

MINUTES

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BISBEE, COUNTY OF COCHISE, AND STATE OF ARIZONA, HELD ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2026, AT 7:00 PM AT COUNCIL CHAMBERS LOCATED AT 118 ARIZONA STREET, BISBEE, ARIZONA.

THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER BY MAYOR BUDGE AT 7:00PM.

ROLL CALL

COUNCIL

Councilmember Karen Schumacher, Ward I
Councilmember Terry Priestley, Ward II
Councilmember Trish Damon, Ward III
Mayor Ken Budge
Councilmember Anna Cline, Ward III, Mayor Pro Tempore Excused
Councilmember Mel Sowid, Ward II
Councilmember Cesilia C. Garcia, Ward I

STAFF

Ashlee Coronado, City Manager
Nina Williams, Acting City Clerk
Keri Bagley, Finance Director
Bridgette Kantner, Personnel Director
Matthew Gurney, Public Works Director
Tim Cox, Police Chief
Jay Ritchie, Deputy Police Chief
Jim Richardson, Fire Chief

CITY ATTORNEY

Joseph Estes

INVOCATION: Mayor Budge called for a moment of silence for personal reflection.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MAYOR'S PROCLAMATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Mayor Budge addressed the Council and public regarding the Call to the Public Protocol. He indicated he had consulted with the Attorney General's office and requested that all speakers provide their full name and ward of residence when addressing the Council. He noted this was necessary for the record and to assist Council members in understanding which constituents they represent. He further reminded the public that presentations must not be repetitious and must be confined to three minutes, noting eight speakers were signed up for Item 6.
- Mayor Budge read the Pitt Hopkins Syndrome Awareness Day Proclamation.
- Mayor Budge introduced Personnel Director Bridgette Kantner, who presided over the Employee Service Awards, recognizing the following employees for their years of service to the City of Bisbee:
 - Jason Macoviak, Public Library Manager
 - Detective Esmeralda Mendoza (unable to attend; award accepted by Police Chief Cox on her behalf)
 - Alison Williams, Services Coordinator, Copper Queen Library

- Randy Kane, Firefighter EMT (unable to attend; award accepted by Fire Chief Richardson on his behalf)
- Raul Hidalgo, Street Supervisor, Public Works Department
- Daniel Hernandez, Sanitation Driver (unable to attend; award accepted by Public Works Director Matthew Gurney on his behalf)
- Jesus Via, Police Officer
- Pedro Medina, Recycling Coordinator, Public Works Department

Mayor Budge remarked that recognizing employee longevity was a great honor, noting that employee turnover was among the most damaging things that can occur in any organization due to the loss of institutional knowledge. He expressed his appreciation for the dedication of City employees.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

- Nolan Gouguet, Bisbee resident addressed the Council on individual rights, government overreach, and freedom of speech, citing the Arizona Constitution and Bisbee's role in Arizona's constitutional history.

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WERE DISCUSSED, CONSIDERED, AND/OR DECIDED UPON AT THIS MEETING:

GENERAL BUSINESS:

1. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE: Subject to availability of funds.

MOTION: Mayor Budge moved to approve accounts payable in the amount of \$536,751.20.

SECOND: Councilmember Damon

Councilmembers Priestley raised a general question regarding rising fuel costs and their impact on the city budget, and staff responded.

MOTION PASSED: UNANIMOUSLY

2. Approval of the Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Session of Mayor and Council held on Tuesday, September 1, 2026.

Nina Williams, Acting City Clerk

- B. Approval to purchase replacement bicycle racks for the 3 current buses.

Rene Lopez, Transit Manager

Mayor Budge briefly noted that the minutes were corrected and reissued versions, and that the bicycle racks were a needed purchase for the transit fleet.

MOTION: Councilmember Schumacher moved to approve the consent agenda items A, and B.

SECOND: Councilmember Sowid

MOTION PASSED: UNANIMOUSLY

OLD BUSINESS

3. Presentation from Arizona Water Company on the Water Conservation partnership with the City of Bisbee.
Ashlee Coronado, City Manager

Mayor Budge introduced representatives from Arizona Water Company, noting the item had been tabled from a prior meeting and that the city had been working with the company for several months. He recognized the importance of water conservation in Arizona.

