

ALPINE CITY COUNCIL MEETING

February 10, 2026

Mayor Carla Merrill called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

- A. **Roll Call** Mayor Carla Merrill
The following were in attendance at the anchor location, which constituted a quorum: Andrew Young, Brent Rummmler, Jessica Smuin, Sarah Blackwell, and Chrissy Hannemann.
Staff: Shane Sorensen, Steve Doxey, Chief Brian Patten, Heidi Smith, and DeAnn Parry
Others: Steve Burrows, Cheryl Cragun Dame
- B. **Prayer** Andrew Young
- C. **Pledge** Chrissy Hannemann

II. CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. **Approve Minutes from Budget Retreat on January 23rd and City Council Meeting on January 27th**
- B. **Approval to Remove Pump from the Busch Well – Nickerson Company: \$10,340**

Andrew Young asked for an explanation of Item B, the Busch Well pump.

City Engineer Jason Judd said that the Busch Well has not been performing adequately. Staff reached out to Nickerson Company, and they recommended pulling the pump to evaluate it. They will also send a camera into the well to check for problems.

Shane Sorensen added that well pumps do not last forever. Sometimes it is 20 years, and sometimes it is only one or two years. It depends on how much sand and debris go through the pump. Because of the drought, we need to have all our water sources functional for this year. There are not many companies that do this type of work, and Nickerson’s price is in line with what we have paid in the past.

Jason Judd confirmed that he is in favor of this project.

Motion: Jessica Smuin moved to approve the Consent Calendar as stated. Brent Rummmler seconded the motion. There were 5 yes votes and 0 no votes, as recorded below. The motion passed unanimously.

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Excused</u>
Andrew Young		
Brent Rummmler		
Jessica Smuin		
Sarah Blackwell		
Chrissy Hannemann		

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Steve Burrows – Meadowlark Drive, Alpine
Steve said he appreciated the information in the packet and what was covered in the budget retreat held by the council in January. Most residents do not understand all the issues that the council and mayor consider. He also appreciates being able to ask questions between meetings. He spoke with Greg Kmetzsch, Water Supervisor, recently about pressurized irrigation for non-residents and it was a helpful discussion.

IV. REPORTS & PRESENTATIONS

- A. **Financial Report – January 2026**
Shane Sorensen said that our financial report is about 58 pages and is very comprehensive. Starting in January of each year, Dave Sanderson creates the Red/Green report to track the status of our various funds.

Our large insurance premiums are paid at the beginning of the fiscal year, we have an upcoming PI bond payment due, and the \$1M grant we received will be allocated in a mid-year budget adjustment soon. We are seeing a positive trend in sales tax revenue but need to remember that there is a two-month lag in receiving funds.

Council members asked various questions:

Planning the budget for the next fiscal year -

Shane explained that staff use a spreadsheet with the previous full year data, the current year status, and the proposed budget for the next fiscal year. This allows comparisons and adjustments. For example, if we incurred high pumping costs due to dry weather last year and we anticipate the same this year, we can increase the budget in that category.

Using impact fees for projects that residents request or that council members want to endorse -

Shane said that in order to spend money from an impact fee fund it must be a project that is included in the impact fee study. Council reviewed three such studies in recent meetings. New impact fees require a public hearing, a vote by the City Council, and a 90-day period after enactment before the new impact fees can be charged to residents.

Alpine bonded to install our PI system in 2020-2021. Then we added \$1M to the bond to put in the filter station and run the CUP line to our city. The Central Utah Water Conservancy District paid for part of the project, and we paid the rest. When we receive our bond invoice, we pay part from impact fees and part from user fees (PI Fund 55). These council-approved studies are very important for our future projects.

Mayor Carla Merrill reminded the council about the email she sent recommending that new council members schedule training times with Shane to get up to speed on budget issues.

Chrissy Hannemann reported that the Finance Committee will have an auditor at their March meeting to do a deeper dive. They will have the recorder post the required notices so that all council members may attend.

