

TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING ADVISORY COMMISSION
August 27, 2025

A Regular Meeting of the Strategic Planning Advisory Commission was convened at 16705 E. Avenue of the Fountains in an open and public session at 4:00 PM

Members Present: Chairman Patrick Garman; Commissioner Bernie Hoenle; Commissioner Paul Smith; Commissioner Joseph Reyes

Member(s) Attending by Phone: Vice Chairman Geoff Yazzetta

Members Absent: Commissioner Polly Bonnett; Commissioner Randy Crader

Staff Present: Deputy Town Manager David Trimble; Town Clerk Bevelyn Bender



**TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS
SUMMARY MINUTES OF REGULAR SESSION
OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING ADVISORY COMMISSION
AUGUST 27, 2025**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Patrick Garman called to order the meeting of the Strategic Planning Advisory Commission at 4:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Chairman Patrick Garman; Commissioner Bernie Hoenle; Commissioner Paul Smith; Commissioner Joseph Reyes

Members Attending by Phone: Vice Chairman Geoff Yazzetta

Members Absent: Commissioner Polly Bonnett; Commissioner Randy Crader

Staff Present: Deputy Town Manager David Trimble; Town Clerk Bevelyn Bender

3. STATEMENT OF PARTICIPATION

4. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

No one spoke

5. REPORTS BY COMMISSIONERS

No reports

6. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. **CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION:** Approval of the Minutes from the Regular Meeting Held on May 28, 2025, and the Work Session held on June 25, 2025

MOVED BY Joseph Reyes to APPROVE the Minutes of the Regular Meeting Held on May 28, 2025, and the Work Session held on June 25, 2025 of the Strategic Planning Advisory Commission Meeting, **SECONDED BY** Commissioner Paul Smith
Vote: 5-0 | motion passed unanimously

7. REGULAR AGENDA

- a. **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION:** Post Workshop Way Forward

Chair Garman reviewed three proposed focus areas under the finance priority — AI integration, alternate funding support, and budget planning strategies — and asked for feedback or revisions. The group agreed these were appropriate topics to address beginning in September, with the goal of identifying specific, actionable tasks for each that could guide planning over the next five to ten years.

Commissioner Reyes confirmed the summary was clear, emphasizing the importance of defining concrete tasks within each area. Commissioners Smith and Yazzetta both expressed support and enthusiasm, particularly noting the timeliness and potential of AI.

Garman encouraged members to research ideas and bring suggestions to the next meeting, noting the plan would remain flexible until finalized and approved by the Council next year. Commissioner Hoenle agreed, adding that future discussions should focus on feasibility and resource requirements.

Garman also reminded members that other towns face similar challenges and encouraged them to look at examples from elsewhere for inspiration. The group will begin with finance and then proceed through the remaining strategic priorities, aiming to complete a comprehensive plan by June, culminating in a workshop and final approval.

He concluded by noting that Commissioner Crader and his wife will assist in refining the presentation materials to make them more visually appealing and easier to understand.

b. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: Implementation of Current Strategic Plan

Chair Garman discussed the implementation and review of the current five-year strategic plan, noting the need to assess which goals have been completed, which are in progress, and which may no longer be relevant. He asked Vice Chair Yazzetta to lead this effort by creating a scorecard—likely in Excel or Google Docs—to track each task’s progress. Yazzetta will coordinate with town staff to gather updates and present the results at the next meeting.

The group agreed this review will help determine which uncompleted but still important items should be carried forward into the new strategic plan, targeted for completion by next summer.

Garman then opened discussion on public outreach strategies to gather community input for the new plan. He reflected on past efforts, including public workshops and presentations to local organizations, and asked for ideas to improve engagement.

Commissioner Smith supported continuing presentations to local groups followed by community workshops. Reyes suggested recruiting a representative from each organization to follow up with the Commission and provide feedback at future meetings. Yazzetta recommended holding the next workshop in February, when more residents—including winter visitors—are in town.

Hoenle proposed collaborating with the school district to hold a session at the Learning Center to gather input from families and parents, and also suggested monitoring social media discussions to identify community concerns. He emphasized coordinating efforts with other town departments to avoid confusion with overlapping events or meetings.

