

Upon notice duly given under Arizona Revised Statutes, Section 38-431, et seq., as amended, the City Council of the City of Bullhead City held a regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, September 2, 2025, in the City Council Chambers, 1255 Marina Boulevard, Bullhead City, Arizona.

**CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Head called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and invited Pastor Steven Brown of Praise Chapel to deliver the invocation. Council Member Newlin led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**ROLL CALL**

Council Present

Alfonzo, Dallman, Head, Newlin, O'Neill, Ring, Smith

Council Absent

None

Staff Present:

CITY MANAGER: Toby Cotter

CITY ATTORNEY: Garnet Emery

CITY CLERK: Debie Ogden

POLICE CAPTAIN: Jason Harms

FINANCE DIRECTOR: Robert Drexler

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR: Angie Johnson

UTILITIES DIRECTOR: Mark R. Clark

**PRESENTATIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS**

1. Morning Kiwanis Club Check Presentation

The Morning Kiwanis Club presented a check to the city for swim lessons. President Nicholas Darris said impacting the lives of children starts with safety and this partnership is key to continuing that mission. Recreation Superintendent Heath said we are lucky to have the support of the Morning Kiwanis to make sure children are safe around water. He thanked the club for 20-plus years of continued support.

2. Recovery in the Park Proclamation

Mayor Head read the proclamation stating Saturday, September 13th as the day of Recovery in the Park Celebration. Karole Finklestein said there will be a concert with Sacred Mirrors and activities for children. She thanked the community for the support of the Mohave Area Partnership Promoting Educated Decisions organization over the last 14 years.

3. Hunger Awareness Month Proclamation

Mayor Head read the proclamation stating the month of September 2025 as Hunger Action Month. Pastor Stephen Brown reported that the Bullhead City Food Bank has 25 volunteers who make their work possible. He stated that 2.2 million pounds of food were distributed last year, and they are on track to exceed that amount this year. He shared that their website, [bullheadfoodbank.org](http://bullheadfoodbank.org), includes information about their programs and donation opportunities. Pastor Brown noted that the food bank is located at 590 Hancock Road and is open Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays from 8:00 a.m. to

2:00 p.m., and Fridays from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. He added that they have partnered with 36 local businesses to accept non-perishable donations, and that the Kiwanis contributed 2,560 pounds of food for Hunger Action Month.

Mayor Head thanked the members of Council for their volunteer work with the food bank.

#### 4. Optimum Communications Update

Mayor Head announced there would be no update from Optimum Communications.

### **OPEN CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

Mayor Head opened the call to the public.

Steven Lee said everyone needs to stand up for their rights and said he is tired of the status quo in government at all levels. He said he is working with the John Birch Society to make sure candidates are vetted and answer to the citizens and protect our values. He said to contact him if interested in learning more.

Rebecca Hoskin stated she has lived in Laughlin Ranch for 15 years and expressed concern about the large number of major water line repairs in the community. She reported counting over 10 repair sites on Secret Pass Canyon Drive and noted a large sinkhole at the east end of the street. She said the city shut off water on August 23rd to repair a major water break and said the next day, she received a door hanger instructing her to call a plumber, with no further explanation. She said the plumber found that the water lines had separated due to excessive pressure. She stated that after a second plumbing call on August 29th, she filed a claim with the city. She said she placed a third emergency call, and the plumber measured the water pressure at over 150 PSI, though a utility technician later told her that level was impossible.

Terry Forsythe said she lives in Laughlin Ranch and had a water leak last week. She said the utility technicians told her it was a known water pressure issue. She said it has happened to numerous homes.

Terry Thomlinson said the Legacy Foundation has awarded almost \$30 million over the past 25 years. She said they are aligning with National Hunger Month during the month of September and in honor of 25 years, they are donating \$250,000 to food banks in the area.

Mickey Maxey asked why it took an hour and twenty minutes for the Bullhead Police Department to post a missing elderly man with dementia to their Facebook page. She said the community she is from had a program where citizens can register their cameras to assist the police and it was extremely successful.

Rose Jacobs announced the Republican Women's Club will host a luncheon starting at 10:30 a.m. at the Chaparral Country Club on Wednesday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>. She said the Colorado River Concert Series is celebrating 51 years of providing entertainment to the Tri-State area and briefly spoke about the upcoming season.

Caleb Elliot cautioned residents about out-of-town "storm chaser" contractors working in the community following recent storms. He stated these contractors engage in predatory practices,

mislead customers, and encourage unnecessary insurance claims, which could ultimately increase residents' insurance premiums.

