



City of Apache Junction, Arizona

Meeting Minutes City Council Meeting

Meeting location:

City Council Chambers
at City Hall
300 E. Superstition Blvd
Apache Junction, AZ
85119

apachejunctionaz.gov
Ph: (480) 982-8002

Doors are open to the public at least 15 minutes prior to the posted meeting start time.

Tuesday, April 7, 2026

7:00 PM

City Council Chambers

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

B. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilmember Heck gave the invocation and Councilmember Cross led the meeting attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. ROLL CALL

Present: 7 - Mayor Wilson
Vice Mayor Schroeder
Councilmember Nesser
Councilmember Heck
Councilmember Johnson
Councilmember Cross
Councilmember Soller

Staff in Attendance:

Bryant Powell, City Manager
Matt Busby, Assistant City Manager
Evie McKinney, City Clerk
Joel Stern, City Attorney
Michael Pooley, Police Chief
Rudy Esquivias, Development Services Director
Liz Langenbach, Parks & Recreation Director
Ryan Kaup, Economic Development Director
Pam Harrison, Library Director
Anna McCray, Human Resources Director
Mike Loggins, Public Works Director
Sidney Urias, Development Services Deputy Director
Nicholas Leftwich, Planner
Rob Wisler, Management Analyst
Eli Richardson, Management Analyst
Joseph Penze, Commander
Wes Kelley, Lieutenant

D. CONSENT AGENDA

Councilmember Heck moved, seconded by Vice Mayor Schroeder to approve the Consent Agenda.

Yes: 7 - Mayor Wilson, Vice Mayor Schroeder, Councilmember Nesser, Councilmember Heck, Councilmember Johnson, Councilmember Cross and Councilmember Soller

No: 0

1. [26-100](#) Consideration of acceptance of agenda.
2. [26-101](#) Consideration of approval of minutes of the regular meeting of March 3, 2026.
3. [26-42](#) Consideration of the proposed Resolution No. 26-04 authorizing the city to enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with Gila County, Arizona, for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Regional Account (RA) allocation.
4. [26-99](#) Consideration of Resolution No. 26-09 authorizing retroactive approval of an agreement for overtime funding in the amount of \$136,000 from the Department of Public Safety for sworn personnel.

E. AWARDS, PRESENTATIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS

5. [26-65](#) Proclamation designating March 29, 2026, as "Vietnam War Veterans Day."

Mayor Wilson read the proclamation designating March 29, 2026, as "Vietnam War Veterans Day." He presented it to James Johnson, VFW Post 9399 and Phil Erikson, VFW Post 7968. Mr. Johnson thanked the Mayor and Council on behalf of all the Veterans in the room.

6. [26-108](#) Proclamation designating the week of April 11th - 17th, 2026, as "Week of the Young Child".

Mayor Wilson read the proclamation designating the week of April 11th - 17th, 2026, as "Week of the Young Child." He presented it to Management Analyst Eli Richardson who is also a Regional Council Member for First Things First for Pinal County. Mr. Richardson thanked the Mayor and Council and shared information about an event at the Apache Junction Library to celebrate the "Week of the Young Child."

7. [26-109](#) Proclamation designating the week of April 19th - 25th, 2026, as "National Library Week."

Mayor Wilson read the proclamation designating the week of April 19th - 25th, 2026, as "National Library Week." He presented it to Library Director Pam Harrison. She highlighted several activities that the library offers and announced that the library garden will be completed at the end of June.

8. [26-112](#) Proclamation designating the week of April 13th - 20th, 2026, as "International Dark Sky Week."

Mayor Wilson read the Proclamation designating the week of April 13th - 20th, 2026, as "International Dark Sky Week." Recreation Coordinator for Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Elliott Anuta accepted the proclamation. Mr. Anuta thanked the Mayor and Council for their support and recognized Kelsey Schattnik for her help with this project. He also announced that the City has achieved the designations of Dark Sky Certified sports fields at Prospector Park and Superstition Shadows Park and City Hall is in the final stages of being designated as Dark Sky Certified.

