

TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION
OF THE FOUNTAIN HILLS TOWN COUNCIL
April 7, 2026

A Special Meeting of the Fountain Hills Town Council was convened via Microsoft Teams at 5:30 p.m.

Members Present: Mayor Gerry M. Friedel; Vice Mayor Gayle Earle; Councilmember Rick Watts; Councilmember Peggy McMahon; Councilmember Brenda J. Kalivianakis; Councilmember Hannah Larrabee; Councilmember Allen Skillicorn

Staff Present: Town Manager Rachael Goodwin; Town Jennifer J. Wright; Town Clerk Bevelyn J. Bender



Post-Production File

Town of Fountain Hills
Regular Council Meeting Minutes
April 7, 2026

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MAYOR FRIEDEL: I'd like to call this meeting to order. Would you please rise for the pledge of allegiance?

ALL: I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America. And to the Republic for which it stands. One nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: And if you choose to remain standing, our invocation tonight will be by Moshe Gaunt of Baha'i, of Fountain Hills.

GAUNT: O' thou kind Lord, this gathering is turning to thee. These hearts are radiant with thy love. These minds and spirits are exhilarated by the message of thy glad tidings. O' God, let this American democracy become glorious in spiritual degrees, even as it has aspired to material degrees. And render this just government victorious. Confirm this revered nation to upraise the standard of the oneness of humanity. To promulgate the most great peace, to become thereby most glorious and praiseworthy among all the nations of the world. O' God, this American nation is worthy of thy favors and is deserving of thy mercy. Make it precious and near to thee, through thy bounty and bestowal.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: Thank you.

Town Clerk, can I get a roll call, please?

BENDER: Mayor Friedel.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: Present.

BENDER: Vice mayor Earle.

EARLE: Present.

BENDER: Councilmember Kalivianakis.

KALIVIANAKIS: Here.

BENDER: Councilmember Watts.

WATTS: Here.

BENDER: Councilmember Larrabee, are you on the phone yet?

LARRABEE: Present.

BENDER: Councilmember McMahon.

MCMAHON: Here.

BENDER: And Councilmember Skillicorn.

SKILLICORN: Here.

BENDER: Mayor, you have a quorum.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: Thank you very much. I have one correction to our agenda tonight. Item number 7(a), which is the recognition for the high school girls basketball team, and boys basketball team, and wrestling team for their achievements. That's going to be delayed to a future meeting.

And we'll move on to the town manager with the summary of our events.

GOODWIN: Great. Thanks, Mayor.

Just a few community updates tonight. First, if you weren't there on Saturday evening, Music Fest was a huge success. Thank you to the weather being very, very helpful with that too. But we had three amazing bands, a packed crowd and a great atmosphere throughout the evening. It was a wonderful to see so many people come out and enjoy such a good time. And a special shout out to our staff, who, on the heels of Irish Fest, put on yet another great community event. So thanks for all the work there.

In other news, as we continue our year-long celebration of America's 250th, I'm happy to report that the new America 250 sign is now up in Fountain Park. Kevin's going to share a quick picture of it. You'll note that it's still in the crate for the moment while the concrete finishes setting, but that will be removed tomorrow. And this will be our new photo op for the community. We'll be rolling it out through social media campaigns and other things, but this is such a great visual of the year-long celebration. So just one of the cool ways.

In addition to the installation, we're getting excited about our 250-themed movie in the park and American car parade coming up later this month on April 25th. That's at Fountain Park. The parade will be led by the MCSO Mounted unit, and we're expecting more than 55 cars. Special shout out to Peter and his help with that. And that should be really fun.

Following that parade will be kicking off our movie in the park at the amphitheater, where we'll be showing national treasure on a big forty foot jumbo screen down at the

park. So mark your calendar. Yes, it'll be super fun.

Again, all of these are just ways that we are trying to join in with the national level celebration of America's 250th.

A couple of infrastructure updates. If you haven't been over there, the Palomino Road work project is darn close. It's on track to be substantially complete later this month, with only the permanent striping to follow at a later date. Work on Richwood is also underway as part of our spring road work efforts, so there is a lot -- a lot going on in that regard.

Another notice, I want to make sure that our residents here, you're going to be hearing more about this in the coming days, but residents should be aware that EPCOR is going to be doing a mainline water line replacement project along Palisades, and it's expected to begin in about two weeks. The work was originally anticipated to start later this summer, but it's beginning a bit earlier to help ensure that the project is completed within the contract timeline.

Note that the work will begin near the intersection of Shay and Palisades, and will span more than a mile up Palisades. As a result, this work will create some traffic changes, and we encourage residents to visit the town's website for additional details and ongoing updates. We'll be working with Mike Pelton to make sure that information goes out through our different social channels, to make sure that all of our residents understand the impact and the ongoing phases of that project.

With that mayor, that's my update.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: Great. Thank you. And now we'll move on to presentations. So I think I'll introduce Elizabeth Waters. And the reason the coalition is here tonight is because I heard these two gentlemen speak at a coalition event and was very impressed. And I wanted the Council and the rest of the town to hear what they have to say, because I don't know if a lot of people remember or not, but we voted unanimously on this Council to turn over all of our opioid funding to the coalition, because they have the programs and the program manager in place to deal with that. So I wanted you to see the result of some of that.

So Elizabeth Waters, it's your turn.

WATERS: Thank you so much. And I just want to -- the boys are going to take over, but I just want to say thank you so much for this opportunity to speak. And our club members are Above That Club members are going to take over now. Come on up, boys. Okay.

GOOD: Hi, everyone. My name is Henry Good, and I'm the vice president of the Above That Club. And this is Peyton Jones. He is the club treasurer. Thank you for giving us this opportunity to speak on behalf of the Hills Protect Our Youth Coalition.

This year, we had the opportunity to travel to Washington, D.C. to attend the CADCA Youth Summit and National Leadership Forum. The CADCA forum brings together more than 4000 people from across the world, including prevention leaders, educators, and youth coalitions. There were more than 100 workshops, training sessions, and speakers focused on preventing drug use and helping communities support healthy choices. We were honored to represent Fountain Hills and bring what we learned back to our community.