Alisa Sanchez stated she is a member of the Mohave Area Partnership Promoting Educated Decisions (MAPPED) Coalition and a program facilitator for Arizona Youth Partnership. She announced that they are hosting the Strengthening Families Program for parents and youth ages 10 – 14. She said this free eight-week program focuses on strengthening communication, goal setting, and problem-solving skills, while reducing risky behaviors and substance use. She said the next session begins September 17th at the First Baptist Church in Fort Mohave, with meetings every Wednesday from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. She said families will receive a free dinner, participate in parent and youth sessions, and engage in family activities. She thanked the Legacy Foundation for a \$1,000 donation, which will fund meals, graduation gift baskets, and certificates for families who complete the program.

Sean Regan provided an update on Arizona Veteran K-9's efforts in the community. He said they have established Starlight Kennels and are seeking community support. He reported that five puppies under a week old were recently dropped off at the facility and that they need veteran volunteers to assist with bottle-feeding. He said more information and volunteer opportunities are available at [starlightkennelsnorth.org](http://starlightkennelsnorth.org).

Scotty McClure stated that he believes Captain Harms should be considered for the next Chief of Police. He noted that the street sweeper did not clean his street after the last flood and suggested the city requires a right-turn lane on Highway 95 at the new Circle K.

Having no one else present requesting to speak, Mayor Head closed the call to the public.

### **AGENDA MODIFICATIONS**

Council Member Ring moved item 12 before item 3. Mayor Head moved item 6 after item 12.

### **WAIVER MOTION**

**Council Member Newlin made a motion to waive the reading in full of all ordinances and resolutions presented for adoption at this meeting. Council Member Ring seconded the motion.**

**VOTE: AYES: Alfonzo, Dallman, Head, Newlin, O'Neill, Ring, Smith NAYS: None**

### **MOTION CARRIED**

### **MANAGER'S REPORT**

#### 1. Community Garden Update and Grand Opening

Assistant City Manager Kajirwa said the Community Garden was established as a nonprofit in late 2021 and there have been some transitions but are back on track. He said the president, Michael Palacios, is present to give a quick presentation.

Michael Palacios thanked the City of Bullhead City for providing land and early grant support that made the Bullhead Community Garden possible. He recognized former Mohave County Supervisor

Hildy Angus, the Legacy Foundation, Butch Redmond of Redmond Construction, Star Nursery, the Laughlin Bullhead Air Show, and numerous local businesses and tradespeople for their contributions. He noted that phase one of the three-phase project is complete, transforming a vacant lot into a functioning community garden with fencing, irrigation, accessible pathways, shade structures, and the first set of garden beds. He acknowledged the board members and volunteers for their efforts and said the fully built-out garden will include up to 100 beds, educational space, and demonstration areas for sustainable gardening. He invited the council and community to the garden's grand opening on Saturday, September 6th at 9:00 a.m., where master gardeners will be present to answer questions and share gardening tips. More information is available at bhgarden.org.

## 2. League of Arizona Cities and Towns

City Manager Cotter reported that several council members and staff attended the annual Arizona League of Cities and Towns Conference and found the training to be very valuable. He noted that the list of conference sessions is available on the Arizona League of Cities and Towns website and said the information learned will be shared among staff and with the public over time.

## **MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS' REPORTS ON CURRENT EVENTS**

Council Member Smith thanked City Manager Cotter for his leadership.

Mayor Head stated that the Arizona League of Cities and Towns annual program provides valuable opportunities to gain new perspectives. He shared that the breakout sessions he attended focused on energy, water, and infrastructure threats, and emphasized the importance of staying informed about state issues. He thanked those who attended and congratulated Council Members Dallman and Newland on their selection into the League's leadership program, noting that this reflects positively on the city and council.

## **ITEMS WITHDRAWN FROM CONSENT AGENDA**

None

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

**Council Member Newlin made a motion that Items 1-2 on the Consent Agenda be approved in accordance with the reports, certifications and recommendations furnished each Council Member and without further discussion. Vice Mayor Alfonzo seconded the motion.**

**VOTE: AYES: Alfonzo, Dallman, Head, Newlin, O'Neill, Ring, Smith NAYS: None**

## **MOTION CARRIED**

Items on the Consent Agenda were approved as follows:

1. Approve the minutes of the August 5, 2025 Special Council Meeting. (City Clerk Ogden)
2. Discussion and possible action to adopt RESOLUTION NO. 2025R-37, approving the Interstate Mutual Aid Agreement between the State of Nevada and the City of Bullhead City for aid and

assistance in responding to emergency situations and authorizing the City Manager to execute the agreement on behalf of the city. (Police Chief Trebes)

### **PUBLIC HEARINGS ON ITEMS PULLED FROM CONSENT AGENDA**

None

### **PROCEDURES FOR PUBLIC COMMENT ON PUBLIC HEARING ACTION ITEMS**

Members of the public are invited to speak on public hearing action items. To give everyone an opportunity to speak, please observe the following: (1) state your name clearly for the record; (2) you may address the Council one time on each public hearing action item for a maximum of three minutes; and (3) groups must designate one spokesperson to speak on behalf of the group for a maximum of five minutes.

