



**MEETING MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING & PUBLIC HEARING  
OF THE THATCHER TOWN COUNCIL  
August 26, 2025**

Council Present: Mayor Howard, Vice Mayor Vining, Councilman Bryce, Councilman McEuen, Councilman Carter, Incoming Councilman Allen

Staff Present: Town Manager Heath Brown, Town Attorney Matt Clifford, Police Chief Glen Orr, Fire Chief Steve Curtis, Town Clerk Annie Reidhead, Procurement Officer Gary Allred

Staff Absent: Town Engineer Tom Palmer

Visitors: David Bell, John Howard, Erick Wright, Denis Poirier, Dawn Poirier, Dennis Yakas, Raelynn Allen, Rocky McNeil, Bryson Allen, Layne Allen, Bretton Allen, Tammy Allen, Chris Allen, Kat Sticklin, Josh Curtis, Ryan Curtis, Cayden Curtis, Brian Thompson, Firefighter

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 McEuen.

**AGENDA**

**1. SWEARING IN OF COUNCILMEMBER RYAN ALLEN**



Mayor Howard introduced newly appointed Councilman Ryan Allen and administered the Oath of Office to Councilman Allen. After being sworn into office, Councilman Allen assumed his seat on the Council. Councilman Allen was appointed to Council to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Heston Welker. The term expires in December of 2026.

**2. PUBLIC HEARING                      None**

**3. OPEN CALL TO THE PUBLIC      None**

**4. PUBLIC APPEARANCES**

A. Wreaths Across America – Kat Sticklin

Kat Sticklin, representing the Graham County Citizens Alliance, spoke to the council about the Wreaths Across America program, which places fresh wreaths on veteran’s graves nationwide. She requested council consider a donation to support wreaths at the Thatcher Cemetery, which has an estimated 300 to 400 veterans’ graves, and noted that volunteers are also needed.

**5. CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Approve Minutes of July 21, 2025, Regular Council Meeting
- B. Planning and Zoning Monthly Report
- C. Police Monthly Report
- D. Approval of Invoices
- E. Financial Reports

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

**6. OLD BUSINESS                      None**

## 7. NEW BUSINESS

### A. Final Plat Extension for Element Crossing Subdivision.

Mr. Brown stated staff received a letter from Lance and Sherri Layton, the developers of the Element Crossing Subdivision, requesting a one-year extension for the subdivision with no changes. The subdivision is located on Reay Lane south of the highway. This subdivision will consist of 19 lots with four-plex multifamily homes. The original final plat was approved in August of 2024.

Councilman Bryce made a motion to approve the Final Plat Extension for Element Crossing Subdivision and was seconded by Vice Mayor Vining. Motion carried unanimously.

### B. ORDINANCE NO. 197-2025: AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF THATCHER, ARIZONA, AMENDING THE TOWN TAX CODE TO INCREASE THE TRANSACTION PRIVILEGE TAX RATE ON THE SELECTED TAX CLASSIFICATION BY TWO PERCENT (2%); PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND DESIGNATING AN EFFECTIVE DATE OF JANUARY 1, 2026.

Mr. Brown explained that this item has been discussed in other previous meetings, The current hotel/motel bed tax is 3%, and a proposal is being considered to increase it to 5% beginning January 1, 2026. He noted that 5% is the state average. Staff have followed the required process to move this forward. Since the Town's sales tax is 2.5% and the proposed bed tax is 5%, 0.5% of the revenue collected from the bed tax would be designated to tourism.

Councilman McEuen made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 197-2025 as presented and was seconded by Vice Mayor Vining. Motion carried unanimously.

### C. RESOLUTION 722-2025: A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF THATCHER, ARIZONA, DECLARING AS A PUBLIC RECORD THAT CERTAIN DOCUMENT FILED WITH THE TOWN CLERK AND ENTITLED "THE 2025 TAX AMENDMENTS TO THE TAX CODE OF THE TOWN OF THATCHER".

Mr. Brown explained that this resolution is a required component of Ordinance No. 197-2025. Its purpose is to avoid the need to publish the entire Town Code, by instead stating that the complete code is available at Town Hall.

Councilman Bryce made a motion to approve Resolution 722-2025 as presented and was seconded by Councilman Allen. Motion carried unanimously.

