the agreement, and authorizes the Town Manager or designee to expend contingency funds, if necessary, for project completion.

Result: Passed (Yes 4, No 0, Abstained 0)

Mover: Council Member Jim Schooler

Seconders: Mayor Jeff Drozd

Ayes: Merl Abel, Jeff Drozd, Rick Denison, Jim Schooler

10. 56370 Buena Vista Drive Demolition Project – Town Project No. 8070

Award of Construction Contract

Motion:

- Approve the award of a construction contract with UBD, Inc., in the amount of \$34,777.00 for the 56370 Buena Vista Drive Demolition Project;
- Authorize construction, construction contingencies, and inspection costs in the total amount of \$41,000.00; and
- Authorize the Mayor, Town Manager, and Town Attorney to execute the agreement, and authorizes the Town Manager to expend contingency funds, if necessary, for project completion.

Result: Passed (Yes 4, No 0, Abstained 0)

Mover: Council Member Jim Schooler

Seconders: Mayor Jeff Drozd

Ayes: Merl Abel, Jeff Drozd, Rick Denison, Jim Schooler

11. Adoption of the 2025 California Building Codes published by the International Code Council

Motion:

- Adopt Resolution 25-29, making express findings and determinations that modifications to the 2025 California Building Standards Code are reasonably necessary because of local climatic, geological or topographical conditions.
- Introduce Ordinance 332, amending Title 8 of the Town of Yucca Valley Municipal Code by the addition of Chapter 8.02.115, and 8.02.125 amending Chapters 8.02.010, 8.02.020, 8.02.030, 8.02.040, 8.02.050, 8.02.060, 8.02.070, 8.02.080, 8.02.090, 8.02.110, AND 8.02.120, adopting as modified the 2025 Edition of the California Building Code Coumes 1, 2 including the Appendix and Standards, the 2025 Edition of the California Electrical Code, the 2025 Edition of the California Plumbing Code, the 2025 Edition of the California Mechanical Code, the 2025 Edition of the Green Building Code, the 2025 Edition of the California Residential Code, the 2025 Edition California Energy Code, the 2025 Edition of the California Fire Code, The 2025 Edition of the California Wildland Urban Interface Code, and adopting other regulations relating to building requirements;
- And set the matter for public hearing and Ordinance adoption at the Town Council meeting of November 4, 2025.

Result: Passed (Yes 4, No 0, Abstained 0)

Mover: Council Member Jim Schooler

Second: Mayor Jeff Drozd

Ayes: Merl Abel, Jeff Drozd, Rick Denison, Jim Schooler

12. 2025-26 Purchase Order Encumbrances and Project Carry Forwards

Motion:

Adopt Resolution No. 25-30 Approving the 2025-26 Purchase Order Encumbrances and Project Carry Forwards as identified in Exhibits A and B.

Result: Passed (Yes 4, No 0, Abstained 0)

Mover: Council Member Jim Schooler

Second: Mayor Jeff Drozd

Ayes: Merl Abel, Jeff Drozd, Rick Denison, Jim Schooler

13. Treasurer's Report for the Quarter Ending September 30, 2025

Motion:

Receive and file the Treasurer's Report for the first quarter of FY2025-26.

Result: Passed (Yes 4, No 0, Abstained 0)
Mover: Council Member Jim Schooler
Second: Mayor Jeff Drozd
Ayes: Merl Abel, Jeff Drozd, Rick Denison, Jim Schooler

14. Ratification of Warrant Registers

Motion:

Ratify the Payroll Registers totaling \$262,538.42 dated September 12, 2025, and \$310,689.17 dated September 26, 2025.

Ratify the Warrant Registers totaling \$2,086,862.08 dated September 12, 2025, and \$391,952.35 dated September 26, 2025.

Result: Passed (Yes 4, No 0, Abstained 0)
Mover: Council Member Jim Schooler
Second: Mayor Jeff Drozd
Ayes: Merl Abel, Jeff Drozd, Rick Denison, Jim Schooler

15. AB1234 Reporting Requirements

Motion:

Receive and file the AB1234 Reporting Requirement Schedule for the month of September 2025.

Result: Passed (Yes 4, No 0, Abstained 0)
Mover: Council Member Jim Schooler
Second: Mayor Jeff Drozd
Ayes: Merl Abel, Jeff Drozd, Rick Denison, Jim Schooler

Department Reports

16. Yucca Valley Aquatic Recreation Center Quarterly Project Update

Daniel Berghauser, Senior Associate for Dahlin Architects, presented a project update for the Yucca Valley Aquatics and Recreation Center.

Mayor Drozd opened public comments. With no members of the public wishing to

Speak, public comments were closed.