Before we get started, I'd like to tell you a little about who we are. The Above That Club is a youth coalition made up of students who want to make a positive difference in our community. Our mission is to lead, inspire, and support our community by modeling integrity and educating youth on the dangers of vaping, drugs, and alcohol.

The club started in 2025 as part of the Fountain Hills Protect Our Youth Coalition. Our focus is peer to peer education, which means students helping other students make healthy choices. Our membership has grown to 24 students, and we meet two Thursdays each month to learn about prevention, plan activities, and educate other youth in our community.

We were selected to attend the CADCA Youth Summit the day right before winter break. We were not expecting the announcement at all. When we heard the news we were shocked, but also extremely excited. We realized this would be a once in a lifetime opportunity to represent our community and learn from other youth leaders across the country.

From that moment on, we were counting down the days until the trip. This is the first time youth have been invited by the coalition. A goal Fountain Hills' Protect Our Youth Coalition has had on its action plan since 2009.

The flight to D.C. went very smoothly, and getting through the airport was no problem. A great part of the surprise was that her parents were coming with us. We got off the plane, and we couldn't believe the amount of snow. The hotel where we were staying at was the Gaylord National Resort, and it was honestly the most beautiful hotel we had ever seen. The hotel was huge and filled with thousands of people attending the CADCA conference. Right away, we realized we were part of something really important.

The conference took place at the Gaylord National Hotel in National Harbor, Maryland. CADCA stands for the community -- for the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America. This event is called the National Leadership Forum, where people from across the Country come together to share ideas about prevention and community health.

During the conference, we attended workshops and youth sessions where we learned strategies for preventing drug use and helping communities support healthy choices. It was very interesting to meet people from other states and hear how they address the same challenges that communities across the country are facing.

One of the most important events during the conference was the SAMHSA Prevention Day. SAMHSA stands for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, which works to improve mental health and prevent substance misuse across the country.

During this event, we heard from national leaders, including U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. and RADM Christopher Jones. Secretary Kennedy spoke candidly about his own past struggle with drug addiction and his recovery, explaining how substance misuse affects not only individuals but also families and entire communities.

Secretary Kennedy also discussed the Great American Recovery Initiative, a new executive order focused on expanding treatment and recovery programs across the United States. This initiative includes a \$100 million investment aimed at addressing

homelessness, combating opioid addiction, and improving public safety by expanding recovery focused treatment options. A key part of this effort is the Safety Through Recovery, Engagement and Evidence Based Treatment and Supports Initiative, also called STREETS, which helps people experiencing homelessness and substance use disorders with housing and long term recovery support.

He also announced a \$10 million assisted outpatient treatment grant program designed to support adults living with serious mental health conditions while they continue living in their communities. Hearing these national leaders speak helped us understand how serious the substance misuse crisis is and how important prevention programs, especially youth-led programs like the Above That Club are in helping protect our community.

Our first youth session was focused on how to start a conversation with someone who might be struggling or making unhealthy choices. One of the most important lessons we learned was that listening is just as important as speaking. When you listen carefully and respectfully, you can better understand what someone else is going through. This helps you respond in a supportive way instead of judging them. These skills are important when we talk with other students about making healthy decisions.

Our second youth session was about identifying hot spots in our community. A hot spot is a location where people often go to participate in risky or unhealthy behaviors, such as vaping or drug use. In this session, we learned how communities can identify these areas and work to improve safety and awareness.

We also created maps of possible hot spots in our town of Fountain Hills. Some examples included certain public parks, gas stations, and areas outside of stores where students sometimes gather. The goal of this activity was to better understand where prevention efforts might be needed.

The third youth session was called Product of Our Environment. This session focused on how the people around us and the environments we spend time in, can influence the choices we make. When young people are surrounded by positive influences, supportive friends, and strong role models, they are more likely to make healthy

decisions. This session reminded us why youth leadership programs like the Above That Club are important for building positive environments for students.

At the conference, we also visited the Vendor Expo. This area included organizations from across the Country that provide prevention resources, educational materials, and programs for communities. We had the opportunity to speak with representatives from different organizations and learn about tools that help prevent substance misuse. It was a great opportunity to gather ideas that could help our coalition back home.

JONES: One of the most impactful experiences of our trip was visiting the DEA Museum in Washington, D.C. The museum shows the history of drug enforcement and the impact drugs have given have had on communities across the country. The atmosphere in the museum felt very serious and emotional, because many displays honor people who lost their lives in the fight against drugs.

There were also exhibits explaining how different drugs affect the body and the serious dangers they create. One exhibit that stood out the most to us was called Faces of Fentanyl. The Faces of Fentanyl Memorial exhibit, located at the DEA Headquarters Museum in Arlington, Virginia, displays more than 7000 photos of people of people who whose lives have been lost to fentanyl overdoses. Each photo represents a real person with a family, a story, and a life that has been cut short.

Seeing so many faces displayed together was extremely powerful because it shows just how widespread and deadly fentanyl has become. It made the crisis feel very real and personal, rather than just statistics. Walking through the museum was especially -- well, and especially seeing the faces of fentanyl exhibit was emotional and eye opening. It reminded us that behind every number is a real person and a family that has been affected.

Experiences like this reinforce why prevention, education, and programs like the Above That Club are so important for protecting young people and raising awareness about the dangers of drugs. Another highlight of our trip was Capitol Hill Day, where we had a personal and private tour with Congressman David Schweikert. Because the government was shut down at the time, the Capitol building was closed to the public,

which meant we had a -- we were actually the only people in the Capitol after hours. Congressman Schweikert guided us through the underground tunnels that connect the government buildings, which had artwork and historical displays along the walls. During the tour, we were able to see parts of the Capitol building that civilians do not normally get to visit. One of the most incredible places we saw was the speaker's private balcony, where important leaders such as past presidents, the pope, and visiting foreign leaders have stood.

