

MINUTES
SPECIAL WORKSESSION/LEGISLATIVE DAYS
CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF YUMA, ARIZONA
ARIZONA STATE CAPITOL
1700 W. WASHINGTON, PHOENIX, AZ
March 4, 2025
9:30 a.m.

Councilmembers Present: Morales, Smith, Morris, McClendon, Watts, and Mayor Nicholls
Councilmembers Absent: Martinez
Staffmembers Present: Acting City Administrator, Jay Simonton
Deputy City Administrator, Jennifer Reichelt
Deputy City Attorney, Rodney Short
Mayor's Chief of Staff, Kathy Moon

Yuma Legislative Days serve as a multiple-day meeting for City Council/Administration to meet collectively with Arizona State Legislators and other state agencies to discuss current topics. No deliberation or actions took place, and no recordings of the meetings were made.

I. MEETINGS:

Senate Minority: Minority Leader Senator Sundareshan; Caucus Chair Senator Alston; and, Elizabeth Higgins, General Counsel/Policy Advisor

Discussion Summary:

- Public Safety, taxation in Wellton, San Luis, & Somerton and challenges with servicing and staffing a population that doubles in the winter.
- Provided update on Public Safety staffing, competitiveness, and trends.
- Yuma's uniqueness and local solutions to local issues and need for statewide solutions to statewide issues.
- Housing successes in Yuma
 - Metropolitan issues do not always translate.
- Farming and water, and creation of new Active Management Area (AMA) and Irrigation Non-expansion Area (INA) across state.
- Spaceport discussion and update.
 - Federal process for approval.
 - State land/Federal land.
- Highway 95 improvements for San Luis to YPG.
- Senate asked about Border and Tariffs.
 - Provided update on cross border traffic and trade with Mexico, discussion of Yuma County Free Trade zone, and new San Luis port of entry.
- Immigration and difference between legal and illegal.
 - Provided updates from BP that numbers were down.
- Senate Minority Leadership confirmed support for Yuma's Ag industry and commerce, H2A housing.

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Secretary of State's Office: Laura Terech, Executive Director Arizona America250

Discussion Summary:

- America 250 and State of Arizona's plans with local communities. Semi-quincentennial 2026.
 - Debuted new logo from student contest, student is now at ASU.
 - Paul Revere ride, "one if by land, two if by sea"
 - Each municipality/agency displays two lights.
 - Flyover at Capitol.
 - Traveling Bell, pictured with every County seal.
 - Big Bell will come to Yuma.

Senate Majority: President Petersen; Majority Leader Senator Shope; and, Senator Dunn

Discussion Summary:

- Water in Arizona and confirmation of Interior Secretary Burgum.
- Majority gave updates on discussions with Secretary Burgum.
- New Commissioner of Bureau will hopefully have Arizona and Colorado River ties.
- Working closely with Yuma water districts on priority rights when Post 2026 guidelines are released.
- Budgets: Yuma County, City of Yuma, San Luis, Somerton, and Wellton budgets
 - City's low tax rate.
- Serving double population
 - Why it is important to capture the winter population to participate in economy, so locals are not required to fund everything.
- President discussed vape bill, no consensus on it.
- President priority is pensions, asked about Yuma's pay down of Public Safety.
- President and Leader discussed border security and workforce development in the City and across the County.
- Senator. Dunn provided an Agriculture update

Legislative Lunch at League of Arizona Cities and Towns

11:45 a.m. Legislative lunch held with Yuma Delegation, Highground Consultants and League of Arizona Cities and Town staff

Topics of Discussion:

- Yuma Day materials and local solutions
- Economic development in Yuma and positive job trends
- Spaceport
- Aerospace for Arizona and how Yuma fits in
- Veteran opportunities
 - Spaceport
 - Nuclear workers and Engineers

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- Manufacturing in Arizona
- Manufacturing in Mexico and final assembly in U.S/Yuma
- Energy
 - Regulation, not deregulation
 - APS planning another nuclear plant for 2040
 - Legislation on Small Modular Reactor (SMR)
 - Tribal company looking at Arizona for SMR
 - SRP/APS pipeline
- Broadband expansion and bill SB1661 to form Broadband Districts
 - Not taxing, but subject to sales tax
- Housing Assistance Program; Appropriating Monies
- Agriculture and Water
 - HCR2051, as it relates to Yuma water rights
 - Autonomous farm equipment and the allowance to cross county roads

Introductions on the floor at the Senate and House of Representatives

Governor's Office: Deputy Chief of Staff Jennifer Loredo; Director of Policy, Legislative, and Intergovernmental Affairs, Marge Zylla; and, Senior Water Policy Advisor Patrick Adams

Discussion Summary:

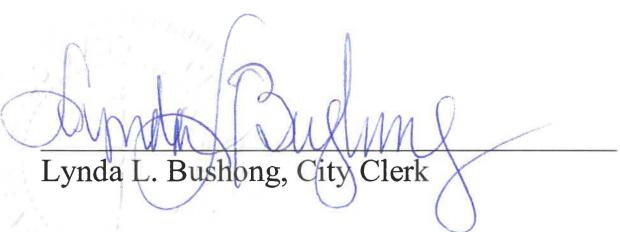
- Mayor discussed Yuma Day materials.
 - Discussed the success of Yuma branding.
 - Governor's staff discussed Yuma Harvest Dinner video and Yuma connections.
- Economic development in rural communities.
- Governors update on commerce, taxes, and energy.
 - Governor has expectations that bills will be negotiated, suggested staying engaged. Understand that one-size-fits all does not work, especially in housing.
- Adams provided updates on water and Post 2026.
 - Gloomy and probably will not get movement until new Commissioner is named.
 - Crisis is increasing, Lower Basins have plan on table, zero from Upper Basin.
 - Looking for accountability from all States.
 - Governor does not want Priority system to be disrupted.
- Meeting with Hank Auza for the Yuma Districts, meet with Rodney.
- Watching rural groundwater regulations from Senator Dunn
 - Need to protect groundwater basins.
 - Does not apply to Yuma, but preserving that water keeps hands out of the Colorado River.
 - Understands that Yuma's wells are surface water, so river communities have only one source.
- Congratulations to Mayor Nicholls for space commission appointment.
- Discussed Elevate Southwest as incubator for job training and creation.
 - Federal Free Trade Zone in Yuma could provide boost.
 - Need ADOT access to site and connection to AZ Tech Council.

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- Rockets do not bring high number of jobs, it is the innovations and research and ultimately manufacturing right on site.
- Discussed Yuma Fire Department AZ Department of Emergency and Military Affairs grant for border rescues, especially from top of border fence.
- Discussed AXON/TASER relocation issue.
 - Headquarters in Scottsdale subject to referendum.
- Discussed new distribution center in Yuma and closure of Shaw and Bose.

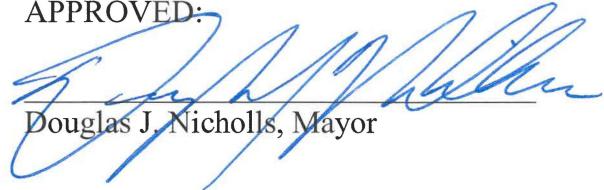
Evening Reception

3:45 p.m. Evening reception hosted by Highground and held at Highground Inc., located at 830 North 4th Avenue, Phoenix. This was a social event, and no specific City business was entertained.



Lynda L. Bushong, City Clerk

APPROVED:



Douglas J. Nicholls, Mayor

Approved at the City Council Meeting of:

MARCH 4, 2025

City Clerk: