

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, MARCH 3, 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 Pete Skinner, Ward II
Councilmember Trish Damon, Ward III
Mayor Ken Budge
Councilmember Anna Cline, Ward III, Mayor Pro Tempore 7:04PM
Councilmember Mel Sowid, Ward II
Councilmember Lori Reynolds, Ward I

STAFF

Ashlee Coronado, Interim City Manager / City Clerk
Keri Bagley, Finance Director
Matthew Gurney, Public Works Director
Logan Dodd, Operations Manager
Tim Cox, Police Chief
Jay Ritchie, Deputy Police Chief
Melissa Hartman, City Planner

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 stated that, with the appointments made tonight, the Charter Review Committee was now full.
- Mayor Budge reminded the public that the Ward 3 meeting would be held on Friday, March 6, 2026, 5:30pm at the Copper Queen Library Annex and encouraged residents to attend.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

- David Neufeld, Bisbee resident, spoke regarding the Fair Building.
- Cynthia Conroy, Bisbee Vogue Inc, spoke regarding the Curiosities for a Cause event that will be held on March 13th and 14th at St. Patrick Parish.
- John Viverto thanked Council for getting city hall back after the 2017 fire and stated that he enjoyed watching the building being constructed and looks forward to taking a tour.

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

GENERAL BUSINESS:

1. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE: Subject to availability of funds.

MOTION: Councilmember Cline moved to approve accounts payable in the amount of \$384,031.03.

SECOND: Mayor Budge

Councilmembers Reynolds inquired about an item on the accounts payable report, 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, February 17, 2026.

Ashlee Coronado, City Clerk

- B. Approval of the Minutes of the Work Session of Mayor and Council held on Tuesday, February 17, 2026.

Ashlee Coronado, City Clerk

- C. Approval of the Minutes of the Special Session of Mayor and Council held on Tuesday, February 24, 2026.

Ashlee Coronado, City Clerk

- D. Approval of the Appointment of Timothy Foster to the Charter Review Committee.

Ashlee Coronado, City Clerk

- E. Approval of the Appointment of Lvana Proffitt to the Charter Review Committee.

Ashlee Coronado, City Clerk

- F. Approval of the Appointment of Kelly Overacker to the Charter Review Committee.

Ashlee Coronado, City Clerk

- G. Approval of the Appointment of Cooper Raphael to the Design Review Board with a Waiver for Number of Commission Memberships Served.

Ashlee Coronado, City Clerk

- H. Approval of a Park Facility and Right of Way Use Permit for the use of public roads and stairs in Old Bisbee and finish at City Park for the North American Orienteering Championships to be held on Friday, January 1, 2027, from 10:00am to 2:00pm, Cristina Luis, Applicant.

Ashlee Coronado, City Clerk

Councilmember Schumacher requested item H be pulled for further discussion.

MOTION: Councilmember Cline moved to approve consent agenda items A through G.

SECOND: Councilmember Sowid

MOTION PASSED: UNANIMOUSLY

- I. Approval of a Park Facility and Right of Way Use Permit for the use of public roads and stairs in Old Bisbee and finish at City Park for the North American Orienteering Championships to be held on Friday, January 1, 2027, from 10:00am to 2:00pm, Cristina Luis, Applicant

- Nicole France, Bisbee resident, supported bringing the orienteering event to Bisbee but raised concerns about the January 1st date, potential overlap with the Arts Commission's New Year's Eve event, and lack of communication with local groups.

Councilmember Schumacher discussed possible conflicts with cleanup, business impacts, and coordination.

Ms. Cristina Luis, applicant said participants support local businesses, races wouldn't begin until 11 a.m., and there would be no street closures—just controlled crossings. She noted limited date flexibility this year but does not plan to use the holiday timeframe again.

Council expressed overall support for the event.

MOTION: Councilmember Cline moved to approve consent agenda items H.

SECOND: Councilmember Skinner MOTION PASSED: UNANIMOUSLY

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

3. Discussion and Possible Direction on the Petition received from Jenny Druckman on Immigration and Customs Enforcement that has been violating civil rights in American cities.

Ken Budge, Mayor

Mayor Budge asked speakers to avoid repetition and simply note agreement if their points had already been made. He also reminded speakers to state whether they were city residents, as required for petitioners under the City Charter.

Ms. Jenny Druckman, who resides just outside city limits, presented a petition modeled on a proposed Tucson ordinance restricting the use of city property for ICE operations and limiting civil immigration enforcement in public spaces. She requested the inclusion of provisions requiring visible identification for agents and prohibiting face masks. Ms. Druckman described reports of aggressive ICE actions in other cities, raised concerns about constitutional violations, and urged the Council to consider local protections, particularly for schools.