We also visited the Capitol rotunda, where the large dome is located, and where statues representing important historical figures from every state are displayed. One of the most exciting parts of the tour was being able to sit on the floor -- sit on the floor of House of Representatives, which was huge, which was a huge thrill because it is a place we normally only get to see on the news.

Unfortunately, we were not able to bring our phones into this area, so we were unable to take pictures of that experience. But as that -- but it is definitely something we will never forget.

Visiting the White House was yet another unforgettable experience during our trip. Before entering, we went through several layers of security to ensure everything was safe. The tour included several of the public rooms on the State floor of the white House, including the Blue Room, Red Room, Green Room, State Dining Room, Cross Hall, and Entrance Hall. Each room has its unique history and is used for official events, meetings, and ceremonies.

As we walk through these rooms, we are able to see the historic furniture, artwork, and decorations that help tell the story of our country. Secret service officers were stationed along the route and were able to answer questions about the history of each room and how they are used today. Our own Fountain Hills Mayor was also gracious enough to send a letter supporting our visit, since the White House often asks for letters from local officials when groups request a possible greeting with the president.

We hoped we might have an opportunity with a brief encounter with President Trump, but unfortunately, that request was denied. Even so, being able to tour the White

House and walk through such an important and historic building where many major moments in American history have taken place, was an incredible experience.

One evening, we experienced the National Mall at night during a three-hour guided night tour -- guided night tours of the monuments. We traveled through Washington, D.C. on a temperature controlled coach bus, while a guide explained the history of the monuments and important events that happened there.

Seeing Washington, D.C. lit up at night made the monuments feel even more powerful and memorable. Our tour included several stops around the National Mall. We first stopped outside the United States Capitol, where we explored the area and took photos at the heart of our American Republic. We then visited the Lincoln Memorial, where we saw the massive statue of President Abraham Lincoln and learned about the history of the monument. We also visited the Martin Luther King Junior Memorial, which features the Stone of Hope and many of Doctor King's inspiring quotes, overlooking the water. During the tour, we also saw many other important landmarks, including the white House, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the Korean War Veterans Memorial, and the World War Two Memorial, where we were able to -- where we were able to find the pillar representing our home State of Arizona.

The tour also passed by sites such as the National Gallery, National Gallery of Art, and the US Marine Corps Memorial War Memorial. Being able to experience these historic places at night made the monuments feel even more impressive and gave us a deeper appreciation for American history.

During the trip, we also had some time to explore other parts of Washington, D.C., we visited museums, historic landmarks, and different areas of the city. Being able to see these places in person helped us better understand American history and how our government works. It was exciting to experience places that we only read about in books.

This trip had created many memories that we will carry with us for the rest of our lives. We met youth from across the Country who are also working to prevent drug use in their communities. We learned leadership skills, prevention strategies, and the

importance of listening to others. This experience inspired us to continue growing the Above That Club to keep helping other students making healthy choices.

We would like to thank the town -- we would like to thank Fountain Hills Protect our Youth Coalition Board for supporting this trip. We'd also like to thank the Town of Fountain Hills for believing in youth prevention and education. Because of their support, we are able to attend this conference, learn valuable lessons, and bring those lessons back to our community.

We are -- we are so grateful for this opportunity and excited to continue our work with the Above That Club. Thank you.

WATERS: Thank you so much. I just wanted to say I'm very proud of these boys and thank you again. This is probably the fifth time they've gone around the town and given this presentation, and just for the audience and everyone watching and listening, and this is sixth and seventh graders, so very proud of them. And thank you again for your support. We really appreciate it.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: Before you go, I have a special gift for both Henry and Peyton. So if you'd come forward.

So what I've got here is one of our 250 celebration t-shirts for each of you. All right? Now, if the size doesn't fit, you can always exchange that upstairs.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: And we have another presentation. Rachel.

GOODWIN: Thank you, Mayor. Unfortunately, our MCSO captain has the disadvantage of going after that. He's going to be sharing his quarterly updates, specifically the three-year crime report from 2023 through 2025.

This is obviously not -- kind of goes in hand in hand with all of the efforts that the coalition is working towards is to help obviously impact our crime, keep our community safe, and in a different way, that's what our MCSO is here to do as well. Captain, do you remember the last time you were here with us, Christmas time?

THOMAS: Yeah, that sounds right.

GOODWIN: Okay. So I appreciate you being back.

THOMAS: Okay. Mayor Fidel. Councilwoman. Town manager.

Like I say, just about every time that I've been up here in front of you, it's. I really appreciate the opportunity to come and talk about the great work that the men and women for MCSO do -- what they do and what they do for the town of Fountain Hills. And the stuff I represent is directly related to their efforts.

So when I took over as the captain here in March of last year, one of the things I do is I go through and see what has been done before. And what I recognized was we had a 2020 to 2022, end of 2022, three-year report. And I thought for these quarterly meetings that was that's -- that worked out great that it was time to come up and do this again, because those reports are a great highlight, especially over that time frame of what's going on in the town. And it's a good notification for the Council to see what changes there are, because we use these things as intel to drive our direction, and our resources, and sometimes respond to hot button topics that sometimes just require our presence.

One of the things I did was I had our criminal intel analyst. Her name is Melissa Deming. Excellent resource for both me and the town in these situations. And my intention was to have her here with me today to maybe describe some of the data collection, if any questions come up. Unfortunately, she was not able to be here.

So my review of some of this information is just going to be an overview. And if there's any nuanced questions, I apologize for not being able to answer them, but I think I do have a firm grasp on most of this material.

So this is going to be pretty brief. These are the four topics we're going to go over. As you guys are well aware, and for those watching at home, our calls for service are broken into a couple categories. Whether the general public is calling in, or our deputies are out there being proactive and putting themselves on calls for service. And the best way to think about that is, they see something suspicious, or they see a crime in process, and they step in and they take action and generate reports.

