City of Prescott

City Council - Study Session

October 14, 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
Ted Gambogi - Councilman
Patrick Grady - Councilman
Brandon Montoya - Councilman (Excused)
Eric Moore - Councilman (Excused)

3. DISCUSSION

A. Presentation, Discussion, & Possible Direction Regarding the Status of the City Council's Strategic Plan.

City Manager Dallin Kimble provided a presentation to the Council regarding an update on the Council's Strategic Plan. Staff has been working to make these plans reality over the last 18 months.

Strategic Priority 1 - Public Safety:

* Fire Chief Holger Durre provided an overview of results related to public safety goals for the Fire Department
* New locations have been identified and staff is already moving forward with steps to obtain the property and begin working on design contracts - Station 73 (SR89 and Phippen Trail Roundabout), Station 76 (SR89 and Prescott Lakes Parkway)
* Tiered medical response plans have been developed this year to reduce engine use on low-acuity calls
* Daytime engine company has been placed into service (Monday through Friday 8 am - 5 pm)
* Mobile devices able to reach 911 from anywhere in Prescott - Community Development continues to process permit applications for equipment upgrades and review locations for towers
* Police Chief Amy Bonney continued with an overview of goals related to the Police Department
* Three (3) new officers have completed their field training
* Eight (8) recruits currently attending Northern Arizona Regional Training Academy
* Continue to test on a monthly basis and actively seek lateral officers

* Community Policing downtown - as staffing improves, Community Services is being built back up (bike patrols and public engagement)
* Pink Patch Program - raised $10,883.54 in 2024; 2025 program launched at the end of September
* Increased traffic enforcement - addition of a Commercial Vehicle Inspector for enforcement and education regarding commercial vehicle law
* Mr. Kimble continued with an overview of goals related to the Precott Regional Airport
* AED property has been purchased along with CVID property needed for runway extension
* Cutter ramp expansion completed, the building portion is currently beginning the planning process with construction to begin in early 2026

<u>Strategic Priority 2 - Dynamic Economy:</u>
* Community Outreach Director John Heiney provided an overview regarding proactively identifying and attracting new business to the community
* Economic Development Strategic Plan was approved and adopted in November 2024
* Hotel, conference and retail studies have been conducted
* Support for Deep Well commercial, AED, ERAU, Whispering Rock and more; there is a lot of interest and planning happening in north Prescott
* FY25 updated spending is $252 million
* Mr. Kimble continued the discussion regarding the full service regional airport impacts - sector updates are in progress for new aeronautic related businesses, currently identifying prospects and sites are in planning stages for these business types, and continual progress with growth in ERAU activity

<u>Strategic Priority 3 - Infrastructure:</u>
* Public Works Director Gwen Rowitsch provided a presentation regarding goals related to an efficient flow of traffic and transportation throughout the city
* Developed a policy which will come to Council soon for placement of speed indicator signs
* Working on Iron Springs, Whipple, Montezuma and other traffic signal timing and coordination throughout the community
* SS4A Grant for the Dexter neighborhood to look at the pedestrian and traffic interactions there and will begin working on that; working on sidewalk improvements in necessary areas as well; examining mid-intersection crosswalks for needed improvements as well
* Alignment with long-range regional transportation plans/working partners - attended the 2024 AZ Rural Transportation Summit, exploring grant opportunities with CYMPO, annual Council briefings and projects/grants, supporting regional bicycle and pedestrian plan, and coordinate with CYMPO on long-range plans
* AMI Meter replacement program, water funding opportunities that support Eye-on-Water program
* Long-range water management plan will be coming forward later this year to the Council
* Workforce Housing policy coming forward

<u>Strategic Priority 4 - Natural Environment:</u>

* Successful purchase of Glassford Dells and anticipated application for AZ State Parks grants early in 2026
* Prescott National Forest in the early stages of Phase II of Bean Peaks
* Staff continues to review Planned Area Development projects for 25% open space requirement
* Pending General Plan update will include extensive language addressing this priority as well

Strategic Priority 5 - Good Governance:
* Deputy City Manager Michael Morris provided a presentation regarding creating the dashboard in OpenGov for departmental performance measures
* Strategic Plan updates will continue every six months and will also be available on the OpenGov platform
* Continue OpenGov implementation - budget book, purchasing, operating budget, strategic plan, performance measures and procurement

Ideas to Consider:
* Council Retreat - January 20-21
* Review mission, vision and values
* Confirm alignment of priorities with mission
* Add/remove desired outcomes
* Impacts of Proposition 478
* Discuss governance approach for 2026

Councilman Gambogi suggested getting a report every three months rather than six.

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

B. Presentation & Discussion Regarding the Prescott Rodeo/Fairgrounds Projects Related to the $15.3 Million Distribution from the State of Arizona.
Mayor Goode asked the City Attorney to review how the state has dictated the funds are supposed to be used.

City Attorney Joseph Young read from SB1735, which lays out what monies may be used for.

Deputy City Manager Michael Morris provided a presentation to the Council regarding the funding. He reiterated that this is a separate item from the Master Plan which is currently in progress. This is a list of possible projects to move forward for appropriate expenditures of the $15.3 million based on the state's requirements. A full scope of these projects will have to be done and procurement followed before anything moves forward.

Councilwoman Fruhwirth asked when the soonest would be for contracts to come before Council for these projects.

