



City of Needles

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Mayor, Janet Jernigan
Vice Mayor Ellen Campbell
Councilmember Tona Belt
Councilmember Jamie McCorkle
Councilmember JoAnne Pogue
Councilmember Henry Longbrake
Councilmember Larry Ford

City Manager Patrick J. Martinez

MEMORANDUM

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PATRICK J. MARTINEZ, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: WEEKLY MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 15, 2025

1. Future of Palo Verde College – Needles Center

The Palo Verde Community College District Board held a regular board meeting on August 12, 2025, to discuss the future of the Needles Center, with fourteen local residents attending via video conference from the Needles campus.

Trustee Brad Arneson raised concerns about the center's long-term operating deficit, citing an annual shortfall of approximately \$500,000 for the past 17–18 years, while Trustee Jon McNeil questioned the accuracy of the financial data and called for further analysis. Trustees and community members emphasized the center's history and importance, noting its establishment in 2005 through local voter support and a donation from the Claypool family, as well as its role as a hub for day and evening classes and community activity. Dean Jaclyn Randall was recognized for her leadership in driving the center's growth and boosting enrollment. The discussion will continue at the board's next regular meeting on September 9, 2025, which will be held at the Blythe campus, with local residents able to attend via video conference at the Palo Verde College – Needles Center, 725 W. Broadway, Needles, CA 92363. Residents are encouraged to participate in person at the Needles site, share public comments, and actively engage with board members to ensure their perspectives are considered in shaping the center's future. See attached for a full copy of the article or click on [this link](#).

2. Assemblyman Jeff Gonzalez District Office Open House

On August 15, Mayor Jernigan and City Manager Patrick Martinez attended Assemblyman Jeff Gonzalez's Open House in Indio, celebrating the grand opening of his new district office. They expressed appreciation to Assemblyman Gonzalez and his team for their warm welcome and the opportunity to connect with community members, meet the staff, and learn more about the ways the office is serving and supporting the region. The event also provided a valuable forum to strengthen connections with state leadership, discuss shared priorities, and highlight Needles' ongoing initiatives. Attendance at regional events such as this supports City Council goals to advocate for the community at higher levels

of government, expand intergovernmental partnerships, and ensure Needles remains well-positioned for state-level support and resources.

3. **State of the City – September 25, 2025**

The time has come once again for our annual *State of the City* address, hosted by the **Needles Chamber of Commerce**. Join us on **Thursday, September 25, 2025, at 6:00 PM** at **El Garces, 950 Front Street, Needles, CA** (see attached image). This event brings our community together to celebrate the City's achievements, share exciting updates on upcoming projects, and outline our vision for the future. Attendance supports the City Council's commitment to transparency, community engagement, and a shared path forward. We encourage **all residents, business owners, and community partners** to attend and be part of this important conversation about our city's progress and opportunities ahead. Let's fill the room and show our Needles pride.

4. **Peanuts PaintFest Draws Big Crowd and National Attention to Needles**

This special celebration marked the 75th anniversary of the Peanuts comic strip and the 50th anniversary of Spike's debut—a character inspired by Needles. CRMC was the only hospital in the nation selected by the Foundation for Hospital Art to receive a custom Snoopy and Spike mural, brought to life by community members during the event. The celebration was kicked off with a [video message from Stephanie Revelli](#), granddaughter of Peanuts creator Charles M. Schulz, honoring Spike's milestone anniversary. Attendees worked together to complete two large paint-by-numbers murals—one featuring beloved Peanuts characters and the other showcasing a desert scene unique to Needles. The day also featured photo opportunities with the iconic Spike statue, a cake walk, root beer floats, and a children's art display. The event highlighted Needles' unique Peanuts legacy, strengthened community pride, and drew national attention to the city. Special thanks go to the Foundation for Hospital Art, Peanuts Worldwide LLC, the River Communities Coalition, the Women's Club of Needles, the River Valley Artists Guild, the Needles Regional Museum, and all volunteers for making this event possible. See attached for a full copy of the article or click on [this link](#).

5. **Citywide Beautification – Needles Pride Program**

This week, crews focused on weed abatement along Needles Highway as part of the Citywide Beautification efforts under the Needles Pride Program. These actions support the City Council's goal to enhance community aesthetics and quality of life. By maintaining clean, safe, and vibrant neighborhoods, the City continues to foster positive partnerships with property owners and encourage community pride (see attached image). Residents can report concerns by calling 760-326-5700 (press #9) or using the Needles Connect app on [Google Play Store](#) (Android) and [Apple Store](#) (iOS). Together, we're building a safer, stronger Needles!