- Father Raymond Rittery, a city resident and Catholic priest, spoke in support of the petition, drawing on his 40 years of ministry experience with undocumented parishioners. He emphasized the humanity of affected individuals, shared past concerns about racial profiling, and referenced Church statements condemning abuses against vulnerable migrants. He expressed broader concerns about erosion of individual rights and urged protections for the community.
- Cado Dailey, a Ward I resident, thanked the Council and expressed concern about the lack of clear guidance on how the city should respond to potential ICE activity. She requested that staff review policies adopted by other cities and develop recommendations for Bisbee, including provisions on face masks, identification, and use of city property.
- Swaneagle Fitzgerald, resident who lives nearby, spoke in support of the petition, and expressed concern about reported conditions in immigration detention facilities, particularly for mothers and children. She also raised concerns about federal enforcement practices and broader humanitarian issues, urging the Council to consider local protections.

- Richard Dowie, a Quality Hill resident, urged the Council to consider potential liability and community impacts if federal immigration operations were conducted in Bisbee. He cautioned about negative effects on tourism and daily activity and encouraged the city to adopt an ordinance setting clear expectations for federal agents.
- Jay Cole, a resident of Old Bisbee, spoke in opposition to unchecked federal police power, urging requirements for state and local approval before any federal deployment, judicial warrants for ICE actions, and due process protections for all individuals. She quoted James Madison on the dangers of standing armies and thanked the Council for upholding constitutional principles. She also cited Amanda Gorman, emphasizing that real power lies in supporting one another.

Mayor Budge acknowledged the emotional concerns raised by speakers but noted his responsibility to consider what was best for all residents. He stated that the city attorney had prepared a memo on potential liabilities, which had been shared with Council and could be made public. He explained the differences between ordinances, resolutions, and referendums, emphasizing enforcement limitations and jurisdictional constraints. Mayor Budge also noted that cities adopting similar measures had faced federal funding cuts, including funding Bisbee currently expects. He expressed reluctance to pass unenforceable ordinances and clarified that only city property falls under city authority. He added that other cities had adopted resolutions rather than ordinances.

Councilmembers then provided their individual responses:

Councilmember Reynolds acknowledged the seriousness of the situation but noted that federal and state laws, funding risks, and potential litigation limited the city's options. She encouraged citizens to protest and vote for change.

Councilmember Sowid thanked speakers and reflected on his experience as a naturalized citizen. He emphasized the need to act within legal limits while considering the wellbeing of all residents.

Councilmember Cline agreed the Council's authority was limited and supported exploring a narrowly crafted resolution or similar approach. She noted that local law enforcement sometimes required federal backup due to staffing limitations.

Councilmember Damon expressed deep concern about civil rights issues but stressed the financial and legal risks of court challenges for a small city. She supported pursuing a referendum or a narrowed resolution rather than an ordinance.

Councilmember Skinner stated he was personally opposed to ICE actions but had to consider the city's limited resources and reliance on federal funding. He noted that larger cities had greater legal and financial capacity to fight such issues.

Councilmember Schumacher thanked speakers and focused on what the city could do. She noted legal complexities but suggested exploring a narrowly tailored ordinance or resolution focused on city property. She also requested that the attorney's memo be made public for transparency.

Mr. Estes, City Attorney clarified that while Council could waive attorney-client privilege, making a motion on something not on the agenda would create issues. He suggested placing the matter on the next meeting's agenda for formal discussion and action to waive privilege limited specifically to the memo.

MOTION: Mayor Budge then moved to file the petition with the City Clerk as an official record.

SECOND: Councilmember Sowid

MOTION PASSED: UNANIMOUSLY

4. Public Auction of Designated Surplus Property an unaddressed parcel located adjacent to 300 Williams Avenue APN 103-60-247.

J. Emanuel Stuart, City Planner

Mr. Stuart explained that this was a public auction initiated by Joseph Scott and Deborah McCall for city-owned property located adjacent to 300 Williams Avenue, parcel number 103-60-247, which was owned by Scott and McCall as the neighboring property. On February 3, 2026, Mayor and Council had designated this property as surplus and set the minimum bid at \$8,500.

Mayor Budge announced this was the time and place set for the public auction of designated surplus property located adjacent to 300 Williams Avenue, with a minimum starting bid of \$8,500.

Ms. Deborah McCall bid \$8,500 for the parcel.

With no other bids, Mayor Budge closed the bidding and moved to accept the bid meeting minimum requirements.

MOTION: Mayor Budge moved to accept the favorable bid of \$8,500.00 meeting minimum bid requirements.

SECOND: Councilmember Schumacher

MOTION PASSED: UNANIMOUSLY

5. Discussion and Possible Approval of an Intergovernmental Agreement with Cochise County for Election Supplies and Services.

Ashlee Coronado, City Clerk

Ms. Coronado explained that this agreement was similar to ones they'd done in the past with the County to provide election services. The County would handle all ballot printing, ballot tabulations, and reports throughout the elections. The primary would be held on July 21st and the general on November 3rd this year. There was no increase in charges from the last two years - \$.75 cents per registered voter, with the last voter count being 4,098.

