

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
HONORABLE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF PINETOP-
LAKESIDE, ARIZONA, HELD ON THURSDAY, JANUARY 15, 2026, IN
THE TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS LOCATED AT 325 W. WHITE
MOUNTAIN BOULEVARD, LAKESIDE, AZ 85929**

➤ **Roll Call**

The following Council Members were present:

Name	Position
Stephanie Irwin	Mayor
Sterling Beus	Vice Mayor
Taber Heisler	Council Member
Jeff Phillips	Council Member
Todd Fernau	Council Member
Jerry Smith	Council Member
Harry Turner	Council Member

Staff Present:

Name	Position
Kristi Salskov	Town Clerk/ Interim Town Manager
Dan Barnes	Police Chief
Daniel Wilkey	Police Commander
Malaina Spillman	Interim Public Works Director
Gabe Buldra	Finance Director (telephonically)
Stacy MacArthur	Accountant
Betsy Peck	Library Manager
Annie DeRosier	Marketing & Communications Director
Frank Naranjo	Public Works Parks Supervisor
Mackenzie Valichnac	Deputy Town Clerk
Lisa Mears	Public Works Secretary
Precila De La Garza	Police Executive Secretary
Eric De La Garza	Collection Center Supervisor

Mayor Irwin called the Regular Meeting of the Pinetop-Lakeside Town Council to order at 6:00 p.m. A quorum was present.

➤ **Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation**

Mayor Irwin led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

The Invocation was offered by Council Member Fernau.

B. Call to the Public

Mayor Irwin called for public comments.

Mike Moffenbier, President of the Pinetop-Lakeside Chamber of Commerce, initially approached the podium but was asked to reserve comments related to the Town Manager interviews for Agenda Item D.2.

Jennifer Butterbrodt stated, *“Good evening, everyone, Vice Mayor or Mayor, Vice Mayor and Council. So, in looking back at last year's transactions and things like that, I want to say everyone did a wonderful job on being able to tighten things up. I just want to put a challenge out there, not only for our residents, but also within, the town staff. When looking at a lot of the transactions, a lot of them were, outside of town limits that potentially we have retailers who are who are within town limits, certain things like hardware stores and stuff like that. And I just wanted to challenge all of us to try and take a step back and look and think, “how could I spend my money a little bit more locally, like, extreme local?” And for such as, like, Ace Hardware, the Brown family is incredibly generous. I can't tell you how many times you've probably seen the donations that they have spread throughout the community. So just being a little bit more mindful of that. The second item is when it, also comes to purchases, a lot of several transactions within one department across several days taking place. How can we be a little bit more thoughtful in terms of can we maybe take a Friday afternoon to sit back and think, “hey, what do we need to buy for next week?” Especially within our own departments and consolidate that so we only have somebody going out once within a week or twice versus numerous times.” So that way we can hopefully move through our projects a little bit more efficiently. So that was my only cause of the action. Thank you.”*

C. Consent Agenda

Mayor Irwin announced consideration of the Consent Agenda and explained that all items listed would be acted upon by a single vote of the Council, unless a member of the Council asked that specific items be removed from the Consent Agenda, discussed, and voted upon separately.

Vice Mayor Beus moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Council Member Smith seconded the motion and by show of hands the following vote was recorded:

	AYES	NAYS	ABSTAIN
Mayor Irwin	X		
Vice Mayor Beus	X		
Council Member Phillips	X		
Council Member Heisler	X		
Council Member Fernau	X		
Council Member Turner	X		
Council Member Smith	X		

Mayor Irwin then declared the motion passed unanimously.

C.1 Consider Approval of the Minutes of the Town Council Regular Meeting held on December 4, 2025.

Vice Mayor Beus moved to approve the Minutes of the Town Council Regular Meeting held on December 4, 2025. Council Member Smith seconded the motion and by show of hands the following vote was recorded:

	AYES	NAYS	ABSTAIN
Mayor Irwin	X		
Vice Mayor Beus	X		
Council Member Phillips	X		
Council Member Heisler	X		
Council Member Fernau	X		
Council Member Smith	X		
Council Member Turner	X		

C.2 Consider Approval of the Minutes of the Town Council Work Session held on December 4, 2025.