6. **Tripepi Smith Marketing and Public Affairs – Continuing Partnership**

The City is continuing its partnership with Tripepi Smith & Associates to advance the City Council's Economic Investment Marketing and Branding Strategic Plan,

focusing on strengthening Needles' brand, expanding outreach, and promoting the community's unique assets. Building on accomplishments such as a full website overhaul, social media alignment, and the launch of a video marketing campaign, upcoming efforts will include targeted recruitment videos, digital and streaming ad campaigns, and promotions tied to opportunities like the Route 66 Centennial. These initiatives directly support the City Council's economic development goals by attracting new businesses, residents, and visitors, positioning Needles for long-term growth and prosperity.

7. Senior Center Air Conditioner Replacement

This week, City staff acted quickly to replace a failed air conditioning unit at the Senior Center, ensuring the facility remains safe and comfortable for all patrons during the peak summer heat. Special thanks to Reinke Heating & Air Conditioning for responding so quickly and helping us get the unit replaced without delay (see attached). The prompt response prevented program disruptions and allowed the center to continue serving the community without interruption.

8. Ice Plant Road Truck Traffic and Parking Enforcement

Since January, City staff has worked with the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department (SBCSD) and Code Enforcement to address ongoing traffic and behavior concerns involving big rig/18-wheel truck parking on Ice Plant Road. Enforcement against illegal parking has increased, and the property owner of the adjacent dirt lot installed a fence to prohibit truck parking; however, it was damaged within 24 hours. In response, the City installed K-rails at the end of the paved section to restrict access and protect the area. These actions are part of the City's continued commitment to improving safety, reducing nuisances, and preserving infrastructure along Ice Plant Road.

9. Ribbon Cuttings – Needles Smash Burgers & Kush 66

Today, members of the Needles City Council were joined by the Needles Chamber of Commerce, the Bullhead Area Chamber of Commerce, the Laughlin Chamber of Commerce, a representative from the Bullhead City Council, and local residents to celebrate the ribbon cuttings for [Needles Smash Burgers](#) and Kush 66 Dispensary and Lounge. These celebrations honored new ownership for their continued investment in the community and their contributions to revitalizing the Historic Route 66 corridor. Located at 2205 Needles Highway, Needles Smash Burgers offers fresh dining options for both residents and travelers. Kush 66 Dispensary is a licensed cannabis retailer, with its lounge providing a regulated space for adult consumption in compliance with state and local laws. Together, these new ventures advance the City Council's goals to drive economic development, strengthen the local business community, and position Needles as a destination for visitors and locals alike.

10. Route 66 Centennial – Doors Open California Tour

On September 13–14, 2025, the California Historic Route 66 Association will host a two-day "Doors Open California" Centennial Tour, spotlighting preservation projects along the California Historic Route 66 Needles-to-Barstow

National Scenic Byway. The tour features a guided visit to the El Garces Harvey House in Needles—one of the most significant Route 66 landmarks—drawing visitors from across the state to experience our city’s history and culture. This event directly supports City Council goals to grow tourism, promote Route 66 heritage, and strengthen Needles’ position as a destination community. The attached flyer provides the full itinerary, which also includes stops in Amboy, Chambless, Newberry Springs, Daggett, and Barstow. This is a prime opportunity to showcase Needles’ downtown, create economic activity for local businesses, and build momentum toward the 2026 Centennial celebrations. Refer to the attached flyer for more information.

11. Last Call – Community Achievement Awards

Nominations for the 28th Annual Community Achievement Awards close **August 18, 2025!** Let’s get Needles back on the winners list—our last honorees were in 2023. Nominate someone who works, lives, does business, or serves in the Colorado River Region. Submit your nomination by [clicking here](#).

12. Community Events Calendar Now Live

The City’s new website now features a [Community Events Calendar](#)—your go-to source for what’s happening in Needles. From festivals to meetings, it’s designed to keep residents and visitors connected. Local organizations are invited to submit or update events through the City Clerk’s Office to keep the calendar fresh and inclusive. Contact **Candace Clark at cclark@cityofneedles.com** to participate. Together, we can showcase the best of Needles and strengthen community spirit.

1. FUTURE OF PALO VERDE

https://www.needlesdesertstar.com/news/the-future-of-palo-verde-community-college-needles-center-in-the-hands-of-district-board/article_99dc55ac-0b72-43d0-aa39-726305c0648c.html

The future of Palo Verde Community College Needles Center in the hands of district board

By Jeni Henderson
Needles Desert Star
Aug 13, 2025



Fourteen residents attended the Aug. 12 Palo Verde Community College District board meeting conducted through a conference in room B08 in the basement of the Needles campus.

By Jeni Henderson
Needles Desert Star



NEEDLES — The future of Palo Verde Community College Needles Center was the topic of discussion at Tuesday night's district board meeting held at the Blythe campus.