What you'll see here is for the '23 to '25 time span, that difference right there, the on view traffic versus the calls for service we get from the public. You'll see in 2025 we have a pretty decent uptick in our on view traffic. And what I can tell you is I reviewed

the 2020 to 2022 three-year report, and it was pretty consistent between '23 and '24 here it was around the 5000 mark and 7000 mark for both categories. Now, the reason we're seeing that uptick in 2025 for the on view is going to be related to, once I come on and gave direction and worked with the town on the visibility initiative and everything, we started upping our efforts and attention toward making contacts with business owners, the community, prioritizing our tips that come in that point out traffic concerns or safety issues. And this includes, of course, traffic enforcement, and that is the result you're seeing right there.

Now, the yearly reports between this three-year report and the last one are pretty consistent. In 2020, we had a -- it seemed like an uptick similar to this one in 2023, but around 1500 has been the consistent number of reports these guys are generating. And just for interest, these are the major crime reports that we see. And again, you'll see that traffic violation number stand out a little bit. And that's, again, related to some of our efforts from public feedback and directives that we're given.

Now the intel analysts are really good at putting together information and digestible ways for us to look at. And it helps me, as the division commander, to direct my resources based on what we're seeing. And for this one, this is the criminal damage example, day of week, and the times that these are happening. And this helps us generate other digestible visuals.

Are you guys familiar with heat spot mapping? There'll be an example of that coming up, but we can look at this, and then we can almost pinpoint the best places and times for us to deploy our resources. And that's just another example of how we look at traffic stops, and we can do this with just about any category.

So the noninjury accidents, we put this information out not long ago, but this is an example of that heat spot mapping. You'll see the dark purple. The darker it is, the more activity we got in that area. And so we have our three major locations right here for these accidents, which are Fountain Hills and Palisades -- and Palisades, La Montana, and Shea and Saguaro. And then you'll have our traffic enforcement, and you'll see our enforcement is heavier in one area, but not surprisingly, where these accidents are

happening and where this enforcement activity takes place are around the major intersections throughout town.

And this is -- the Uniform Crime Report is going to be what our analysts put together for me, who is really the expert on this. And this is where I'll go just kind of high level on it, and just point out a couple things and keep going. What I wanted to do was kind of mirror the last report, talk about the comparisons between Fountain Hills and other similar towns size-wise, and our neighbors.

You'll see right here the violent crime statistic. Right here, the 80 that's going to be all of these categories added up to make that 80. Homicide, sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault. So when they do the UCRs, they do it -- they categorize it 1 per 1000 population. So that's what this number is seen here. 3, 2, and 0.2, and 1 that's represented for 1 of those incidents per 1000 population.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: Captain, can you take a question?

THOMAS: Absolutely.

EARLE: I'm sorry. Could you back up one slide, please? Okay. On the top you have -- oh, it's for per 1000 people. So you broke down those figures into per thousand people, what --

THOMAS: Yeah. The bottom numbers that you see down there, that 3.2.

EARLE: Okay. Thank you.

THOMAS: And there will be some categories, much like arson, even though in this time frame there were two quote, unquote, arson incidents. But because it doesn't -- it'll be a zero in this reporting.

And here we're going to talk about the not -- the major crime indicators. This is the ones that don't fall into that category, property crimes, burglary, theft. And you'll see the same thing here. This number is what combines all of those. And that per 1000 numbers are all down here.

So in review in the last three-years in this one, I see Fountain Hills is really consistent on experiencing these incidents. There has not been any major upticks. And actually, there's been some areas where it's gone down significantly. And when I wanted to

compare, I did our neighbor, Scottsdale PD. You'll see the significant population difference here and where I gained the most indication to me on what we experience versus what they do is using that 1 per 1000. You'll see for violent crimes, we're 3.2, Scottsdale is 4.8. So it's just it's just a quick and easy way for me to do a comparison between the two and see how we stack up compared to other towns, no matter what the population size is.

You'll see right here where property crimes Scottsdale's up there quite a bit over us, but I think that could be explained when you do have major population differences. These types of crimes are obviously going to be more significant. Paradise Valley, they're a little. They're about half our population of Fountain Hills. But again, I'd say go down and take a look at the UCR numbers here used at the bottom. And you'll see we're not far off from them. And even they're ahead of us on some categories.

Gilbert, again, different. Oh. Okay. I'm going to skip over this. As you see right here, the population numbers off. So this data may be -- may be off here. So we'll bypass that one.

Queen Creek. Again, here, you'll see these comparisons. But this is the easiest to digest right here. And see where we -- where we stand out and where -- I mean, you could say do better.

El Mirage in the West Valley. Very similar population. But right here you can see where, depending on what you're looking at, there's a stark difference in some areas.

So I was going through all this information between these two reports before, and consistency ended up being a common theme across all these numbers. And what we, what we deal with in town. And we actually -- as far as property crime, the public safety crimes, and violent crime were actually down compared to the three-year report last year.

Property crime numbers from 2020 to 2022 were around 864, and for this three-year report, we're down to 632. And the violent crimes were actually down a few as well. So I think it goes a long way to say that in the things that are actually measured and counted upon, Fountain Hills continues to be a very safe community.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: I will make a comment. Thank you for the report. That's very telling. And we have a law enforcement review committee, which the Captain also serves on. And one of our -- one of the outcomes from that, We've got about 125 years' worth of experience on that committee, and one of the outcomes was Community Policing and Visibility Initiative. And I have to say that the numbers reflect in the work that you guys have done. So we really appreciate the support and all the hard work. So thank you for that.

EARLE: Hello.

BENDER: Captain. We have one more question up here.

EARLE: I don't have a question. I just have a comment. I really appreciate the visual presentation you had tonight. It was really nice and very helpful. Thank you and good information. Thank you.

THOMAS: Thank you.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: Okay. Now we'll move on to proclamations. We have two tonight, and we have the CASA Volunteer Week, which I believe Vice Mayor Earl will be reading.