### **COUNCIL REQUESTED ITEMS**

12. Discussion and possible action to approve naming the new ADA Mobility Ramp in Community Park the "Ciaran Riley ADA Mobility Ramp" and direct the City Manager or his designee to install signage reflecting the new name. (Council Members Tami Ring and Jason Newlin)

City Manager Cotter and Mayor Head invited Ciaran Riley and her family and friends to the front of the chamber.

City Manager Cotter explained that city code allows the naming of a facility in honor of a person who has played an active leadership role in developing, promoting, or implementing programs that benefit youth, senior citizens, or improve the community's visual appearance. He said Council Members Ring and Newlin requested naming the new ADA mobility ramp after Ciaran Riley, an inspiring young woman whose determination and resilience have made a lasting impact on the Bullhead City community. He said Ciaran was diagnosed at birth with spina bifida and other medical conditions, undergoing 28 major surgeries and approximately 100 additional procedures to improve her quality of life. He said despite these challenges, Ciaran has led an active life, participating in biking, swimming, T-ball, Girl Scouts, and library programs. He said she played for several years in the AYSO Challenger program and has been a longtime member of the Bullhead City Special Olympics Stars, competing as a swimmer, cheerleader, bowler, and swimming medalist. He said Council Members Newlin and Ring recommended approving the naming of the new ADA Mobility Ramp in Community Park as the Ciaran Riley ADA Mobility Ramp and directing staff to install signage reflecting the name.

Council Member Ring said the name will now be the Ciaran Riley and Friends ADA Mobility Ramp.

Council Member Newlin said he is confident that this meets the requirements of the ordinance and is honored to speak in support of adding the name Ciaran Riley and Friends to the ADA River Access Ramp.

Mayor Head asked if anyone from the public wanted to speak on this item.

Ciaran Riley thanked everyone for their love and support.

Janine Woodmancy said she has been Ms. Riley's best friend and caregiver for over seven years and said she appreciates the council for doing this for her.

John Riley said he wanted to thank everyone and said this is not only a recognition for her, but also for everybody in the community that is handicapped. He said this river access is a beautiful thing.

**Council Member Ring made a motion to approve naming the new ADA Mobility Ramp in Community Park the "Ciaran Riley and Friends ADA Mobility Ramp" and direct the City Manager or his designee to install signage reflecting the new name. Vice Mayor Alfonzo seconded the motion.**

**VOTE: AYES: Alfonzo, Dallman, Head, Newlin, O'Neill, Ring, Smith NAYS: None**

### **MOTION CARRIED**

6. Discussion and possible action to approve a budget amendment transferring funds (upon receipt of the donation from the Bullhead City Pickleball Club) in the amount of \$75,000 from the Grant Fund to Parks Capital Projects Fund and expenditure of up to \$75,000 for the development of the shade structures, concrete paths and bleachers for the Rotary Park pickleball courts. (Recreation Superintendent Heath)

Recreation Superintendent Heath said council had asked staff to reach out to the pickleball club and help with this project. He said the club donated \$75,000 and this item is to request the transfer of funds from the grant fund to the Parks capital project fund.

Vice Mayor Alfonzo thanked the Pickleball Club for their generous donation for improvements to the pickleball courts.

Mayor Head asked if anyone from the public wanted to speak on this item.

Laura Murphy said she represents the Pickleball Club and said she had asked the city for help with the shade project for an area at Rotary Park which lies in between the pickleball courts. She said they have been fundraising for the last three years and searched for grants and donations from local service organizations. She said she has been blessed with individuals who have stepped up to ask for donations. She said Scott Lethbridge, one of the players and a member of the Los Matadors of Bullhead City, helped secure the first donation from that organization. She said Sherri Shepherd and Gretchen Vander made the effort to approach DOT Foods and secured a donation. Ms. Shepherd, Ms. Vander, Bill Chase, and Allen Reed sought and secured a grant from the Legacy Foundation of Arizona, whose mission is to enhance the quality of life and health of those it serves. She said after completion, the Pickleball Club will donate the completed project to the city, which will own and maintain it. She said meetings with Recreation Superintendent Heath and Public Works Director Johnson have educated the club on degrees of slope, drainage, pony walls, compliance and now Better understand the process. She said the cemented and shaded area would be the benefit to outdoor players both day and night She asked if there was an update on the progress of the promised indoor pickleball courts at the Optimum Center.

Public Works Director Johnson said the project would be advertised within the next 30 days.