Shane explained that we cannot retain more than 35 percent of the total revenue of the General Fund for the fiscal year in that fund. If there is a surplus, we transfer it to the Capital Improvement Fund. A bill in the legislature this year is proposing a 25 percent limit, so we will watch that closely. The General Fund is the only one that has this restriction.

B. Outdoor Water Outlook for 2026

Shane Sorensen said we are having another historically low precipitation year this winter and are currently at 51 percent of normal. It will take a number of large storms to reach 100 percent. The whole western United States is experiencing drought, and people are joking that Lake Powell should be called Lake Puddle. This is uncharted territory because we rely so heavily on our snowpack and a slow spring runoff.

Because big projects take a year or two to complete, we have limited options in what we can do for this season. Staff provided the following suggestions:

1. Prepare so we can use all the sources we have to pump water. Maintenance for one of these sources (the Busch Well) is on the agenda tonight. The 300 North Well has been pumping sand, so we are working to fix that. Our other wells are in good shape and ready to go.
2. Increase conservation education efforts for residents. We may need to begin the season by restricting watering to two days per week. Many cities are in a similar situation.
3. Establish a water shortage plan - Shane attended a meeting yesterday about these plans. Saratoga Springs recently had consultants create one for them. With the backing of the City Council, we can publish a plan, so residents know what to expect. Staff are trying to have a document ready for our March 10 City Council meeting. We would want an engineering firm to help us create this plan.

Staff and council members discussed various details:

Well Pumps - When the aquifer drops, we have to lower the pumps. You can deepen the well, but you cannot put a new gravel pack around it. If a pump runs dry, it ruins the pump. The Busch and 300 North Wells were drilled decades ago, using different technology than today. It is hard to go back and update an old well. The gravel used now filters the water before it enters the well, which is a better system and provides longevity. Wells do not have infinite life. A VFD (variable frequency drive) allows pumps to function at varying speeds depending on conditions, but they are expensive (around 100K).

Funding – New projects will be paid for from multiple sources: some from impact fees, some from cash, some from the Capital Improvement Fund, and some from bonding. It is not feasible to do all the necessary projects without bonding. Maintenance and repairs cannot be paid from impact fees.

Priorities – The first projects are to upsize the booster pumps and pipelines on 400 West, drill a new well at Heritage Hills, and upsize the booster pumps for the Healey Well.

Construction Savings - When we have opportunities to install larger pipes as part of another project, like the Page property development, we must take advantage of those. With the Canyon Crest Road PI line project, we stubbed the new pipe 30 feet into Ridge Drive. Running the pipe across the north edge of Peterson Park would save the city lots of money.

Elevation - Reservoirs are elevation dependent. We cannot have two in the same zone at different elevations, or one will not fill with water. Staff are looking at city properties that could accommodate another reservoir, but we do not have much vacant land.

Education – Residents can learn methods to improve absorption, so less water is running down the gutters. Park strips waste lots of water so we could promote the Flip the Strip and other programs. The Central Utah Water Conservancy District has lots of information we can use to educate residents. We can host open houses, send mailers, and post on social media. Jason Judd reported that we will get some but not all of the grant money we requested for education. We have a public meeting scheduled for March 11 about water conservation and to encourage residents to sign up for the Eye on Water app.

Increased User Fees – We may be required to increase user fees in order to bond for the large projects. Construction costs have increased approximately 300 percent over the last few years, which helps support the increased rates. A rate study costs about \$75,000 to \$110,000 and will be required to raise rates. We also want to consider residents on fixed incomes and keep the lower tiers reasonable for them. Raising fees for large volume use in the upper tiers would help discourage some residents from wasting water. Others will not care.

Water Sources – Our current water sources are not located to be most effective. If one source goes down, it impacts all the others. When the Healey Well went down, it took several months to get a new pump delivered and was expensive. We need more sources in the middle and high zones.

