



TOWN OF HUACHUCA CITY

The Sunset City

**MEETING MINUTES OF THE
HUACHUCA CITY TOWN COUNCIL
April 27, 2023 AT 6:00 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
500 N. GONZALES BLVD.
HUACHUCA CITY, AZ 85616**

A. Call to Order – Mayor

- a. Pledge of Allegiance
- b. Roll Call and Ascertain Quorum

B. Roll Call.

Roll Call.

Present: Johann Wallace, Christy Hirshberg, Jeffrey Ferro, Cynthia Butterworth, Debra Trate, Town Manager Suzanne Harvey (Not voting), Town Clerk Brandye Thorpe (Not voting), Town Attorney Thomas Benavidez (Not voting).

Absent: Jean Smelt

- a. Invocation

Any prayer/invocation that may be offered before the start of regular Council business shall be the voluntary offering of a private citizen, for the benefit of the Council and the citizens present. The views or beliefs expressed by the prayer/invocation speaker have not been previously reviewed or approved by the Council, and the Council does not endorse the religious beliefs or views of this, or any other speaker. A list of volunteers is maintained by the Town Clerk's Office and interested persons should contact the Town Clerk's Office for further information.

C. Call to the Public – Mayor

A.R.S. 38-431.01 states the Public Body may make an open call to the public during a public meeting, subject to reasonable time, place and manner restrictions, to allow individuals to address the public body on any issue within the jurisdiction of the Public Body. At the conclusion of an open call to the public, individual members of the Public Body may respond to criticism made by those who have addressed the Public Body, may ask staff to review a matter or may ask that a matter be put on a future agenda. However, members of the Public Body shall not discuss or take legal action on matters raised during an open call to the public unless the matters are properly noticed for discussion and legal action.

D. Consent Agenda - Mayor

All items listed in the Consent Agenda are considered routine matters and will be enacted by one motion of the Council. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Member of the Town Council requests that an item or items be removed for discussion. Council Members may ask questions without removal of the item from the Consent Agenda. Items removed from the Consent Agenda are considered in their normal sequence as listed on the agenda, unless called out of sequence.

C.1 Consider approval of the Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held on April 13, 2023.
C.2 Consider approval of the Payment Approval Report.

Motion: Approval of the items on the Consent Agenda, **Action:** Open for Discussion and/or Action, **Moved by** Johann Wallace, **Seconded by** Christy Hirshberg.

Motion: Approve Items on the Consent Agenda., **Action:** Approve, **Moved by** Johann Wallace, **Seconded by** Christy Hirshberg.
Motion passed unanimously.

E. Unfinished Business before the Council – Mayor

Public comment will be taken at the beginning of each agenda item, after the subject has been announced by the Mayor and explained by staff. Any citizen, who wishes, may speak one time for five minutes on each agenda item before or after Council discussion. Questions from Council Members, however, may be directed to staff or a member of the public through the Mayor at any time.

E. New Business Before Council - Mayor

Public comment will be taken at the beginning of each agenda item, after the subject has been announced by the Mayor and explained by staff. Any citizen, who wishes, may speak one time for five minutes on each agenda item before or after Council discussion. Questions from Council Members, however, may be directed to staff or a member of the public through the Mayor at any time.

E.1 Discussion and/or Action [Budget Consultant, Ruben Villa]: Request for direction from the Council on the “Truth in Taxation” process, which will be required if the Town intends to increase the amount of property tax revenue over last year’s amount.

Motion: Request for direction from the Council on the “Truth in Taxation” process, which will be required if the Town intends to increase the amount of property tax revenue over last year’s amount, **Action:** Open for Discussion and/or Action, **Moved by** Johann Wallace, **Seconded by** Cynthia Butterworth.

