

COUNCIL MINUTES

November 17, 2025

The City Council of the City of Mesa met in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 20 East Main Street, on November 17, 2025, at 5:45 p.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT

Mark Freeman
Scott Somers
Rich Adams
Jennifer Duff
Alicia Goforth
Dorean Taylor

COUNCIL ABSENT

Francisco Heredia

OFFICERS PRESENT

Lisa Anderson
Scott Butler
Jim Smith

Mayor's Welcome.

Mayor Freeman conducted a roll call.

Mayor Freeman excused Councilmember Heredia from the entire meeting.

Invocation by Reverend Dr. Derrick Elliott at Desert Heritage Church.

Pledge of Allegiance was led by U.S. Army Sergeant Dan Stratton, 101st Airborne Division.

There were no awards, recognitions, or announcements.

1. Take action on all consent agenda items.

All items listed with an asterisk (*) will be considered as a group by the City Council and will be enacted with one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Councilmember or citizen requests, in which event the item will be removed from the consent agenda and considered as a separate item. If a citizen wants an item removed from the consent agenda, a blue card must be completed and given to the City Clerk prior to the Council's vote on the consent agenda.

It was moved by Vice Mayor Somers, seconded by Councilmember Goforth, that the consent agenda items be approved.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Freeman–Somers–Adams–Duff–Goforth–Taylor

NAYS – None

ABSENT– Heredia

Mayor Freeman declared the motion carried unanimously by those present.

*2. Approval of minutes of previous meetings as written.

Minutes from the Joint Meeting with the Mesa Public Schools held on September 17, 2025, Study Sessions on September 22, and October 2, 2025, and from the Regular Council meeting on November 3, 2025.

3. Take action on the following liquor license applications:

*3-a. Mesa Drummer

A restaurant that serves lunch and dinner is requesting a new Series 12 Restaurant License for Tree Top Construction LLC, 1211 North Country Club Drive, Suite 9 - Jeffrey Craig Miller, agent. The existing Series 12 Restaurant License held by A Pleasant Affair LLC will revert to the State. **(District 1)**

*3-b. Mojo Smoke Palace #2

A smoke shop is requesting a new Series 10 Beer and Wine Store License for Eshu Alakentu LLC, 1057 North Mesa Drive - Victor Eduardo Hernandez Rodriguez, agent. There is no existing license at this location. **(District 1)**

*3-c. Inspirations of Mesa

A restaurant that serves lunch and dinner is requesting a new Series 12 Restaurant License for VOP Mesa LLC, 6220 East Broadway Road - Garrett Richard Jones, agent. The existing Series 12 Restaurant License held by BLC Springs at East Mesa LLC will revert to the State. **(District 2)**

*3-d. Taroko Sports

A restaurant that serves lunch and dinner is requesting a new Series 12 Restaurant License for Taroko US Corporation, 1738 West Rio Salado Parkway - Keith Brian Turner, agent. There is no existing license at this location. **(District 3)**

*3-e. Rapid Refuel

A convenience store is requesting a new Series 10 Beer and Wine Store License for Rapid Refuel LLC, 6951 East Southern Avenue - Meagan Jean Nelson, agent. There is no existing license at this location. **(District 6)**

4. Take action on the following contracts:

*4-a. Use of a 32-Month Cooperative Term Contract for Hach Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) Equipment, Parts, and Services for the Water Resources Department. **(Citywide)**

This contract is for OEM Hach instruments, replacement parts, and certified repair services. Hach instruments are used by City staff to analyze water samples for chemical and physical properties. Operators rely on OEM maintenance kits to clean and calibrate equipment, ensuring consistent and accurate performance. Technicians use diagnostic tools and replacement parts to maintain or restore functionality.

The Water Resources Department and Procurement Services recommend authorizing the purchase using the City of Tempe, Strategic Alliance for Volume Expenditures (S.A.V.E.) cooperative contract with Hach at \$580,000 annually, with an annual increase allowance of up to 5% or the adjusted Consumer Price Index.