The Commission agreed to move forward with these ideas—reviewing progress on the current plan, conducting workshops and presentations, partnering with local organizations and schools, and gathering community feedback—as key steps in developing the updated strategic plan.

c. **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: Future Agenda Topics**

Chair Garman asked members for suggestions on future agenda topics or presentations over the next few months. He noted that in earlier years, various town organizations were invited to present and share information, and he encouraged similar opportunities.

Commissioner Hoenle suggested inviting the Fountain Hills Discovery Center to provide an update on its operations, facility use, and funding structure. Garman agreed, noting interest in understanding the funding model and whether it could be applied to other projects.

Commissioner Yazzetta, who serves on the Discovery Center board, offered to help coordinate the presentation with the Center's president. Garman confirmed he would follow up by email to schedule it for a future meeting. No additional topics or organizations were suggested.

d. **COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

Chair Garman acknowledged the extensive workload ahead and emphasized the importance of keeping the group's plan concise, organized, and visually appealing. He encouraged focusing on manageable portions throughout the year to assemble a complete plan by spring.

Commissioner Smith agreed, noting that maintaining focus on a few key priorities—rather than spreading efforts too broadly—would lead to greater progress.

Garman concluded by noting the meeting's efficiency and stated that at the next session, the group would focus on three finance-related topics: AI integration, alternate funding support, and budget planning strategies. He planned to distribute materials on these topics soon so members could prepare in advance.

e. **UPDATE: Next Regular Meeting is Scheduled for September 24, 2025**

8. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED BY Commissioner Paul Smith to **APPROVE** adjourning the meeting of the August 27, 2025, Strategic Planning Advisory Commission Meeting, **SECONDED BY** Commissioner Joseph Reyes.

Chairman Patrick Garman adjourned the meeting of the Strategic Planning Advisory Commission at 4:38 PM

Post-Production File

Town of Fountain Hills
STRATEGIC PLANNING ADVISORY COMMISSION
August 27, 2025

Transcription Provided By:
eScribers, LLC

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Transcription is provided in order to facilitate communication accessibility and may not
be a totally verbatim record of the proceedings.

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Please note - Issue with town recording system. Recording for the Verbatim Transcript did not begin until minutes later into the meeting. Please refer to the summary of minutes.

GARMAN: Those were the three I identified. Do you all see big problems with that? Do you want to add any? Do you want to subtract any? Do you disagree with how I phrased it? I mean, I -- and then -- so each one of those we would talk about in September. Hopefully, we could get it done in one meeting, but -- it might take longer -- but we would just talk about AI for a little while and see if there's any specific tasks under -- under AI that we would identify over the next five to ten years, you know, and even maybe discuss a time frame for integration.

That's a big task. I know, because it's a big thing. But then the same thing for alternate funding and then budget planning strategies. I think we would attack both of those -- all three of those in September and see if we could get things hanging out underneath them -- a task. no -- specific tasks now, not big generic things, but a specific task underneath. So then you have finance. You say you would have AI integration, and under AI integration would be a specific task that the town might be able to do over the next five to ten years.

That's -- that's kind of the -- the -- the vision, as they say, for September. And then we see how much we get done in September, and we go to the next month, and next month, and try to get through all five of the -- of our strategic priorities by the end of the year.

All right. That was a long stream of consciousness. Anybody --
Joe, did you want to comment?

REYES: Actually, there was a very good summary because it was at the tail end of the -- of the presentation -- as you recall, I left a little bit early -- but with your schematic here and the explanation that you gave, I think it's pretty crystal clear. We basically want to take those three signature strategies, think about ways to develop task for each one, and then keep it -- keep the framework of the target that expand to cover somewhere

between the five and ten year span.

Is that pretty much it?

GARMAN: Mm-hmm.

REYES: I'm for it.

GARMAN: So -- so that means you're all --

Thanks, Joe.

So your homework will be between now and September to look at those three, study them, do -- do whatever you need to do, come equipped, and bring a friend, bring a group, whatever you need to do so that -- and then we will hash those out in September.

Paul?

SMITH: I was going to say, I think -- I think it's got a -- it's a good plan. There's some excitement, you know, with AI changing every day, what it can do for you and what it can do for your communities. It's an exciting time for -- for that kind of plan, I think. Yeah.

GARMAN: Yeah.

Geoff, what do you think?

YAZZETTA: I think it's great. I've got the slides open. And I think it's great, Patrick.

GARMAN: Yep. I'm trying to -- I keep trying to whittle it down, you know, because it becomes really big, really quick.