EARLE: Okay. Whereas children in the foster care system often face uncertainty and need strong advocates to ensure their voices are heard and their needs are met. And whereas Court Appointed Special Advocates, CASA are trained volunteers appointed by judges to advocate for the best interests of children who have experienced abuse or neglect. And whereas CASA volunteers work alongside judges, attorneys, and social workers to help provide stability, support, and hope for vulnerable children. Now, therefore, Gerry Friedel, mayor, along with the Town Council of Fountain Hills, does hereby do hereby proclaim April 6th to 12th, '26, 2026 as CASA Volunteer Week and encourage all members of the community to recognize the dedication of CASA volunteers and learn more about supporting children in foster care.

Is there someone here to --

MAYOR FRIEDEL: Do we have anybody here from -- there we go.

Test.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Good evening, Mayor and Councilmembers, I just want to say

thank you for the recognition of CASA Week and for helping shine a light on the importance of advocacy for our children living in foster care. A CASA volunteer really does do something very important in our communities. They provide a steady, adult voice focused on the best interests of those children living in foster care. So we're grateful for the recognition and the awareness it brings. Thank you.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: Thank you.

And we have a second proclamation, which I will read. It's for the International Dark Sky Week, which is April 13th to 20th. Whereas the natural light -- I'm sorry -- the natural night sky is shared heritage that inspires wonder, scientific discovery, and a deeper connection to our environment. And whereas light pollution has measurable impacts on our environment, economy, and public health.

While Arizona remains a global leader in astronomy, and home to the world renowned observatories, and whereas, the town of Fountain Hills and its Dark Sky Preservation Committee are committed to promoting responsible lighting and protecting our communities dark sky resources.

Now, therefore, I, Mayor Gerry Friedel, on behalf of the Town of Fountain Hills, do hereby proclaim April 13th to 20th, 2026, as International Dark Sky Week and encourage all residents to join in preserving and protecting our dark skies for future generations. And I think we have a few representatives here if you want to step forward.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Just a quick thank you, Mayor, Council, for your support. I think the partnership that the town has with the Dark Sky community has paid in dividends for this community, as we will see very shortly with the fully grand opening of our Discovery Center, which is a unique organization and facility that will provide all kinds of educational, discovery, and event activities, which can only bode well for the economy, and keep us all contented.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: Can you give us any hint as to when that will be?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Well, it should be -- is this still on?

MAYOR FRIEDEL: It is.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We're -- we are optimistic that it will be towards the end of

this year. There's a chance we might slip into the new year, but it is coming. We are ready to go.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: Great. Thank you. Thank you all. Thank you.

Okay. Now we'll move on to our consent agenda. Can I get a motion on that?

KALIVIANAKIS: Motion to approve consent agenda.

WATTS: Second.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: We have a motion and a second. Can I get a roll call, please?

BENDER: Councilmember Skillicorn.

SKILLICORN: Yes.

BENDER: Councilmember McMahon.

MCMAHON: Aye.

BENDER: Councilmember Kalivianakis.

KALIVIANAKIS: Aye.

BENDER: Councilmember Watts.

WATTS: Aye.

BENDER: Councilmember Larrabee.

LARRABEE: Aye.

BENDER: Vice Mayor Earle.

EARLE: Aye.

BENDER: And Mayor Friedel.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: Aye.

BENDER: Mayor, seven-zero.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: Thank you.

We'll move on to our regular agenda. We have consideration, possible action relating to amendment number 7 for professional services agreement for J.E. Fuller hydrology and geomorphic morphology.

Rachel.

GOODWIN: Thank you, Mayor. Our director, Weldy, is going to be presenting this item. It's related to our drainage improvements at Golden Eagle Park that were initiated a

number of years ago. And this is continuing down that process.

Director, with that, I'll turn it over to you.

WELDY: Thank you for the kind introduction. Staff has certainly been before this elected body numerous times over the past several years to discuss the Golden Eagle impoundment area, including, but not limited to, asking for funding to clean up some of the debris from some storm events, more than once.

Also, we've returned to this Council to ask for approval of contracts on several different levels, additional funding, and we're nearing the finish line on this. Having said that, we are now in the final phases and the design of the final phase, which is phase two, which addresses the dam throughput, so that's the inlet and the and the throughput outlet, the water flow. Also making some necessary corrections to the Fountain Hills Sanitary District manhole that is adjacent to one of those inlets.

Staff was here last year asking for the approval of a contract to complete phase one. During that presentation, we discussed some of the challenges that were faced. We returned at a later date and explained those challenges as part of our capital improvement.

As a reminder, this portion is funded 70 percent by the Maricopa County Flood Control District. Earlier tonight that IGA for that was approved. So when we get to final design, which should be in the coming months based on progress, then the construction documents will be prepared. The town will release it for sealed bid. Ideally, in the middle of the summer or beginning of the summer. Those dates are unknown at this time because the Arizona Department of Water Resources and the Maricopa County Flood Control have some pretty long review times for their plans.

We just got some notification today that one of the applications was reviewed. There's 120 day time frame tied to that. They let us know that 60 of those days they used to complete it, ask that the town and their -- and their engineering firm make some minor adjustments, and resubmit it.

So we're moving along nicely with the final phase on this. With that said, if you have any questions about this amendment, I will do my best to answer them.

EARLE: Thank you. Hi, Justin. When did the contract expire and how come it expired?

WELDY: Mr. Mayor, Councilmember. The contract expired about 60 days ago --

EARLE: Uh-huh.

WELDY: -- and we allowed that to happen while we were in the process of submitting all the documentation. When I say we, we're part of a team --

EARLE: Uh-huh.

WELDY: -- that includes the engineering firm. We knew it was going to happen, but we also had some checks and balances and some requirements that we needed to be certain of prior to coming to the town manager to explain that, and then put together this package for the funding tonight.

EARLE: Okay. Thank you. Also I'm a little confused about the money, because I think that you're saying it's up to 150,000 for each contractor, but then you're asking 165,817. So could you explain how that works, please? Unless I'm referring to the wrong one.

WELDY: Mr. Mayor and Councilmember, the one -- the one that we're discussing right now is a one amount.

EARLE: Okay.

WELDY: An amendment for --

EARLE: I'm confusing with the other one. Right. Okay. So it's all you're asking for is one hundred is -- not all, but 165,817 to fulfill?