- *4-b. One-Year Term Contract with Four-Year Renewal Options for Pad-Mounted Insulated Switchgears for the Energy Resources Department. **(Citywide)**

This contract establishes an agreement with three qualified vendors to supply pad-mounted 15kV SF6 insulated switchgears for the City's electrical distribution system. The equipment is essential for controlling and isolating circuits to ensure reliable and safe power delivery and will be used for new construction, system upgrades, and replacement of aging infrastructure.

A committee representing the Engineering and Energy Resources Departments and Procurement Services evaluated responses and recommend awarding the contract to the highest scored proposals from Arizona Sun Sales (G&W), Border States Industries Inc., and Wesco dba Anixter Inc. at \$750,000 annually, based on estimated requirements.

- *4-c. See: **Items not on the consent Agenda**

5. Take action on the following resolutions:

- *5-a. Approving and authorizing the City Manager to enter a Subgrant Award Agreement with the Arizona Department of Public Safety, to accept \$457,761 in grant funds from the Victims of Crime Act, Victim Assistance Grant Program. Funds will be used for personnel expenses at the Police Department's Mesa Family Advocacy Center. **(Citywide)** – Resolution No. 12430

- *5-b. Approving and authorizing the City Manager to enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community for the receipt and distribution of \$1,615,000 in Proposition 202 Funds. **(Citywide)** – Resolution No. 12431

Under this agreement, \$300,000 will go to the City of Mesa to support programs in Fire and Medical (\$100,000); Falcon Field Airport (\$99,000); Library Services (\$55,500); and Parks, Recreation, and Community Facilities (\$45,500).

The balance of funds will be distributed to other local community agencies as pass-through grants.

- *5-c. Approving and authorizing the City Manager to enter into an Amendment to the telecommunications license agreement with Level 3 Communications, LLC. **(Citywide)** – Resolution No. 12432

- *5-d. See: **Items not on the consent Agenda**

- *5-e. Approving and authorizing the City Manager to enter into the third addendum to the Agreement for Museum and Exhibit Services with the Mesa Historical Society to contribute additional funding for necessary renovations for the Mesa Historical Museum at the Lehi Campus in exchange for the Mesa Historical Society providing additional community engagement events. **(District 1)** – Resolution No. 12434

6. Introduction of the following ordinance and setting December 1, 2025, as the date of the public hearing:

*6-a. See: **Items not on the consent Agenda**

7. Take action on the following resolutions declaring titles and schedules of terms/rates/fees/charges to be public records and available to the public, and introducing the following ordinances regarding titles and schedules for City-owned utility terms/rates/fees/charges and setting December 1, 2025, as the date of the public hearing on these ordinances:

*7-a. See: **Items not on the consent Agenda**

*7-b. An ordinance adopting titles and schedules of terms/rates/fees/charges for electric utility services. **(Districts 1, 3 and 4)** – Ordinance No. 5971

*7-c. A resolution declaring proposed titles and schedules of terms/rates/fees/charges for natural gas utility services to be a public record. **(Citywide)** – Resolution No. 12436

*7-d. An ordinance adopting titles and schedules of terms/rates/fees/charges for natural gas utility services. **(Citywide)** – Ordinance No. 5972

*7-e. A resolution declaring proposed titles and schedules of terms/rates/fees/charges for water utility services to be a public record. **(Citywide)** – Resolution No. 12437

*7-f. See: **Items not on the consent Agenda**

*7-g. A resolution declaring proposed titles and schedules of terms/rates/fees/charges for wastewater utility services to be a public record. **(Citywide)** – Resolution No. 12438

*7-h. An ordinance adopting titles and schedules of terms/rates/fees/charges for wastewater utility services. **(Citywide)** – Ordinance No. 5974

*7-i. A resolution declaring proposed titles and schedules of terms/rates/fees/charges for solid waste utility services to be a public record. **(Citywide)** – Resolution No. 12439

*7-j. An ordinance adopting titles and schedules of terms/rates/fees/charges for solid waste utility services. **(Citywide)** – Ordinance No. 5975

Items not on the Consent Agenda

4-c. Use of a Cooperative Term Contract for Furniture and Related Services for Sunaire property for the Community Services Department. (Funded by ARPA Related Interest Income). **(Citywide)**

Reverend Sandy Johnson, Pastor of Red Mountain United Methodist Church and spokesperson for Valley Interfaith Project, expressed her appreciation to Council for their continued partnership and support of the Sunaire property and the Off the Streets program. She encouraged Council to vote in favor of the contract.