Future Planning – Other cities like Saratoga Springs and Lehi are growing at explosive rates, but we are close enough to build out that we do not anticipate any big surprises. With around 32 new homes a year, we cannot fund many projects with cash. Impact fees must stay in that fund.

Alpine Irrigation Company – Our contract with them took several years to create and stipulates that they do not pay for the water system. It has been in force for about 25 years, with 75 more to go. Shareholder user rates have increased 3 percent each year for the last five years, which is the same as the rest of our residents.

Fitzgerald Annexation – They will pay the annexation fee up front for the whole area, which will help fund projects. We are currently working through the final steps to have it recorded.

High Elevations - We do not serve PI at high elevations. Three Falls was the most recent expansion in this category. They had to build two water tanks and two pump stations to serve their lots. Box Elder and Willow Canyon had to do the same for their high elevation lots.

Additional Staff - Our Code Compliance officer is part-time so we may need to hire additional seasonal help for water enforcement. In our recent grant application, we asked for funds for additional staff. If we are able to hire someone, it will take a while to get them up to speed. Enforcement is difficult so it is ultimately up to the residents to comply.

Citizen Committee – It is helpful to have people walking around and checking on the weekends, and the citizens care about Alpine. It is important that staff are not required to attend every meeting. Ideally the committee would function mostly independently and report back to the City Council. Steve Burrows has expertise in educating the public.

C. Proposal for Pressurized Irrigation Projects

Shane Sorensen reported that the following are projects that staff are currently working on relating to providing pressurized irrigation service to the residents of Alpine:

1. Equip the 300 North Well with VFD and install a new pump.
2. Pull the pump from the Busch Well. Install a new pump if necessary.
3. Develop a plan for water conservation.
 - a. Consider forming a citizen committee.
4. Develop a water shortage response plan.
5. Prepare a package of projects for bonding. Get a proforma from Zion's Public Finance.
6. Review potential locations for a PI reservoir in the lower zone.

V. ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Ordinance 2026-06: Amend Alpine City Code for View Protection

Ryan Robinson said these changes were proposed by Andrew Young and Sarah Blackwell to protect views in the city. There have been many discussions over past years about how to accomplish this.

The Planning Commission reviewed this proposal during their February 3rd meeting and held a public hearing. Support for the ordinance emphasized the importance of preserving scenic views that contribute to the character, desirability, and long-term value of the community, while acknowledging that development should continue in a thoughtful and balanced manner.

The Planning Commission also identified substantial concerns regarding enforceability, objectivity, and potential impacts on private property rights. Discussion focused on the subjectivity of evaluating view impacts, the potential for increased neighbor-to-neighbor disputes, and the administrative challenges of implementing and enforcing the proposed standards. Commissioners expressed concern that the ordinance could create widespread legal nonconforming properties, expose the city to legal challenges, and function as an attempt to regulate aesthetics rather than land use. It was further noted that existing zoning regulations, including height limits, setbacks, and the Sensitive Land Overlay, already address many view-related concerns. Based on these considerations, the Planning Commission recommended denial of the proposed ordinance, concluding that while the goal of protecting scenic views is important, the proposed framework was overly broad and could result in unintended legal and practical consequences.

Mayor Carla Merrill explained that staff reached out to Andrew Young to ask if he wanted to delay putting this item on the agenda so that revisions could be made. Andrew made the decision to move forward at this meeting.

Attorney Steve Doxey sent an email to the council regarding the legal implications of the current proposal. He said this does not imply that the concept is without merit, but that any amendments to the ordinance must be carefully written to avoid unintended consequences.

Andrew Young said that everyone wants a solution to this problem and many residents have spoken to him about this issue. Ryan Robinson has offered some great suggestions. We may want to focus on regulating accessory buildings and issues like grading, setbacks and roof height. Andrew hopes the council will pursue a solution.