Councilmember Cross recognized Vice Mayor Schroeder for starting the process on this initiative.

9. [26-105](#) Presentation of 30-year Service Award to Liz Langenbach.

City Manager Bryant Powell recognized Parks and Recreation Director Liz Langenbach's 30 years of service with words of appreciation and photos through the years. He shared all her professional accomplishments and the awards that she has received.

Parks and Recreation staff members presented her with flowers. Recreation Superintendent Jamie Sullivan and Parks Superintendent Dave Butler shared fun facts about working with Ms. Langenbach and expressed their appreciation for her as their director.

Ms. Langenbach thanked the Mayor and Council for their support and introduced her family in the audience.

F. REGIONAL INTERGOVERNMENTAL UPDATES

10. [26-102](#) Brief summary of intergovernmental updates from mayor and councilmembers.

Councilmember Heck shared highlights from Lost Dutchman Days and how the event benefited local organizations. He thanked City Staff and all volunteers for their hard work.

Councilmember Johnson spoke about the opportunities that the Greater Phoenix Economic Council (GPEC) offers and their importance to the future of Apache Junction. She gave the example of the company, Hitachi, being interested in coming to the City.

Councilmember Soller, Councilmember Cross and Mayor Wilson attended the Central Arizona Project (CAP) meeting where discussion included the state of the Colorado River water.

Mayor Wilson attended the following events:

- GPEC meeting
- 2026 Apache Junction Annual Easter Egg Hunt at Prospector Park on April 4, 2026
- Blues and Brews event at Flatiron Park on March 14, 2026
- Cul-De-Sac Cowboys Party in the Park at Flatiron Community Park on March 29, 2026
- Vietnam Veteran's Day event at American Legion Post 27 where they presented a plaque to the family of Russell Ogden, the only Apache Junction resident that was killed in the Vietnam War. The Mayor then shared a story of his time during the war.

G. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

11. [26-103](#) City Manager's Report

City Manager Bryant Powell spoke about the success of the Household Hazardous Waste event on March 14, 2026.

He then introduced Gail Evans from the Apache Junction Community Development Corporation.

12. [26-82](#) Presentation and discussion with Chairperson Gail Evans of the Apache Junction Community Development Corporation (CDC) regarding CDC activities.

President and Board Chair for the Apache Junction Community Development Corporation (AJCDC) Gail Evans presented a background on what they do and gave an update on Community Action Day, current projects they are working on, and things they need help with. She also announced the AJCDC is doing a clean up on Idaho Road and Baseline Avenue on April 11, 2026, at 7:00 a.m.

13. [26-81](#) Presentation and discussion with Apache Junction Police Chief Mike Pooley regarding department operational updates.

Police Chief Michael Pooley presented an update on technology at the Police Department. He stated a Real Time Crime Center is currently being built at the Police Department headquarters and explained how it will benefit the City. He introduced Lieutenant Wes Kelley who explained how the Skydio Drone program works and shared an example of how the Flock camera system has helped solve crimes quickly. He also explained how the DEDrone by Axon works and why it is important.

Chief Pooley thanked Council for their approval on the mobile command van last year and shared how it has been useful for the department's success. He spoke about Taser 10, Virtra Virtual Realty training and spider technology.

Councilmember Soller commented about the backlash of the Flock cameras and drones.

14. [26-107](#) Legislative Update

City Manager Bryant Powell stated the legislative update will be given to the Council tomorrow.

15. [26-104](#) Announcement of Current Events

Management Analyst Eli Richardson shared an upcoming event:

Earth Day Celebration and Ladybug Release on April 11, 2026, 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. at Flatiron Community Park, 100 N. Apache Trail.

H. PUBLIC HEARINGS

I. OLD BUSINESS

J. NEW BUSINESS

16. [26-126](#) Presentation and discussion on the Parks and Recreation Fee Study as required by state law every five years.