Does anybody have any questions specifically? Just remember, I always want you all to know this isn't all, like, in solid concrete right now. It's not unchangeable. So if something comes up, then we want to discuss, and we can add, that's perfectly fine until, you know, the council approves it hopefully next year.

So those three, it took a lot of kind of reading, and looking, and writing stuff down, and see how it looked, and then changing the phrasing. And so I want you guys to be comfortable with this. Or if you have ideas next week, or the week after, or whenever, when you're out sitting by your pool over Labor Day and you have an epiphany on -- on something that might come under finance, feel free to, you know, let me know, and we

can bring it up and talk about it.

All right. Are you okay with those three, Bernie?

HOENLE: It works.

GARMAN: It works.

HOENLE: Yeah, really. The discussion will be on the detail, trying to get down to the tasks, and see how they are implemented and if they're doable, and what does it -- what resources does it take to implement them?

GARMAN: And I would put forth to everybody that there's thousands of small towns across the United States, and they're all doing similar things to us. And there's, you know, big cities and small towns. And a lot of them are thinking about the same type of things. So when you go out, you know, there's things that we're familiar with, Fountain Hills, but you can -- you can go out and look at plans and ideas from -- from New York to Casstown, Ohio, where I grew up, which is about 250 people. No stoplights, one stop sign. So but -- but it has a mayor and it has a town council. So -- and they are looking at some of the same types of things.

So you can do some research if you want to show something next week. If you find something that you want us all to see, please let me know. Let Angela (ph.) know. Let Bev know, and we can present it, and you can talk about it next month.

Okay. All right. We're moving forward. You see, I didn't want to throw everything at you on this meeting. I wanted to prepare the battlefield for next -- for next month.

Okay. So that is the way forward for now. And it's just going to be month to month. I mean, hopefully we get finance out of the way, and then we're just going to move to the next one. I think some of these might last more than one month, but the goal is next June being a workshop, and -- and complete it all, and sign off on it on a way forward after that with a total plan, okay?

I do have a commitment from Randy part of his business. What he does his -- his day job is putting ideas and information together to make it more appealing, to make it more understandable. So he's -- he's -- him and his wife have agreed to kind of help us with that so I can -- so it's not just me and my awful PowerPoint slides with the big

arrows and stuff that you guys see, but make it a little more pretty and easy to digest as are going forward. So that's what Randy is going to do for us as well.

Okay. All right. Hey Geoff, I'm going to -- now we're going to move on to under the regular agenda item B, which is discussion and possible action, which is implementation of the current strategic plan.

One thing I thought about and I talked to -- to, to Geoff about is, you know, we need to look at the current plan after it's been out now for coming on five years to see what -- what the town is completed, what the town has made progress on, and maybe some things that aren't -- aren't relevant anymore with time moving through -- or time moving on. Quite a bit of the things have been have been implemented in it.

I talked to Geoff, and I thought it's something that that, as the vice chair, that something that he could work on and pull together anybody -- he might need help. But to go through the old plan, go through the different priorities, and strategies, and tasks, look at the timelines, maybe interact with the -- with the town government to -- to see what's been done and what the progress is on some of those. So that we could get a, kind of, a scorecard to one of a better term, with the current plan, maybe a percentage, hey, we have this many tasks and 80 percent of them have been completed or started. Five percent of them are, you know -- OBE.

Do you know what OBE is? We see it in the military all the time.

HOENLE: Overcome by events.

GARMAN: Yeah, overtake -- overcome by events. We see that in the military all the time.

So Geoff, I know I'm putting you on the spot here from California. Is there anything you wanted to add to the discussion?

YAZZETTA: Yeah -- no, your summary was great, Patrick, and thanks for reaching out the other day about that.

What I am envisioning is a spreadsheet that can be done on Excel, or it can be done on Google Docs, so, you know, we all have access to it up to the minute. But I'll reach out to Rachel (ph.) and the other relevant director level staff to just identify where we are

with each task in the current plan, and then we'll come up with that scorecard. And I'm thinking, you know, we could have, you know, like, percentage to completion if that's relevant for a particular task. But I think this will take maybe a few weeks to just get reports back from all the town staff, and then, you know, we'll have this ready for the next meeting.

GARMAN: Oh, that'd be great. And then, you know, there are some things that, you know, we might -- maybe haven't been started yet that we think are still important. We might find a way to implement them into the new plan going forward, or some things that we don't think are important anymore, and we can take out. So all those kind of discussions are on the table.