Mr. Morris responded that it depends on the project; some will have a shorter lead time and some longer and that timeframes will be tentative. He continued with a bullet point list of appropriate expenditures from the State Treasurer:
* Landscaping

* Hardcaping
* Drainage improvements
* Replacement, improvement and increased capacity of aging water and sewer infrastructure
* Upgrades to the main arena sound system
* Upgrades to bleacher seating
* Construction of new restroom facilities to accommodate large crowds during events
* Other site improvements that support the economic and tourism activity generated by year-round use of the rodeo grounds for rodeo, equine and related events

Improvements Specifically Identified in State Appropriation:

* Underground utilities replacement and relocation (water, sewer and drainage) - begin design and set aside funding for construction estimated at $8-10 million
* Installation of new sound system - estimated at $500,000-600,000
* Replace seating components and railings in grandstand - estimated at $300,000-400,000
* New restroom buildings - exact location and scope of the structure(s) cannot be defined until the master plan is completed but will allocate and set aside funding estimated at $1-1.5 million

Other Potential Improvements Supporting the Rodeo/Equine Related Events:

* Replacement of battery backups for emergency lighting - estimated at $20,000-25,000
* HVAC system in Freeman and Pardee buildings - estimated at $250,000
* New announcer stand and suite seating structure - estimated at $400,000-500,000
* Installation of "city hall statue horse and cowboy" at the Rodeo Grounds (including a new base for mounting) - estimated at $200,000

Mayor Pro Tem asked how they would locate and place the sewer line without a Master Plan.

Mr. Morris responded that from a timing perspective, a scope of work would need to be done, invite bids and then award while Master Plan is happening.

Councilman Grady asked about previous replacements to the underground utilities and if site assessments could be done.

Public Works Director Gwen Rowtisch responded that part of the scope of work would be a feasibility study. The sewer runs diagonally through the arena and conflicts with the drainage so all of these things tie together before looking at relocation or anything like that. Staff has already identified that the system is not looped, which can impact water pressure, so that will need to be addressed as well. Drainage won't be addressed until there is a site plan.

Councilwoman Fruhwirth commented that she would like to positively impact Rodeo 2026 and the neighborhood, and it seems that items two and three on the specifically identified items would accomplish that. She also thinks emergency lighting is important as well.

Projects Requiring Additional Location and Scope Definition throughout the Master Plan Process:
* Replacing of the Justin Room for medical and rehabilitation needs
* Fencing and buffering along Gail Gardner and Fair Streets
* Manure processing and composting system
* Modified or new rodeo grounds entrance and associated drainage/stormwater improvements
* Parking solutions
* Demolition of Barn "B"
* New items identified in the Master Plan process

Councilman Gambogi commented that the Rodeo is part of the city's heritage and something we should be proud of. He would agree with everything here.

Mayor Goode commented that there is consensus on the new sound system, restroom buildings and replacement of seating and railings as long as the Council is assured that everything underneath is sufficiently stable.

Councilman Grady stated that he is in general support of Council's comments about moving projects, but with regard to the sound system need to be sensitive to concerns. One of the key concerns is going to be fencing and buffering as well and that needs to be looked at.

Mr. Morris agreed and staff would like to set aside funding for that.

Member of the public Susan Davidson addressed the Council and is pleased to hear that things are moving forward. There are minimal things that can get done before 2026, the sound system enhancements will not be nearly as loud as it has been in the past. The bathrooms are currently horrible and need to look into at least refurbishing what is there now. Getting some upgrades would be helpful to all events held on the fairgrounds.

Member of the public Sue Manuel addressed the Council regarding the Master Plan, she would like to see the rodeo succeed but is concerned about expansion of events and would like to see upgrades and enhancements focused on that and not additional events. Need a feasibility study and business plan from PFD.

Member of the public Rex Hinshaw addressed the Council and stated that the grandstands are considered historic in nature, the spring is not running through the middle of them so that shouldn't be an issue but will be studied. The sound system improvement will be safely done and not have to be redone. They plan to replace the speakers beneath the stands to contain the sound.

Member of the public Kym Lopez addressed the Council and stated that there are swamp coolers in the Freeman and Pardee buildings, and no heating in the Pardee building. The Pardee building contains the museum for the rodeo, so both of these issues need to be addressed. She added that a study has been done related to the sound system, and was given to Mr. Morris.

Member of the public Ralph Hess addressed the Council regarding the lease agreement with Prescott Frontier Days that he sees as a violation of the state gift clause and these improvements are a further violation of that clause and the agreement itself. The city should renegotiate a new lease before expending any public funds for improvements for the sole benefit of Prescott Frontier Days.

Member of the public Howard Mechanic addressed the Council regarding Prescott Frontier Days not being willing to sign a new lease, he believes this is a legal train wreck and reiterated the state's gift clause. This is an unconstitutional gift if there is no new lease. The City Attorney needs to inform the public and Council that a new lease is required.

Member of the public Deborah Thalasitis addressed the Council and expressed her disappointment in the lack of criteria and information for anyone but PFD.The Council should consider what benefits to the community are when thinking about where the money is being spent. She said that the money has not been received based on a search of OpenGov, and has not been appropriated. The improvements should be made to the grounds in total and not just for things that will benefit the rodeo specifically.

Member of the public Posey Nash addressed the Council and stated that the grandstands should be donated to YEI to be reconstructed into commemorative furniture pieces and added that Rodeo participants need a special space like the Justin Room in the event of a medical emergency so that should be a priority.

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. THORNHILL, 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 October 14, 2025. I further certify the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Sarah M. Thornhill, City Clerk