Vice Mayor Beus moved to approve the Minutes of the Town Council Work Session held on December 4, 2025. Council Member Smith seconded the motion and by show of hands the following vote was recorded:

	AYES	NAYS	ABSTAIN
Mayor Irwin	X		
Vice Mayor Beus	X		
Council Member Phillips	X		
Council Member Heisler	X		
Council Member Fernau	X		
Council Member Smith	X		
Council Member Turner	X		

C.3 Consider Approval of the Minutes of the Town Council Regular Meeting held on December 18, 2025.

Vice Mayor Beus moved to approve the Minutes of the Town Council Regular Meeting held on December 18, 2025. Council Member Smith seconded the motion and by show of hands the following vote was recorded:

	AYES	NAYS	ABSTAIN
Mayor Irwin	X		
Vice Mayor Beus	X		
Council Member Phillips	X		
Council Member Heisler	X		
Council Member Fernau	X		
Council Member Smith	X		
Council Member Turner	X		

C.4 Consider Approval of the Town Check Register for the Period of December 1 through 31, 2025.

Vice Mayor Beus moved to approve the Town Check Register for the Period of December 1 through 31, 2025. Council Member Smith seconded the motion and by show of hands the following vote was recorded:

	AYES	NAYS	ABSTAIN
Mayor Irwin	X		
Vice Mayor Beus	X		
Council Member Phillips	X		
Council Member Heisler	X		
Council Member Fernau	X		
Council Member Smith	X		
Council Member Turner	X		

D. Business Before the Council

D.1 Presentation of the December 2025 Financial Report.

To view this item, please go to:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/gUISu00MWPg?si=c5WfjNCPmfqBU23l>

This item begins at minute: 7:45.

Finance Director Gabe Buldra presented the December 2025 Financial Report.

Key highlights included: - General Fund revenues year-to-date totaled approximately \$3.96 million. Transaction Privilege Tax collections were approximately \$2.8 million. General Fund expenditure was approximately 39% percent of budget, remaining below targeted spending levels. The General Fund cash balance increased month-over-month, with a projected year-end balance of approximately \$1.4 million.

Council thanked Director Buldra for the report. No action was taken.

D.2 Interviews of Town Manager Applicants Kristi Salskov and Jak Teel

<https://www.youtube.com/live/gUISu00MWPg?si=c5WfjNCPmfqBU231>

This item begins at minute: 11:50.

Mike Moffenbier stated, *“Again, I want to just thank the committee, the hiring committee, you did an amazing job. Our town certainly deserves the best, and I'm sure you guys are going to deliver that to us. I think what we need in our town is somebody who can quickly assess, you know, operations, innovation, and where a town needs to be headed. We need somebody with stability and consistency. We need somebody who can determine short term action, long term vision, and the ability to manage controls and pivot community and budget control. We have to discern fiscal responsibility and be able to document fiscal responsibility. We must be able to live the real game, not talk a good game. So, I just ask that all of you to take that into consideration. And they must be present and active in the community, both the local constituents as well as the business community. And as the president of the Chamber of Commerce, I just ask all of you to keep that in high consideration, and I know that you'll make the right decision tonight. Thank you very much.”*

Jennifer Butterbrodt stated, *“Good evening, everyone. Thank you so much for inviting me to be a part of the meet and greet last night. It was, it was really good. It was really important, to be able to not only see what each candidate brings to the table, but also to hear from fellow town members what they find most important within our community. A couple of my peers within the community raised a lot of questions in terms of each one of the candidates, and a lot of them were addressed last night. As you go into contract tonight with the final decision, I just ask that you take into consideration, the ability for the candidate to be able to see their decisions through over the course of, a five year plan and to make sure that we are not coming back here in a year or two and having to revisit this, due to, you know, whatever a candidate decides to do after a very short period of time. Being able to make a decision and then also seeing it come to fruition is absolutely critical. So, I hope that we can all take that into consideration when we're looking at our contract and making sure that we're locking our candidate in place permanently. Thank you.”*