WELDY: That is correct, Councilmember.

EARLE: Okay. Thank you I appreciate it. And I'll make a motion to approve.

WELDY: You're welcome.

WATTS: Justin, 165,817 is about \$47,000 more than the 93,197. Is that 93,197 still being held by the town? Is it work that's already been completed, and we just need the other additional 47 plus to get to the 165.

WELDY: Mr. Mayor, Councilmember, the majority of that funding was utilized to get us to where we're at right now. We do have an open PO, or an unspent fund balance, but no additional work has been taken place and the contract expired. I can certainly get you that unspent fund balance tomorrow by midday or mid-afternoon, but I don't know

what it is right now.

WATTS: But there is an incremental increase. It isn't a full 165. It's whatever is a residual left and looked like 93 to me. So it's about \$47,000 additional to get to the 165?

WELDY: That is correct.

EARLE: Okay. And the 15 percent in contingency funds, is that something that you suggested because of not knowing what we can encounter normally? Maybe a ten percent. I'm surprised that the 15 percent. So is there a basis for the 15?

WELDY: Councilmember, the 15 percent is based on what we encountered during construction of phase one, and several other items that came up as part of the construction and the design. And yes, that is my suggestion based on having to return to Council to ask for some additional funding. Just a little bit of insurance there, just in case we need it to keep moving.

WATTS: Just a cushion to get it complete?

WELDY: Correct.

EARLE: Thank you.

KALIVIANAKIS: And thank you. I just wanted to second the motion that's on the floor to approve the amendment number 7.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: We have a motion and a second. Can we get a -- Hannah, do you have anything to add?

LARRABEE: No, thank you Mayor.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: Okay. We have a motion and a second.

Can we get a roll call, please?

BENDER: Councilmember Skillicorn.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: I'm sorry. Were there any comment cards?

BENDER: No. Mayor. Mayor, we haven't received any comment cards for today or for the call to the public.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: Okay. Thank you.

SKILLICORN: Yes.

BENDER: Councilmember Larrabee.

LARRABEE: Aye.

BENDER: Councilmember McMahon.

MCMAHON: Aye.

BENDER: Councilmember Kalivianakis.

KALIVIANAKIS: Aye.

BENDER: Councilmember Watts.

WATTS: Aye.

BENDER: Vice Mayor Earle.

EARLE: Aye.

BENDER: And Mayor Friedel.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: Aye.

BENDER: Mayor, seven-zero.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: Thank you. Moving on to item b, 9(b) that's I think that's also --

Rachael, that's also Justin, correct?

GOODWIN: It is, and the next one is also related to Justin's wheelhouse, where it's a job order contract that's related to both mechanical and plumbing services for all of the town's facilities.

WELDY: Thank you. A short time ago, staff was at this podium asking the Council to consider approval of some separate job order contracts for electrical. Post council meeting, we had some discussions and some additional information was included in the staff report that we hope better helped to explain the position.

Approval of these agreements tonight does not automatically authorize the staff to spend the \$150,000 for each one of them. Each one of these contracts in that amount are still governed by the budget, policies, plans, and procedures. The \$150,000 amount is simply a holding place that allows staff not one, but several options in regards to -- and I refer to it primarily as mechanical. That's the technical term, but it's plumbing. A good example of that, for those of you that may not have noticed, was right here in the town hall recently. The facility staff has been struggling for a considerable amount

of time with the employee break room drainage system. Upon inspection of that using cameras and other technology, it was discovered that the pipe that goes from the second floor to the first floor, and obviously into the sewer system was essentially shot. They were able to secure the services of not one, but two specialty mechanical people and remove the old ductile iron pipe and replace that with a more modern PVC pipe. And then obviously bring in from another job order contract, the folks that did the drywall repair.

All of that work was in the facility's budget. We did not have to go to the town manager to ask for any additional permissions, nor did I have to bring a proverbial hat here at a later date and ask for permissions to spend money. And that's what job order contracts are about. It gives the town staff, all of our facilities and all of our parks, excluding our roads and stuff like that. It gives us an opportunity to take action on preventative maintenance and or reaction to emergencies that may happen.

With that said, if you have any questions about any one of these, I will certainly, certainly do my best to answer them.

WATTS: I think Beth was up first. Never mind. Sorry about that.

So Justin, I went through the contracts. I was looking at them, and I noticed that each contractor provided a different markup on materials and equipment. One had a 15 to 30 percent markup. One had a similar gross margin, and one didn't disclose. We've generally been pretty accurate in doing cost plus. Is there a reason that we've not done that on these?

WELDY: Mr. Mayor, Councilmember, the primary reason here is each one of the vendors that submitted on this are right now in an unpredictable commodities market. So not only the cost of fuel, but all commodities, parts, and pieces that we need are historically up and down right now. So as part of our due diligence -- and the procurement officer couldn't be here tonight. He's at a family event -- but as part of our procuring, whenever we submit for a purchase order, and their quote is in there, there are going to be checks and balances in regards to the markup.

What you're seeing is the maximum amount allowed for any one particular part that

may be a specialty part, or it may have had to have been shipped overnight, or something like that. But the Mr. Durham, along with myself and Mr. Snipes and the finance team, we keep a close eye on those types of margins. There's a reasonable, and then there's unreasonable, and we will certainly flag that should it come up.

WATTS: You use the term margin, but if it's cost plus it's not gross margin that you're going to -- based upon what the cost to the contractor is. Isn't it more reasonable to have a cost plus in uniform across all three contractors, so we can ask for their original invoice to make sure that we're getting the applied? And I don't really care whether it's 15 percent, 20 percent, as long as we have that disclosure. You don't have that same disclosure when you do gross margin. And in one case, there is no disclosure about the amount of markup.

WELDY: Councilmember, I believe that the ask is reasonable, but we also ask for backup invoicing whenever we're processing as well. So we will have those for our records.

WATTS: But we won't have anything for the one contractor that doesn't have a disclosed markup. So you're just going to argue with him and say why?

