

November 17, 2025

Town of Chandler Council Meeting Minutes

The Chandler Town Council meeting was called to order on Nov 17, 2025, at the Chandler Town Hall, 401 E. Lincoln Ave. at 6:00 p.m.

Present – Cheryl Amos, Tonya Wester, Ron Whitledge

Absent – Tom Burnett, Sarah Eller

Pledge of Allegiance

Council reviewed the November 3, 2025 meeting minutes. No corrections were requested. Motion to approve the minutes as presented was made by Ron Whitledge and seconded by Cheryl Amos. **Roll call vote:** Cheryl Amos – yes; Tom Burnett – **absent**; Sarah Eller – **absent**; Tonya Wester – **yes**; Ron Whitledge – **yes**. **Motion passed.**

Town Attorney: Joshua Claybourn was absent, Chandler Lacy attended in his place. Chandler presented a technical amendment to the 2025 Salary Ordinance, clarifying the fund source for each position per the State Board of Accounts' requirement. The amendment does not change pay rates; it simply codifies the allowable fund splits for each position (e.g., Water/Sewer split for Director of Public Services; Sewer for Wastewater; Water/Sewer for Shop Foreman).

Council discussed the purpose of the amendment. Members noted that the SBOA specifically requested that funding sources be stated by ordinance, not merely in internal documentation. Percentages are intentionally not included to maintain flexibility; the ordinance lists allowable fund sources only. Motion to suspend the rules and pass on first reading was made by Cheryl Amos and seconded by Ron Whitledge. **Roll call vote:** Cheryl Amos – yes; Tom Burnett – **absent**; Sarah Eller – **absent**; Tonya Wester – **yes**; Ron Whitledge – **yes**. **Motion passed.**

Motion to adopt Ordinance 2025-09 was made by Ron Whitledge and seconded by Cheryl Amos. **Roll call vote:** Cheryl Amos – yes; Tom Burnett – **absent**; Sarah Eller – **absent**; Tonya Wester – **yes**; Ron Whitledge – **yes**. **Motion passed.**

Police Chief: Chief Kirk Tevault reported extended staffing shortages throughout the year, including operating with only five officers for a two-month period after the April incident. Two officers have significant unused vacation balances (approx. 100+ hours and 80 hours). Due to staffing limits and restrictions on part-time hours, scheduling this time off before year-end is not feasible. Chief Tevault requested authorization to pay out up to 80 hours of unused vacation per officer, as a one-time accommodation for 2025. Council discussion included agreement that staffing shortages made full

Nov 17, 2025

1 | Page

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utilization impossible, preference to avoid officers carrying large balances into the next year, and recognition of the substantial additional hours worked by officers to maintain coverage. Motion to authorize one time payout of unused vacation time vacation per officer for 2025 was made by Cheryl Amos and seconded by Ron Whitledge. **Roll call vote:** Cheryl Amos – yes; Tom Burnett – **absent**; Sarah Eller – **absent**; Tonya Wester – **yes**; Ron Whitledge – **yes**. **Motion passed.**

Fire Department: Report emailed. During the meeting, Tonya Wester received a notice that the fire department had broken their previous annual run record and that they have been on over 400 runs this year.

Director of Public Services: Tyler Kinder reported that S&P Global recently downgraded the Town's rating from A+ to A, citing concerns that water and sewer rates have remained unchanged since 2016 and may be insufficient for long-term sustainability. He recommended re-initiating a professional rate review with Baker Tilly, and Council agreed to move forward with that discussion. Kinder also noted that sewer infrastructure needs in the Cool Road annexation area should be evaluated as part of the broader rate analysis. Regarding the park lighting project, he reported that the first conduit crossing has been installed, foundations have been poured, and lights can be set once the second conduit is completed; the system operates on photo-cell controls, with Christmas decorations running on a fixed 4:30 PM timer.

Utility Administrator: Misty Denk reported that the 2026 draft budget is still being refined, noting that additional park-related expenses and other adjustments require further review before a final proposal can be presented; she expects to have complete numbers ready for the next meeting. She also announced that the Town Christmas Party is scheduled for Saturday at 4:30 PM, with warmer weather anticipated, and stated that children will again decorate the tree with handmade ornaments as part of the event.