Allison Hephner stated, “Mayor, Vice Mayor, Council, staff. Hi, everyone. I'm here and I'm really excited for what's going on, and we're getting a new town manager. So, thank you for that. I know too, like Jennifer says, I know that a lot of went into that. I just want to provide some insight. I'm up here because I want to support a specific candidate. And the reason for that is recently I had a lot of work that has kind of held up in a project that I'm working on in this community. And this individual was able to reduce the barriers very quickly, and I was able to partner with the staff a little bit more efficiently. I didn't know this person before this. It was pretty obvious, and it made things much easier and we're back on track. And that's what's important is in this community. For me, as somebody who's a community champion and has been responsible for bringing several million dollars into the community, I've worked really hard at doing that. And it's my partnership, and it's the fact that I'm a local, and I've been living here for thirty-five years. It has given me the opportunity to be able to expand a lot of things in this community. You have to know the people, and you have to know the community. One of the things that we see a lot, with working a lot with Summit, our physicians come here and they can't stay. Their wives don't like it, their family's not here, what you know, it's a different place, you're kind of by yourself. You also have to have the in. You got to be a local a lot of the time, just to get things done. So, this individual, has done a lot in a little a short time. And it's just I just want to let you know that I personally am impressed by it. I hope that, you guys see some of that too. So I just wanted to speak to that. So, thank you.”

Rob Hephner stated, “Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Council Members, staff, you obviously have a hard decision in front of you. I watched the other evening as the presentations were made of you online. You have two very solid candidates. I think that's that is a testament to the process that you went through to get to this point. From this point, I would say to you, fifteen years ago, I moved here. There was a unifying message that was given to me when I got here fifteen years ago. I've heard it again and again and again. In fact, we just heard it at the very beginning of the meeting in the Call of the Public. At one point during COVID, we had a 30 foot by 10 foot sign at the entry of town saying, “please buy local”. Local solid to a local community and to a small community and local should be, if all things are considered equal and you can buy local, it should be the obvious choice. So, I would say to you, when you're looking at this and, you know, specifically speaking to Kristi and nothing against the other candidate, she's done already something in the job. So, you're not even you're not even trying this without knowing. You're knowing. She's already done great things. You've just heard from my wife. And I can tell you internally that hadn't moved at all. She needed MOU with the Blue Ridge. That wouldn't have happened without Kristi. Kristi stepped in, did the work. I don't know if you've ever dealt with Blue Ridge. I'm not going to name names but there's individuals who can hold it up and make it not happen, and she made it happen with that individual. So that's a testament to her. So, I can say undoubtedly that, “buy local” would be a great message to send. Hire local. You know, you say consistently we were sitting in the economic development, meeting. And it was like, well, we want people to be able to, you know, we want our kids to be able to come back here and have a job. So, when a person lives in the

community, is vested in the community, and does the job, I think they've earned it. Thank you for your time."

Mayor Irwin thanked everyone for their comments and stated that they will proceed with the interviews. Each candidate was given the questions 24 hours in advance to evaluate their depth of understanding instead of who is able to respond to questions under pressure. Council will consider all of the evaluations and feedback that has occurred over the application process.

Kristi Salskov was interviewed first. To view the interview please use the link above starting at minute 20:30.

Jak Teel was interviewed second. To view the interview please use the link above starting at minute 31:03.

D.3 Pursuant to A.R.S. 38-431.03 A.(1)(3)(4) Upon a public majority vote of the members constituting a quorum, a public body may hold an executive session but only for the following purpose:

1. Discussion or consideration of employment, assignment, appointment, promotion, demotion, dismissal, salaries, disciplining or resignation of a public officer, appointee or employee of any public body, except that with the exception of salary discussions, an officer, appointee or employee may demand that the discussion or consideration occur at a public meeting. The public body shall provide the officer, appointee or employee with written notice of the executive session as is appropriate but not less than twenty-four hours for the officer, appointee or employee to determine to be maintained as confidential or consideration should occur at a public meeting.