Frank Cabello, Arizona Water Company Division Manager for Cochise, Bisbee, and Sierra Vista, introduced himself and his colleagues: Raluca Mihalcescu, Water Conservation Administrator, and Caitlin Brady of the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension's WaterWise program.

Ms. Mihalcescu delivered the presentation, providing a comprehensive overview of Arizona Water Company's Integrated Demand Management Program (IDMP) launched in partnership with the City of Bisbee and the U of A WaterWise Program; to include the following:

- Company Background
- Conservation Philosophy
- Existing Programs
- Bisbee-Specific Research
- “Bisbee: Not a Drop to Waste” program
- Upcoming Events
- Launch Date: Officially launched on July 31, 2026

Mayor Budge thanked the presenters and commented that the city was actively pursuing additional conservation-related initiatives, including grant funding for pipe replacement and the potential development of recharge basins near city wells.

4. Discussion and Possible Approval of Ordinance O-26-21, Accepting the Transfer of Real Property from TIMO Holdings LLC, Located at 105 N. Taylor Avenue, Bisbee.

Ashlee Coronado, City Manager

Ms. Coronado clarified that this was the second reading of Ordinance O-26-21. She explained that upon adoption, title to the property would transfer into the City's name within thirty days, at which point it could be formally sold as part of the City's workforce housing program.

MOTION: Councilmember Sowid moved to approve Ordinance O-26-21, Accepting the Transfer of Real Property from TIMO Holdings LLC, Located at 105 N. Taylor Avenue, Bisbee.

SECOND: Councilmember Damon

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYES: Councilmember Schumacher, Priestley, Damon, Garcia, Sowid, and Mayor Budge

NAYS: 0

MOTION PASSED: AYES-6 NAYS-0

5. Discussion and Possible Approval of Ordinance O-26-22, Accepting the Transfer of Real Property from Southeast Arizona Renovations LLC, Located at 108 D Street, Bisbee.

Ashlee Coronado, City Manager

Ms. Coronado described this item as substantially similar to Item 4, also representing a second reading. She noted the property at 108 D Street was still undergoing finishing touches and that once complete, it would be listed for sale as part of the workforce housing program.

MOTION: Councilmember Schumacher moved to approve Ordinance O-26-22, Accepting the Transfer of Real Property from Southeast Arizona Renovations LLC, Located at 108 D Street, Bisbee.

SECOND: Councilmember Sowid

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYES: Councilmember Schumacher, Priestley, Damon, Garcia, Sowid, and Mayor Budge

NAYS: 0

MOTION PASSED: AYES-6 NAYS-0

6. Discussion and Possible Action to establish a policy, or directive, for the City of Bisbee that all real property belonging to, or subject to the control of, the City of Bisbee shall only be used for authorized City purposes and shall not be used as or in connection with a staging area, processing location, or operations base for unauthorized civil law enforcement actions, including civil immigration enforcement.

Karen Schumacher, Councilmember Ward I

Mayor Budge introduced Item 6, noting the Council would depart from its typical procedure. He asked the item's sponsor, Councilmember Karen Schumacher, to first present her position so that subsequent public speakers would be able to address the substance of the item as it applied to Bisbee specifically. He requested that speakers focus on local conditions rather than national examples.

Councilmember Schumacher stated that the agenda item was initially intended as a symbolic response to constituents' concerns but was now no longer relevant due to changes in ICE operations. She expressed openness to alternative approaches, including resolutions.

- **Richard Dohe (Ward 1):** Supported the directive, stating it would send a message opposing abuse and encourage other communities to take similar action.
- **Raymond Ritari (Ward 1):** Addressed the issue from a faith perspective, advocating for humane immigration policies and safe, legal pathways for immigrants.
- **Swan Eagle Fitzgerald (Ward not identified):** Expressed concerns about conditions in immigration detention and the broader impact of enforcement, urging the community to seek collective solutions.
- **J. Kold (Ward 1):** Supported taking a stand despite potential funding risks and expressed concern about local police resources being diverted to federal operations.
- **Sharon Strachan (Ward 3):** Asked the Council to consider the impact of immigration policies on local families, workers, and children when making its decision.
- **Circles Robinson (Ward 1):** Proposed policy elements addressing resident safety, federal agent accountability, lawful warrants, and the use of city property, describing the measure as a preventive and symbolic stance.
- **Elizabeth Faley (Ward not identified):** Disagreed that the issue was no longer relevant, stating local governments are not required to participate in federal immigration enforcement and expressing concerns about potential violence and community safety.
- **Jenny Druckman (Ward not identified):** Described herself as the original petitioner for an ordinance regarding ICE, stating that arrests and detention remain ongoing. She urged the Council to make a unified statement as a community.