It was moved by Vice Mayor Somers, seconded by Councilmember Goforth, that this item be continued to a future date.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Freeman–Somers–Adams–Goforth–Taylor

NAYS – Duff

ABSENT– Heredia

Mayor Freeman declared the motion carried by majority vote of those present.

- 5-d. Approving and adopting the Downtown Mesa Micromobility and Parking Plan, covering the area generally located from University Drive on the north to Broadway Road on the south and Country Club Drive on the west to Mesa Drive on the east. **(District 4)** – Resolution No. 12433

Mary Maybeno, a Mesa resident, spoke in opposition to the proposed Downtown Mesa Micromobility and Parking Plan. She expressed concern about combining the parking and mobility components into a single plan, stating that each carries significant implications that warrant separate consideration.

Kathy Carlsen, a Mesa resident, expressed opposition to the proposed Downtown Mesa Micromobility and Parking Plan. She suggested deferring infrastructure changes until additional businesses are established and urged the Council to avoid spending funds on improvements she feels will not provide value at this time.

David Winstanley, a Mesa resident, acknowledged that while Council would not be approving any funding at this stage, adopting the plan would be a commitment to advancing the identified concepts. He recommended that the plan be reviewed by the Transportation Advisory Board and urged Council to reconsider the proposal.

Tim Sprague, a Mesa resident and Chair of the Downtown Mesa Association, spoke in support of the proposed Downtown Mesa Micromobility and Parking Plan. He commented that although the plan may not serve as the final long-term solution, the document provides an important planning framework to support micromobility integration and enhance safe sidewalk and bicycle connectivity. He requested that Council adopt the plan.

James Graef, a Tempe resident and representative of Culdesac Mesa, stated that the Micromobility Plan would enhance the visitor experience, support local businesses, improve outdoor dining by reducing traffic noise, and provide clearer wayfinding for drivers. He encouraged Council to approve the plan.

Joathan Busch, a Mesa resident, stated his support for the Downtown Mesa Micromobility and Parking Plan, noting that well-designed streets that encourage walking and biking can improve driver behavior, creating a safer environment for all. He requested that the Council support the plan as a public safety measure.

Downtown Transformation Manager Jeff McVay provided an overview of the Downtown Mesa Micromobility and Parking Plan. He explained that the plan includes two aligned but separate efforts, micromobility and parking, with the goal of supporting all transportation modes. He noted that many downtown streets, such as First Street, have wide rights-of-way, allowing for bike lanes, pedestrian facilities, and additional on-street parking without impacting traffic flow. He emphasized that the implementation of street striping can occur alongside scheduled pavement preservation work over the next four years, except for Center Street, which would require separate Council approval and funding. He confirmed that the plan includes standardized

parking regulations by zone, geofenced ride-share pickup locations, and additional bike racks to support micromobility access to downtown businesses.

Mr. McVay explained that, if adopted, the plan's short-term recommendations that include parking signs and street restriping would move forward on all streets except Center Street. He confirmed that the proposed mid- and long-term recommendations, which include traffic signal modifications, do not have funding identified today and would need to be addressed through a future Capital Improvement Program (CIP). He stated that three of the four traffic signals along First Street do not currently support traffic flow due to low volumes, and their removal could improve overall traffic movement through downtown.

Interim Transportation Director Erik Guderian added that removing traffic signals as identified in the plan would incur costs, which would first be reviewed and approved by City management and Council through the budget or CIP process. He added that many downtown traffic signals are unnecessary, often causing delays of 30-45 seconds, and emphasized the Transportation Department's ongoing commitment to evaluate and bring recommendations regarding signal removal back to Council.

In response to multiple questions from Councilmember Taylor, Mr. McVay verified that downtown streets can handle the traffic generated by new developments, including roughly 2,000 additional residential units. He noted that continued redevelopment aligns with Council's strategic priorities and that upcoming pavement preservation work and parking sign replacements are already funded. He added that intersections identified for possible signal removal are low-volume, would remain controlled by four-way stops, and are not expected to experience increased traffic.