Does that sound okay?

YAZZETTA: Yep. Yes, it does.

GARMAN: All right. Thanks, Geoff.

Anybody -- anybody have any questions about what I just talked about? And the team that Geoff is -- the work group that Geoff was going to lead? Sound okay? Sound okay? All right. Thanks.

Okay. Is there anything -- I want your all's suggestions, because this is a year where, you know, the goal is to put the finishing touches on a draft plan by next summer. And part of that is to continue to bring in, you know, ideas, comments from the public. And the year before last, you know, I kind of went out on a speaking tour and we did a workshop over in the community center. Last year, Geoff did another workshop.

So I don't know if you have any ideas this year on what you thought was particularly effective, because when I went out and gave my talks a year and a half ago, I told them, don't think about the specifics. Don't -- don't tell me that your sidewalk has a crack in it. You need to back up and say, what's the larger issues? Is it infrastructure? You know, what -- is it the economy or economic development? So I specifically told them -- the audience that I was talking to.

This year, it's like, okay, we need to know the specifics. Okay. Tell me your sidewalks are broken. Tell me, you know, whatever -- something is leaking, or the washes, or

whatever. It needs to be more specific.

So how -- what do you all think about ideas to do that? A couple years ago, we went to all the, I'll say, nonprofits and organizations like that and -- and talked to them. And I think that went pretty well. And then the workshops have been fairly good -- good attended and productive as well.

We just need to create awareness as we get through, because when we're done next summer, then the plan is going to go over to the counsel to debate and talk about. And we just need the town to be aware that we're coming to the end of the -- this five year planning and production of the next town's strategic plan.

SMITH: Yeah. As you're -- as you're telling what's been done in the past -- and I think both -- both things were successful. The workshops that we did with the people coming in, I just had joined the -- the organization at that particular time. I thought that was very successful.

And it would seem to me like picking a few organizations to do a presentation to again, and follow it up with a workshop. If you could get -- get an exciting -- and excited enough people in those workshops -- or in that presentation -- to come to the workshops, it would -- it would duly make them both very successful. Yeah.

GARMAN: Yes, Joe?

REYES: To reinforce that -- well, first of all, I think we should pretty much establish that, yeah, it's a real good idea to go out there and do the presentations like you were doing with the nonprofits or whoever the field is. But as a part of that, I think it would be real good, as Paul indicates, that we let them know not only are you going to share this information and the reasons why, but also to ask if, at the end of that, they can have a volunteer from their group who would follow up with us at one of the subsequent meetings when we put some of this together? That way, they can come back with some of the insights from their group's perspective, hopefully.

Sound like a plan?

GARMAN: Yeah, writing it down.

Okay. What do you think, Geoff? After doing the workshops over the last couple years,

do you think we should try to jump right into a workshop this fall or wait and, you know, do something after we've met with some organizations and do a workshop more in the late winter or spring next year?

YAZZETTA: The workshops -- we've had pretty good turnout last year and a few months ago this past spring. I mean, as long as we advertise it, I don't see why we couldn't do it during the fall. I mean, we could push it to the spring. I do know that during the holidays, people tend to travel. So maybe that kind of pushes us to maybe February of next year. We'll also have the snowbirds will be back for the winter, and we might be able to capture some of their feedback in February when they're back. But we should do that.

And then I know Bernie had talked about doing an event with the school district to maybe get the feedback from some of the younger families in Fountain Hills. So I just want to throw that out there, too.

GARMAN: How would that work, Bernie?

Thanks, Geoff, by the way.

How would that work, Bernie?

HOENLE: Yeah, we'd use the learning center and get with organizations that support the school, like the PTO and some other booster clubs. And the parents and the teachers get notices out through the -- the school bulletins that -- they use social media on a regular basis and get some input from the families that are living the dream, raising their kids, and going to school.

GARMAN: Would you -- would it be like a workshop, slash, meeting or is this soliciting comments?

HOENLE: It'd be like what you did in the community center. Put up topics, have them make comments. They'll -- they'll do it.

GARMAN: Would it be like on the same night as the school board meeting before --

HOENLE: No, I'd separate it from the school board. Have it separate, just use the learning center as the meeting place, and get the word out. The board can -- will support it, but not have it necessarily associated with a board meeting.