Mayor Budge stat that similar directives had little practical effect elsewhere and could risk state funding; concluded the directive would be symbolic.

Councilmember Schumacher stated the directive would be symbolic in Bisbee due to the existing Border Patrol presence and expressed openness to alternative approaches.

Councilmember Priestley raised concerns about funding, lack of demonstrated impact, long-term consequences, and enforceability; concluded the policy would be symbolic without clear benefit. He asked Chief Cox to come up to speak regarding.

Chief Cox explained that the Police Department's significant reliance on federal funding and agency partnerships and the potential consequences of disrupting those relationships.

Councilmember Damon opposed pursuing unenforceable directive, citing legal costs, constituent concerns, and potential risks to residents; supported civic engagement and voting.

Councilmember Sowid acknowledged the city's limited authority and expressed concern that the directive could create unnecessary conflict and attention.

Councilmember Garcia acknowledged concerns about immigration enforcement and suggested developing a community response plan rather than a formal directive.

Following the conclusion of Council discussion, Mayor Budge called for a motion on Item 6. Hearing none, he declared the item dead for a lack of motion.

7. Discussion and Possible Approval of the Park, Facility, and Right-of-Way Use Permit for the use of Lower Vista Park for the 36th Annual Festival of Lights on Friday, November 27, 2026, from 8:00am to 10:00pm with possible waiver of fees.

Nina Williams, Acting City Manager

Mayor Budge noted this item had been tabled from the previous meeting. A brief recess was informally observed to allow members of the public to depart before discussion resumed.

Councilmember Schumacher raised concerns that Bisbee Pride's corporate status was pending administrative dissolution, potentially affecting the event's insurance coverage. The City Attorney agreed the issue should be resolved before proceeding.

Mr. Garcia, applicant, stated the required filing had been submitted.

Councilmember Priestley raised concerns about consistent permit requirements and suggested adding any required documentation to the standard application.

MOTION: Mayor Budge moved to table the Park, Facility, and Right-of-Way Use Permit for the 36th Annual Festival of Lights pending resolution of Bisbee Pride's corporate standing with the Arizona Corporation Commission.

SECOND: Councilmember Schumacher

MOTION PASSED: 5/1 (Priestley)

NEW BUSINESS

8. Discussion and Possible Approval of the Adoption of the City's 2026-2027 Title VI Plan.

Rene Lopez, Transit Manager

Mr. Lopez presented the item, explaining that the plan update was prompted by a compliance review in which ADOT requested updates to wording in the City's Title VI literature and website materials. The revisions were primarily administrative in nature, including updated contact information — which he noted was a critical feature for transit riders who need to reach the city with questions or concerns.

Councilmember Priestley raised an editorial question regarding the approval date on page 29 of the document, which appeared to reference a prior submission. Mr. Lopez and Ms. Coronado clarified that the page in question

reflects a historical approval log; today's date would be recorded as the new adoption date in a corresponding line added to the document.

MOTION: Councilmember Schumacher moved to approve the City's 2026-2027 Title VI Plan as revised.

SECOND: Councilmember Sowid

MOTION PASSED: UNANIMOUSLY

9. Discussion and Possible Approval of the First Amendment to the Intergovernmental Agreement between the City of Bisbee and the City of Douglas for Bisbee Public Transit Services.

Rene Lopez, Transit Manager

Mr. Lopez explained the background of the item. The City had gone out for bids to renew its transit services contract, receiving two bids: one that exceeded the allowable ADOT budget for operations, and one that did not adequately respond to the proposed scope of work. Because neither bid was deemed acceptable, the city exercised a contractual option for a one-year extension to the existing Intergovernmental Agreement with the City of Douglas. The proposed amendment reflects an operating cost of \$280,498.

