

City of Prescott
Tourism Advisory Committee



May 14, 2025 | 11:00 AM
201 N. Montezuma Street
Council Chambers, 1st Floor
Prescott, AZ 86301

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Christensen called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Margo Christensen - Chair
Matt Brassard - Vice Chair
Robert Coombs - Member
Jim Dawson - Member (Excused)
Dennis Gallagher - Member
Edd Kellerman - Member
Autumn Kline - Member
Nick Medina - Member
Tamara Burks - Member

3. DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS

A. Approval of the April 30, 2025 Tourism Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes.

THE APRIL MINUTES WERE NOT AVAILABLE AT THE MAY 14, 2025 TOURISM ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING.

B. Presentation & Discussion Regarding the FY26 Budget.

Tourism Manager Cristina Binkley provided a presentation regarding the FY26 budget.

Chair Christensen confirmed with staff that the Bed Tax remains at 3.67%. While reviewing financial highlights, she asked why only \$1.1 million is available if \$1.5 million was budgeted.

Ms. Binkley clarified that salaries and operational costs account for the difference.

Chair Christensen also expressed concern over the low fund balance, especially given the high expenditure on events, emphasizing the need for emergency marketing reserves and requesting deeper discussion on the matter.

Vice Chair Brassard asked about the Downtown Beautification timeline.

Ms. Binkley explained it began in January, with power washing starting in April.

Community Outreach Director John Heiney noted efforts are underway to shift this project's funding away from Bed Tax dollars.

Chair Christensen asked about declining ad spend and fund depletion, arguing that some expenses (e.g., utilities, beautification) should be covered by the General Fund.

Member Medina suggested Economic Development should fund tools like Placer AI or find more cost-effective alternatives. Staff confirmed Placer AI has been moved to Economic Development for FY26.

Vice Chair Brassard expressed concern regarding Fourth of July expenses and stated that prior efforts to cut the event's budget haven't shown results.

Chair Christensen agreed, calling it excessive and suggesting a meeting with City leadership.

Member Kline asked about the \$160,000 event cost.

Ms. Binkley clarified the current contract ends in 2025, with a new fireworks contract beginning in 2026.

Committee discussion regarding possibly shifting funds to the General Fund, high fireworks charges, and possibly cutting back on grant funds.

Ms. Binkley reminded the Committee they may revise grant funding anytime.

Chair Christensen asked about whether other DMOs spend less on operations and more on advertising, and why Flagstaff wasn't included in the comparison.

Ms. Binkley explained the figures represented only advertising dollars and that Flagstaff is not a valid comparison.

Committee members asked for additional information about bed and other tax revenues collected by comparable DMOs.

Staff will follow up.

Member Coombs advocated for exploring parking revenue opportunities and supported partnering with the Chamber to sell parking passes.

Member Gallagher echoed this sentiment, favoring parking fees at events.

Ms. Binkley noted plans to research automated technology to manage parking.

Member Coombs also suggested implementing paid parking year-round.

Chair Christensen highlighted the city's growth in hotel rooms and called for increased marketing funds, requesting a meeting with the City Manager and Finance Director to discuss further.

Member Kellerman expressed concern about potential special event cuts and urged a reevaluation of the items presented.

Ms. Binkley assured the Committee that the City remains committed to supporting all special events.

Member Kline suggested placing stipulations on event funding and requested that financial accounting be reviewed prior to allocation.

Ms. Binkley proposed setting up a funding ceiling for events to maintain sustainable support levels.

Vice Chair Brassard asked if the City Council still has final authority regarding award of funds.

Ms. Binkley confirmed.

Member Medina raised concerns that some events don't generate Bed Tax revenue for Prescott and instead benefit neighboring Prescott Valley. He proposed exploring collaboration or co-sponsorship opportunities to recapture value.

Ms. Binkley agreed to investigate this.

Member Coombs also inquired about potential sponsorship options, which staff committed to exploring.

Chair Christensen requested an update on the Gravity Trail system.

Recreation Program Manager Ryan Harlow responded that the trail is very popular, and reported that there were 13,000 riders from May 2024 through March 2025 on the Bean Peaks trail system.

This item is for discussion only. No formal action was taken.

4. UPDATES

A. Staff Announcements & Updates

Staff advised that there will be no TAC meetings for the next two months, however, everyone is welcome to attend the June 10, 2025 Council Study Session at 1:00 p.m.

This item was for discussion only. No formal action was taken.

5. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Chair Christensen adjourned the meeting at 12:14p.m.

ATTEST:

Margo Christensen 8/27/25

MARGO CHRISTENSEN, Chair

Arley Tucker

Arley Tucker, Staff Liaison