Town of Wickenburg

MINUTES

WICKENBURG COMMON COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
Monday, May 19, 2025 - 5:30 P.M.
155 N. TEGNER - COUNCIL CHAMBERS
WICKENBURG, ARIZONA 85390

A. **CALL TO ORDER** – Mayor Bratcher called the meeting to order at 5:31 PM

B. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** - Led by Karla Mortimer

C. **INVOCATION** - Led by Pastor Duane Middleton, Mt. Hope Assembly of God Church

D. **ROLL CALL**

Present:	Mayor BG Bratcher
	Vice Mayor Brian Jones (On Teams)
	Councilmember Kristy Bedoian
	Councilmember Shawn Clark
	Councilmember Margaret Nyberg
	Councilmember Rebecca Rovey
	Councilmember Art Rubash
Staff Present:	Troy Smith, Interim Town Manager
	Trish Stuhan, Town Attorney
	Tim Suan, Deputy Town Manager/Economic Development
	Steve Boyle, Community Development Director
	Amy Brown, Town Clerk
	Les Brown, Police Chief
	Robert Martinez, Finance Director
	Tarah Mayerhofer, Human Resources Director
	Ed Temerowski, Fire Chief
	Herschel Workman, Public Works Director

E. **MAYOR & COUNCILMEMBERS REPORT ON CURRENT EVENTS**
- Mayor BG Bratcher announced that the Town Council has hired Troy Smith as the new Town Manager.
- Councilmember Art Rubash stated that Little League is ending with all stars being picked. He thanked the town crew for keeping the fields nice.
- Councilmember Shawn Clark attended the retirement of the teachers and head of school at the Wickenburg Christian Academy (WCA). He also attended a Future Farmers of America (FFA) awards banquet at the high school.
- Councilmember Margaret Nyberg thanked the hospital for taking care of her in the emergency room this morning. She also toured a new park in Glendale.

- Councilmember Kristy Bedoian welcomed Town Manager Troy Smith. She attended the Economic Development and Transportation Committee meeting with presentations from Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) and Small Business Development.
- Mayor BG Bratcher announced that the WCA boys won state in baseball and girls won state in softball. She attended meetings regarding BNSF facility in Wittmann, Western Trading Post first auction, museum art contest, WESTMARC economic development summit, and town job fair.

F. **TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

- Interim Town Manager Troy Smith celebrated Joseph Baker's service to the town for fifteen years. He is a third-generation town employee who has worked in water, wastewater, sanitation, and parks.
- Interim Town Manager Troy Smith attended the grand opening and toured Hero's Park in Glendale with Council and staff. Staff held the final meeting on the Zoning Code, so the final draft should be received soon, with public meetings in the fall. Lewis Addition roads are down to five residents to sign the paperwork. Tegner Street phase two will start on June 27th. Splash pad is open, summer programs will be starting, adopt-a-park is available, and job fair saw over 40 job seekers.

G. **FINAL CALL** for Request to Speak Cards to be turned into the Town Clerk.

H. **CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

- Lori McGuire, Out-of-Town Resident, owns a business outside of town but was concerned about the downtown businesses with the Tegner paving project as she heard the road and sidewalks will be closed. She wondered about signs and information.
- Karla Mortimer, In-Town Resident, stated that she has only received two letters and attended a meeting regarding the Tegner paving project and thinks more needs to be done by the town to listen to the businesses, including advertising for them.

I. **ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

1. **Action on the Consent Agenda -**

   MOVED BY Councilmember Kristy Bedoian to approve items a, b, and d of the consent agenda
   SECONDED BY Councilmember Margaret Nyberg
   VOTE: 7 – 0 (Yes – Mayor Bratcher, Vice Mayor Jones, Councilmembers Bedoian, Clark, Nyberg, Rovey, and Rubash)

   a. Consideration and Action to Approve the Minutes of the Special and Regular Meetings of May 5, 2025 and Special Meeting of May 12, 2025

   By a 7-0 vote under the Consent Agenda, Council moved to approve the minutes of May 5, 2025 and May 12, 2025.

b. Consideration and Action on Resolution 2374, Adopting an Annual Policy Prescribing Procedures for Purchasing from the Mayor and any Member of the Common Council