Mayor Drozd reported on a recent on-site visit of the construction site.

Council Member Denison thanked the team for the incredible progress being made on the project.

Council Member Schooler commented on a recent site visit and spoke kindly of the number of workers in multiple trades being on site.

Mayor Pro Tem Abel commented on the quality of life benefits of the project to the Town of Yucca Valley and surrounding areas.

Council Member Lombardo arrived at 6:10 p.m.

17. Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Commissioner Appointment

Town Clerk Copeland presented the staff report requesting Council Member Lombardo's nomination for the commissioner appointment to the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Commissioner.

Council Member Lombardo nominated Kim Monnie to serve as a Parks, Recreation and Cultural Commissioner.

Mayor Drozd opened public comments.

Kim Monnie, Yucca Valley introduced herself to the Town Council and thanked Council Member Lombardo for the nomination.

With no other members of the public wishing to speak, Mayor Drozd closed public comments.

Motion:

Appoint Kim Monnie to serve as commissioner to the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Commission with a term expiring January 31, 2029.

Result: Passed (Yes 5, No 0, Abstained 0)

Mover: Council Member Robert Lombardo

Second: Council Member Jim Schooler

Ayes: Merl Abel, Jeff Drozd, Rick Denison, Jim Schooler, Robert Lombardo

18. Yucca Valley Film Festival 2025 Event Update

Film Festival Director Matt Beurois of Colorado Studios provided a preview of the

upcoming 2025 Film Festival.

Mayor Drozd opened public comments. With no members of the public wishing to speak, public comments were closed.

Council Member Denison thanked Beurois for presenting the event, bringing a great level of culture to the community.

Council Member Schooler and Abel thanked Matt and Auregon for committing to the community and sharing their talent.

Received and Filed.

19. Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Public Works Annual Report

The Town's Public Works Supervisors (Dave Johnson, Streets, James McCubbin, Facilities, Joseph Bowers, Parks) presented the 2024-25 Annual Department Report.

Mayor Drozd opened public comments.

Melissa Spurr, Yucca Valley spoke about the conditions of the dog park area at Essig Park.

Sondra Hamlin, Yucca Valley thanked the streets crew for their recent attention to her street.

_____ Yucca Valley commented on adverse conditions of his street, especially after it rains.

With no members of the public wishing to speak, public comments were closed.

Council Member Denison thanked the crew for their report and the work they are doing and reminded the public to report any adverse condition they see to assist the Town's crew in keeping on top of things. Great to see the savings on the LED lighting installations.

Council Member Schooler thanked the supervisors for their work and expressed appreciation for jobs well done.

Council Member Lombardo commented on the heavy work load the small crews are undertaking. Lombardo thanked the parks crews quick response to vandalism as its reported.

Mayor Pro Tem Abel thanked the public works crews for the work they are doing with

the limited staff and the quick response time for attending to public requests.

Mayor Drozd thanked the public works staff for their update and thanked them for their hard work.

Received and Filed.

20. Public Art - Town West Entrance Monument Signage

Recreation Supervisor Rardon presented the staff report for the consideration of the design and location of the west entrance sign along Hwy 62.

Mayor Drozd opened public comments. With no members of the public wishing to speak, Mayor Drozd closed public comments.

Council Member Lombardo spoke in favor of installing a new sign at the existing location for possible cost savings and the opportunity to try and use the existing base to honor the original creator, Frank Garske.

Council Member Denison expressed similar thoughts on using the original structure and to embrace history.

Mayor Drozd explained he doesn't like the location of the old sign as it is difficult to see as you first come over the hill into Yucca Valley. Drozd would prefer to use the site originally selected at Camino Del Cielo or to collaborate with the tribal agency.

Town Manager Yakimow clarified information regarding potential tribal collaboration.

Council Member Schooler inquired about the process and items for consideration. Schooler explained he likes the idea of the south-west corner of Camino Del Cielo and doesn't believe the location will compete with other signage. Schooler also explained he is leaning toward the Cory Hamilton design and would like to plan for installing signage at all Town entrances.

Council Member Lombardo offered that Hamilton's artwork could possibly incorporate the existing base and would like to make sure the signage text will be very readable at a distance.

Mayor Pro Tem Abel spoke favorably for Hamilton's submission and believes that proper lighting, and a natural landscape would create better visibility and keep the cost down at the existing location.

Deputy Town Manager Luckino explained the project process with design creation and assistance by the Town's engineering team.

Town Manager Yakimow explained the current site is not owned by the Town and would need a commitment by service clubs for ongoing maintenance.

Motion:

Approve the existing sign location to install Cory Hamilton's design and pursue a site license at the current site for maintenance and provide an additional cost analysis.

