

MINUTES OF THE STUDY SESSION OF THE SHOW LOW CITY COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2026, AT 6:00 PM IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 181 NORTH 9TH STREET, SHOW LOW, NAVAJO COUNTY, ARIZONA

1. Call to Order.

Mayor Leech called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Leech, Vice Mayor Kakavas (arrived 6:07 p.m.), Councilman Clark, Councilman Hatch, Councilman Judd, and Councilman Whipple.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: Councilman Adams.

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: F. Morgan Brown, City Manager; Anna Atencio, City Attorney; Justin Johnson, Deputy City Manager; Mike Mariscal, Community Services Director; Terri Nikolaus, Recreation Supervisor; and Rachael Hall, City Clerk.

GUESTS: Tom Kakavas.

3. Discussion of City Recreational Facilities and Athletic Fields Use Policy and Resolution No. R2022-06 Setting Fees.

Mayor Leech said staff and the City Council were here to discuss fees for City recreation facilities and athletic fields.

Mr. Mariscal said the City did not charge usage fees to the Little League or the American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) during their normal season. However, travel teams and club teams were charged a usage fee for field use and lights.

Ms. Nikolaus said the City charged \$20.00 per hour for the use of the field and lights to travel teams and private teams. Special events were charged \$100.00 per day, and insurance and a permit were required.

Ms. Nikolaus said that when field play was open to all children, such as in Little League and AYSO, the City did not charge a use fee. When the field was reserved, as in the case of travel teams, and play was not open to everyone, the City charged for field and light use.

Mayor Leech asked how the City defined a traveling team versus a non-traveling team. Ms. Nikolaus said that a traveling team or club team had tryouts, and parents typically paid additional fees for their children to participate in a club team. These teams travel out of town and play in tournaments. Since participation in the club team was tryout-based, not every child made the team. Whereas in a recreation league, such as Little League or AYSO, every child who signed up got to play.

Councilman Hatch asked whether the difference was between all-stars and regular league play. Ms. Nickolaus said that Little League had an All-Stars team, which was

part of their regular season, but once the All-Star season ended and some players moved to travel teams, those teams were charged for field use.

Ms. Nikolaus said that the AYSO recreation season ended in October, and then they picked up with an elite team. Children must try out for that team, so not every child would play. The City had started charging field and light usage fees for the elite teams.

Mayor Leech asked to confirm that the City was charging for the lights, not for the field. Ms. Nikolaus said that was correct: if the lights were not needed, the City did not charge a light-use fee. If lights were needed, then fees would be charged.

Mayor Leech asked if the same policy applied to softball. Ms. Nikolaus said that the City charged fees for a softball tournament. However, for the City's softball league, the usage fees were built into the participation fees teams pay.

Councilman Clark asked what the goal of the Ordinance was when it was passed in 2022. Ms. Nikolaus and Mr. Mariscal said they could not answer that question as they did not participate in creating the Ordinance.

Councilman Hatch said it appeared that AYSO and Little League were open to the public; however, tournament play was usually specialized and not open to the public, so it would make sense that the City would charge a fee.

Mayor Leech asked whether a traveling team, whether adults or children, that wanted to use a field for practice before a tournament started would have to pay for lights or use the facility for free without them. Mr. Mariscal said that if a team just showed up and used the field, the City did not charge for that.

Councilman Clark asked how much the City had collected over the last four years under the Ordinance. Ms. Nikolaus said that only one team had regularly used the field and lights, High Elevation Baseball. Since 2022, they had paid about \$6,700.00. They also hosted tournaments in Show Low. They paid fees to use the fields for tournaments and lights for night practices.

Councilman Clark asked about the fields that they used. Ms. Nikolaus said that they had used all five fields at some tournaments. When they practiced, they typically used Senior Field or Ponderosa, and the City charged a fee if lights needed to be scheduled.

Mayor Leech wanted to know if a tournament was held over a weekend and lights were not needed, did the City prorate the fee. Ms. Nikolaus said that a tournament was considered a special event, so a \$100.00 per day field use fee was charged, which included lights.

Councilman Clark wanted to know whether anyone other than High Elevation had paid field and light use fees. Ms. Nikolaus said there was a coed team that had paid

a fee a handful of times.

Ms. Nikolaus said AYSO had not been charged because they said they were still in their regular season. Staff met with the AYSO liaison, who verified that it was a traveling team currently using the fields.

Councilman Clark said AYSO had not been charged a fee for the last four years, so what triggered the fee. Ms. Nikolaus said AYSO's regular season was over at the end of October, and they continued to use the lights every weeknight through November and December. At the end of December, City staff met with AYSO and learned that the AYSO elite/travel team had been using the field, so a decision was made to charge the usage fee.

Councilman Clark wanted to know how the City defined a "travel team" in the Ordinance, as he could not find the definition.

Mr. Brown said that what was being discussed was a Resolution, not an Ordinance. It was a Resolution that set the fees and staff and could clarify the language.

