

**Minutes
Town of Clifton
Town Council Regular Meeting
January 8, 2026
2:00 p.m.**

Town Council Members

Shane Kennedy, Council Member*
Chad Brown, Council Member
Anthony James, Vice Mayor
Laura Dorrell, Mayor
Raymond Lorenzo, Council Member
B. Waddell Reyes, Council Member
Barbara Ahmann, Council Member

***Excused**

****Participated via telephone**

A quorum was present.

The Town's legal counsel, Matt Schuimo participated via telephone**

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Mayor Laura Dorrell at 2:05 p.m. Followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Call to the Public

Sheriff Ellison announced that while the department applied for a \$750,000 grant from Local Board of Security, they were awarded \$228,000. These funds are earmarked for two new patrol vehicles, \$50,000 in overtime costs, and \$11,000 for a new drone. Regarding operations, heavy traffic enforcement on **US 191** has proven successful, with a notable decrease in high-speed violations. The office is now pivoting its focus toward the local drug problem; however, current staffing levels remain a challenge. To address this, the Sheriff is hoping to coordinate with outside agencies to secure a dedicated investigator for Greenlee County. Additionally, the department is addressing critical communication infrastructure by opening a bidding process to replace outdated dispatch consoles.

Council Report

Vice Mayor James wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Council Member Ahmann reported on the recent mural dedication at Valley Telecom, praising the quality of the artwork. She will be following up with the Town Manager or Clerk to discuss the availability of Town materials to assist in the long-term preservation of the mural.

Council Member Waddell Reyes also attended the mural dedication and shared how much she enjoyed the celebration. She also took a moment to recognize Officer Alex Armijo of the Clifton Police Department. Following a recent interaction, the Council Member commended Officer Armijo for his exceptional professionalism and for taking the time to provide thorough, clear explanations. She also expressed her gratitude to Bashas' for their generous contribution this holiday season. While the Council Member personally delivers donuts to emergency responders annually, Bashas' went above and beyond this year by donating additional donuts and sodas.

Mayor Dorrell is pleased to announce that the Health Fair will take place on February 18th at the Morenci Middle School. Additionally, the Flinn-Brown Fellows are scheduled to visit the area on January 30th. Mayor Dorrell hopes this visit will put the community "on the map" and provide the Fellows with a true understanding of what life in rural Arizona is all about. The event will feature guest speakers, including Mayor Mila Besich of Superior and Mayor Dorrell's daughter, who will be sharing insights on rural education.

Council Members Brown and Lorenzo had no reports at this time.

Town Manager Report

The Town Manager opened the report by reminding Council Members that mandatory financial disclosures are due by January 31st, noting that paper copies must be submitted by Thursday, the 29th, due to office schedules. As budget season commences internally with staff, the Town may also need to pursue "Home Rule" this year. Ahead of the legislative session starting Monday, the Manager distributed the League of Cities and Towns' 2026 policy statement, which prioritizes local decision-making, housing livability (specifically regarding short-term rentals and historic property maintenance), and increased budget flexibility for unexpected funds. The Manager noted that San Tan Valley recently became Arizona's 92nd municipality. She attended the county Board of Supervisors meeting. Finally, the Town Manager informed the Council of an upcoming absence during the week of the 26th to attend the Arizona City Managers Conference in Sedona.

Consent Agenda: The following items of a non-controversial nature have been grouped together for a single vote without Council discussion. The Consent Agenda is a time-saving device and Council members received documentation on these items for their review prior to the open meeting. Any Council member may remove any item from the Consent Agenda for discussion and a separate vote as deemed necessary. The public may view the documentation relating to the Consent Agenda at the Clifton Town Hall; 510 N. Coronado Blvd., Clifton, Arizona.

1. Approval of the December 11, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes
2. Approval of December 2025 Demands

Motion to approve the following items listed under the consent agenda was made by Council Member Waddell Reyes and seconded by Vice Mayor James.