Amy Brown, Town Clerk, reported in her Council routing form that in Town Code, the Town is allowed to make a single purchase from the Mayor or Council Member of $300 and a maximum per fiscal year of $1,000. According to A.R.S. 38-503, the Town may purchase services, supplies, materials and equipment not exceeding $300 in cost in any single transaction, not to exceed a total of $1,000 annually, from a member of the governing body if the policy for such purchases is approved annually. Adoption of Resolution 2374 will satisfy the requirement that an annual policy be adopted. The only exception to the maximum amount is if there is a competitive bidding process for the services.

By a 7-0 vote under the Consent Agenda, Council moved to approve Resolution 2374, adopting an annual policy prescribing procedures for purchasing from the Council.

c. Consideration and Action on Resolution No. 2373, Adopting the Fiscal Year 2025-26 Consolidated Fee Schedule for Town Services and Use of Town Facilities

Amy Brown, Town Clerk, reported in her Council routing form that on June 16, 2014, the Town Council approved Ordinance No. 1140, authorizing the Council to set fees annually by resolution for town services and use of facilities. At the Council meeting of March 3, 2025, staff presented the changes to the 2025-26 Consolidated Fee Schedule that were recommended by each department.

As required by A.R.S. § 9-499.15, the Town gave a 60-days’ notice that it may adopt the 2025-26 Consolidated Fee Schedule and posted the proposed consolidated fee schedule on the Town’s website. Attached for Council's consideration is Resolution No. 2373, which adopts the 2025-26 Consolidated Fee Schedule for town services and use of town facilities. If approved, the Fee Schedule will become effective July 1st.

The proposed fee schedule was updated to include the deletion of tax on residential rentals due to the legislature amending ARS § 42-6004(H) to prohibit the town from levying a TPT on residential rentals. This legislative change preempted the Town's ability to collect tax on long-term rentals; the Town continues to tax short term rentals.

Councilmember Clark asked about the 25% discount for non-profits that is being recommended to be deleted. Deputy Town Manager Suan stated that the non-profit organizations still will receive 50% off facility rental rates.

Currently they also receive a 25% reduction on staff time and services provided by the town, which is being recommended that they pay the full cost to help cover the costs incurred by the town. The Council strategic plan recommends that staff work toward cost recovery. This only affects about five organizations and the Chamber of Commerce. Interim Town Manager Smith stated that this item has come to the Council once and in the three work sessions, with no questions.

MOVED BY Councilmember Shawn Clark to table this item to the next meeting
SECONDED BY Councilmember Margaret Nyberg
VOTE: 6 – 1 (Yes – Mayor Bratcher, Vice Mayor Jones, Councilmembers Clark, Nyberg, Rovey, and Rubash) (No - Councilmembers Bedoian)

d. Consideration and Action Regarding Appointment of Connie Jenson to the Planning and Zoning Commission and Terry Eberhardt to the Community Programming Committee as Regular Members and Bill Holder as an Alternate on the Planning and Zoning Commission

Amy Brown, Town Clerk, reported in her Council routing form that with the passing of Mitch Jackson, the town has an opening on the Planning and Zoning Commission. Connie Jenson is a current alternate who is suggested to be a regular member. In addition, on the Community Programming Committee, Tom Core has resigned. Terry Eberhardt is a current alternate who is being suggested to be a regular member. The town has also received an application from Bill Holder for the Planning and Zoning Commission, so the recommendation is to add him as an alternate to replace the position that Connie Jenson held.

By a 7-0 vote under the Consent Agenda, Council moved to approve the appointments of Connie Jenson and Terry Eberhardt as regular members of their committee/commission and Bill Holder as an alternate on the Planning and Zoning Commission.

MOVED BY Councilmember Rebecca Rovey to adjourn into executive session for items 5 and 2 at 6:02 PM
SECONDED BY Councilmember Kristy Bedoian
VOTE: 7 – 0 (Yes – Mayor Bratcher, Vice Mayor Jones, Councilmembers Bedoian, Clark, Nyberg, Rovey, and Rubash)

Council reconvened the meeting at 7:04 PM.