Management Analyst Riley King presented that fees are required by the state of Arizona to be reviewed every five years to insure they are aligned with the local market, the community needs, and changes in other laws. This is stated in the Apache Junction City Code Volume I, Chapter 4: Fees, Article 4-1: Parks And Recreation Fee Schedule.

The Parks and Recreation Department has historically used three primary funding sources to provide high quality programs, services, and facilities for the community: general fund (sales tax), development fee fund, and user fees. These are supplemented by various smaller sources such as grants, donations, corporate partnerships, etc.

The fee review and potential updates will work to accomplish the following:

1. General Market Comparison

Parks and Recreation fees were last updated in 2021. Due to changing dynamics within other funding sources (state-shared revenues, local economy, increasing operating costs, etc.) it is more important than ever to evaluate revenue streams and ensure the city balances the community needs with the cost of operations. The recommended updates will aim to increase only those fees that are substantially below market.

2. New Amenity/Service Fee Considerations

With the introduction of renovated facilities at the Rodeo Event Center, Parks and Recreation Staff will need to add new use fees for items such as the large pavilion, vendor electricity, and RV hook-ups.

The Parks and Recreation Commission will make final recommendations to the City Council and once Council is satisfied with proposed changes, the fees will be discussed and voted on at a future Public Hearing. The intent is to have any approved changes effective January 1st, 2027.

Councilmember Heck inquired if participation would be impacted with the fee increases.

Councilmember Cross shared his concern on raising fees with the current economic climate.

Vice Mayor Schroeder asked what open space was referring to in the presentation and if they were looking to hit the benchmark average.

Councilmember Nesser commented on how it benefits the community keeping the fees lower.

Councilmember Soller asked what the fees pay for.

Ms. King replied to all questions.

17. [26-129](#) Presentation and discussion of Case P-25-59-PZ, a proposed rezoning of 7.96 net acres located at the northeast corner of S. Acacia Road & E. Southern Avenue, from High Density Multiple-Family Residential by Planned Development (“RM-1/PD”), General Commercial (“B-1”), and General Rural Low Density Single-Family Detached Residential (“RS-GR”) to High Density Multiple-Family Residential by Planned Development (“RM-2/PD”) with a new planned development overlay to authorize the development of a 129 lot townhome subdivision, and a minor General Plan Amendment to modify the “Commercial” land use designation of the east four parcels of the subject site to “High Density Residential”, requested by Brennan Ray of Ray Law Firm, representing Diamante Homes Inc.

Principal Planner Nick Leftwich presented that P-25-59-PZ is a proposed rezoning requested by Diamante Homes Inc. represented by Brennan Ray of Ray Law Firm, to Parcels 10321-025F, 103-21-025G, 103-21-025H, 103-21-025E, 103-21-026E, 103-21-026G, 103-21-026C, and 103-21-026F, approximately 7.96 net acres located at the corner of northeast corner of Southern Avenue and Acacia Road, from High Density Multiple-Family Residential by Planned Development (“RM-1/PD”), General Commercial (“B-1”), and General Rural Low Density Single-Family Detached Residential (“RS-GR”) to High Density Multiple-Family Residential by Planned Development (“RM-2/PD”), and the minor General Plan Amendment to modify the “Commercial” land use designation of parcels 103-21-026E, 103-21-026G, 103-21-026C, and 103-21-026F to match the “High Density Residential” designation of the remainder of the project properties.

The Planned Development (PD) has been requested to provide a modification of the minimum interior private street width from 28’ to 26’, as permitted by the Apache Junction Zoning Ordinance § 1-7-6 Private Street Standards upon council approval.

Planning & Zoning Commission Hearing and Recommendation:

The Planning and Zoning Commission held their Public Hearing for P-25-59-PZ on March 24, 2026. They discussed street improvements, fire safety, the interior private street width, stormwater questions regarding retention and pre-existing flows, and improvements that would be made to the surrounding streets.

The Planning and Zoning Commission evaluated the Minor General Plan Amendment and Rezoning by Planned Development proposal and subsequently voted 4-3 to forward P-25-59-PZ to the City Council with a recommendation of approval, with a modification to Condition #6 to read:

- 6) The developer’s engineer shall meet the civil engineering improvement plans and document requirements in accordance with the city’s approved engineering standards that are in effect at the time of plan submittal.