Environmental Director: Michael Bell reported that the Town received its October 8 IDEM audit results with zero deficiencies and noted that IDEM has indicated Chandler will likely be selected for a federal EPA audit in 2027, which is expected to last three days and require extensive advance documentation. He advised Council that INDOT has moved the next Community Crossings grant deadline from January to July, a change that will significantly disrupt the Town's resurfacing schedule; staff will contact INDOT for clarification and to request accommodation given that contractual timing becomes unworkable under a July award.

He also revisited the proposal to purchase a Polaris Ranger UTV for stormwater, park, and right-of-way operations, outlining potential uses including wetlands access, ditch and right-of-way maintenance, inspections, and reducing wear on existing trucks; Council expressed concerns regarding funding source, the roughly \$6,000 price difference between the proposed model and less expensive options, the necessity of features such as a fully enclosed cab with heat and A/C, and the lack of comparative quotes or a detailed feature breakdown. Michael acknowledged he relied on staff recommendations and had not independently compared configurations; Council requested multiple comparative quotes, a detailed list of features and upgrades, clarification of departmental use, and exploration of lower-cost alternatives, with Michael to return December 1 with revised information.

Nov 17, 2025

2 | Page

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He further presented preliminary 2026 stormwater operations numbers, noting that operational costs have dropped from approximately \$120,000 in 2023 to \$34,550 due to bringing work in-house, although salary allocations are still pending and will increase total expenses. The Stormwater Board recommends increasing the stormwater fee from \$6.50 to \$8.00, but Council emphasized that sewer and stormwater fees appear on the same bill and that sewer rates should be reviewed first before any stormwater increase is considered; no action was taken pending complete budget information.

Clerk-Treasurer: Kayla Litton presented two items. She reported that increasing employee health-insurance premium contributions would generate only minimal additional revenue and would not meaningfully offset rising healthcare costs; after discussion, Council agreed to leave employee premium contributions unchanged for 2026. Kayla also advised that the prior imbalance in the payroll account appears to have resulted from a timing issue rather than a software error, and that the temporary interfund loan from Payroll to General can be safely reversed; Council will confirm with the Town Attorney at the next meeting whether a formal resolution is required before transferring the funds back.

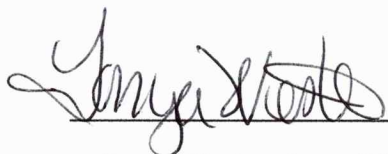
New Business: Council President Tonya Wester reported complaints regarding two properties—one on Kentucky Street and one on Madison Street—where overgrown brush and debris have accumulated, attracting wildlife such as skunks, raccoons, and possums and creating conditions similar to a recent nuisance case on Cherry Street. She will send parcel information via GIS and requested that the Police Department issue letters directing property owners to clean up the sites.

Council also discussed whether to suspend utility shut-offs during December in light of the recent federal government shutdown and potential holiday financial strain; staff noted that November shut-offs were tied to October bills and were not impacted by the shutdown, and that only about 0.9 percent of customers were disconnected. Utility Administrator Misty Denk advised that suspending shut-offs typically delays payment and results in larger January balances rather than reducing hardship. Council took no action to modify shut-off procedures.

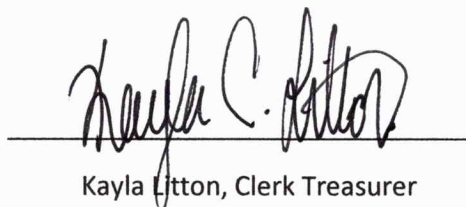
Claims: Claims totaling \$283,099.83 were presented for approval. Motion to approve claims as presented was made by Ron Whitledge and seconded by Cheryl Amos. **Roll call vote:** Cheryl Amos – yes; Tom Burnett – **absent**; Sarah Eller – **absent**; Tonya Wester – **yes**; Ron Whitledge – **yes**. **Motion passed.**

Adjournment

Motion was made by Cheryl Amos and seconded by Ron Whitledge to recess until the next regularly scheduled meeting on Dec 1st. **All in favor.**



Tonya Wester, Council President



Kayla Litton, Clerk Treasurer

Nov 17, 2025

3 | Page

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