

Meeting Minutes

City Council Regular Meeting

July 14, 2025 | 6:00 p.m.
Chandler City Council Chambers
88 E. Chicago St., Chandler, AZ



Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Kevin Hartke at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Council Attendance

Mayor Kevin Hartke
Vice Mayor Christine Ellis
Councilmember Angel Encinas
Councilmember Jane Poston
Councilmember Matt Orlando
*Councilmember OD Harris
Councilmember Jennifer Hawkins

Appointee Attendance

Joshua Wright, City Manager
Kelly Schwab, City Attorney
Dana DeLong, City Clerk

*Councilmember Harris attended virtually.

Invocation

The invocation was given by Jolyon Clarke, Chandler Bahá'i Community.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilmember Orlando.

Scheduled Public Appearances

1. Proclamation: Park and Recreation Month

MAYOR HARTKE read the proclamation and invited the Community Services team to accept.

JOHN SEFTON, Community Services Director, introduced Olly the Ostrich, encouraging residents to take selfies with Olly and tag the department on Facebook for a chance to win prizes. He

reflected on the personal impact of parks and recreation in his life and expressed gratitude for the opportunity to lead the department. Mr. Sefton thanked the Mayor for reading the proclamation and recognizing the team's work.

2. Recognition: 2025 International Data Corporation (IDC) Smart Cities North America Award

MAYOR HARTKE invited Niki Tapia, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer, and Smart City Staff to accept.

MS. TAPIA thanked Mayor, City Council, and city leaders for their support in using technology to better serve the community. She also thanked Sandip, Kristen, Janine, and Charles for their help with the project. She thanked the employees who participated, saying their ideas helped make the program a success. Ms. Tapia noted this is just the beginning: with the first rollout complete, the city is on track to ensure that all residents, regardless of their language or ability, feel seen, heard, and well-served.

SANDIP DHOLAKIA, Chief Information Officer, shared a story about seeing this technology for the first time, where someone told him they feel safer coming downtown because they know they'll be heard and understood. Sandip said that meant a lot to him and showed how this can truly help people. He thanked Niki for including his team.

3. Retirement Recognition

JOHN KNUDSON, Public Works & Utilities, recognized David Valenzuela, Senior Street Specialist.

4. Service Recognitions

Dennis Aust, 10 years – Development Services

Joshua Wright, City Manager, service recognition.

MAYOR HARTKE recognized Joshua Wright, City Manager, and thanked him on behalf of the City Council, residents, and staff for his leadership and service. Josh joined the city eight years ago, bringing steady leadership, innovative ideas, and a strong commitment to serving the public. He listened to different people and helped the city move forward. Over the last four years, as City Manager, Josh has helped Chandler become more connected, innovative, and ready for the future. After the pandemic, he didn't just help the city recover, he helped it grow. He worked with the city council to turn goals into action, keeping Chandler a great place to live and work. Under his leadership, Chandler was recognized as one of the best cities to live in. The city improved its technology and infrastructure and remained financially strong. Mayor Hartke praised Josh for supporting city employees, listening to people, and creating a respectful workplace. He also helped develop future leaders to keep the city strong. Josh led with calm and focus during hard times and helped build a better Chandler for today and tomorrow. As he moves on, Mayor Hartke thanked him for making Chandler stronger and wished him well.

VICE MAYOR ELLIS thanked Joshua Wright, City Manager, for his service to the City of Chandler. She shared that both he and her children started their education at the same business academy,

where important values like integrity and teamwork were taught. She said Josh always led with a spirit of sharing and working together. She also thanked his family, especially his mother, who has worked as a doctor in Chandler for many years. Vice Mayor Ellis reminded everyone that Chandler is Josh's hometown, and his impact will always be remembered. On behalf of her family and all who know him, she thanked Josh for giving his best to the city. As he moves on to the University of Arizona, she shared a personal note that her late son also attended the University of Arizona. She said if he were here, he would proudly say, "Bear Down."

COUNCILMEMBER HAWKINS expressed that she was sad to see Josh leave and wished she had more time to work with him and learn from his leadership. She said he brought something truly special to Chandler. She thanked him for the support he had given her as a new councilmember and for everything he had done for the city. She acknowledged that the role is not easy and wanted him to know how much he is truly appreciated.

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO said he wanted the night to be happy, not sad, because Josh did a great job and will be missed. He remembered their first talk over coffee at Ziggi's, where they shared their goals and how to help each other. He liked their honest and respectful relationship, where they gave each other feedback without hard feelings. He praised Josh for caring a lot about city staff and standing up for them. He thanked Josh for his work and said the council always supported his ideas to help staff. He joked that losing Josh to the University of Arizona is a loss for the city. He said his own family has graduates from ASU, U of A, and NAU, wished Josh good luck, and told him to stay in touch.

