



**MEETING MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING & PUBLIC HEARING
OF THE THATCHER TOWN COUNCIL
July 21, 2025**

Councilmembers Present: Mayor Howard, Councilman Bryce, Councilman Vining, Councilman McEuen, Councilman Woods, Councilman Carter by Zoom

Staff Present: Town Manager Heath Brown, Town Attorney Matt Clifford, Town Engineer Tom Palmer, Police Chief Glen Orr, Fire Chief Steve Curtis, Procurement Officer Gary Allred, office staff Rachel Nicholas

Visitors: David Bell, John Howard, Vance Bryce, Brandon Homer, Erick Wright, Ryan Allen, Denis Poirier, Bryan Montierth, Pam Giss, Ginger Belilove, Jim Belilove, Mitchell Goodman and Jerom Lunt.

Welcome and Call Meeting to Order at 6:30 p.m. by Mayor Howard and she stated that this is a public meeting of the Thatcher Town Council. She stated that we do have a quorum.

Pledge of Allegiance led by Councilman Shaffen Woods

AGENDA

1. **PUBLIC HEARING:** none

2. **OPEN CALL TO THE PUBLIC:** none

3. **PUBLIC APPEARANCES:**

- A. Presentation of Plaque to Councilman Heston Welker – postponed to a later meeting
- B. Revitalization District Presentation – Launch DFA.

Pam Giss on behalf of Launch Development Finance Advisors, introduced the company and gave a detailed presentation on how Launch provides infrastructure financing opportunities in Arizona.

4. **CONSENT AGENDA:**

- C. Approve Minutes of June 16, 2025, Regular Council Meeting
- D. Planning and Zoning Monthly Report
- E. Police Monthly Report
- F. Approval of Invoices
- G. Financial Reports

Councilmember Bryce made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented and was seconded by Councilmember McEuen. Motion carried unanimously.

5. **OLD BUSINESS:**

(MOVE TO POSTPONE EXECUTIVE SESSION)

- A. Appointment to fill Thatcher Town Council Vacancy
 - Election of Vice Mayor

6. **NEW BUSINESS:**

- A. Town of Thatcher – Thatcher Unified School District – School Resource Officer – Intergovernmental Agreement - 25-26

B. Town of Thatcher – Thatcher Unified School District – Facilities Use Agreement – 25-26

Mr. Brown stated that items A & B are the renewals of the IGA's the Town currently has with the Thatcher Unified School District. There are no changes from the current IGA's that are in place. This action item is just a renewal for the current fiscal year dates. Staff recommend approving both IGA's.

Councilmember McEuen made a motion to approve the Thatcher Unified School District Resource Officer IGA and the Thatcher Unified School District Facilities Use Agreement for the year 2025-2026 and was seconded by Councilmember Vining. Motion carried unanimously.

C. 48" Walker Lawnmower Purchase

Mr. Brown noted that this a budget item for the current fiscal year. There were three bids for the lawnmower. The A&G Turf Equipment state contracted price was the low bid at \$19,555.10. Staff's recommendation is to accept the A&G bid.

Councilmember McEuen made a motion to approve the lawnmower purchase from A&G Turf Equipment as presented and was seconded by Councilmember Woods. Motion carried unanimously.

D. Speed Limit Change Considerations:

US 70 – Reay Lane to 20th Avenue

1st Avenue – US 70 to Quail Ridge

Mr. Brown presented possible speed limit changes to a couple areas within Thatcher. Mr. Brown, Mr. Palmer and the traffic engineer from ADOT had previously discussed a reduction in speed to the 45 mph zone on the highway. With the increase in construction and road traffic it was proposed that a reduction to 35 or 40 mph would be more appropriate for that area on the highway. The recommendation from the ADOT engineer in previous discussions was to make the speed limit a consistent 40 mph from Reay Ln to 20th Ave. The next proposal is for 1st Ave from the highway south to Quail Ridge. The proposal is to change the current speed limit of 35 mph to 30 mph from the highway to Quail Ridge.

Chief Orr also agreed with the proposed changes, especially on 1st Ave. He stated that with all of the new housing developments and increased traffic on 1st Ave that the current speed of 35 mph does seem too fast. Councilmember Woods stated that the area on 1st Ave is a very condensed residential area and asked why the speed limit isn't being reduced to the standard residential speed limit of 25mph. Mr. Brown answered that 1st Ave is a main arterial road and is much wider than a standard residential road and for those reasons it is recommended to keep the speed above 25 mph to help move traffic along in a timely manner. Mayor Howard and Councilmember Vining stated that the current speed of 35 mph feels too fast for 1st Ave.

Councilmember Bryce made a motion to change the speed limit on 1st Ave from US Hwy 70 to Quail Ridge from 35 mph to 25 mph and also recommend to ADOT that the speed limit on US Hwy 70 from Reay Ln to 20th Ave be changed to 35mph and was seconded by Councilmember Woods. Motion carried by majority vote of 4 to 2.