Mr. Ruben Villa prepared a brief presentation going over Truth in Taxation to go over with the Council. Going as far as six (6) years back to look at the Towns levy rates. He explains that “Truth

in Taxation" is a law, and it only applies to property tax. It's been around since the 90's and is meant to help involve and inform the public about changes to local property tax revenue. He explains to the Council that if they decide to increase the amount of property tax revenue the Town will be required to do "Truth in Taxation"; which would involve send notices out to the public and having public hearings about the possible change to hear the public opinion. Mr. Villa goes into detail on how the Property Tax Levy is what contributes to the Towns General Fund. He then goes over the equation used to calculate the Mutual Rate. Next, he goes over the Maximum Rate to show the Council how much of a raise is allowed by the state and what those numbers would look like. He then showed the Council what the numbers for a resident would look like at the Mutual, Mid-way, and Maximum rates and explained the differences. Councilmember Ferro asked what system is in place to prevent the County from taking the money the Town receives from the increased Levy?

Mr. Villa explains how that wouldn't be possible. The Town would report the change to the County, the County would report that change to the State and the Department of Revenue would handle and scrutinize the project.

Mr. Villa goes further and explains that this is also why there is so much importance for getting everything completed on time and with correct calculations. He suggests to the Council two options. One; Direct staff to publish the required "Truth in Taxation" notices that will allow the City to consider adopting anything above the Mutual amount. Two; Keep things the way they are and plan to stay with the Mutual amount.

Mayor Wallace mentioned how he remembers a past Council setting a Property Tax Rate of something like 1.33%. He asked if they decide to go with something like a 1.6 levy would that be a Property Tax increase?

Mr. Villa answers that yes that would be considered an increase.

Manager Harvey tells the Council that even the set 1.33 would be considered an increase in profit.

Mayor Wallace wants to see how this will look against the budget itself. He mentions how costs are still going up and while he personally doesn't want to see an increase, would an increase help the Town.

Councilmember Trate asks about publishing it.

Councilmember Ferro commented that he would be shocked if we were the only Town to raise the annual levy and that at a certain point, we'll not be able to continue to provide the services to the Town that we currently do with the budget we have now. While as an individual he doesn't like any type of tax increase but as a Councilmember he must think of the health of the Town and people.

Councilmember Butterworth comments that she knows we must have that income for the Town; but her main concern will be the impact on the Homeowners. She worries about bringing more hardships to the people who may be living paycheck to paycheck and struggling currently. That this is something they as a Council can control while everything else pricewise, they can't.

Mr. Villa goes over when certain notices would be needed, and how the Council may decide to raise rates in different areas than this. He makes sure they understand they do have time to go over and decide on these matters.

Councilmember Butterworth asks if he knows if the school, the County, the College, anyone is planning on raising taxes?

Councilmember Trate answers the College is.

Mr. Villa answers that Tombstone School District is not.

Motion: To publish the required "Truth in Taxation" notices to allow the city council to consider adopting a levy above the mutual amount if necessary to start the process, **Action:** Direct Staff, **Moved by** Johann Wallace, **Seconded by** Jeffrey Ferro.
Motion passed unanimously

E.2 Discussion and/or Action [Mayor Wallace]: Second Reading- ORDINANCE NO. 2023-08- AN ORDINANCE OF THE MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF HUACHUCA CITY, COCHISE COUNTY, ARIZONA, AMENDING THE TOWN CODE TITLE 6 "ANIMALS," CHAPTER 6.05 "DOGS AND CATS," SECTION 6.05.070 "DOGS AND CATS IN CITY PARKS PROHIBITED," TO ALLOW DOGS AND CATS IN HUNT AND LEFFINGWELL PARKS.

Motion: Second Reading- Ordinance No. 2023-08- An Ordinance of the Mayor and Town Council of the Town of Huachuca City, Cochise County, Arizona, amending the Town Code Title 6 "ANIMALS," Chapter 6.05 "DOGS AND CATS," Section 6.05.070 "DOGS AND CATS IN CITY PARKS PROHIBITED," to allow dogs and cats in Hunt and Leffingwell parks, **Action:** Open for Discussion and/or Action, **Moved by** Johann Wallace, **Seconded by** Christy Hirshberg.