**Council Member Dallman made a motion to approve a budget amendment transferring funds (upon receipt of the donation from the Bullhead City Pickleball Club) in the amount of \$75,000 from the Grant Fund to Parks Capital Projects Fund and expenditure of up to \$75,000 for the development of the shade structures, concrete paths and bleachers for the Rotary Park pickleball courts. Council Member Ring seconded the motion.**

**VOTE: AYES: Alfonzo, Dallman, Head, Newlin, O’Neill, Ring, Smith NAYS: None**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**3. PUBLIC HEARING: Discussion only regarding the intent to increase water and wastewater rates. NO ACTION WILL BE TAKEN ON THIS ITEM. (Assistant City Manager Kajirwa)**

Assistant City Manager Kajirwa explained that the rate increase has been discussed with Council in May, June, and July, and the public hearing provides another opportunity to share information with the community. He said the primary drivers for the increase are challenging market conditions, tariffs, supply chain delays, aging infrastructure, and labor shortages. Some infrastructure is more than 25–30 years old and nearing end of life. He said the city has begun investing in infrastructure upgrades, but material shortages, longer lead times, and cost volatility continue to pose challenges. He noted that media prices have increased 10–15%, and project costs have risen 22–52%. The city is working to ensure it remains financially positioned to maintain service quality for residents despite these pressures.

Utilities Director Clark stated that utilities are enterprise funds, meaning water and wastewater operations must be self-sustaining through rates and charges. He said they do not receive general fund money, state-shared revenue, or city sales tax, and said the city borrowed money from the general fund to purchase the system and make initial improvements, but those loans must be repaid. He said rates have not been raised in four years and said when the city took over EPCOR, they kept the rates in place and agreed not to raise rates for two years. He said the city now proposes phasing in increases over three years to bring the system to financial sustainability. He said the interim rate from EPCOR will be integrated into the base rate and no longer listed separately. He said the system was in poor condition when acquired, with significantly deferred maintenance. He said since taking over, the city has drilled and replaced wells, rehabilitated booster and pressure-reducing stations (a \$1 million investment), and is installing 320 new fire hydrants, including 180 smart hydrants. He said approximately \$10 million has been borrowed from the general fund for these improvements. He explained the water enterprise fund budget is currently allocated as follows: debt service 38 percent, operations 22 percent, depreciation 19 percent, administration and interdepartmental charges 50 percent, and staffing at 20 percent. He stated that the City is proposing a 19 percent water rate increase effective January 1, 2026, followed by 14% increases on January 1, 2027, and January 1, 2028. He said even after these adjustments, the utility will only be slightly in the black financially.

Utilities Director Clark explained the base rates for residential customers are currently \$14.61 (Mohave) and \$11.00 (North Mohave). He said in year one, they will increase to \$17.39, resulting in an average monthly increase of \$2.78 for Mohave customers and \$6.39 for North Mohave customers who previously paid lower rates, and by year three, the base rate will be \$22.59, which is still below the \$23.00 EPCOR would be charging today. He said the city serves just over 20,000 customers, with approximately 1,100 commercial accounts. He said the commercial meters include 431 two-inch meters, 37 three-inch meters, one four-inch meter, and six six-inch meters. He explained that water

bills include both a base rate and a volumetric rate, with three tiers: Tier 1: 0–3,000 gallons; Tier 2: 3,001–10,000 gallons; and Tier 3: over 10,000 gallons. He added the average residential customer uses 6,000 gallons per month, so most do not reach Tier 3. He said for a 4,000-gallon customer, the new bill will be \$30.95, compared to \$25.99 in North Mohave and the same as Mohave customers. He said North Mohave residents will see a larger monthly increase (\$8.27) compared to Mohave customers (\$4.96), as they have been subsidized since the City adopted EPCOR's rates without adjustment four years ago. He said by year three, a 4,000-gallon customer's bill will be \$40.23 in both North Mohave and Mohave, still below EPCOR's current rate of \$36.42 when accounting for what customers would have been paying had EPCOR retained the system.

Assistant City Manager Kajirwa said the goal was very clear to increase rates but not put the full burden on the customers. He said we are one of the lowest in the state, in comparison to other cities that are similar in size. He said the wastewater treatment facility needs an expansion from a 4 million gallon per day plant to 6 million gallons per day plant. And that's going to require a significant amount of investment.

Utilities Director Clark reported that sewer rate increases will be phased in over a three-year period, and applied evenly across all customer classes. He noted that planned system improvements include work on clarifiers, reservoirs, construction of an oxidation ditch, and citywide manhole rehabilitation. He reviewed wastewater-related expenses, stating that operations account for 68 percent, debt service 17 percent, billing 7 percent, depreciation 25 percent, personnel 29 percent, and interdepartmental charges 2 percent. He said an 8 percent rate increase is proposed each January 1st in 2026, 2027, and 2028, and even with these increases, the utility will only have a projected surplus of \$144,000.

Assistant City Manager Kajirwa added that earlier presentations reflected a 9 percent increase, but after reviewing the data, staff determined that an 8 percent increase would meet operational needs while keeping rates affordable.

Utilities Director Clark explained the new base rate for residential customers, noting that even after the third increase, rates will remain lower than EPCOR's current rates. He said commercial customers will also see an 8 percent increase each year for three years. He said commercial base rates are slightly higher than residential rates because residential customers pay a flat fee, while commercial customers are charged a base rate plus a volumetric rate based on wastewater output.