3. Discussion or consultation for legal advice with the attorney or attorneys of the public body.

4. Discussion or consultation with the attorneys of the public body in order to consider its position and instruct its attorneys regarding the public body's position regarding contracts that are the subject of negotiations, in pending or contemplated litigation or in settlement discussions conducted in order to avoid or resolve litigation.

➤ *Discussion, Consideration and Possible Appointment of a Town Manger.*

Town Council will reconvene the Regular Meeting to consider taking action on item D.3.

Vice Mayor Beus made a motion to go into Executive Session. Council Member Smith seconded the motion and by show of hands the following vote was recorded:

	AYES	NAYS	ABSTAIN
Mayor Irwin	X		
Vice Mayor Beus	X		
Council Member Phillips	X		
Council Member Heisler	X		
Council Member Fernau	X		
Council Member Smith	X		
Council Member Turner	X		

Mayor Irwin then declared the motion passed unanimously. The Council entered into Executive Session at 6:44 p.m. and reconvened at 7:37 p.m.

Mayor Irwin stated that this has been a long process to pick the next Town Manager. She believes that either of the candidates would do an amazing job and she thanked both of them for applying. Throughout the process, the Council has received input from community members and staff, which has been taken into consideration.

Mayor Irwin made a motion to go into contract negotiations with Kristi Salskov. Council Member Heisler seconded the motion and by show of hands the following vote was recorded:

	AYES	NAYS	ABSTAIN
Mayor Irwin	X		
Vice Mayor Beus	X		
Council Member Phillips	X		
Council Member Heisler	X		
Council Member Fernau	X		
Council Member Smith	X		
Council Member Turner	X		

Mayor Irwin then declared the motion passed unanimously.

D.4 Pursuant to A.R.S. 38-431.03 A.(3)(4) Upon a public majority vote of the members constituting a quorum, a public body may hold an executive session but only for the following purpose:

3. Discussion or consultation for legal advice with the attorney or attorneys of the public body.

4. Discussion or consultation with the attorneys of the public body in order to consider its position and instruct its attorneys regarding the public body's position regarding contracts that are the subject of

negotiations, in pending or contemplated litigation or in settlement discussions conducted in order to avoid or resolve litigation.

- ***Discussion and provide direction to the Town Attorney regarding Town Manager contract negotiation.***

Town Council will reconvene the to adjourn the Regular Meeting. No action will be taken on this item.

Vice Mayor Beus made a motion to go into Executive Session. Council Member Smith seconded the motion and by show of hands the following vote was recorded:

	AYES	NAYS	ABSTAIN
Mayor Irwin	X		
Vice Mayor Beus	X		
Council Member Phillips	X		
Council Member Heisler	X		
Council Member Fernau	X		
Council Member Smith	X		
Council Member Turner	X		

Mayor Irwin then declared the motion passed unanimously. The Council entered into Executive Session at 7:40 p.m. and reconvened at 8:15 p.m.

No action was taken.

Adjournment:

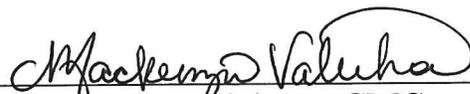
Mayor Irwin

There being no further business at this time, the regular meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:15 p.m.



Stephanie Irwin,
Mayor

ATTEST:

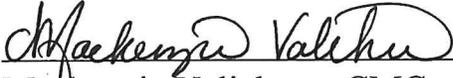

 Mackenzie Valichnac, CMC,
 Deputy Clerk



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 Pinetop-Lakeside, Arizona, held on the 15th day of January, 2026. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this 15th day of January, 2026.



Mackenzie Valichnac, CMC,
Deputy Clerk