2. Consideration and Action on Resolution No. 2376, Amending Rates for Water and Wastewater System 1

   Herschel Workman, Public Works Director, reported that in 2022, the Town of Wickenburg developed comprehensive master plans for water and wastewater systems, along with a utility rate study. These plans identified the need for nearly $80 million in wastewater infrastructure projects and about $40 million in water system upgrades. Based on this, the Town Council approved new rate structures on May 6, 2024 (Resolution 2347) to ensure the long-term stability of the utilities.

   At the Council Retreat on February 10, 2025, staff were asked whether there would be a review of water and wastewater rate increases. During COVID the water usage went up causing the wastewater system to get closer to capacity. In reviewing the usage date, the water usage is back to the pre-COVID numbers. Staff engaged the consultant who completed the initial rate study and the engineer who designed system improvements to assess the Water and Wastewater Master Plans to see if any projects could be modified, postponed, or removed. Staff reassessed the necessity and timing of a major $44 million wastewater treatment plant expansion. Given the current capacity and revised projections, we determined that the expansion could be delayed by at least five years. In response, staff recommended adjusting the previously approved rate increases. Resolution 2376 reflects these changes by reducing the upcoming wastewater rate hikes while still maintaining responsible funding for system maintenance, smaller-scale improvements, and regulatory compliance.

   Subsequently, we initiated discussions with Waterworth (rate study consultant) and revised the original Water and Wastewater financial models to include a delay of major projects. The $44M dollar expansion project for Wastewater has been delayed until 2036. As a result of these modifications, the planned rate increase for the wastewater rate increase for year 2 (FY 26) was lowered from 60% to 30%, and FY 27 was lowered from 60% to 15%, with subsequent 3% increases in FY 28 and 29.

   Trish Stuhan, Town Attorney, then discussed the water system. The Gila River General Stream Adjudication is moving forward and picking up pace. There are scientific questions about how groundwater and surface water interact and are being actively addressed in court. As these questions are resolved, the pace of adjudication is expected to increase. The court is currently reviewing Hydrographic Survey Reports (HSRs) for different areas of the watershed. Although the town's rights are not immediately up for decision and the town's Lower Gila – Agua Fria River HSR is still beyond the court's planning horizon, we know that being prepared will ensure we protect the town's long-term water rights. The town will need capital resources to support:

   - Scientific and legal investigations into the town's historical and current water use
   - Strategic planning for how best to use, defend, or modify rights

- Capital improvement projects that may be necessary to use water in the future
- Evaluation or acquisition of additional surface water rights, if needed

Investing now positions the town to respond proactively, leading to better effectiveness and flexibility for the town as the adjudication process continues to unfold. The town will continue installing monitoring wells to assist in establishing subflow zone and develop a GroundWater Master Plan. Even though the town can spread out the water projects to every other year, the town needs to have funds in the event that it has to purchase additional water rights in the future. It is recommended to take no action on the water rights and continue with the same increases to the water rates.

MOVED BY Councilmember Margaret Nyberg to approve Resolution No. 2376, amending the rates for wastewater service for the Town's System 1 and take no action on the water rates
SECONDED BY Councilmember Rebecca Rovey
VOTE: 7 – 0 (Yes – Mayor Bratcher, Vice Mayor Jones, Councilmembers Bedoian, Clark, Nyberg, Rovey, and Rubash)

3. Consideration and Action Regarding the Water Utility Assistance Program in Fiscal Year 2026

Tim Suan, Deputy Town Manager, stated that staff reviewed the performance of the town's water utility assistance program, initially funded with $20,000 to help low-income or fixed-income households afford the recent rate changes.

Councilmember Bedoian suggested that the 80% AMI was too high as this was supposed to be for seniors and those on fixed incomes.

Mayor Bratcher would like to continue the program at 50% AMI for eligibility and lower the amount to $10,000, plus roll over what is left in this year's fund.