Assistant City Manager Kajirwa emphasized that the goal is to raise rates responsibly without placing the full burden on customers. He stated that current rates are among the lowest in the state compared to similar sized cities. He also noted that the wastewater treatment facility must expand from a 4-million-gallon-per-day capacity to 6 million gallons per day, which will require significant investment.

Assistant City Manager Kajirwa explained the Bullhead City Utilities Assistance and Discount Program. He said the program will be available beginning January 1, 2026, and is designed to support income-eligible households, disabled veterans, and active service members by reducing the impact of increased utility rates and ensuring equitable access to essential services. He stated that any resident with combined water and sewer service will be eligible to apply but added the income limit for a household of four is approximately \$60,000 and applicants must have an active residential account in their name with Bullhead City Utilities. He said approved applicants may combine or "stack"

discount programs, up to a maximum of \$20 per account. He also confirmed that the city will continue to offer the high-bill water consideration program and payment plans.

Assistant City Manager Kajirwa further reported that the formal notice of intent regarding the proposed rate increase was issued July 1st. The notice announcing the public hearings on September 2nd and 16th was advertised August 11th. He said the earliest possible effective date for the new rates would be October 17th but recommended an implementation date of January 1, 2026.

Mayor Head opened the public hearing.

Scotty McClure asked what the monthly discount would be. Assistant City Manager Kajirwa said \$20 per month maximum. Mr. McClure asked what the income level was. City Manager Cotter said the city will be working with every applicant who applies starting January 1, 2026. Assistant City Manager Kajirwa said he would assist Mr. McClure with those numbers.

Sean Regan stated that comparing Bullhead City's rates to EPCOR's is irrelevant because EPCOR is no longer in the community. He expressed concern about the impact of rate increases on residents living on fixed incomes, noting that they cannot easily absorb higher costs. He said residents cannot take out large loans to cover utility bills and, at most, may receive a small amount of assistance from organizations like River Fund, if they meet income requirements. He said that since the City assumed operations, his water bill has doubled, and he is now paying a sewer bill he did not previously have. He called for a moratorium on rate increases until there is a significant increase in income levels, such as a 7 to 8 percent increase in Social Security benefits. He also expressed frustration with rising costs due to tariffs, labor shortages, and difficulty finding contractors, adding that the community is already burdened with these challenges.

Jackie Miller stated that the proposed rate increase is significant and expressed concern as a resident on a fixed income, particularly for the impact on the working poor. She asked if someone earning \$26,000 per year would qualify for the discount program. Assistant City Manager Kajirwa responded that the income limit for a single-person household is \$31,300. Ms. Miller asked if Sunridge Estates is in the North Mohave area. Utilities Director Clark answered affirmative. Ms. Miller added that grocery prices and property taxes are increasing, particularly due to fire district assessments, and said it feels like residents are continually being asked to pay more while receiving very little in Social Security increases.

Having no one else present wishing to speak, Mayor Head closed the public hearing.

Utilities Director Clark said the average increase for a Mohave customer will be approximately \$5.00 per month. He said the average increase for North Mohave customers will be approximately \$22.00 per month.

#### **BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS**

None

**PUBLIC HEARINGS ON LIQUOR LICENSE APPLICATIONS**

4. **PUBLIC HEARING:** Discussion and possible action to make a recommendation to the Arizona Department of Liquor Licenses and Control to approve the application for a Series 6 (Bar) License and Interim Permit Job No. 354357 submitted by Jeffrey Craig Miller for The Pour House located at 845 Hancock Road, Bullhead City, Arizona. (City Clerk Ogden)

City Manager Cotter said staff has reviewed the application and have no questions or concerns.

Pourhouse Owner Jim Atwood said the application is for an ownership structure change and for separating some assets.

Mayor Head opened the public hearing. Having no one present wishing to speak, Mayor Head closed the public hearing.

**Council Member Ring made a motion to make a recommendation to the Arizona Department of Liquor Licenses and Control to approve the application for a Series 6 (Bar) License and Interim Permit Job No. 354357 submitted by Jeffrey Craig Miller for The Pour House located at 845 Hancock Road, Bullhead City, Arizona. Council Member Newlin seconded the motion.**

**VOTE:** AYES: Alfonzo, Dallman, Head, Newlin, O'Neill, Ring, Smith NAYS: None

**MOTION CARRIED**

**ACTION ITEMS**

**Building, Planning and Zoning Items**

None

**Bid Awards, Contracts, Intergovernmental Agreement, and Purchases**

5. Discussion and possible action to adopt RESOLUTION NO. 2025R-38, approving the Memorandum of Understanding with Lake Havasu City for the shared use of the Lake Havasu Police Department's radio system. (Police Chief Trebes)

Police Chief Trebes explained this is a memorandum of understanding between the city of Bullhead City Police Department and the Lake Havasu City Police Department to establish a shared use of the Lake Havasu City Police Department's radio system. He said access to Lake Havasu City's radio system will enhance officer safety, interoperability, facilitate mutual aid and responses, and improve public safety coordination with Mohave County.