E. 8th Street Design Consideration - Roundabout at Cemetery / Park Intersection

Mr. Brown explained that Mr. Palmer has been moving forward with the design for the straightening of 8th St. and one of the most challenging parts of the design is the portion of the road that intersects with the cemetery and the park access. After discussing all possibilities, the resolution that is being presented today is that of a roundabout at that particular intersection. Mr. Brown deferred to Mr. Palmer to further discuss the pros and cons of a roundabout versus a traditional intersection. Discussion was made about safety, size and the cost of construction.

Council asked that a cost estimate of adding the roundabout to the 8th St construction project and present those numbers at the next meeting.

F. Town Sidewalks – Routes to Schools

Mr. Brown asked Mr. Palmer to go over the CDBG sidewalk extension project that is being pursued. Mr. Palmer went over the areas of Thatcher that are in most need of sidewalks and the current timeline of the CDBG grant process.

G. Highway Beautification Grant

Mr. Brown presented the two applications for the Highway Beautification Grant. H & S Feed Store which is proposing landscaping. The second project is Lee's Riteway, which are looking at a complete overhaul of the exterior and expansion of the store's interior. The Town will award the grant to Lee's Riteway.

H. 1st Avenue Project – Eagle Drive to Quail Ridge

- i. Railroad Crossing Process / Cost
- ii. Right-of-Way

Mr. Brown summarized that the 1st Ave project is currently under design and is about sixty percent complete. The next step for the project would be to start coordinating with the railroad which would require a \$45,000 upfront cost. There was also clarification on the completion of the plans, the environmental clearance which requires funds being committed to acquire the right of way. Estimates for the cost of the right of way are at about \$400,000. Graham County is interested in working together on this project as some of the right of way is in their jurisdiction. The Town is seeking estimates from consulting firms for help with acquiring the right of way.

Councilmember Bryce made a motion to allocate up to \$45,000 for the railroad crossing process from the streets department funds and seconded by Councilmember Woods. Motion carried unanimously.

I. August Town Council Meeting – League Meetings

Mayor Howard informed everyone that the council meeting in August conflicts with the annual League of Cities conference and asked for input on possibly changing the council meeting from August 18th to a different date to help accommodate those individuals who need to travel on that Monday evening.

The unanimous consensus for the August council meeting will be Tuesday, August 26th at 6:30pm

7. **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

A. Town Manager's Report

- Public Works Department

8th Street

The street will officially be open on Friday, Aug 1st and the ribbon cutting is scheduled for Monday, August 4th.

Ridge View Drainage

The Ridge View project is complete.

Red Lamp

The streets crew is working on getting the electric underground. Culvers is working on their architecture and engineering design. There is also some interest from an investor who would like to add some commercial rentable space on the south end of the Red Lamp property. An RFP is being drafted.

- Detectives Office Update

Project is completed.

- Commercial Projects Update

All current projects are moving forward as expected.

- Financial Summary
- Police Department
The town K9 and handler finished recertification for the year including a swat integration training. The new detective office is complete and in full use. The new evidence refrigerators have been installed. The department is currently working on two more opioid settlement grants. The Flock readers are very useful and are worth the money spent. They assisted in helping catch the bank robber in Safford recently.
- Fire Department
There was some storm damage and down power poles that the fire department assisted in. They also assisted Bylas in a structure fire. Burger King had a small fire before demolition. With permission from the contractor the fire department was permitted to do some training on the commercial building before demolition.

B. Council Reports

4th of July celebration was a success. Mayor Howard thinks there was a larger turnout from the year before. There was talk of maybe moving out of the concession stand to cook the pancakes and mingle more with the public. It was also suggested to rent a large event tent for the celebration.

8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS & POTENTIAL QUOROM'S:

August 15th is an ADOT meeting at the General Services Building
The Resolution's Committee on August 19th at the League. The mayor is looking for a representative.
August 6th, as part of the Rural Policy Forum, there will be an economic tour. There is room for one council member or Town of Thatcher staff member.

At 8:10 p.m. Councilmember Bryce made a motion to enter Executive Session and was seconded by Councilmember Vining.

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Pursuant to A.R.S. Section 38-431.02 (A)(1)(7) the Council may go into an Executive Session to discuss personnel matters and to consult with the Town Attorney for legal advice. Action Item

A. Town Council Member Appointment Interviews

At 9:12 p.m. Mayor Howard stated to exit the Executive Session and return to Regular Session.

Councilmember Bryce made a motion to appoint Ryan Allen to the Town Council and was seconded by Councilmember Vining. Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Howard stated that there may be an additional vacancy on the Council and if the remaining candidates are interested, they would be considered for that vacancy as well.

Councilmember McEuen made a motion to appoint Councilmember Mark Vining as Vice Mayor on the Thatcher Town Council and was seconded by Councilmember Woods. Motion carried unanimously.

10. ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to Adjourn at 9:22p.m.

APPROVED:

Heath Brown, Town Manager

Jenny Howard, Mayor

CERTIFICATION:

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the regular meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Thatcher held on the 21st day of July. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Annie Reidhead, Town Clerk