Voting in favor of the motion were Council Members Brown, James, Dorrell, Lorenzo, Waddell Reyes, and Ahmann.

All in favor.

Motion carries.

Executive Session

Motion made by Council Member Waddell Reyes to move into executive session at 2:26 p.m. pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(1) and (3) for discussion and consideration of the appointment and employment of an Interim Magistrate, including the terms of the interim appointment and compensation. Seconded by Vice Mayor James.

Voting in favor of the motion were Council Members Brown, James, Dorrell, Lorenzo, Waddell Reyes and Ahmann.

All in favor.

Motion carries.

Record of Attendance: Let the record show that Council Member Kennedy arrived at 2:26 p.m. for the remainder of the meeting.

The Town Manager provided an update regarding the potential candidate for the interim judge for the Magistrate Court.

2:36 p.m. back in regular session.

New Business

Discussion and possible action to approve an Interim Magistrate Employment Agreement and appoint Jaime Aguilar as Interim Magistrate to serve on a temporary basis pending appointment of a permanent magistrate and to authorize the Mayor, Town Manager or Town Attorney to take all actions necessary to execute and implement the Agreement.

Council Kennedy made a motion to table the possible action to approve an Interim Magistrate Employment Agreement and appoint Jaime Aguilar as Interim Magistrate to serve on a temporary basis pending appointment of a permanent magistrate and to authorize the Mayor, Town Manager or Town Attorney to take all actions necessary to execute and implement the Agreement. Seconded By Council Member Waddell Reyes.

Voting in favor of the motion were Council Members: Brown, Kennedy, James, Dorrell, Lorenzo, Waddell Reyes and Ahmann.

All in favor.

Motion carries.

Discussion and possible action to approve the 2026 Call of Election

The Town Manager officially announced the upcoming 2026 Election cycle. The following key dates and procedures were established:

1. Candidate Information & Filing

- **Packet Availability:** Candidate packets are currently available for pickup at **Town Hall**.
- **Process Review:** Prospective candidates are requested to schedule an appointment with Cece to review the filing process upon receiving their packet.
- **Official Declaration Period:** The first day candidate packets may be officially submitted is **March 9, 2026**.
- **Filing Deadline:** All packets must be filed at Town Hall no later than **April 6, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.**

Motion made by Council Member Waddell Reyes to approve the Call to Election, seconded by Vice Mayor James.

Voting in favor of the motion were Council Members Brown, James, Dorrell, Lorenzo, Waddell Reyes, Ahmann, and Kennedy
 All in favor.
 Motion carries.

Presentation and Discussion with Council regarding goals and overall vision; presented by Greenlee Tourism Association Executive Board.

The Greenlee Tourism Association gave a presentation on promoting tourism, community, and Sustainable Growth in Greenlee County. Leslie Ray announced the upcoming Greenlee Tourism Association mixer on January 21st, which will kick off a membership drive with a challenging tic-tac-toe game and a grand prize gift basket. A major portion of the discussion centered on the San Francisco River revitalization, with Steve Ahmann proposing a flood-resistant, wheelchair-accessible fishing wharf on town-owned property based on resident demands for eco-tourism and river access. Secretary Phil Ronnerud discussed major projects within the revitalization plan, such as addressing parking issues at the train depot, possibly by moving the building on top of underground parking, which, while challenging, is "totally doable." Additionally, Vice Chair Akos Kovach introduced a multi-stage county-wide trading card project starting in Clifton to promote local history. Karen Frye specifically thanked Mayor Dorrell and Town Manager Cindy Blackmore for their continued support in driving these initiatives forward.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 3:30 p.m. made by Council Member Brown, seconded by Council Member Lorenzo.

Voting in favor of the motion were Council Members Brown, James, Dorrell, Lorenzo, Waddell Reyes, Ahmann, and Kennedy
 All in favor.
 Motion carries.