Brent Rummeler said he appreciates the intent of the proposal and the work that has been done. He thanked the Planning Commission for their thoughtful discussion, and Mr. Doxey for providing information on legal issues with land use. Brent said we also need to consider the private ownership rights of landowners and the purposes of zoning and setbacks. You cannot appease everyone. Trying to legislate good taste or thoughtfulness of neighbors and landscaping is very difficult. It may be more appropriate to focus on ancillary structures, with setbacks and height requirements.

Jessica Smuin said that this issue has been discussed for many years without a solution. We need to make this a priority, and the city needs to protect views on our own properties as well. We need to make changes to the current ordinances and address bulk and massing because it is all intertwined. View issues are not just happening on the hillsides, they are problems in our neighborhoods as well.

Ryan Robinson commented that staff recently provided language for a guest house amendment, which was tabled at the January 13 meeting. Those numbers may be a helpful starting point when drafting accessory structure regulations.

Sarah Blackwell said that they decided to keep this item on the agenda so the council could have a conversation. Quite a few residents spoke up at the public hearing during Planning Commission. We already have some regulations in place, and she would like to pursue cleaning up the ordinance.

Chrissy Hannemann said she enjoyed listening to the Planning Commission meeting and noted that many residents are concerned about this. They want to maintain a rural feel in our community, and it is becoming more urban. We should look at massing and how much of a parcel can be used for building. Chrissy asked about the ordinance that allows an additional structure if it is connected to the primary home.

Ryan Robinson explained that if the structures are connected by a common wall or roof, it is considered part of the home. A short breezeway has allowed residents to meet that requirement.

Chrissy said she wants to look at multiple angles on this, the roof attachment issue, massing standards, setback requirements, and a potential limitation on ADU square footage. The market already allows people to purchase a lot next to open space or public properties like schools, which will not be developed in the future and would provide protected views.

Mayor Carla Merrill said it appears that the council is in agreement that moving forward to prevent large buildings is important. However, she is concerned about the potential for lawsuits and property rights. With the way that a private protected view is addressed in this proposal, almost any home in Alpine would not comply. The first home built in a subdivision would conform, and then no one else could build a two-story home. Most existing homes in Alpine would become legal nonconforming structures. If you owned an older home and wanted to build an addition, you could not do it until you conformed to this ordinance. She strongly encouraged the council to work with staff so that we do not place a target on the city's back. This ordinance is not ready yet.

Steve Doxey said that if council is in agreement with that the existing ordinance needs to be modified, they could direct staff to work with the Planning Commission to study it and see what would help to protect views without infringing on private property rights or resulting in litigation. This may take a while to accomplish, but the Planning Commission could explore the issue and make recommendations.

Motion: Andrew Young moved to deny the Scenic Ridgeline, View, and Hillside Protection Ordinance (Alpine City Code 3.34) so that council can look for a different approach with staff that does not incur legal liability on the city but still attempts to fulfil the General Plan of Alpine City.

Brent Rummler suggested the addition of working with the Planning Commission, as recommended by Mr. Doxey.

Andrew Young accepted that suggestion.

Amended Motion: Andrew Young moved to deny the Scenic Ridgeline, View, and Hillside Protection Ordinance (Alpine City Code 3.34) so that council can look for a different approach with staff and the Planning Commission that does not incur legal liability on the city but still attempts to fulfil the General Plan of Alpine City. Sarah Blackwell seconded the motion. There were 5 yes votes and 0 no votes, as recorded below. The motion passed unanimously.

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Excused</u>
Andrew Young		
Brent Rummler		
Jessica Smuin		
Sarah Blackwell		
Chrissy Hannemann		

Council members asked how to submit their ideas for the new ordinance.

Shane Sorensen said that Ryan Robinson is great to help us until we can hire a new City Planner, but he has another job and we cannot ask him to lead this. Council members should email their suggestions to Shane and he will compile them.