Mayor Budge mentioned that Sierra Vista had eliminated their primary and conducted just one vote in the general election, avoiding runoffs and saving time. He suggested this could be brought before the Charter Review Committee since it would require a charter change, and asked Councilmembers to let him know their feelings on this potential change.

MOTION: Councilmember Schumacher moved to approve the Intergovernmental Agreement with Cochise County for Election Services.

SECOND: Councilmember Damon

MOTION PASSED: UNANIMOUSLY

6. Discussion and Possible Approval to pay the Bisbee Hospital Foundation \$5,000.00 for our portion of the update to the Senior Housing Feasibility Study.

Melissa Hartman, City Planner

Ms. Hartman explained that the committee formed after the "Burnishing Bisbee" report identified the need for expanded senior services. The group included Freeport, the hospital, and the city, with the hospital managing the contract and all parties contributing. They worked with Points Consulting to add an addendum on senior services within Copper Queen Hospital's service area. The total contract cost was approximately \$22,000, with the city's share being \$5,000.

Mayor Budge mentioned that a semi-study had been done with a Bisbee committee years ago that didn't go anywhere because it was very narrow in scope, going only from Bisbee to the New Mexico border. This new study would be much broader in scope to match what the hospital actually served.

Councilmember Sowid asked if this was budgeted.

Ms. Hartman confirmed that with the Finance Director, they had ARPA monies that needed to be spent within a certain time period, and there was enough ARPA money left for this contribution.

MOTION: Councilmember Skinner moved to approve paying the Bisbee Hospital Foundation \$5,000.00 for the city portion of the updated senior housing feasibility study.

SECOND: Councilmember Damon

MOTION PASSED: UNANIMOUSLY

7. Discussion and Possible Approval of Ordinance O-26-05; an ordinance of the Mayor and Council of the City of Bisbee, County of Cochise, State of Arizona, Authorizing the Sale and Transfer of certain property located at 611 Oliver Circle, City of Bisbee, County of Cochise, State of Arizona Under the city's Workforce Housing Initiative; Authorizing the taking of all other actions necessary for the consummation of the transaction contemplated by this ordinance and declaring an emergency.

Ashlee Coronado, Interim City Manager

Ms. Hartman explained that this was the official ordinance to complete a sale they had previously voted on. The person's funding was all in place, with an appraisal and closing scheduled for Friday. This was house number 13 in the program. She added that they had sold two houses in the last month and had one more coming up on Taylor Street that she'd shown at least three times - a two-story house they were trying to get into the three-bedroom, two-bath range that families needed. This particular sale went very smoothly and quickly to a service industry person.

Councilmember Sowid asked about the selling price and whether \$200,000 covered all costs associated with the house, wanting to ensure they stayed within budget.

Ms. Hartman clarified that the actual building cost was about \$210,000, but they preferred not selling anything over \$200,000. Step Up was able to take \$10,000 off the sale price and use it as equity for the borrower. Everything was covered and the city never incurred any costs - it was all done through the nonprofit.

Councilmember Cline shared the same cost concerns, noting this was a cute but little house. Her concern was the high cost for their workforce, especially those in the service industry and school district. While she understood this particular house went to a service industry person, she wanted to keep costs reasonable for their workforce.

Ms. Hartman agreed completely and noted they were assisting Step Up in looking for down payment assistance from every angle to bring costs down. All future houses were new builds rather than renovations, and if they did some in Ward 3, they'd aim for all to come in under \$180,000, between \$170-180,000. She acknowledged that affordability was an issue along with cost of materials, but when speaking to other similar-sized municipalities, they were flabbergasted at how low Bisbee's prices were.

Mr. Estes, City Attorney, provided comparison context, noting the average median sales price in Cochise County was \$270-277,000 compared to over \$420,000 in the valley. While still a big number, it was very affordable compared to the median Cochise County price. The program tried to bring houses in at \$200,000, which was 80 percent of the house value, meaning buyers moved in with instant 20 percent equity. Buyers had to maintain the property and keep it for a period of time - they couldn't just buy it and immediately sell for profit.

Ms. Hartman noted they had 13 sales completed with more in the pipeline, including three on Taylor Street with one two-story almost completed and two others planned.

MOTION: Councilmember Schumacher moved to approve Ordinance O-26-05; an ordinance of the Mayor and Council of the City of Bisbee, County of Cochise, State of Arizona , Authorizing the Sale and Transfer of certain property located at 611 Oliver Circle, City of Bisbee, County of Cochise, State of Arizona Under the city's Workforce Housing Initiative; Authorizing the taking of all other actions necessary for the consummation of the transaction contemplated by this ordinance and declaring an emergency.

SECOND: Councilmember Sowid

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYES: Councilmember Schumacher, Skinner, Damon, Reynolds, Sowid, Cline and Mayor Budge

NAYS: 0

MOTION PASSED: AYES-7 NAYS-0

8. 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, as there was nothing else before this Council this meeting was adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT: 8:38PM

Ken Budge, Mayor