



City of Prescott

City Council - Study Session

May 13, 2025 | 1:00 PM
201 N Montezuma Street
City Council Chambers, 1st Floor
Prescott, AZ 86301

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Goode called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Phil Goode - Mayor
Connie Cantelme - Mayor Pro Tem
Lois Fruhwirth - Councilwoman (Excused)
Ted Gambogi - Councilman
Brandon Montoya - Councilman
Eric Moore - Councilman
VACANT SEAT

3. DISCUSSION

A. Presentation & Discussion Regarding the Whiskey-Off Road Mountain Bike Event.

City Manager Dallin Kimble introduced Todd Sadow, event organizer, who has hosted the event in Prescott for the last twenty years. Mr. Sadow will be presenting and staff will be available for any questions.

Mayor Goode commented that there is no intention to cancel the event, but want to balance economic benefits and history of the event.

Mr. Sadow provided a presentation to the Council regarding the background of the Whiskey Off-Road event which is a combined mountain bike ride, expo and music festival that was created twenty-two years ago. Since inception, it has been a public-private partnership and serves as a marketing vehicle to champion Prescott's brand by promoting the quantity and quality of its outdoor spaces and lifestyle. He reviewed the economic contributions from the city in the amount of approximately \$77,000-80,000 to put on the event.

Audience:

- * Grew from 200 to 2,000 with 90% outside of Prescott
- * 14,000 total attendees include bike event attendees (6,000), spectators/concert (8,000), sponsors/media/bands/crew, volunteers and local support
- * Demographics are largely affluent and mature with active outdoor and hobbies

Purpose:

- * Epic Rides and Whiskey Off-Road have supported the City of Prescott's

strategic initiatives since the inception of the event

- * Market Prescott as a globally relevant mountain bike destination
- * Launch of PMBA and AZ Cycling League
- * Preserve and build new trails (Spence Basin and Bean Peaks trail networks)
- * Contribute to the healthy identity and reputation of the community

Benefits:

- * Estimated \$3 million into local small businesses each event week
- * \$100,000 in tax revenue to city during event week
- * Optimized bed tax dollars expenditure
- * Expands tourism season with adventure and luxury market
- * Delivers unparalleled worldwide advertising
- * Community discount night benefit
- * Free concerts and entertainment for the whole community
- * Raises \$70,000 annually for local charities
- * Additional intangibles

Deliverables:

- * Life of Event is an estimated \$40 million cumulative direct spend by attendees over 20-year lifespan versus \$540,000 city investment
- * Annual Average of \$3 million annual direct spend by attendees over event weekend
- * Visitor Impact estimated at \$6 million annual impact of non-Prescottian event attendees on local economy

Mr. Sadow would like to get a renewal in place as soon as possible, or an addendum to their current agreement so they can begin planning for the future.

Councilman Gambogi asked what the entry fees are here compared to other locations.

Mr. Sadow responded that it is \$150 for Tour of the White Mountain, \$200 for Whiskey Off-Road, \$275 24-hours in the Old Pueblo (Tucson).

Mayor Pro Tem Cantelme asked how the initial sponsorship was agreed upon at \$5,000, and how the funding changed over time.

Mr. Sadow responded that it was a match in marketing. Over time, changes were made to the event which updated the funding and support costs.

Councilman Moore asked if there were vendors that come in for the expo portion.

Mr. Sadow responded that some of the vendors do but not all.

Mayor Goode commented that there was never an intention to provide a permanent subsidy for this event, it has done extremely well and is world renowned. The Council has a high standard of fiduciary duty. These contributions are the taxpayer's money and have to be able to show a justified return on the investment.

Member of the public Ximena Florez addressed the Council in support of the Whiskey Off-Road event, which is an important event for the community, particularly youth participation. There are over six high school mountain biking teams that participate in the event annually. We need to be concerned about the possibility of losing the event if sponsorship is lowered, Epic Rides owns the trademark and can go anywhere.

Member of the public Dov Torenberg addressed the Council stating that he moved here because of the Whiskey Off-Road event. There should be no doubt that this event makes a huge contribution to the economy in Prescott. The return on investment for this event is significant. The city should act in the best interest of its residents and failing to continue with a highly profitable event would breach this fiduciary duty.

Member of the public Deborah Thalasis addressed the Council regarding extending the proposal for a one-year extension. All events in Prescott should be looked at and not just one.

Member of the public Brad Green addressed the Council regarding the significance of this event. The social and cultural aspects of this event are measured not only by the monetary aspects the event brings, but also the health aspects that the event and culture bring to the city.

Member of the public Deborah Cox addressed the Council as President of Bike Prescott, which hosts bicycle rides for everyone in the community. Cycling is a big and growing sport throughout the world. Prescott has a unique opportunity to be a premier place for mountain biking.

Member of the public Wayne Wright addressed the Council and pointed out that Whiskey Off-Road weekend is booked a year in advance for vacation rentals and brings in the highest rates for the community.

Member of the public Matthew Hart addressed the Council regarding the positive economic impacts of this event, a 10-55% increase in sales typically on an annual basis. He sees this event as a huge change to what is available in Prescott that many people come to enjoy and contribute financially to the city.

Member of the public Scott Bideau addressed the Council regarding the significant amount of support this event has and that it meets the vision and mission of the city. The city asked for much of the expansion of the event which comes with additional costs. This event has helped to expand trails in the city and the money provided doesn't come from the General Fund it comes from Bed Tax which comes from tourists/their lodging. Epic Rides has never been asked to cover the additional costs that are now being included in the expenses.