### D. Appointment to fill in Thatcher Town Council Vacancy

This item has been postponed and will be discussed in Executive Session following the regular council meeting.

### E. 8<sup>th</sup> Street / Cemetery Roundabout Discussion

Mr. Brown reported that this item was discussed in last month's meeting and council directed staff to prepare cost estimates for a Roundabout versus a Traditional Intersection for this location. Mr. Brown presented the costs, Roundabout cost is approximately \$390,000 and the Traditional Intersection cost is approximately \$380,000. Council stated the following concerns with determining how to move forward:

- Is project included in this year's budget.
- Time frame is the decision critical to keep staff busy.
- Existing Roundabouts are maybe too small could this one be larger.
- Provided concepts do not show the combining of the parking lot to 8<sup>th</sup> Street.

Council tabled this agenda item and directed staff to provide additional ideas at next month's meeting illustrating the removal of the existing alignment and the combining of the parking lot to 8<sup>th</sup> Street.

### F. Revitalization District Consideration

Mr. Brown referred to a letter included in the packet from Jim Belilove with Thatcher West Development. This letter corresponds to the presentation given by Pamela Giss with Launch Development Finance Advisors on behalf of Mr. Belilove.

Dear Mayor and Council,

I'm writing to provide an update on our development plans and to formally express our intent to move forward with a Revitalization District (RD) to support infrastructure, recreation, and long-term community benefit.

The project is located near the intersection of Reay Lane and Ridgeview Drive, where the Town is already making road and drainage improvements. Our property extends south to the bridge and wash corridor and partially borders the Mount Graham Golf Course (owned by the City of Safford). This area connects key parts of the community — including the Thatcher Recreation Complex, Desert View Estates, and new commercial development nearby.

We're planning a mix of residential housing — including apartment rentals and larger homes on generous lots — with integrated trails and open space. We also intend to dedicate approximately 30 acres to the Town for parks, multi-use paths, and public amenities.

**Why a Revitalization District**

We recognize this would be the Town's first time using a Revitalization District, and we're committed to working in full alignment with staff, legal counsel, and council members. The RD offers several key benefits:

- Privately funds infrastructure — roads, drainage, trails, and parks — without impacting the Town's general fund
- Builds on existing Town improvements already underway on Reay and Ridgeview
- Enables community assets like pickleball courts, disc golf, a possible event center, and water-based amenities
- Supports coordinated flood mitigation while enhancing public space and safety
- Allows us to offer a higher quality of life while keeping home prices affordable
- Helps Thatcher compete with larger suburbs for workforce attraction and retention
- Is governed locally, operates transparently, and is subject to state law and formal agreements

**A Request for Direction**

We have the team in place — including planning, legal, and engineering support — to move forward immediately if the Town is open to it. At this time, we respectfully ask for clarity on whether the Town is supportive of moving forward in principle with a Revitalization District for this project.

If so, we're ready to begin working with Town staff and legal to establish a clear framework. If not, we understand — but would appreciate that clarity now so we can make informed decisions about infrastructure, housing, and public improvements.

Sincerely,

Jim Bellilove

Thatcher West Development LLC

Council tabled this agenda item and directed staff to request a defined scope with concept drawings from Mr. Bellilove. Council also referenced the existing Revitalization District in Benson and asked staff to contact them for an update on its progress. The item will be returned for consideration on next month's agenda.

**G. Mini-Excavator Purchase Approval**

| Vendor                   | Description                    | Bid Amount                |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Empire Cat               | CAT 302.7 CR Mini Excavator    | \$61,126.60 State Pricing |
| Bingham Equipment        | Kubota U35-4 Compact Excavator | \$61,736.74 State Pricing |
| Sonsray Machinery (CASE) | Kubota U35-4 Compact Excavator | \$62,408.00               |

Mr. Brown presented the bid recap for the Mini-Excavator for the Parks and Recreation Department. He noted that staff's preference is the Kubota brand, which they were able to demonstrate. The department currently operates both an older and newer CAT Excavator but prefers the older model, as the newer model's hydraulic function is overly sensitive and poses safety concerns. Staff previously asked Empire to address this issue, but the problem persists.

Council tabled the agenda item, considering both the lowest bid and the local vendor, and directed staff to contact Empire to request a demonstration of the CAT 302.7 CR Mini Excavator. The item will be returned for consideration on next month's agenda.