Councilmember Sowid raised a question regarding an apparent \$18,305 shortfall relative to the budgeted amount. Mr. Lopez explained this difference results from a timing overlap between the City's fiscal year and ADOT's fiscal year, which begins in October. He stated that the actual difference in contract cost compared to the prior agreement was approximately \$3,000 less, meaning the true shortfall was nominal and will be covered by subsequent ADOT funding cycle payments.

MOTION: Councilmember Sowid moved to approve the First Amendment to the Intergovernmental Agreement between the City of Bisbee and the City of Douglas for Bisbee Public Transit Services.

SECOND: Councilmember Damon

MOTION PASSED: UNANIMOUSLY

10. Discussion and Possible Approval of a Change Order for Engineering of the CDBG Senior Center Renovation Project.

Melissa Hartman, City Planner

Ms. Coronado, City Manager presented the change order, explaining that the original engineering for the Senior Center renovation project was conducted approximately three years ago. The change order incorporates additions to the scope of engineering, including HVAC and plumbing elements that were not part of the original contract. She confirmed that the full increase — slightly over \$10,000 — would be covered by the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and would not draw from City funds.

In response to questions, Coronado confirmed that CDBG funding is reimbursable, meaning the City would spend the funds and be reimbursed by the grant. She also clarified that the renovation remains within the overall grant budget and encompasses work on the bathroom, kitchen, and HVAC systems of the Senior Center.

Councilmember Priestley requested that in the future, acronyms such as "CDBG" be spelled out on first use in Council materials for clarity.

MOTION: Councilmember Damon moved to approve the change order in the amount of \$10,250 for the additional engineering needed to keep the Senior Center renovation on track and code compliant.

SECOND: Councilmember Sowid

MOTION PASSED: UNANIMOUSLY

11. Discussion and Possible Approval of Change Orders #18 and #32 with Durazo Construction.

Mike Normand, Construction Project Manager Camp Naco

Note: Councilmember Garcia recused herself from Items 11 and 12.

Mr. Jeremy Fricke, Executive Director Naco Heritage Alliance, presented the two change orders for the Camp Naco construction project. Change Order #18 addresses modifications to the water harvesting system, including the addition of pumps, which were identified as necessary after the system was put into use. Change Order #32 covers the installation of a fountain feature, which had not been part of the original project scope but was determined to be a desirable addition. Mayor Budge noted he had visited the site and encouraged the Council to do so, characterizing the project as impressive.

MOTION: Councilmember Sowid moved to approve Change Orders #18 and #32 with Durazo Construction in the total amount of \$30,109.33.

SECOND: Councilmember Damon

MOTION PASSED: UNANIMOUSLY

12. Discussion and Possible Approval of Change Order #35 with Durazo Construction.

Mike Normand, Construction Project Manager Camp Naco

Mr. Jeremy Fricke, Executive Director Naco Heritage Alliance, presented Change Order #35, which covers the installation of a sidewalk along one side of the Camp Naco officer's club building to improve accessibility. He explained that while it was not envisioned in the original plans, practical experience with the site demonstrated that a continuous concrete walkway would significantly improve accessibility, particularly for individuals using wheelchairs. The change order was covered by grant funding. Mayor Budge confirmed he had visited the site and observed the accessibility need firsthand.

MOTION: Councilmember Damon moved to approve Change Order #35 with Durazo Construction in the total amount of \$14,949.50.

SECOND: Councilmember Sowid

MOTION PASSED: UNANIMOUSLY

13. Discussion and Possible Approval of a Contract with CEI to provide third party inspection services for construction of the Bisbee Bikeways Lavender Pit East Segment Shared-Use Path.

Mike Normand, Construction Project Manager

Mr. Gurney, Public Works Director, explained that ADOT requires independent daily inspections because the project is within ADOT right-of-way. CEI was selected through the City of Tucson's pre-approved agreement, with rates compared against two other firms.

Councilmember Damon raised concerns about the approximately \$218,000 contract and potential travel costs for inspectors.

Mayor Budge clarified that the \$218,000 is a contract ceiling and the City will only pay for actual services performed.