COUNCILMEMBER POSTON highlighted Josh's role as a strong advocate for city staff. She said both staff and council will truly miss him. As a former city employee herself, she shared how important it is to have a city manager who stands up for staff and how much of a difference that made during Josh's time. She noted that when Josh first started, the staff didn't always feel appreciated. However, over time, he helped change that and garnered strong support from employees, earning their respect and trust. She wished him the best at the University of Arizona, adding that her own family is now cheering for a Wildcat too. She closed by saying, "Bear Down," and wished him good luck in the next chapter.

COUNCILMEMBER ENCINAS said he will truly miss Josh. He joked that Josh was his favorite and only city manager, so there's no comparison, but he believes Josh is brilliant. He said Josh always had answers when needed and always made time, even to tease him about being a Sun Devils fan. While he won't miss that part, he said he deeply admires Josh's work ethic and drive to accomplish things. He added that the city wouldn't be where it is today without Josh's leadership and the way he managed Chandler's great staff. He said it's hard to see Josh go, but he knows he's headed for bigger things, and he's confident they'll stay in touch.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS said he's not sad about Josh leaving, because Josh is just a phone call or text away. He said Josh is moving on to bigger things, and this next step is part of the path he's worked hard for. He shared that while it's hard not seeing someone every day, Josh has always

been there to help solve problems. He thanked Josh for his strong problem-solving skills and leadership, saying that's exactly what the city needs in its top staff. Councilmember Harris also said he respects Josh for being honest, having tough conversations, and always working to improve himself. He believes Josh will bring that same strength to the University of Arizona. On behalf of the people of Chandler, he thanked Josh for all he's done for the city and wished him wisdom and success in the future. He ended by saying, "Keep going, Josh, and bear down."

JOSHUA WRIGHT, City Manager, expressed his gratitude for the recognition he received. He thanked the community for trusting him over the past four years, as well as throughout his entire tenure with the City of Chandler. Mr. Wright emphasized that serving as city manager is a profound honor, allowing a rare opportunity to influence and impact the community positively. He shared his appreciation for the trust placed in him to lead staff and contribute to the city's achievements. He reflected on his eight-year journey in Chandler, describing it as a dream come true, and acknowledged that Chandler represents the pinnacle of municipal service, especially after working for two other cities. With about 20 years of experience, he expressed gratitude for the opportunity to serve. Mr. Wright emphasized his belief in people as the core of the city's success, highlighting the importance of respect and a team-oriented approach. He praised the staff of Team Chandler as second to none, noting their consistent excellence. He also thanked the city council for their support and investment in staff development. Concluding his remarks, he described his tenure as a blessing for his family and himself, expressing heartfelt appreciation for the opportunity to be part of the community.

Consent Agenda and Discussion

City Clerk

1. Approval of Minutes
Move City Council approve the Council meeting minutes of the Special Meeting held on June 23, 2025, the Study Session held on June 23, 2025, the Work Session held on June 26, 2025, and the Regular Meeting held on June 26, 2025.

Development Services

2. Final Adoption of Ordinance No. 5127, Zoning Code Amendment, PLH25-0007 Medical Marijuana Code Amendment
Move City Council adopt Ordinance No. 5127 approving Zoning Code Amendment PLH25-0007 Medical Marijuana Code Amendment, amending Chapter 35 – Section 2213 Medical marijuana facility, medical marijuana cultivation site, and infusion food establishment by replacing the one (1) year time condition for medical marijuana facilities approved through a Use Permit with any period of time approved by the City Council.

Public Works and Utilities

3. Final Adoption of Ordinance No. 5126, Granting a Non-Exclusive Power Distribution Easement to Salt River Project Agricultural Improvement and Power District, at No Cost, for

the Electrical Facilities Required for the New Pickleball and Tennis Courts at Tumbleweed Park

Move City Council adopt Ordinance No. 5126, granting a non-exclusive power distribution easement to SRP, at no cost, for the electrical facilities required for the new pickleball and tennis courts at Tumbleweed Park.

Consent Agenda Motion and Vote

Councilmember Orlando moved to approve the Consent Agenda of the July 14, 2025, Regular City Council Meeting; Seconded by Vice Mayor Ellis.

Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 6:33 p.m.

ATTEST: *Dana R. Ditzong*
City Clerk

Kevin Harthe
Mayor

Approval Date of Minutes: August 11, 2025

Certification

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of Regular Meeting of the City Council of Chandler, Arizona, held on the 14th day of July 2025. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

DATED this 11th day of August, 2025.

Dana R. Ditzong
City Clerk