WELDY: Certainly we're not going to argue with him. As if that is, if that person is selected or that firm is selected for a particular project, there will be a discussion with them from either myself, facilities, or community services, and we will discuss what we're needing. We will ask them for a quote, and then we will discuss that quote and ask for backup documents should we deem it necessary.

WATTS: So you do the pricing behind the scenes to make sure they're charging us the appropriate pricing?

WELDY: Yes, sir. Not only for this, but for everything that primarily in regards to commodities that we use.

WATTS: And something that seemed to be glaring. There were two contractors where you generally use a lot. One was MESA and EMCOR. Was there a reason they didn't participate because they are both in this same trade?

WELDY: Each of them have cooperative use agreements, and their cooperative use agreements are really locked in, and they have a relatively large customer base as a

result of those cooperative agreements.

WATTS: Okay. I'm not sure I understand that.

Last question. The travel time for the contractors was ambiguous. Is it \$75 an hour? Is it \$75 lump sum? Do you know? Because it wasn't clear in the contract in the documents.

WELDY: And that's an excellent question. So a couple of us that were reviewing this had that question. Historically, it's portal to portal.

WATTS: Both ways?

WELDY: Correct.

WATTS: That's not if I was reading the contract, and I would say they said \$75, I would interpret that as a flat rate. \$75 is all they're going to be allowed to charge for travel time to and from the job. Now I realize that if I'm on the west side of town and I've got an hour drive there and an hour drive back, somebody has to pay for that. But I would ask for clarity on the disclosure. Is it 75 an hour, 75 each way, 75 lump sum or -- and portal to portal is an excellent example of what we really need to make sure we've got clarification on.

WELDY: We will certainly work to achieve that.

WATTS: Thank you.

KALIVIANAKIS: I would just like to make a motion to approve the award of job order contracting 2026-727374 under RFP 2025-27, and the amount not to exceed 150,000 per year, each.

MCMAHON: Second.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: We have a motion and a second.

Can we get a roll call vote, please?

BENDER: Councilmember McMahon.

MCMAHON: Aye.

BENDER: Councilmember Watts.

WATTS: Aye.

BENDER: Councilmember Skillicorn.

SKILLICORN: Yes.

BENDER: Councilmember Kalivianakis.

KALIVIANAKIS: Aye.

BENDER: Councilmember Larrabee.

LARRABEE: Aye.

BENDER: Vice Mayor Earle.

EARLE: Aye.

BENDER: And Mayor Friedel.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: Aye.

BENDER: Mayor, seven-zero.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: Thank you.

Item C is a discussion and possible direction regarding state level legal resources and protections available to public officials.

And I believe Councilwoman Larrabee, you had initiated this. Would you like to start the discussion?

LARRABEE: Sure. My original intention -- and I think we may remember there was a little bit confusion on whether it needed to be an agenda item or not, but my initial idea was just writing a letter to the Attorney General, because there is, of course, a lot of discretionary power that the Attorney General has on which laws are enforced or by how much. And this would be specifically in regards to ARS-13-, I believe 202. Let me fact check myself. Sorry. 13-1202 which is what outlaws threatening violence, property damage, or using threats to interfere with official duties.

So that would be in regards to public officials and in line with the comment that we heard from a member of the public last meeting regarding judges that have been threatened throughout the country. But then on top of that, just understanding the current political environment and standing as a town, Fountain Hills, making a statement to say, hey, we stand against political violence and we encourage the Attorney General to take any threats seriously.

And given that this law does allow for it to be from a class one misdemeanor to a class

six felony, this is something that does call for some encouragement to the Attorney General's office to ensure that the law is being enforced properly.

EARLE: Okay. Thank you very much. It sounds to me like I had difficulty understanding what you were saying, that you would like the town to write a letter to the Attorney General asking her to enforce the law or -- what was it, Hannah again?

LARRABEE: Mayor, if I may respond to the Councilmember's question, and thank you. Councilmember McMahon.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: Please do.

LARRABEE: Yes. I would like for us to write a letter encouraging the Attorney General to enforce ARS 13-1202. I'm sorry, I'm trying to think of the correct word. I'd like for our town to make a statement in that letter regarding that. First of all, that we stand against political violence, that we encourage the Attorney General to enforce these laws should our officials be met with threats in today's political environment? I do feel that that is necessary, and I concur with the member of the public that had brought this up in our last meeting.

EARLE: Well, based on what I've read, the State Attorney General's office, she's there to protect local town councils and judges by enforcing state laws against threats, defending laws like Daniel's Law that shield personal information from data brokers, and providing legal guidance to local officials.

They act -- the acts as the top law enforcement official, assisting local law enforcement and investigating threats to public office officials. That's her job. She defends the State laws in court, protects judges and public servants from threats of violence and harassment.

She can initiate criminal investigations, prosecutions against individuals who make violent threats against public officials. They -- she provides legal guidance, advocacy, provides legal advice to local officials, and can file lawsuits to uphold the rule of law and safety of communities. She can coordinate with law enforcement to provide support to local police, et cetera. I believe she these powers are already installed in her, and she does do them actively.

It's her job and it's her authority already to ensure the safety of officials, including judges, in the face of threats and using their position -- and using their position, as, you know, the chief legal officer of the state to make sure that we are protected.

So I'm not sure that a letter to the Attorney General is number one, necessary, and number two, is going to have any force and effect, because she already does all this, and she already has all these powers.

KALIVIANAKIS: Hmm. Thank you, Mr. Mayor. I'll make it short. But while I fully acknowledge the serious concerns surrounding threats to public officials, I do believe this discussion falls outside the appropriate scope of this council's responsibilities. We are not a state-level body. We're a town council. We're elected to address local priorities like public safety, budgeting, and infrastructure. We already have enough on our plate serving our community.

Matters of state-level enforcement and legal response are best left to the appropriate agencies, including the Attorney General's office. Once again, I would focus us to use our time and attention on issues that we were elected to address, and where we can make the most meaningful impact to our residents. Thank you.