**H. Police Vehicle (Detective) Purchase Approval**

Mr. Brown stated that this vehicle was budgeted for and deferred to Chief Orr for information. Chief Orr explained that the quoted, \$60,090, 2026 Chevy Tahoe comes with an updated police package. He noted that the upfit cost would be \$15,000.

Councilman Bryce made a motion to approve the purchase of the 2026 Chevy Tahoe from Midway Chevrolet in the amount of \$60,090 and was seconded by Councilman Allen. Motion carried unanimously.

**I. Thatcher Fire Department / FMI Mutual Aid Agreement**

Mr. Brown explained that this agreement represents the Thatcher Fire Department to enter mutual fire protection assistance with Freeport McMoran Safford. The current agreement in place required updating.

Councilman Bryce made a motion to approve the Thatcher Fire Department/FMI Mutual Aid Agreement as presented and was seconded by Councilman Allen. Motion carried unanimously.

**8. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

A. Town Manager’s Report

- Public Works Department

Red Lamp

The sidewalk from 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue to La Casita has been replaced and includes landscaping. The sidewalk on the south side of the highway, adjacent to the Credit Union, is being constructed. Hoping to receive the permit from ADOT to begin construction on Culver’s driveway.

Frye Creek Flood Channel

The flood channel that drains the damn has been cleaned out due to farmers’ tail water.

- US 70 Paving Project – Begin work on September 22<sup>nd</sup>
- Speed Limit Change Updates  
Notified ADOT and is being reviewed. Waiting on new signs for 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue.
- Thatcher Commercial Plaza Updates – RFP due September 18<sup>th</sup>
- Diamondbacks Grant Application  
Applied once again this year.
- New Employee’s Update  
Gabriel Lunt has been hired to replace Jaxten Wiltbank as a Maintenance Worker I in the Streets Department.
- Electrician Out of State Training  
Electric Meter Training in October in Texas

- Financial Summary

| GENERAL FUND            |                   | SEWER FUND             |                 | ELECTRIC FUND        |           |
|-------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----------|
| TOWN TAXES              | \$405,050         | SEWER REVENUE          | \$41,890        | ELECTRIC REVENUE     | \$750,952 |
| SHARED REVENUE          | \$206,063         | SEWER EXPENDITURES     | \$40,160        | ELECTRIC EXPENDITURE | \$191,591 |
| OTHER REVENUES          | \$97,205          | SEWER NET              | \$1,731         | ELECTRIC NET         | \$559,362 |
| TOTAL REVENUE           | \$708,318         | <b>SANITATION FUND</b> |                 |                      |           |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURES      | \$768,850         | SANITATION REVENUE     | \$38,557        |                      |           |
| <b>GENERAL FUND NET</b> | <b>(\$60,531)</b> | SANITATION EXPENDITURE | \$25,710        |                      |           |
|                         |                   | <b>SANITATION NET</b>  | <b>\$12,847</b> |                      |           |

- Police Department  
Chief Orr reported on the following:
  - Electricians helped with the wiring for the new evidence refrigerators.
  - Police Officer Shaffen Woods will begin on September 8<sup>th</sup>.
  - Worked back to school traffic control
  - Conducted “Day of Safety” at the middle school.
  - Applied for a Border Security Grant to cover the cost and maintenance of the K9.
  - Reminder of the 9/11 Stair Climb at EAC
- Fire Department  
Chief Curtis reported on the following:
  - Busier than last month.
  - New flooring at the Fire Station has been completed.
  - Assisted with the CKC fire over the weekend.

B. Council Reports

- 2025 AZ League of Cities & Towns Conference  
Mayor Howard stated that the survey for the conference has been emailed out and encouraged council to respond.

**9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS & POTENTIAL QUOROM'S**

None

At 7:52 p.m., Vice Mayor Vining made a motion to enter Executive Session and was seconded by Councilman McEuen. Motion carried unanimously.

**10. 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

At 8:07 p.m., Mayor Howard asked if there was any opposition to returning to Regular Session. Hearing none, the motion carried unanimously.

Council came to a consensus to post an advertisement for the Town Council Vacancy and interviews be conducted during the next council meeting.

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Howard adjourned the meeting at 8:09 p.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 26<sup>th</sup> day of August. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Annie Reidhead, Town Clerk