Councilmember Adams pointed out that parking in Downtown Mesa was confusing for residents and visitors due to inconsistent signage. He noted that the planned pavement resurfacing and striping would occur regardless of the Micromobility and Parking Plan as part of routine maintenance and expressed that he does not support a roundabout on Center Street. He stated that supporting the current parking plan and striping does not constitute approval of unfunded mid- or long-term recommendations. He voiced his support for adopting the necessary parking plan to make downtown more accessible for visitors and stated that the current vote should focus solely on parking and striping components.

Responding to a question from Vice Mayor Somers, Mr. McVay explained that the development of the Downtown Mesa Micromobility and Parking Plan was guided by an internal stakeholder group, including representatives from the Downtown Mesa Association, Transportation Department, Library, and additional stakeholders. He added that the planning process also included neighborhood and community meetings, as well as a Mesa Listens webpage to gather public input.

Mr. McVay stated that the Transportation Advisory Board was not included in the plan's development and recognized the omission as an oversight.

Councilmember Duff emphasized the need for increased walkability and bikeability as Downtown Mesa grows denser. She commented that more people on downtown streets will benefit businesses economically by increasing foot traffic and retail activity. She advised that the proposed plan is based on best practices from a national walkability study by Stantec and includes phased implementation, including resurfacing streets, restriping for multimodal use, and adding amenities such as shaded, attractive parking areas and protected bike lanes. She stressed that the plan adds approximately 250 parking spaces and aims to create a walkable, inviting environment that encourages business growth, community interaction, and accessibility.

for all ages and abilities. She urged Council support, emphasizing that this first phase is a practical step toward a safe, vibrant, and economically thriving downtown.

Councilmember Goforth declared that a vibrant Downtown Mesa requires walkable streets, accessible parking, reliable mobility options, and safe, comfortable movement for residents and visitors. She noted that the proposed plan strengthens the foundation for a lively, economically strong, people-centered downtown by improving how people park, walk, bike, roll, and use transit.

Mayor Freeman pointed out that parking remains a challenge despite approximately 6,000 spaces, including many permitted spots. He expressed support for the proposed plan, emphasizing the need for clear parking designations and infrastructure that accommodates all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, scooters, and ride-share services.

It was moved by Councilmember Duff, seconded by Councilmember Goforth, that Resolution No. 12433 be approved.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Freeman–Somers–Adams–Duff–Goforth
NAYS – Taylor
ABSENT– Heredia

Mayor Freeman declared the motion carried by majority vote of those present.

6-a. An ordinance adopting Mesa City Code Section 8-10-13 titled “Capacity Fee” authorizing a water and wastewater capacity fee to fund City water and wastewater infrastructure projects. **(Citywide)** – Ordinance No. 5970

David Winstanley, a Mesa resident, spoke in support of adopting the Water and Wastewater Capacity Fee and encouraged Council approval.

It was moved by Councilmember Goforth, seconded by Vice Mayor Somers, that Ordinance No. 5970 be approved.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Freeman–Somers–Adams–Duff–Goforth–Taylor
NAYS – None
ABSENT– Heredia

Mayor Freeman declared the motion carried unanimously by those present.

7-a. A resolution declaring proposed titles and schedules of terms/rates/fees/charges for electric utility services to be a public record. **(Districts 1, 3 and 4)** – Resolution No. 12435

David Winstanley, a Mesa resident, stated he opposes the electric utility rate increase. He proposed updating utility bills for greater transparency, clearly showing charges for utility services versus other government services. He suggested that the 30% General Fund transfer not be automatically tied to utility increases and noted that recent rate adjustments primarily shift costs rather than significantly raise overall bills.

Carey Davis, a Mesa resident, shared his opposition to the proposed electric utility rate increase.

City Attorney Jim Smith confirmed that the General Fund transfer is not part of this agenda item and pointed out that the transfer is discussed during the budget planning process.