MOVED BY Councilmember Kristy Bedoian to approve continuation of the utility assistance program in the amount of $10,000 for fiscal year 2026 with the remainder of this fiscal year rolled over and the Area Median Income (AMI) reduced to 50% for eligibility
SECONDED BY Councilmember Rebecca Rovey
VOTE: 7 – 0 (Yes – Mayor Bratcher, Vice Mayor Jones, Councilmembers Bedoian, Clark, Nyberg, Rovey, and Rubash)

4. Consideration and Action to Approve Resolution No. 2372, Adopting the Tentative Budget with an Expenditure Limitation of $63,473,203, the Financial Policies, and the Capital Improvement Plan for Fiscal Year 2025-26

Troy Smith, Interim Town Manager, stated that the town has had several meetings regarding the budget. The budget is a financial plan that includes all reserves, contingencies and a plan for all that could happen in the next fiscal year. The Tentative Budget sets the town's maximum allowable expenditures for the upcoming fiscal year. Once adopted, the total expenditure limitation cannot be increased, only reduced. The Tentative Budget serves as the legal framework for final budget adoption.

The key achievements in this budget include the following:
- Provides targeted relief for the most critical personnel compression issues; includes market adjustments to ensure the organization remains competitive and does not lag behind
- Reduces overall costs through the creation of an Operational Contingency under the Town Manager's authority
- Expands insurance coverage to include major infrastructure assets that were previously uninsured
- Extends our Capital Outlay planning from a 3-Year to a 5-Year plan
- Establishes significant progress towards capital projects in Council identified priority areas
- Limits operational expense growth to just $469,411 – which can be accounted for in the salary adjustments, so staff has been very careful with expenses especially given the increase in costs

The big picture for the General Fund is below:

	FY2025 (Current)	FY2026
Budgeted New Revenue	$18,487,974	$18,845,064
Budgeted Expenses without CIP	$18,901,428	$19,370,839
Budgeted Use of Fund Balance	$14,012,094	$12,261,157
Budgeted General Fund CIP	($1,532,357)	($4,951,700)
General Fund Transfer to Other Funds	($1,398,902)	($2,498,902)
Remaining Unrestricted Fund Balance	$11,080,835	$4,810,555

The General Fund balance summary is as follows:
- Projected End of FY25 Restricted Fund Balance - $22,083,547
  - ✓ Contingency $4,347,134
  - ✓ Capital Reserve $1,000,000
  - ✓ Reserve $5,653,519 (funded at 30%) – policy is 15%

The streets budget comes out of the General Fund as well as the Highway User Revenue Fund (HURF) funding from the state from gas tax which is used for personnel.

Project	FY26 Budgeted
Lewis Addition	$200,000
Multi Use Path	$80,000
Bass Rd. Rock Wall Retention	$70,000
Constellation Road Repaving	$1,200,000
Tegner Street Phase 2	$900,000
Total FY26 Streets Capital Expense	**$2,450,000**

There have been a few changes in the Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) list since the May 5th budget work session, which are listed below:

- Fire VHF System Upgrades was reduced from $100,000 to $75,000 next FY as the parts have a long lead time.
- IT Voting/Request to Speak Software was removed from the budget at a cost of $40,000.
- Library Remodel of Conference and Study Room can use $17,000 from another funding source, so the GF cost will only be $18,000.
- LED Lighting will happen from a grant for $173,476.
- Sunset Park parking lots and the resurfacing of the tennis courts have been moved to another fiscal year.
- Rodeo Grounds RV hookups and waterline has been removed from the budget as there is not enough funding for those projects. The town will still be putting in $1.2 million for Constellation Road repaving.
- Smoke Eater’s Renovation has been moved out one fiscal year with the plan to try to get a grant to pay for some of that cost.
- Sunrise Park design has been split over two fiscal years after talking to Dig Studio about their recommendation, with the idea of getting to 60% plans to know what is planned to be built and the estimated cost.
- Community Center Construction was reduced to $1.5 million next fiscal year because the project won’t start until March or April, so there will be limited time to start the project.
- Recreation Portable Stage has been removed from the budget.
- There are also projects in the sanitation, electric, water and wastewater enterprise funds, with the total projects estimated to cost around $19 million.