GARMAN: That is a great idea. I think I'm -- I'm noodling that. I'm thinking about that.

HOENLE: The other thing that lately, more than a while ago, social media has been lit up about lots of things happening in the town. So if we screen through that, you're going to find comments on everything from streets, to swimming pools, and downtown revitalization, and parks, and all that stuff. It seems to go cyclical. So all this stuff is hitting the social media at this point in time. The other thing --

GARMAN: Is -- is that when you say social media, you mean, like Facebook? The Facebook group or --

HOENLE: Yeah, all the different -- different parts of Facebook.

GARMAN: Yeah. Because my -- there's generational differences in that, you know, between Snapchat, and Instagram, and --

HOENLE: Yeah.

GARMAN: What's the other one?

HOENLE: You'd have to look at all this stuff.

GARMAN: What's the other one that sometimes controversial? TikTok. TikTok --

HOENLE: Yeah.

GARMAN: Facebook. Yeah -- yeah. Sorry.

HOENLE: Okay. So then the other thing was there was a bit of concern -- I don't know if it was -- really came down to some confusion because one of the events that was in the community center, the individual says, okay, is this from the planning commission or is this from the town? And one of them was a town, and one of them was ours, and they were separate. So leading up to it. If we're going to do something that maybe recreation or economic development is interested in, figure that we do it as a joint effort instead of just a planning commission going out to try and get input. And then if we filter it or break it out after that, that might be more beneficial. But I know it happened a couple of times.

GARMAN: So who was the other organization that --

HOENLE: The town.

GARMAN: The town government?

HOENLE: Yeah.

GARMAN: Okay.

HOENLE: Like one of those where they put hot dots up. Wasn't us. It was a town and vice versa.

GARMAN: So they -- do you do listening sessions and things like that as well? Is that what --

HOENLE: Yes.

GARMAN: I wasn't aware of that. No comment?

TRIMBLE: I, you know, I wouldn't say that I've never seen it, but I can't remember -- I mean, I guess we had one on the downtown recently. Is that -- is that what you kind of had in mind?

HOENLE: That's the most recent.

TRIMBLE: Yeah. Yeah. And that was, I think, the same day that SPAC had theirs at the community center recently. And we had one down right here in the council chambers to talk about the downtown. Yeah, it was purely a listening session. So --

REYES: Brings up a good point that -- now that you mentioned it, I've forgotten about that, but we should be careful that we don't conflict with other programs like that that are on the same time frame or day. We got lucky on that one because some of the people that were here just naturally gravitated over there, and that worked out fine. So -- but that was just by chance.

GARMAN: Okay. I appreciate that.

So I wrote down workshops, some presentations to organizations in town. Maybe some of the organizations can then brief us back. The school district at their learning center. I think that was great. Looking at social media.

Okay. All right. All right. I think those are good things for this -- so we got a lot on our plate for this year as we talk about it. Working on the new plan, seeing the status of the current plan, and getting feedback from the community on where we are as far as working on the new plan.

All right. Any other comments?

Nope.

All right. So I'm going to move on now to the -- still under agenda item seven -- agenda item seven, the regular agenda. Discussion and possible action.

So future agenda topics, I mean, we've talked about a lot of that. Is there anything specific over the next few months that -- that you all would like to see come to us? And, you know, it makes me sound really old when I say years ago, but you know, when we were first getting started, we had a lot of people come in and talk to us. And there are organizations within the town that would like to come in and tell us their story. So I don't know if any of you had any topics that you might want to be put on the agenda, and briefed about, and educated about this year?

Bernie?

HOENLE: I think it would probably be good to get a presentation from the Discovery Center. They're going to be up and running and see how things are going. Are they going to coordinate usage of the facility? Any presentations?

GARMAN: I had that as too. That's a good idea. Because the -- the way the Discovery Center was funded, you know. I was thinking about that when I was writing down alternate funding support and, you know, just to describe how that was -- how that was funded, and if that's replicatable maybe to other projects.

Does that sound okay, Geoff? Are you still on the board for the Discovery Center?

YAZZETTA: Yes, I am. And I know that (indiscernible), the president, he would be happy to give a presentation. Just if you'd like, I can help coordinate that, Patrick. Just let me know.

GARMAN: Yep. That's great. I'll follow it up with an email to you, and we can get it on one of the month's agenda.

YAZZETTA: Sure.

GARMAN: Any other topics or organizations? Anyone?