B. Review of Resolution R2025-32: Water Conservation Plan

Shane Sorensen explained that the council passed this resolution at the December meeting but wanted to bring it back for review and questions. A water conservation plan is required by State code, and we cannot get State funding without one. Our previous plan was valid through the end of 2025, so passing the new plan keeps us in compliance. The Division of Water Resources may send us their comments or suggestions. This is a living document, and we can make changes to it.

Staff and council members discussed the following:

- The Everbridge notification system is for emergencies like water main breaks and city-wide announcements about PI reduction requirements. Resident education will need to use other methods.
- We should evaluate our leak adjustment policy regarding a stricter stance.
- We need the upsized PI pipes so we can use Healey Well and CUP water at the same time. We also need a delivery method to get water to the high zone.
- The Fitzgerald Annexation is the only new area that would use PI water. Box Elder and Pine Grove will have to use culinary for their outdoor needs.
- We can only bond for a certain amount, so we need to make sure we get the best results with our investment.
- Draper City charges an additional fee for residents above a certain elevation. We may want to consider that idea.
- The Central Utah Water Conservancy District has materials we can use for education.
- We may want to consider raising rates in the higher tiers for excessive usage. John Schiess has stated that higher fees are more effective than education at lowering usage.
- Our schools use a great deal of water on their grounds, and they must be contacted when the city regulates summer watering.
- Having a percentage goal for outdoor water reduction would allow us to measure our progress each year.

C. Review of Resolution R2025-33: Water Use and Preservation Elements of the General Plan

Shane Sorensen said that this item is similar and related to the Conservation Plan. The State requires us to have this element as part of our General Plan. We used a grant to have Horrocks Engineers create the plan, which was adopted in December 2025, but is on the agenda for review tonight.

Staff and council members discussed the following:

- Early detection of water leaks using the Eye on Water app is important.
- Limiting impervious surface coverage could be done through an ordinance.
- Our source protection plans are for culinary water and are updated every 3-5 years.
- Our watershed needs to be protected from petroleum products and fertilizers. Alpine's culinary water is tested every month. If we begin to see trace elements, we will work to mitigate those.

Motion: Brent Rummler moved to extend the meeting to accomplish the city business. Jessica Smuin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. STAFF REPORTS

Shane Sorensen gave an update on the fire station expansion. They met with the design group today and reviewed each page. He shared some details:

- Small changes have been made to the plans, and the radio room will likely be eliminated so the kitchen can be expanded.
- A standing seam metal roof is planned, and the structure will have as many windows as possible.
- It may be nice to add an outdoor sitting area or pergola on the northeast corner.
- The entry area could display Alpine mementoes and incorporate historical bricks and other materials.
- It is possible that the overhead powerline from 100 North can be eliminated.

Shane reviewed the timeline:

- The plans will be updated after today's meeting
- An estimate is due from SIRQ on February 18
- Construction drawings will be done by April 2
- The contractor will assemble bids in April and early May
- Groundbreaking is planned for May

Shane explained that the contractor will give Alpine City a guaranteed maximum price for the project, and sometimes these projects even come in under budget. Shane will forward the design development drawings from Chad Littlewood to council members. The email will include a link where they can acknowledge that they have seen them.

Shane said he is very impressed with architect, the contractor, and the construction managers (Navigate), who are acting as an extension of staff. They have the expertise we are lacking and are doing a great job for us.

The large tree by the Arnold Patrick home will need to be removed, and the Fire Department has suggested the wood be used to make a table for the day room at the station.

Mayor Carola Merrill asked the Fire Chief to have his contact assess the tree.

A question was raised about why Alpine's station is Number 202.

Fire Chief Brian Patten explained the history of cities being incorporated and the numbering scheme for stations. Highland is 201 and Alpine is 202.

Shane reported that the Lambert Parking lot expansion is almost complete, and the trees at the north end have been left standing. Wood rail fencing will be installed.