Councilmember Butterworth asks about leashes?
Mayor Wallace answers that the leash law still exists, is in the Town Code, and will be enforced.

Motion: Second Reading- Ordinance No. 2023-08- An Ordinance of the Mayor and Town Council of the Town of Huachuca City, Cochise County, Arizona, amending the Town Code Title 6 "ANIMALS," Chapter 6.05 "DOGS AND CATS," Section 6.05.070 "DOGS AND CATS IN CITY PARKS PROHIBITED," to allow dogs and cats in Hunt and Leffingwell parks, **Action:** Approve **Moved by** Johann Wallace, **Seconded by** Jeffrey Ferro.
Motion passed unanimously

E.3 Discussion and/or Action [Mayor Wallace]: Proclamation No. 2023-09 - A PROCLAMATION OF THE MAYOR OF THE TOWN OF HUACHUCA CITY, DECLARING THE MONTH OF MAY, 2023, AS "ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH."

Motion: Proclamation No. 2023-09 A Proclamation of the Mayor of the Town of Huachuca City, Declaring the month of May, 2023, as "Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, **Action:** Open for Discussion and/or Action, **Moved by** Johann Wallace, **Seconded by** Christy Hirshberg.

E.4 Discussion and/or Action [Mayor Wallace]: Proclamation No. 2023-10 - A PROCLAMATION OF THE MAYOR OF THE TOWN OF HUACHUCA CITY, DECLARING THE MONTH OF MAY, 2023, AS "OLDER AMERICANS MONTH."

Motion: Proclamation No. 2023-10 – A Proclamation of the Mayor of the Town of Huachuca City, Declaring the month of May, 2023, as Older Americans Month, **Action:** Open for Discussion and/or Action, **Moved by** Johann Wallace, **Seconded by** Christy Hirshberg.

F. Reports of Current Events by Council

Councilmember Butterworth mentions the food distribution on Friday, she stopped counting after 60 cars and several cars were picking up for more than one family. She was at the SVMPO meeting on Wednesday. They're looking at State Route 90, the plan for the renovations and construction and such. They're looking at November for this. She has not heard anything final about the House Bill for Road Construction Projects, but she encourages everyone to keep fighting for our projects to be approved, especially the one for Skyline Drive.

Councilmember Trate mentions that next week is the Upper San Pedro Meeting and Tuesday is the Arizona Cities and Towns transportation. She mentions to the Council that this might be a place to bring the Skyline project if it fails. She also mentions the meeting that had happened the day before, though she wasn't there herself, the Co-operative gave a big presentation about the Community Garden. They also gave a big shout out to the library, and School for all that they do.

Mayor Pro Tem Hirshberg just wanted to mention how excited she is that COX is coming to town.

Mayor Wallace joined in the excitement about COX. He mentions the Military Affairs Luncheon next week he'll be attending. On the 10th he'll be attending the U of A South graduation ceremony as a representative of the Town. On the 17th is the mayor and managers meeting which he's unsure if he'll be able to attend; and the 19th is the Hispanic Chamber Mixer. He let the Council know that he had been contacted by a Senator asking his opinion about Title 42 and his answer back was that as the Mayor and member of the council he is in a nonpartisan role and wouldn't be providing an opinion.

G. Adjournment

Motion: To Adjourn, **Action:** Adjourn, **Moved by** Johann Wallace, **Seconded by** Christy Hirshberg.

Motion passed unanimously.

Approved by Mayor Johann R. Wallace on May 11, 2023.

Mr. Johann R. Wallace
Mayor

Attest: _____
Ms. Brandye Thorpe,
Town Clerk

Seal:

Certification

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Meeting for the Huachuca City Town Council held on April 27, 2023. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and a quorum was present.

Ms. Brandye Thorpe,
Town Clerk