All right. No comments.

And I've been talking this whole time, so the next one is D, under regular agenda, is comments from the chair.

You see, there's a lot on our plates, and as I worked through it this summer, I was sometimes overwhelmed. So I'm very much hoping that we can keep this straightforward, keep whittling it down, winnowed down so that this plan doesn't look like a dictionary or a telephone book when we're done. And part of that is, you know, making it streamlined and then hopefully, you know, working with Randy as well, we can make it appealing, and attractive to look at, and go through. So I'm just hoping that time allows us to do that this year. And we can work on little bits and pieces, and so we start putting it all together in the spring, and then we -- we have something to look at. So that's all my comments. It seemed like a lot to do this year. So I hope everybody's patient, I guess.

Yeah?

SMITH: And you know -- excuse me -- a lot of congestion this morning -- or this afternoon.

We had talked about that when we were doing our -- our presentations and narrowing things down. And I think you did a good job with the finance. We've got three things that we need to maintain that focus on. And if we can do that every session with -- with whatever there and keep it narrowed, we will get a lot more accomplished than, you know, throwing the ball up in the air and hitting it or not knowing where it's coming down.

GARMAN: Sounds good. Thanks.

All right. No other comments seen.

Next month -- by the way, this might be a record. Usually, we're hustling to try to get out of here.

So next month, we're going to dive in. I'm going to send out to you all those three again, the AI integration, alternate funding support, and budget planning strategies under finance. I'm going to try to do that maybe as early as this evening, but maybe tomorrow, and get it sent so you can start thinking about it, start researching it, talking to people about it. So you can be prepared to -- to dig into those three next month. So next month the meeting is September 24th. So the last -- last Wednesday of

September.

All right. Before I go ahead and we start to adjourn the meeting, is there any other comments? Anybody?

No?

Is there a motion as far as adjourning the meeting today?

SMITH: I'll make a motion.

GARMAN: Thanks, Paul.

A motion on the table is to adjourn.

REYES: Second.

GARMAN: Got a second from Joe.

Any discussion?

Nope.

Move on to a vote. All those in favor of adjourning the meeting today, say aye.

ALL: Aye.

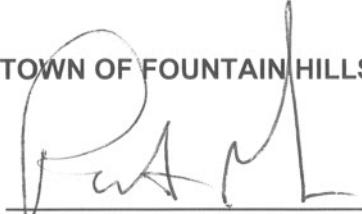
GARMAN: Any opposed?

Hearing none.

It's unanimous. The meeting is over. We'll see you all next month. Thank you.

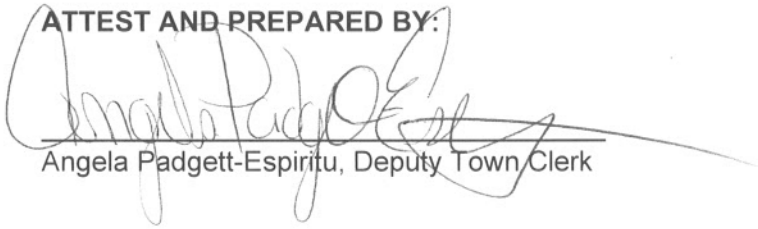
Having no further business, Chairman Patrick Garman adjourned the Regular Meeting of the Strategic Planning Advisory Commission held on August 27, 2025, at 4:38 p.m.

TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS



Patrick Garman, Chairman

ATTEST AND PREPARED BY:

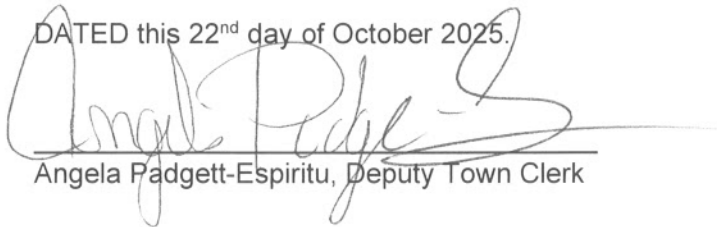


Angela Padgett-Espiritu, Deputy Town Clerk

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Regular Meeting held by the Strategic Planning Advisory Commission of Fountain Hills in the Town Hall Council Chambers on the 27 day of August 2025. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and that a quorum was present.

DATED this 22nd day of October 2025.



Angela Padgett-Espiritu, Deputy Town Clerk