Robert Martinez, Finance Director, reviewed the budget schedules that are submitted to the State Auditor General for the town’s budget. Schedule E shows the expenditures by the departments and funds. This shows the entire budget including the contingency and reserves. The General Fund total is $35,256,338, special revenue funds are $9,556,950, debt service is $498,903, Capital projects are $1,083,988, Enterprise funds are $40,412,613 and the internal services funds are $953,263 with a total budget for all funds at $87,974,166. The expenditure limitation is $63,473,203. There is $54 million in contingency and reserves. Schedule D shows the transfers out of the General Fund with $1.7 million to the streets fund, $498,902 for debt services for the fire station, and $300,000 for capital projects for a total transfer of $2,498,902.

Schedule C is multiple pages showing the revenues for the town. The local sales tax has been reduced by $1 million, but the Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP) has increased due to all the money in contingency and reserves. The general fund revenues are estimated to be $18,230,064. This is a conservative approach after looking at the trends. Special Revenue Funds are $8,199,356 and Enterprise Funds are $20,319,473, with the new rates factored into the totals.

Property tax is listed on Schedule B at $615,000 with the rate decreasing to 0.3997. Schedule A is a summary of the other schedules.

Interim Town Manager Smith stated that he is going to answer the question that keeps being asked of why a small town needs a budget of $88 million. The town has ten operating departments, seven utilities and future capital projects. The town will not spend that amount, but the town must keep up the contingency and reserves to pay for future capital projects. This provides the best value for the community for a stable future.

MOVED BY Councilmember Rebecca Rovey to approve Resolution No. 2372, adopting the Tentative Budget with an Expenditure Limitation of $63,473,203, the Financial Policies, and the Capital Improvement Plan for Fiscal Year 2025-26, and setting the Public Hearing for the Final Budget and Property Tax Levy
SECONDED BY Councilmember Margaret Nyberg
VOTE: 7 – 0 (Yes – Mayor Bratcher, Vice Mayor Jones, Councilmembers Bedoian, Clark, Nyberg, Rovey, and Rubash)

5. Consideration and Possible Action Regarding the Town Magistrate Vacancy, Possible Job Offer to a Candidate, and Approval of a Contract

   MOVED BY Councilmember Rebecca Rovey to approve a contract for Town Magistrate pending the Town Manager and Town Attorney negotiating a contract as directed in executive session
   SECONDED BY Councilmember Kristy Bedoian
   VOTE: 7 – 0 (Yes – Mayor Bratcher, Vice Mayor Jones, Councilmembers Bedoian, Clark, Nyberg, Rovey, and Rubash)

J. **EXECUTIVE SESSION -** (Council May Vote to Go Into Executive Session Pursuant to A.R.S §38-431.03(A)(3) to Receive Legal Advice from the Town Attorney on Any of the Above Agenda Items.)

1. An Executive Session Pursuant to A.R.S. §§ 38-431.03(A)(1), 38-431.03(A)(3), and 38-431.03(A)(4) the Council May Vote to Convene into Executive Session For (1) Discussion and Consideration of Employment of Town Magistrate And Interview of Candidates; (2) Discussion or Consultation for Legal Advice withthe Town Attorney regarding Appointment of a Town Magistrate; and (3) Discussion or Consultation with the Town Attorney in order to consider its position and instruct the Town Attorney regarding the Town Council's position regarding the Town Magistrate Contract. Candidates for appointment include: Charles J. Adornetto, Mayra J. Galindo and Teresa M. Hunt.

K. **SCHEDULING OF FUTURE COUNCIL AGENDA ITEMS** - None

L. **ADJOURNMENT**

MOVED BY Councilmember Rebecca Rovey to adjourn at approximately 7:53 PM
SECONDED BY Councilmember Margaret Nyberg
VOTE: 7 – 0 (Yes – Mayor Bratcher, Vice Mayor Jones, Councilmembers Bedoian, Clark, Nyberg, Rovey, and Rubash)

BG Bratcher, Mayor

ATTEST:

Amy Brown, Town Clerk

CERTIFICATION

I, Amy Brown, the duly appointed and qualified Town Clerk of the Town of Wickenburg, do hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the regular meeting of the Town Council of Wickenburg, Arizona held on May 19, 2025. I further certify the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Amy Brown, MMC
Town Clerk