SKILLICORN: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. And my question is actually for Councilwoman Larabee. And in light of our Attorney General's kind of veiled threats on law enforcement, do you find it ironic that -- you know I support this -- ironic that we'll be writing a letter to effectively not do the things that she's been talking about doing to law enforcement. But protecting elected officials and judges and even taking a stand against political violence.

LARRABEE: Mayor, if I may respond?

MAYOR FRIEDEL: Please do.

LARRABEE: Thank you, Mayor. To answer the Councilmember's question, yes, I do find it ironic, and I honestly use that as partially my example of why this is necessary. If communities come together and make it clear that we expect that law to be enforced. And should officials be threatened or government actions be obstructed, we expect that individual to be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

I believe that there is an opportunity for someone seeking elected office to hopefully change their tune regarding that. And in today's political environment, frankly, threats, veiled or not, are entirely unacceptable. We've seen the effects of a lot of this rhetoric already, and I can speak very personally to the effect that that has had on this country.

MCMAHON: Thank you. Mayor. I would just make a recommendation to go ahead and write this letter as Councilmember Larrabee has requested.

SKILLICORN: Second.

WATTS: I think laws are already on the books. I think that a letter to the Attorney General, who has her own bias that's clearly been demonstrated, is going to have little or no effect. I think that the majority of the time that this Council and staff need to dedicate is to town business.

While I agree in that we should rely on our officials to enforce laws, I don't think we're going to have any impact by writing a single letter. I don't think it makes any sense to me to write the letter. I think what we're saying here on the dais right now is that it's abhorrent when our Attorney General doesn't enforce things, but our letter coming from a small town is going to have no impact. And it's not something that I think we should waste our time doing.

EARLE: Also, Hannah, your comment was about the country. This isn't about the country. This is about our local town and city. And again, I reiterate what I said. She already has this authority. She's already doing it. You may not like what she's doing or not, or in your perception, not doing, but I don't think that we need to spend time on this, and sending her a letter that is absolutely going to have no force and effect.

I think we need to start paying attention to more local things, and doing our job, and being proactive to provide solutions to things that are going on in our own town versus -- to me is this going to end up being an insult to her? I don't know, it's something to consider.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: Having heard everybody else, I'll weigh in now. I think that there are effects nationally. We just heard from the drug coalition and the young men that spoke about fentanyl that's pouring into our country. So there are effects. I don't see any

problem with just sending a letter and just asking, hey, we think this is an issue that needs to be considered strongly. And I think it's something that -- that we could do.

EARLE: I think she's already doing it. There's a lot of cases and stuff that she's enforcing and upholding. It's not something she's ignoring, that's for sure.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: We're not saying that she's ignoring it. We're just -- we're just --

EARLE: You are if you write the letter.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: No, we're just encouraging.

GOODWIN: At this point, mayor, there is a motion on the table. But really, this item is for direction. But at this point, I don't have a consensus of the majority at this point, if that's what I'm understanding.

MCMAHON: We've got Hannah, Allen, me, and Gerry.

GOODWIN: Okay. Great. Then that's what we'll -- we will go ahead and do the letter based on --

EARLE: Please omit my name from the letter.

GOODWIN: Correct. That's what I was going to say, I will make it that it was from the majority and include those that are in support. Okay.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: We'll move on now to the call to the public. Town clerk or do we have any --

BENDER: No speaker cards.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: No speaker cards? Okay.

Then we'll move on to Council -- we'll move on to Council direction to the town manager.

All right. Seeing none. How about any future agenda items?

GOODWIN: Mayor, sorry, we did skip one item, which was the legislative update --

MAYOR FRIEDEL: Oh, yes.

GOODWIN: -- if there was any discussion on that.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: Yeah, yeah. Because there was no meeting, I didn't --

GOODWIN: There was no meeting this week, so I figured it -- yeah.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: Does anybody have anything for the legislative update that they want

to bring up?

SKILLICORN: If I'm allowed. I was looking through it. And you know, there's a couple bills here that I actually recommend people from this Council to go on individually support because they may or may not agree. Most of them are okay, but I mean, I see the one that is basically geared up to punish -- I'm actually trying to find the actual bill number right now. It's HB2460. And what this would do is punish retail stores that have their have their items stolen, and then the crux abandoned it.

It would -- actually punishes the victim in a crime. And I still think it's ridiculous that the cities and towns would take this position. But effectively, Phoenix wants to fine retail outlets for having their stuff stolen. And it's retarded. And we shouldn't support it. I mean, I have -- I have come out on RTS against -- or for it, but we shouldn't. I don't think the town should go along with this. And frankly, the town needs to represent the needs and wants of the citizens, not the kind of radical objective that's going on in Phoenix. That's all.

EARLE: It addresses issues regarding property and restricts local ordinances that penalize businesses for such incidents. It doesn't penalize businesses, it's trying to prevent that from happening.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: Future agenda items. Anyone?

KALIVIANAKIS: Yeah, I've got one, Mr. Mayor. I would like to bring the call to the public back to the beginning of the meetings. And just relook at that that whole process.

MCMAHON: I'd like to do that to you. I'll second it.

SKILLICORN: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. In light of some information that's kind of come to my attention about prosecutions in town and effectively Fountain Hills is getting the reputation of being soft on crime. I would like to have an agenda item of replacing our town attorney -- our town prosecutor. I'm sorry. Specifically town prosecutor. And because of open meetings, I can't get into details here, but. --

WATTS: I'd suggest that we wait until we have the review. Because while it may be a little bit subjective at this point -- doggone you guys.

KALIVIANAKIS: Motion to adjourn meeting.

MAYOR FRIEDEL: Meeting's adjourned.

Having no further business, Mayor Gerry M. Friedel adjourned the Regular Session of the Fountain Hills Town Council held on April 7, 2026, at 6:45 p.m.

APPROVED:

TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS

Gerry M. Friedel, Mayor

ATTEST:

Bevelyn J. Bender, Town Clerk

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Special Meeting held by the Town Council of Fountain Hills via Microsoft Teams on the 7th day of April 2026. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and that a quorum was present.

Bevelyn J. Bender, Town Clerk