Mayor Head asked if anyone from the public wanted to speak on this item.

Ivy Yeomans asked for clarification of the memorandum of understanding as she felt a computer system for dispatch was just purchased. Police Chief Trebes said it is for an agreement with the Lake Havasu City Police Department to utilize their radio system to enhance capabilities that we currently do not have Bullhead City.

Mayor Head asked if this item is asking Lake Havasu City to have access to their infrastructure to run our radio system, to make it more robust and is free of charge. Police Chief Trebes answered affirmative.

**Council Member Dallman made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025R-38, approving the Memorandum of Understanding with Lake Havasu City for the shared use of the Lake Havasu Police Department's radio system. Vice Mayor Alfonzo seconded the motion.**

**VOTE:** AYES: Alfonzo, Dallman, Head, Newlin, O'Neill, Ring, Smith NAYS: None

## **MOTION CARRIED**

### **Other Business**

7. Discussion and possible action to approve the removal of the raised traffic median between Richardo and Central Avenues in accordance with the Greenlight Median Removal Study. (Public Works Director Johnson)

City Manager Cotter explained that when the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) owned and operated Highway 95, a series of centerline medians were installed on the city's southern border near Target without the city's acknowledgment. He stated that time had shown there were some safety improvements associated with some of the medians, particularly extending into Fort Mohave. He said the public did not understand why the medians were installed and had expressed a desire for some of them to be removed. He emphasized that the city now owns Highway 95 and decisions regarding the highway were made in the council chambers.

Public Works Director Johnson presented a map of the subject location, noting the proposed changes to the Highway was between Richardo and Central. She stated that she had reached out to a consultant to conduct a traffic study to ensure it was safe to remove the center median at this location. She said the study confirmed that the median could be removed with the addition of some minor safety enhancements. She explained that the median was pinned into the highway and that the curb, landscaping, and rock would need to be removed. She said the city would then mill about an inch and a half of the existing pavement, repave, and restripe the area. She said the estimated cost for the project was approximately \$100,000.

City Manager Cotter clarified that this project involved only one section of Highway 95, specifically the block near Vito's, US Southwest, the former Subway, and Batteries and Bulbs. He stated that it did not include the section near Target, Corwin, or into Fort Mohave, which would be addressed separately following future engineering studies.

Vice Mayor Alfonzo stated that he strongly supported the removal of the medians, noting that he had heard complaints about the raised medians since they were installed, from nearby businesses, professional offices, and neighborhoods. He said he was very pleased to see the project move forward.

Council Member O'Neill asked if there were plans to remove the other two medians later or if only this one would be addressed. City Manager Cotter responded that this location had generated the most complaints from the business community. He explained that the other medians would need to be evaluated individually, as the city did not want to take action that might create an emergency or safety

problem. He said that was why an engineering firm had been consulted, and the study confirmed it was safe to remove this median.

Council Member Dallman confirmed with City Manager Cotter that ADOT had installed the medians without the city's consent and at no cost to the city, but that there would be a cost for their removal. City Manager Cotter affirmed and explained that at the time, the state owned and operated the highway and, under a different district engineer, determined that crashes and other incidents were occurring from Target through Fort Mohave. He said the state had considered roundabouts, medians, and other traffic measures. He added that the city had discussed the proposed roundabouts and had objected to those planned for Fort Mohave.

Mayor Head stated that he had spent considerable time reading the engineer's study and believed it was a balanced, comprehensive engineering report focused on safety. He said the study confirmed what many had observed on that stretch of road. He expressed appreciation for the effort to find someone who could prepare a comprehensive study that used predictive measures to show what could be expected.

Mayor Head asked if anyone from the public wanted to speak on this item.

Scotty McClure stated that he would have preferred the project to extend all the way to Long Avenue where the double turn lane allows traffic to move from south to north toward Target. He expressed concern that another study would be required to remove the improvements, noting that traffic sometimes backed up to the point where drivers had to wait through two or three light cycles, which was particularly difficult during extreme heat. He said he wished the project could be amended to address the issue but understood that a study would be required to make changes. He added that the congestion made it difficult for emergency vehicles to get through because vehicles could not move to the right, as that lane was already occupied. He also stated that he wished the median near the stoplight up to Long Avenue could be removed.

Ann Petitt, business owner at 3767 Highway 95, thanked the Council for listening to the concerns of businesses in the area. She stated that she had heard from nearly every business along that section of the highway, including several her company manages. She reported that exiting onto Highway 95 required using the left lane and making a U-turn, which she said was extremely dangerous and had resulted in many near accidents. She noted that customers often missed the turn, had to go all the way to the Target Center to turn around, and then faced the same hazardous U-turn when leaving. She said the medians had caused businesses to lose customers and tenants, citing Subway's 40 percent drop in sales as an example. She also observed that the fire department had been unable to get through the section at times due to the lack of a center lane.