And the addition of Condition #9 to add the language:

9) Planning Staff shall work with developers to ascertain the possible change of the entrance/exit point from Acacia to Starr Road.

The applicant is preparing an alternative design to present to Council to show what moving the primary entrance to Starr Road would look like.

Councilmember Johnson asked if the revised site plan will be available to review before the April 21, 2026, meeting.

City Manager Bryant Powell asked why the revised site plan could not be sent out sooner.

Development Services Deputy Director Sidney Urias responded to Mr. Powell.

Mayor Wilson expressed his concern about the traffic exiting the project.

Mr. Leftwich and Mr. Urias responded to all concerns.

18. [26-133](#) Presentation and discussion on market comparison for Mayor and City Council salaries.

Human Resources Director Anna McCray presented that as part of the city's comprehensive classification and compensation study, Human Resources staff conducted a review of compensation across all employee groups. At the request of a councilmember, a market review of city council compensation has also been completed.

City council compensation has not been adjusted since September 21, 2004, with Ordinance No. 1215. The results of the market study, in comparison with peer cities and towns, show current compensation levels are significantly below prevailing market benchmarks.

Apache Junction elected officials' salary:

Mayor: \$12,000

Vice Mayor: \$10,800

Councilmember: \$9,600

VERSUS

The market average elected officials' salary:

Mayor: \$36,367

Vice Mayor: \$23,595

Councilmember: \$20,880

The city council may consider the following options:

- 1) Take No Action: Maintain current compensation levels with no changes.
- 2) Adjust to Market Average: Direct staff to prepare an ordinance aligning city council compensation with the average levels identified in the comparator market analysis.
- 3) Alternative Methodology: Direct staff to prepare an ordinance using a different methodology or compensation structure.
- 4) Defer Consideration: Choose to revisit this topic at a later date.

Any change to city council compensation requires formal action beyond the annual budget process. Council salaries are established in Apache Junction City Code, Volume I, Chapter 2: Mayor, Council and Appointed Boards and Commissions, Section 2-1-5 Compensation, and any adjustment would require adoption of an ordinance at a public hearing amending that section of code. Council may also want to consider a cost-of-living adjustment to be built into the city code, so the elected officials' salaries keep up with market.

In addition, pursuant to state law, any approved change would not take effect immediately. Instead, revised compensation would become effective following the next election and the swearing-in of elected officials in January 2027. This statutory requirement is intended to ensure that elected officials do not directly benefit from compensation decisions made during their current terms per Arizona State Statute.

Based on the current election cycle, four elected officials would begin receiving approved adjustments upon being seated in January 2027, with the remaining three elected officials receiving the adjustment following the subsequent election cycle in 2029.

If council wishes to move forward with a potential adjustment, direction-to-staff to the city attorney would be required to initiate preparation of an appropriate ordinance at a later date designated by the council. Staff recommend this item be scheduled as early as the next city council meeting on April 21, 2026, as a change will impact the city budget in Fiscal Year 2026-2027 and successive fiscal year budgets.

Councilmember Johnson stated her support to adjust to market average and asked about the next steps in the process.

Mayor Wilson also stated his support to adjust the elected official's salaries.

K. COUNCIL DIRECTION TO STAFF

L. SELECTION OF MEETING DATES, TIMES, LOCATIONS, AND PURPOSES

M. CALL TO PUBLIC

Donna Carr, 2178 W. Virginia Street, Apache Junction, expressed her frustrations with the process of buying state trust land and commented on the design of one of the new housing developments.

N. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Wilson adjourned the meeting at 8:49 p.m.

ACCEPTED THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2026, BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF APACHE JUNCTION, ARIZONA.

SIGNED AND ATTESTED TO THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2026.

Walter "Chip" Wilson
Mayor

ATTEST:

Evie McKinney
City Clerk