Jessica Smuin asked that rocks also be installed around the middle section to protect the trees from vehicles backing up.

VII. COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

Brent Rummler said he appreciates being able to see the agenda earlier in the week because packets are not ready until late Friday afternoon. He wondered when Shane would be available for questions.

Shane explained that the DRC meeting takes up the morning on Mondays, and then the legislative meeting is in the afternoon. He is always happy to respond to emailed questions. Once the legislative session is over, Monday afternoons or Tuesday mornings will be more open.

Brent mentioned the recent cemetery cleanup and residents' frustrations with the removal of their items. Shane said that staff are working on a sign package that they will bring to the council for approval. Part of this will be to update signs at the cemetery.

Brent showed slides of two concept plans for a roundabout on Canyon Crest Road and said that Keller Associates provided these at no cost. They hope to be chosen as the designer for the project. Engineer Andy Spencer prefers the 135-foot version. The estimated cost is around \$1M, plus design expenses.

Shane Sorensen commented that one challenge with MAG grants is that if it were approved today, the funding would be five years out.

Mayor Merrill recommended that Jason Judd work with Andy Spencer to see if we have a better chance of a grant through the MAG Technical Advisory Committee, because we have not received one from them yet.

The council discussed the dangers at this crosswalk and intersection and ways to improve safety.

Jessica Smuin reported that they met with the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers (DUP) representatives today. They are excited about the community center and the history wall. They would like to have a place to showcase stories at the center. The DUP ladies are pleased that the stucco on the relic hall will be repaired and the windowsills painted. The Sculpture Garden landscaper is creating a plan for the block.

Shane explained that because the community room will double as an emergency command center, there will be two flat screen televisions installed. They can be covered by rolling barn doors for aesthetics. The floor will be carpeted, and acoustic panels can be added if echoing is found to be an issue.

Sarah Blackwell said she has been tasked with salvaging the bricks from Olsen home. She attended the AYC activity which was a polar plunge. The AYC is also working on a vision charter. Sarah loved meeting with the amazing DUP ladies and is excited about the improvements to the relic hall.

Andrew Young asked about Alpine's policy on pop-up stands selling merchandise.

Mayor Carla Merrill said that we have an ordinance against them. People may call the police to report the vendors.

Andrew said that he and Jessica Smuin had a great meeting at the Alpine Art Center about sculptures. There will be a caucus meeting on March 17 from 5-7 at City Hall.

Racoons are being removed from the city.

Alex Hume would like to be on the emergency committee and Andrew thinks he would be great.

Mayor Merrill responded that we need to wait until we have hired a new City Planner to make changes to that committee.

Sarah Blackwell asked if ideas for service projects come up in any of the committee meetings, that council members please email her. Sarah is collecting service ideas for the Alpine Youth Council and other groups.

Mayor Carla Merrill reminded the council of the water conservation meeting on March 11. A regional transportation plan meeting will be hosted by MAG on February 18 at 5:00 pm at Lehi City Power. She will forward the invitation.

The mayor asked Andrew Young about digitizing the photos received from Kathleen Rasmussen. Andrew said he will make that project a priority.

The mayor reported that the traffic study from Fehr & Peers came back, but we need a larger scope so there will be a small delay.

The city has received donations for gym equipment and a drinking fountain for the fire station expansion.

Motion: Brent Rummler moved to pause the regular meeting and move into a closed meeting to be held in the Conference Room at City Hall to discuss the purchase, exchange and sale of real property, and the character, professional competence, or physical or mental health of an individual, and that at the end of the closed meeting the open City Council meeting would be adjourned. Jessica Smuin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The regular City Council meeting was paused at 10:05 pm.

VIII. CLOSED MEETING

The closed meeting began at 10:11 pm,

Motion: Chrissy Hannemann moved to adjourn the meeting. Sarah Blackwell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:56 pm.