Result:	Passed (Yes 4, No 1, Abstained 0)
Mover:	Council Member Robert Lombardo
Second:	Mayor Pro Tem Merl Abel
Ayes:	Merl Abel, Rick Denison, Jim Schooler, Robert Lombardo
Nays:	Jeff Drozd

21. 2025 Farmers' Market RFP Discussion

Deputy Town Manager Luckino presented the staff report for council consideration of a Certified Farmers Market operator. Luckino provided an overview of the RFP process and the philosophical differences in the proposal submissions and clarified decision points, especially for the inclusion of food trucks.

Mayor Drozd opened public comments.

Lori Herbel, Yucca Valley spoke as an operator applicant and explained her proposal, the operating model and thoughts on the naming of the farmers market event.

Mayor Pro Tem Abel thanked Herbel and inquired on set-up concerns and scheduling.

Council Member Schooler asked about Herbel's staffing levels to assist with current operations and inquired on the proposed schedule and advertising target.

Council Member Lombardo inquired on event advertising and visitor statistics for the Joshua Tree Farmers Market. Lombardo proposed a Wednesday morning market.

Alexander Vallejos, Sky Forest commented as an operator applicant and introduced himself and his company to the Town Council. Vallejos provided explanation on the proposed idea for a Farmers Market in Yucca Valley, including a Friday evening/night

event from 3pm to 8pm similar to Big Bear Lake's event with similar visitor demographics.

With no other members of the public wishing to speak, Mayor Drozd closed public comments.

Mayor Pro Tem Abel spoke favorably of a Friday event in the evening with the inclusion of music and food. While might be best for summer nights, the later time of the day could be a concern in colder, windy months. Abel inquired on advertising methods and business model.

Council Member Lombardo spoke favorably of including an educational component to the market operations and asked how they might address higher winds, adverse weather, and canopy issues.

Council Member Schooler thanked Vallejos for the proposal and spoke of concern with including food and possibly affecting food businesses in Old Town and asked for clarification on the breakdown of vendor types.

Council Member Denison inquired on the percentages of vendor types as proposed and how it compares to other farmers' markets. Denison also asked about other experiences with the inclusion of prepared food options or food trucks at similar markets. Denison requested clarification on the designation as a certified farmers market.

Mayor Drozd expressed he would prefer not to include a lot of food trucks at a farmers' market.

Council Member Lombardo spoke favorably of the variety of food options with food trucks in general.

Mayor Pro Tem Abel inquired about the purpose of the Council item and commented on the inclusion of food trucks. Abel sees a strong case for both proposals.

Council Member Schooler explained food trucks would be okay on a limited basis if separated from the produce vendors. Schooler reminded the group, should a farmers' market be scheduled for a prime-time Friday night, it might not allow for the location to be used for other special events.

Mayor Drozd agreed with Council Member Schooler on limiting options on a Friday night.

Council Member Denison also agreed with the potential of limiting options on a

Friday night and would like to keep vendor rations as previously established.

Town Council input provided; no motion made.

Animal Shelter Committee Report

Council Member Schooler provided a recap of the September 18, 2025 Animal Shelter Committee meeting and thanked staff for the update in the press release distributed on October 22, 2025.

Town Manager Yakimow provided an additional update on animal shelter operations.

Public Comments

Mayor Drozd opened public comments.

Suzy Dick, Yucca Valley spoke of community outreach with basic needs through "giving machines" located at Tyler Mall in Riverside.

Carolynn Lee, Yucca Valley spoke of strong community involvement in bringing a lost animal home to her family.

The following provided comments on the animal shelter operations.

- Cheryl Contopulos, Yucca Valley
- Susan Herring, Pioneertown
- James Porter, Yucca Valley
- Melissa Spurr, Joshua Tree
- Candace Moulton, Yucca Valley (provided written comment)

With no other members of the public wishing to speak, Mayor Drozd closed public comments.

Staff Reports and Comments

Senior Management Analyst Rice announced the fall Community Clean Up Day coming up this Saturday.

Town Manager Yakimow reported on a recent meeting held by Assemblyman Greg Wallis on the Western Joshua Tree topic and updated the council on completed shelter operational review items.

Mayor and Council Member Reports and Comments

Council Member Lombardo reported on the recent attendance at the League of CA Cities Annual Conference.

Council Member Schooler thanked staff for providing the recent Founders Plaza event this past week.

Mayor Pro Tem Abel thanked the public for attending and providing comments this evening. Abel also reported on his attendance at the League of CA Cities Annual Conference.

Mayor Drozd thanked everyone for participating tonight.

Announcements

With no further business, Mayor Drozd adjourned the meeting at 9:09 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Lesley Copeland, CMC
Town Clerk