Ray Jackson, manager at US Southwest, stated that when the medians were installed, they blocked access for many people who previously could easily pull into the businesses. He said drivers now often had to go down the road and make a U-turn, which was confusing for first-time visitors who were unsure how far they needed to pull out. He reported that he had seen drivers including police officers stop in the middle of the street, back up, and then turn around to access businesses. He stated that, in this instance, the medians created more of a hazard and nuisance than if they had not been installed at all.

Bob Caravan, owner of a strip mall on the east side of the highway, thanked City Manager Cotter for commissioning the study that supported the concern that the median installation had been a bad idea. He stated that the medians had created chaos and significant danger for drivers making U-turns. He thanked the Council for addressing the issue and looking out for the businesses.

Mayor Head stated that he was knowledgeable about traffic accidents, traffic flow, and city liability when arbitrary decisions are made. He said the study would lead a reasonable person to believe that the City was not creating liability for the motoring public, the city, or the community. He explained that while some people wanted the medians removed immediately, doing so without a concrete basis would create more liability than the Council was comfortable with. He stated that a comprehensive study conducted by knowledgeable professionals allowed laypeople to understand the findings and provided a solid basis for decisions. He said that commissioning the study was a service to the community rather than a disservice that would expose it to liability.

**Council Member Newlin made a motion to approve the removal of the raised traffic median between Richardo and Central Avenues in accordance with the Greenlight Median Removal Study. Council Member Dallman seconded the motion.**

**VOTE: AYES: Alfonzo, Dallman, Head, Newlin, O’Neill, Ring, Smith NAYS: None**

**MOTION CARRIED**

8. Discussion and possible action to: 1) approve a name for the southwest beach area within Rotary Park, either from the suggested list herein or as may be determined by the Council; and further, 2) approve the rules for the dog beach within ORDINANCE NO. 2025-8 by reference, approving an amendment to Section 6.08.040, Running at large, of Title 6, Animals, of the Bullhead City Municipal Code; and adopting Resolution No. 2025R-39, declaring the code amendment a public record. the park in substantial form as presented. (Public Works Director Johnson)

City Manager Cotter stated that this item was a follow-up from a recent workshop and action taken by the Parks and Recreation Commission. He explained that the City Attorney had advised that the beach area currently referred to as “Dog Beach” should have an official name since it was being implemented with rules, regulations, and specific time elements. He noted that naming the beach would provide consistency whether the pilot program was discontinued, modified, or made permanent in the future. He said Public Works Director Johnson had prepared a list of potential names, which was included in the packet, and invited Council Members to offer additional suggestions.

Council Members Smith, Dallman, and Ring prefer “Sandy Toes” for the new name.

Council Member O’Neill jokingly suggested “Toby Cotter Beach”.

Council Member Newlin said he has run along that section of beach for many years and has always known it as “Palm Tree Beach”. He said it is what everyone he knows has always called it. He suggested “Palm Tree Beach” for another name to consider.

Vice Mayor Alfonzo suggested “River Breeze Beach” because it is along the river and Bullhead City is known for its breeze.

Mayor Head asked if anyone from the public wanted to speak on this item.

Sean Regan asked if the item also included adopting the resolution for dogs at large. City Manager Cotter confirmed that it would be addressed next. Mr. Regan stated that "Palm Beach" sounded like a good name.

Ivy Yeomans confirmed that the area was for dogs to walk and suggested the name "Dog Walk."

Scotty McClure asked if the item was in three parts and inquired about the rules. Mayor Head replied that the rules would be addressed in the next agenda item.

City Manager Cotter explained that the item included the general administrative rules for operating the park, reflecting the outcome of the workshop with the Parks and Recreation Commission. He stated that the current motion addressed naming the area and generally approving the rules, while the related code amendment would be considered as the next item.

Caleb Elliot said he likes "Sandy Paws Beach".

Council Member Ring proposed naming the area "Sandy Toes Beach." She noted that she preferred "Sandy Paws Beach," but felt "Paws" might be inappropriate if the pilot program did not continue.

**Council Member Smith made a motion to approve 1) approve the name "Sandy Toes Beach" for the southwest beach area within Rotary Park; and further, 2) approve the rules for the dog beach within Ordinance No. 2025-8 by reference, approving an amendment to Section 6.08.040, Running at large, of Title 6, Animals, of the Bullhead City Municipal Code; and adopting Resolution No. 2025R-39, declaring the code amendment a public record. the park in substantial form as presented. Council Member Ring seconded the motion.**

**VOTE: AYES: Alfonzo, Dallman, Head, Newlin, Ring, Smith NAYS: O'Neill**

#### **MOTION CARRIED**

9. Discussion and possible action to adopt ORDINANCE NO. 2025-8 by reference, approving an amendment to Section 6.08.040, Running at large, of Title 6, Animals, of the Bullhead City Municipal Code; and adopting RESOLUTION NO. 2025R-39, declaring the code amendment a public record. (City Attorney Emery)

City Manager Cotter explained that the code amendment would allow dogs to legally run off-leash in the designated area at Rotary Park. He noted that in all other areas of city parks, dogs must remain on a leash, except in designated dog parks.