Responding to questions from Councilmember Taylor, Office of Management Budget Director Brian Ritschel verified that the transfer from the Utility Fund to the General Fund is a byproduct of utility rate increases, calculated at up to 30% of operating revenues. He stated that the transfer supports public safety and some general government functions. He explained that when utility rates are adjusted, Council and staff review the Utility Fund revenues and adjust the budget accordingly. He stated that freezing this transfer would reduce the amount going into the General Fund by approximately \$12 million in this scenario. He recalled that the General Fund has a projected net deficit of about \$55 million, which could increase to roughly \$70 million if the transfer were frozen, adding that the actual results often end up better than projected due to one-time revenues.

*7-f. An ordinance adopting titles and schedules of terms/rates/fees/charges for water utility services. **(Citywide)** – Ordinance No. 5973

Alex Vranicic, a Mesa resident, expressed his opposition to the utility rate increases. He criticized the previous Council decisions for using public safety to justify the rate increases while using the funds elsewhere and noted a \$16 million Cubs project. He encouraged Council to listen to citizen concerns and stated that keeping rates stable would not compromise public safety.

Mr. Smith confirmed that the final vote to approve the utility rate adjustments will be made at the December 1 Council meeting.

In response to a request from City Manager Scott Butler, Assistant City Manager Marc Heirshberg verified that the contract with the Chicago Cubs was a voter approved effort and includes the obligation for current and future maintenance to keep the facilities in peak operating condition. He noted the requirement to significantly invest in the facilities every 10 years to keep up with the Cactus and Major League Baseball standards.

Councilmember Goforth acknowledged the concerns over utility rate increases and pointed out that the original proposed increase was 6%; however, after Council review and adjustments, the rate was reduced to 2.5%, aiming to minimize the burden while still funding necessary utility operations.

Additional discussion ensued regarding the contractual obligations with the Chicago Cubs.

In response to a question from Councilmember Taylor, Mr. Ritschel confirmed that the total public safety budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 25-26 is \$400 million, and the utility fund transfer of roughly \$136 million contributes about 32% toward that budget. He said the transfer supports sworn public safety positions, general governmental costs, and salary benchmarks, totaling roughly \$27 to \$30 million for ongoing increases. He verified that even with the proposed utility rate increases, the City is not fully covering rising operational costs and will draw down on the utility fund balance over the next few years.

Mr. Butler emphasized that utility rate increases are never taken lightly, recognizing that times are financially challenging for residents. He identified that rising costs in utilities and government services must be covered to maintain operations and recalled that Council has historically

implemented a small, steady rate increase to avoid sudden large hikes. He pointed out that this incremental approach helps residents manage costs annually and prevents the sticker shock seen in neighboring communities, where rate increases can reach 25-50% or more.

Responding to a question from Vice Mayor Somers, Mr. Heirshberg confirmed that the funds used to fulfill the contract with the Chicago Cubs derived from an Arizona State Tourism Authority rental car tax that has been reserved annually for this purpose.

Councilmember Duff explained that the water utility rate for residents was reduced from a proposed 3.5% to 2.5%, saving the average household about \$0.77 per month, or \$9.24 per year. She pointed out that the reduction shifts part of the cost burden onto businesses with an initial business water rate increase set at 13%, with an additional 7% scheduled in the future. She expressed concern that this phased approach disproportionately impacts small businesses and could be detrimental, given current economic conditions. She commented that she supports the proposed increase for residential customers and indicated opposition to the additional 7% increase.

Mayor Freeman stated that pending no objection from the Council, Agenda Items 7-a and 7-f will be voted on in one motion.

It was moved by Vice Mayor Somers, seconded by Councilmember Adams, that Resolution No. 12435 and Ordinance No. 5973 be approved.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Freeman–Somers–Adams–Duff–Goforth

NAYS – Taylor

ABSENT– Heredia

Mayor Freeman declared the motion carried by majority vote of those present.

8. Items from citizens present.

Regie Bron, a Mesa resident, shared his opposition to the 287(g) Cooperation Agreement with the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Ryan Jara-Bersh, a Mesa resident, expressed opposition to the 287(g) Cooperation Agreement with ICE.

Brian Eckley, a Mesa resident, spoke in support of the 287(g) Cooperation Agreement with ICE.

9. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Regular Council Meeting adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

ATTEST:

MARK FREEMAN, MAYOR

LISA ANDERSON, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of the City Council of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 17th day of November 2025. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

LISA ANDERSON, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

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