Councilman Clark said many sports had morphed into year-round training and competition, and that there was really no off-season. He said if AYSO wanted to help develop children in sports, the City should not impede that.

Mayor Leech said the City needed to better define the regular season versus the travel season.

Councilman Clark said that Little League All-Stars were not open to everyone; children had to try out to make the All-Star team, but the City did not charge Little League a usage fee for the All-Star team.

Vice Mayor Kakavas said she thought that travel or club team should be defined. Some parents want their children to participate, while others want their children to be developed further. If parents were serious about developing their children, they could do that. But it was standard for them to be charged a fee for participating in a club or travel team.

Councilman Judd said the City needed to keep sports affordable so everyone who wanted to participate could do so. He would like to look at ways the City could charge less, not more.

Councilman Whipple asked if there were other fees that groups were being charged besides the fee for the lights. Ms. Nikolaus said that tournaments were viewed as a special event and would pay additional fees to rent the field. Travel teams had to provide insurance and pay a refundable deposit. If lights were not needed, there was no additional fee; if lights were needed, a light fee was charged.

Ms. Nikolaus said that if participation were open to all children, the City would not

charge a fee. But travel club ball was not open to all children, and parents had to pay an additional fee for their children to keep participating.

Councilman Clark wanted to know how staff delineated that with the Little League All-Stars team. Ms. Nikolaus said that those children who made the All-Star team did not pay an additional fee to participate.

Councilman Clark said that the children who made the All-Stars team did pay an additional fee. Ms. Nikolaus said when she was involved with Little League, there was no additional charge for All-Stars; perhaps that was something new.

Councilman Clark said the City had a standard but no definition of a travel team in the Resolution.

Councilman Hatch said that if the field was used during the day, the team could play for free, but if they wanted to use it at night, there would be a fee, and asked why that was out of scope.

Councilman Clark said the City provided lights at the tennis courts and pickleball courts. The City made about \$6,700.00 from light fees over four years, which was insignificant in the City's budget. He suggested finding a way to avoid charging fees to people who were trying to keep children engaged.

Mr. Mariscal said that when he started looking into this issue, it was determined that AYSO had an elite travel team, and other teams, such as High Elevation, were being charged for the lights. The staff wanted to be fair across the board.

Mayor Leech said that if someone did not want to pay the light-use fee, they could use the field during the day. If someone needed to coach at night, perhaps they could make arrangements with the team sponsor to cover the fee.

Councilman Clark said that a sponsor was not just a sponsor for Little League; they also sponsored other sports. At some point, they got tapped out.

Mr. Mariscal said staff reached out to other communities to ensure the City was not out of line with the field use fees. Staff discovered that the City's fees were at the lower end compared to other towns and cities of a similar size. Many of the communities charged a per-player fee during their AYSO and Little League seasons. This fee ranged from \$7.00 to \$30.00 per child.

Councilman Clark asked which communities did that. Ms. Nikolaus said Yuma, Flagstaff, Sierra Vista, Benson, Payson, and Snowflake. Snowflake charged \$10.00 per hour for their lights plus a \$50.00 deposit.

Councilman Clark asked about Pinetop-Lakeside. Ms. Nikolaus said Pinetop-Lakeside did not charge any usage fees at this time. A lot of teams were going there. She said the City had not yet charged AYSO for this travel season.

Mayor Leech asked whether the majority wanted to keep the fees at \$20.00 and whether the travel team should be defined.

Councilman Hatch agreed with the \$20.00 charge and with staff defining more clearly what constitutes a traveling team.

Councilman Clark wanted to know if the City had use agreements with AYSO and Little League. Ms. Nikolaus said AYSO and Little League completed the City's standard application for use of City recreational facilities and lights.

Mayor Leech said that perhaps staff should look at differentiating the City agreements with traveling teams, AYSO, and Little League.

Councilman Hatch said new parameters could be developed for AYSO, Little League, traveling teams, club ball, and other programs in 2027.

Ms. Atencio said she had drafted a definition of traveling team, and the City could amend the Resolution to include that definition.

Vice Mayor Kakavas said the City should develop an agreement with AYSO and Little League.

Councilman Clark said the City should not charge AYSO this year, since it was halfway through its season, but should give them a heads-up that next year there would be usage fees after the regular season.

Councilman Judd said that he did not think there was a difference between the All-Stars and AYSO club team because children had to try to make the team.

Mayor Leech said staff had direction to clean up the Resolution and that the City should not charge AYSO a light use fee this year.

4. Adjournment.


There being no further business to be brought before the Council, **MAYOR LEECH ADJOURNED THE STUDY SESSION OF THE SHOW LOW CITY COUNCIL OF MARCH 24, 2026, AT 6:29 P.M.**

ATTEST:



Rachael Hall, City Clerk

APPROVED:



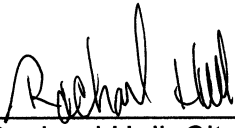
John Leech, Jr., Mayor

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Study Session of the City Council of Show Low held on March 24, 2026. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this 7th day of April, 2026.

(SEAL)



Rachael Hall, City Clerk