City Attorney Emery added that the amendment was a minor change reflecting the Council's action to establish a dog beach with specific time restrictions.

Mayor Head asked if anyone from the public wanted to speak on this item.

Scotty McClure expressed concern that the public did not have an opportunity to discuss the rules with the Parks and Recreation Commission. He emphasized the need for dog owners to maintain

control of their dogs when off-leash, citing personal experiences with dogs running toward him. He suggested requiring training, leashes, or some form of approval, noting the risk of bites and liability if dogs were allowed to run freely without oversight.

Sean Regan asked whether the item was a new ordinance or an amendment to allow off-leash dogs in a specific area and during certain times. He expressed concern that the ordinance should clearly reflect exemptions for service dogs, noting that without explicit guidance, enforcement could create problems for individuals whose service dogs needed to be off-leash for medical or assistance purposes.

**Council Member Newlin made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2025-8 by reference, approving an amendment to Section 6.08.040, Running at large, of Title 6, Animals, of the Bullhead City Municipal Code; and adopting RESOLUTION NO. 2025R-39, declaring the code amendment a public record. Council Member Dallman seconded the motion.**

**VOTE: AYES: Alfonzo, Dallman, Head, Newlin, O’Neill, Ring, Smith NAYS: None**

**MOTION CARRIED**

10. Discussion and possible action to appoint a Council Member to serve as the Bullhead City Council Representative on the Western Arizona Council of Governments (WACOG) Executive Board. (Human Services Director Tipton)

Human Services Director Tipton said this is a request for the Council to select a representative to serve on the Western Arizona Council of Governments (WACOG) Executive Board. He explained WACOG is a governmental nonprofit organization dedicated to serving its member entities, income challenged households, and vulnerable populations in Yuma, La Paz, and Mohave counties, and said the Executive Board is made up of 16 elected officials from those counties. He said WACOG programs include Head Start, different aging programs and human services, which include rental assistance, utility help, home repair, and weatherization.

Council Member Newlin expressed interest in serving as a representative to WACOG.

Mayor Head asked if anyone from the public wanted to speak on this item. No one spoke.

**Council Member Smith made a motion to appoint Council Member Jason Newlin to serve as the Bullhead City Council Representative on the Western Arizona Council of Governments (WACOG) Executive Board. Vice Mayor Alfonzo seconded the motion.**

**VOTE: AYES: Alfonzo, Dallman, Head, Newlin, O’Neill, Ring, Smith NAYS: None**

**MOTION CARRIED**

11. Discussion and possible action to appoint a Council Member to serve as the City’s representative on the Rural Transportation Advocacy Council (RTAC). (Assistant City Manager Pruitt)

Assistant City Manager Pruitt explained that the Council was being asked to appoint a representative to the Rural Transportation Advocacy Council (RTAC). He stated that the council advocates for

transportation and rural community projects, including funding support. He noted that RTAC historically develops project lists, citing the Hancock project which recently received \$1.5 million in funding. He explained that RTAC typically holds monthly virtual meetings, with occasional in-person meetings in Phoenix for direct advocacy. He noted that he participates on the commission but does not have voting rights, while the Council appointee would. He added that the appointee would have the opportunity, but not the requirement, to attend the Rural Transit Conference in Sierra Vista, and he would provide updates if they attended.

Mayor Head asked if anyone from the public wanted to speak on this item. No one spoke.

Mayor Head stated that he had spoken with the Vice Mayor as a potential candidate and noted that, since the Vice Mayor is also the vice chair of the MPO, combining the roles through one person would be beneficial.

Vice Mayor Alfonzo declined due to previous obligations and thanked Mayor Head for the consideration.

Council Member Dallman expressed her interest as representative for the Rural Transportation Advisory Council.

**Council Member Smith made a motion to appoint Council Member Karen Dallman to serve as the City's representative on the Rural Transportation Advocacy Council (RTAC). Vice Mayor Alfonzo seconded the motion.**

**VOTE:** **AYES:** Alfonzo, Dallman, Head, Newlin, O'Neill, Ring, Smith **NAYS:** None

**MOTION CARRIED**

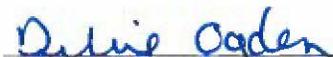
**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Head declared the meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

**CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct record of the regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Bullhead City held on the 2nd day of September 2025. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this 26th day of September 2025.

  
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Debie Ogden, MMC, CPM  
City Clerk