

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Mayor Daggett called the retreat of the Flagstaff City Council held March 19, 2026, to order at 9:01 a.m.

NOTICE OF OPTION TO RECESS INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Pursuant to A.R.S. §38-431.02, notice is hereby given to the members of the City Council and to the general public that, at this work session, the City Council may vote to go into executive session, which will not be open to the public, for discussion and consultation with the City's attorneys for legal advice on any item listed on the following agenda, pursuant to A.R.S. §38-431.03(A)(3).

2. Roll Call

NOTE: One or more Councilmembers may be in attendance through other technological means.

Present: Mayor Becky Daggett
Vice Mayor Miranda Sweet
Councilmember Austin Aslan
Councilmember Anthony Garcia
Councilmember Khara House
Councilmember Lori Matthews
Councilmember David Spence

Staff: City Manager Joanne Keene; City Attorney Sterling Solomon

3. Pledge of Allegiance, Mission Statement, and Land Acknowledgement

The Council and audience recited the pledge of allegiance, Councilmember House read the Mission Statement of the City of Flagstaff, and Councilmember Spence read the Land Acknowledgement.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the City of Flagstaff is to protect and enhance the quality of life for all.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Flagstaff City Council humbly acknowledges the ancestral homelands of this area's Indigenous nations and original stewards. These lands, still inhabited by Native descendants, border mountains sacred to Indigenous peoples. We honor them, their legacies, their traditions, and their continued contributions. We celebrate their past, present, and future generations who will forever know this place as home.

4. City Council Governance Expectations

City Manager Keene introduced Mike Letcher with Bridge Group who facilitated the retreat. He provided a PowerPoint presentation that covered the following:

COUNCIL GOVERNANCE EXPECTATIONS

OUTCOMES FOR TODAY
SURVEY FOR INPUT
BUILDING SHARED EXPECTATIONS
GOVERNANCE TEAMWORK
INTERDEPENDENT
WHY THE GRS IS IMPORTANT
THE CHALLENGE
FLAGSTAFF CITY COUNCIL SPEAKS WITH ONE VOICE
GOVERNANCE RELATIONS SYSTEM (GRS) BRIDGE
THESE SEEMINGLY OPPOSITE OBJECTIVES CAN COEXIST
WHY HAVE EXPECTATIONS?
COUNCIL CONSENSUS ON GRS
TAKE STEPS TO SUCCEED
THE COUNCIL DETERMINES LEVEL OF PRIORITIES AND FOCUS FOR CITY
LET'S TALK
FACILITATION GUIDE

The following summarizes the discussions and outcomes.

Council discussed the development and consensus-building process for the Governance Relations System (GRS), focusing on shared expectations for the Council, City Manager, and staff, with input from survey results and language adjustments to ensure clarity and inclusivity.

Mr. Letcher explained that the GRS is designed to create a unified set of expectations for the Council, City Manager, and staff, serving as a legacy document that guides organizational behavior and relationships, and helps new councilmembers understand their roles beyond the city charter and operational procedures.

Mr. Letcher reviewed the results of the Council survey on expectations, noting consensus on most items but highlighting six expectations requiring further discussion and language changes, particularly to address concerns about inclusivity and clarity, such as integrating community priorities and refining technology adoption language. The Council engaged in discussion to reach consensus on the revised expectations.

Council also discussed the need for improved onboarding and orientation for incoming councilmembers, suggesting workshops and clearer guidance on council-manager-staff relationships. Mr. Letcher indicated that he would incorporate these elements into the GRS and future processes.

Council discussed and reviewed expectations for the organization, city manager, and council. They agreed on expectations for the organization to be transparent, maintain an open-book approach to financial information, commit to staff development, and continuously improve technology and internal processes, with language refined to balance cost concerns and the need for proven innovations.

Expectations for the City Manager include implementing the strategic plan, providing thorough and dependable information to the council, sharing key policy-related information with all members, planning ahead, and practicing collaborative leadership involving community stakeholders.

The Council discussed and revised expectations for member conduct, including valuing opinions, doing homework, avoiding undermining decisions, focusing on outcomes over positions, and refraining from public criticism of staff, with special attention to balancing dissent and unity after votes.

Staff expectations were set to prioritize timely responses, civic engagement, resident education, and clear, jargon-free communication, with accountability for making information accessible and useful to residents.

The Council agreed on a process where the Human Resource/Risk Management Director distributes evaluation forms for both the city manager and council self-assessments, with results compiled and discussed in executive session, and the mayor signing the final evaluation. The city manager should complete their self-evaluation before seeing Council evaluations, with the opportunity to submit written

responses to any 'needs improvement' ratings, ensuring transparency and fairness. There would be a three-point rating system for the city manager evaluation: 'on track,' 'outperforming,' and 'needs improvement,' with the requirement to specify reasons for any 'needs improvement' ratings.

Council discussed how to allow dissenting members to express their views and advocate for change after a decision, while ensuring that such actions do not actively impede the implementation of Council decisions, referencing real-world examples such as the hospital referendum. They worked collaboratively to refine the GRS language, incorporating provisions for advocacy and reconsideration through established processes, and clarifying the distinction between personal agendas and legitimate community representation.

Mr. Letcher outlined the next steps, including finalizing and distributing the revised GRS and evaluation documents, scheduling future strategic planning sessions, and ensuring all agreed changes are incorporated before council adoption.

5. Adjournment

The City Council Retreat held March 19, 2026, adjourned at 12:04: p.m.

MAYOR

ATTEST:

CITY CLERK