Member of the public Barry Barbe addressed the Council regarding the tension in the room, which makes it clear how important this event is for the city. For the last twenty years he has been standing outside his restaurant to hear the sounds of the bike race, and each year it gets louder. The impact on his business

doesn't just impact the three days of the event. He thanked Mr. Sadow and his team for bringing this event to Prescott, supporting the economy and lifestyle. He is shocked that, rather than begging the organization to stay, the Council is questioning it.

Member of the public Tracey Taylor addressed the Council regarding the importance of this event. Her husband and son have been riding the event since her son was five years old it is a bright spot in their year. The mountain bike community is unique and is a gift to many.

Member of the public Adrianna Dolca addressed the Council. This was her first year riding the 15-mile in the Whiskey Off-Road, and she wants to continue.

Councilman Gambogi asked the City Manager to address the numbers the city looks at in comparison to the event organizer.

Mr. Kimble responded that the Economic Impact report was done by a consultant, tax revenue of \$42,400 on that report. On the expense side, there is \$134,000 in expenses, \$87,000 of which is from bed tax funds.

Mayor Goode asked for all the numbers to be reviewed, so everyone is clear on that.

This item was for discussion only, no formal action was taken.

B. Presentation & Discussion Regarding Wildfire Suppression Systems for the Cathedral Pines Community.

Project Team Lead William Hartley addressed the Council regarding the Cathedral Pines Wildfire Suppression system proposal. There are 29,423 properties in Prescott at some level of risk of being affected by wildfires over the next 30-years. In 2002, the Indian Fire threatened Prescott and homes in the community were lost. Out of 1.3 million US firefighters, only 35% are on active duty. Trees in the area surrounding Cathedral Pines have not been removed in over 100 years which is a problem because brush and trees provide tinder for wildfire to travel up the steep terrain to the Cathedral Pines community.

Why a Wildfire Suppression System:

- * Raise humidity to reduce oxygen which helps to extinguish a blowing ember storm and slow down the beast
- * Provides more time for firefighters to attend to priorities
- * Help save lives of firefighters
- * Influence insurance companies to maintain insurability
- * 2018 was rated the eighth worst year for wildfires in the US, 8.5 million acres were destroyed and over half a million people were evacuated

Mr. Hartley stated that 30% of residents have not been able to renew their coverage because of fire danger.

What is a Wildfire Suppression System:

- * This is an important fire mitigation tool for firefighters

- * 1,700 feet long sprinkler system with 22 sprinklers (SE to SW between CPCA and Prescott Pines Mobile Home Resort)
- * Sprinkler System will be turned on at the first sign of an ember storm that threatens; the national forest recommends a minimum of 2" of water be laid down ahead of the wildfire
- * System has been designed for ease of maintenance with standard parts

Wildfire Suppression System Design:

- * 22 sprinklers will be mounted on Ponderosa Pines at 6-8 feet or 4x4" posts for 180-320 degree spray coverage
- * Mechanical Sprinklers will use between 2.5 and 3 gallons per minute (2 hours of operation)
- * Steady water spray shown to reach out to approximately 52 feet
- * Adequate water supply & pressure present for two hours of required spray
- * System has been used in Yosemite National Park and during the Mayer Fire; Prescott Fire Department also has a mobile unit
- * It is designed to remain a "dry system"

Responsibility of Operational System:

- * City will install 2" meter on 8" water line
- * CPCA Firewise team will test system annually
- * Firefighters will be trained on system
- * Cathedral Pines is responsible for maintenance and costs

Condensed Project Timeline for Tasks:

- * Overall system design has been completed
- * Utility and property easements completed
- * Working with public works for engineering approval in process
- * USDA grant funding for installation in process

The community has done a significant amount of work to get ready for this system.

Mayor Goode asked what the impact fees will cost.

Public Works Director Gwen Rowitsch responded that her staff has been reviewing the plans and the impact fees for a 2" meter is \$42,000 with a \$1,000 meter. Impact fees cannot be waived in accordance with state law, but could be paid for from another account.

Mr. Hartley stated that they are working on a \$53,000 grant right now, but don't plan to have an assessment to community members to pay for the system.

Mayor Goode asked Fire Department staff to rate the community's fire-wise status.

Wildfire Risk Manager Conrad Jackson responded that Cathedral Pines is very proactive in this and that is positively impacting surrounding communities as well.

Councilman Moore asked if this system is manual or automated.

Mr. Hartley responded that it is manual, the Association will be in charge of turning the system on. 75 property owners in the association. They've been a fire-wise community since 2011.

Councilman Gambogi asked if the water would come directly from the city or from a tank, and if trees had been thinned.

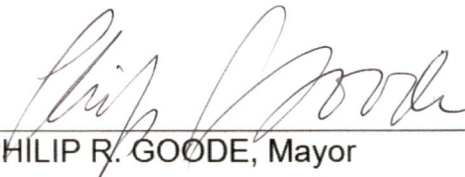
Mr. Hartley responded that the water is coming from a tank, and that some of the homes were built prior to guidelines being accepted and trying to get some of them into compliance is difficult.

Member of the public Bonnie McMinn addressed the Council regarding this being a tremendous opportunity for a pilot project for these types of systems throughout the community. This is a fantastic idea and should be embraced.

This item was for discussion only, no formal action was taken.

4. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Mayor Goode adjourned the meeting at 2:47 p.m.



PHILIP R. GOODE, Mayor

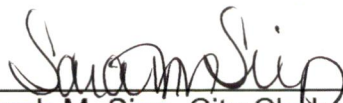
ATTEST:



SARAH M. SIEP, City Clerk

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Voting Meeting of the City Council Voting Meeting of the City of Prescott, Arizona held on May 13, 2025. I further certify the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.



Sarah M. Siep, City Clerk

