

Town of Yucca Valley
Town Council Meeting Minutes
February 3, 2026

Call to Order

Roll Call

Present: Merl Abel, Jeff Drozd, Rick Denison, Robert Lombardo

Absent: Jim Schooler (Excused)

Pledge of Allegiance

Led by Mayor Abel

Invocation

Led by Mayor Abel

Presentations, Introductions, Recognitions

1. Morongo Basin Youth Soccer Association Update- President Clint Stoker

MBYSA President Clint Stoker presented an overview of the organization and reported on a recent locally hosted Tournament of Champions event including over 600 players and their families from around Southern California.

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

Mayor Abel thanked Stoker for the update and congratulated MBYSA for a successful event.

Council Member Denison completed the League for hosting a great event for the community.

Council Member Lombardo thanked Stoker for sharing his enthusiasm for supporting the local youth.

Council Member Drozd complemented Stoker and the other volunteers for bringing the successful event to the community.

2. Introduction of new Town employees

Public Works Director introduced Skilled Maintenance Worker Patrick Morning as the newest member of the Town's Public Works team.

Deputy Town Manager Stueckle introduced Animal Care and Control Manager Shianne May.

3. Yucca Valley Military Banner Program Presentation

Recreation Supervisor Rardon presented an update on the Town's Military Banner Program. Banners were recently installed on light poles around the Town Hall Complex and Brehm Park.

Town Manager Yakimow thanked former PRCC Commissioner Staehle for bringing this idea forward.

Mayor Abel complemented the staff for the installation of the banners and confirmed the annual cycle of application and installation process.

Council Member Denison spoke favorably about expanding the amount of banners currently on display and feels this is a great community feature.

Council Member Lombardo spoke favorably of the program for the community.

Council Member Drozd thanked former PRCC Commissioner Staehle for introducing the program.

Approval of Agenda

4. Agenda Approval

Motion:

Approve the meeting agenda as prepared.

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

Mover: Council Member Robert Lombardo

Seconder: Council Member Rick Denison

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

Consent Agenda

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

Mover: Council Member Rick Denison

Seconder: Mayor Jeff Drozd

Ayes: None

5. Approval of Meeting Minutes for October 21, 2025

Motion:

Approve the Town Council meeting minutes of October 21, 2025 as presented.

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

6. Approval of Meeting Minutes for November 4, 2025

Motion:
Approve the Town Council meeting minutes of November 4, 2025 as presented.

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

7. 56370 Buena Vista Drive Property Demolition Project No. 8070 - Notice of Completion

Motion:
Accept the project as substantially complete, authorize staff to file the Notice of Completion, authorize the reduction of the Faithful Performance Bond to 10%, direct staff to retain the Labor and Material Bond for six (6) months for Project No. 8070.

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

8. Town Project No. 8340; Town-Wide Crack, Slurry, Cape Seal Project — Notice of Completion

Motion:
Accept the project as substantially complete, authorize staff to file the Notice of Completion, authorize the reduction of the Faithful Performance Bond to 10%, direct staff to retain the Labor and Material Bond for six (6) months for Project No. 8340.

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

Department Reports

9. Town of Yucca Valley 35th Anniversary Celebration

Deputy Town Clerk Dudra presented the staff report announcing the launch of the Town's year-long 35th Anniversary Celebration.

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

Council Member Denison complemented the proposed work plan to include the 35th anniversary focus this year.

Council Member Lombardo looks forward for the history sharing.

Council Member Drozd spoke of early years of the Town's incorporation. Thanked those who had the insight to start a city.

Mayor Abel spoke of the purpose of incorporating to retain local tax revenue to provide much needed services to Yucca Valley.

No Motion Made

10. Land Development Update

Senior Planner Jerome provided an update on local land development projects.

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

No motion made.

11. Update on Solid Waste & Recycling

Senior Management Analyst Rice presented an updated on the Town's solid waste and recycling program.

Town Manager Yakimow provided comments on implementation timing and efforts to comply with State legislation. Yakimow thanked the services Burrtec is providing to the community.

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

Council Member Denison thanked Rice for the update and spoke kindly of the bulky

item pick up program and reminded the public of the household hazardous waste collection services provided by the County. Denison inquired if there are any local food pantries participating in the recycling program.

Council Member Drozd thanked Rice for the information and explained that the trash trucks have multiple sections within the truck to separate the contents of the different colored bins.

Mayor Abel reminded the public to contact Burrtec if a trash bin needs to be replaced.

No Motion Made.

12. FY 2026-28 Final Draft Strategic Plan Review

Town Manager Yakimow presented the final 2026-28 Strategic Plan and Objectives. Yakimow explained the strategic plan will guide the upcoming 2026-28 budget cycle.

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

Council Member Drozd expressed he is glad to see dirt road maintenance on the report.

Motion:

Review and approve the final draft FY 2026-28 Strategic Plan and direct staff to incorporate the plan priorities into the FY 2026-28 budget process and policy planning activities.

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

Mover: Council Member Drozd

Seconder: Council Member Lombardo

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

Public Comments

Mayor Abel opened public comments for items not on the agenda.

James Dean, Twentynine Palms announced the upcoming Flying Doctors event being held on March 7th and 8th at Yucca Valley High School.

Cheryl Contopulos, Yucca Valley complemented Animal Care and Control Manager May as being a pleasure to work with.

James Porter, Yucca Valley spoke of saving the animals on a recent euthanasia list and commented on the status of several unmet priorities.

Susan Walls, Joshua Tree spoke favorably of changes happening at the shelter and inquired on the scheduling of the next spay and neuter clinic. Walls stated the Town needs additional kennels and agreed with Mr. Porter on the status of unmet priorities.

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

Staff Reports and Comments

Captain Scovel updated the Town Council on public safety activity at the King of the Hammers event.

Deputy Town Manager Luckino provided a status update on the Yucca Valley Farmers' Market.

Human Resources and Risk Manager Breidenbach-Sterling provided an update on the recent Point in Time Count and thanked all the volunteers who assisted.

Community Services Manager Earnest provided an update on the Town's Youth Basketball Team and announced upcoming events and activities.

Mayor and Council Member Reports and Comments

Council Member Denison thanked Yakimow and Stueckle for representing the Town in Sacramento regarding the Western Joshua Tree regulations and other legislation. Denison announced his recent participation in SBCTA representing local transportation.

Council Member Drozd thanked James Dean for the information on the Flying Doctors event and announced the upcoming Miss Yucca Valley Pageant.

Council Member Lombardo complemented the Flying Doctors and providing much needed services. Lombardo announced the attendance at a recent League of California Cities Desert Mountain Division meeting.

Mayor Abel welcomed the new employees Morning and May to the Town team and reported on recent attendance a conference in Sacramento and his attendance at a recent MDQMD meeting, and the League of California Cities Desert Mountain Division meeting.

Announcements

Mayor Abel adjourned the meeting in memory of local resident Stacy Schooler at 6:39 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lesley Copeland, CMC
Town Clerk