Councilmember Schumacher noted that the contract amount is a maximum, not a guaranteed expenditure.

Councilmember Priestley asked how the CEI contract relates to inspection costs included in the Granite Construction contract.

Mr. Gurney clarified that Granite would handle specialized testing, while CEI provides the independent daily inspections required by ADOT.

Ms. Coronado stated that approximately \$50,000–\$58,000 will come from the bed tax contingency fund, with the remainder covered by existing grant funds.

MOTION: Councilmember Schumacher moved to approve the contract with CEI to provide third party inspection services for construction of the Bisbee Bikeways Lavender Pit East Segment Shared-Use Path in the amount of up to \$218,854.80.

SECOND: Councilmember Sowid

MOTION PASSED: UNANIMOUSLY

14. Discussion and Possible Approval of a Revision to the Acquisition of a 2026 Chevrolet Silverado 4-wheel drive 2500HD Utility Truck through a five-year municipal lease purchase agreement with GM Financial, with annual payments of \$17,341.81.

Matthew Gurney. Public Works Director

Mr. Gurney presented this item as a correction to an approval made at the prior Council meeting. He explained that at the previous meeting, the Council approved the acquisition of a 2-wheel drive utility truck; however, the Streets Division requires a 4-wheel drive vehicle, particularly for operations during snow events and on unpaved or muddy roads in Old Bisbee and other areas. Through an administrative error, the 2-wheel drive configuration was brought forward when the 4-wheel drive was the intended selection. The revised annual lease payment under GM Financial was approximately \$500 more per year than the previously approved amount.

Councilmember Schumacher confirmed for the record that this was not an additional vehicle but rather a correction to the specifications of the previously approved acquisition. Mr. Gurney stated that was correct.

MOTION: Councilmember Damon moved to approve the revision of an acquisition of a 2026 Chevrolet Silverado 4-wheel drive 2500HD Utility Truck through a five-year municipal lease purchase agreement with GM Financial, with annual payments of \$17,341.81.

SECOND: Councilmember Sowid

MOTION PASSED: UNANIMOUSLY

15. Discussion and Possible Approval of Authorization of Services No. 1 for Airport Airfield Electrical Improvements.

Matthew Gurney. Public Works Director

Mr. Gurney presented the item, explaining that the Bisbee Municipal Airport's airfield electrical infrastructure has reached — and in many instances well exceeded — the end of its useful life. He described the scope of work covered under the authorization of services, including replacement and modernization of runway edge lighting, threshold lighting, Precision Approach Path Indicators (PAPIs), the primary wind cone, the airport beacon, constant current regulators, airfield electrical cabling, and associated control systems. He noted that the PAPI guidance systems have been inoperable for approximately fifteen to twenty years, and that the airport beacon has required repeated motor replacements over the years, with the current unit being an aging piece of equipment. As part of the improvements, the airport beacon will be relocated from atop the terminal building to a dedicated separate tower.

The engineering services will be provided by Gage Dybdahl and Associates (GDA) Consulting Engineers, with CR Engineers serving as electrical subconsultants. The total fee for Authorization of Services No. 1 was \$306,303, which covers engineering design, fitting, acceptance, construction administration, grant coordination, and related project services. This amount was funded almost entirely by an FAA grant of over \$400,000 that was approved two days prior to the meeting. The City's required match was five percent.

Councilmember Priestley asked about the overall project timeline. Mr. Gurney explained that the current authorization covers engineering and design work through the coming year; grant applications for the construction phase are anticipated to be submitted the following fall, with construction expected to begin approximately one year, hence.

MOTION: Councilmember Sowid moved to approve Authorization of Services No. 1 for Airport Airfield Electrical Improvements in the amount of \$306,303.

SECOND: Councilmember Damon

MOTION PASSED: UNANIMOUSLY

16. City Manager's Report:

COUNCIL COMMENTS OR FUTURE AGENDA ITEM SUGGESTIONS: (Council members may suggest topics for future meeting agendas, but Council will not here discuss, deliberate, or take any action on these topics.):

Mayor Budge stated that with no further business before this Council this meeting was adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT: 9:29PM

Ken Budge, Mayor