The discussion will be brought back to a special meeting to be held Aug. 26.

Fourteen residents attended the Aug. 12 board meeting conducted through video conference in room B08 in the basement of the Needles campus.

Discussion about the future of the Needles Educational Center was requested by board trustee Brad Arneson; the future of Needles Center graduation ceremony and pinning ceremony was requested by board president Stella Camargo-Styers.

“We had a study session a few months ago where we discovered that we are about \$500,000 a year upside down in that office,” Arneson said. “So I'm wondering, why being fiscally responsible, we would continue to fund that function of theirs that for 17-18 years we’ve been at half a million dollars a year average...”

This was the first of at least three inaccuracies presented by the board.

Twenty-seven years ago, in 1998, PVC began serving the Needles area and in 2005, thanks to the generosity of the Claypool family and the voters of the recently annexed San Bernardino part of the district, PVC opened the Needles Center which now offer a full array of classes both in the daytime as well as the evening.

Board trustee Jon McNeil has concerns regarding the validity of the Needles budget and its expenditures.

"I can't tell you what the real numbers are because I don't have access to them," he said, but questions whether or not those numbers, in addition to revenue, are completely accurate.

"I think that another analysis of what was presented would be helpful for us," he said.

With four teachers, one of which is part time, there is "no way" there can be a deficit in expenses, he added.

"When you just look at it, you just step back and look at it, it doesn't make sense," McNeil said.

The original "up-to-date" data will be brought back to the Aug. 26 meeting, said Supt. Bruce Moses.

"We'll have a Q&A about that information," he added.

"I don't know what all this is about with the always wanting to talk about it (Needles), Brad, but that used to be just a dead zone and it's just so full now and everything that's happening in our city usually has something to do with our college," said board trustee Glenda Williams.

It's because of Needles Center dean Jaclyn Randall that the school is now alive with people and classes being offered, said Alice Dean, CalWORKs Student Services during the public comment period.

In 2022, staff from the main campus in Blythe began providing support services for Needles residents at the monthly Main Campus on Broadway events at the Needles Center.

When Dean first arrived in Needles, there wasn't a lot, she said.

"We have seen an increase of students showing up over and over and over each month, more and more students would show up and they know us by name," she said. "Now they call us because they know us because we were there and we share our personal lives with them, talk with them. We met with them and we showed them that we cared. We helped them feel a part of Palo Verde College."

Since these events stopped last semester, students have been confused, she said.

In regards to future graduations at the Needles campus, it will create a hardship for their students and their families to travel to Blythe.

"We're not going to get the whole town of Needles down here," Dean said. "There's no train anymore taking you down to Blythe so we have to keep the Needles graduation and we need to keep going to Needles and showing them they are part of our center and part of our community college and that they are important too."

Needles residents Wayne Colburn and William Boschelli echoed her sentiment.

The Needles Center offers residents with vital pathways to better jobs, economic stability without the burden of relocating, he said.

The closure of the Chuckwalla Valley State Prison as well as the upcoming shutdown of the California Rehabilitation Center impact both enrollment and funding.

“In this context, the Needles Center becomes even more important as a steady base of community students,” Colburn said. “It supports workforce development, helping attract local businesses and contributes significantly to the area's economics.”

Board members regularly travel to the main campus for meetings, he said, so it’s reasonable to ask the board members from Blythe to come to Needles and support its graduates.

Keeping the Needles Center graduations is not just about convenience, he said. “It’s about investing in the future of this community and supporting economic growth, student success and a stronger, more connected Palo Verde College.”

Boschelli agreed with the importance of having a graduation ceremony for Needles students and their families at the Needles campus.

“Traveling that 90-minutes down to Blythe as you are well aware, it’s a long drive and it’s a haul and putting that obstacle in the way of families and friends is not the right solution,” Boschelli said.

Investing in the students of Blythe is just as important as in Needles, Williams said.

“We just have to give it a chance to catch on,” she added.

THE FUTURE OF GRADUATION CEREMONIES

“Given the time and expense involved in holding a separate commencement ceremony for Needles, the students for Needles can travel to the main campus via college vans and participate with their fellow graduates,” said Camargo-Styers.

A positive aspect of this change, she said, is that Needles Center graduates will be able to celebrate this milestone at the main campus at the main commencement ceremony and share that experience with the entire graduates.

“They had three graduates last year,” she said of the Needles Center.

This was the second inaccuracy.

Camargo-Styers later claimed, “We had three students and then three families come. ...”

This would be the third inaccuracy.

Last year, Needles graduated 16 students with more than 140 people in attendance.

Graduation ceremonies are not planned by Needles staff, McNeil said, but offered a solution.

“Let's do a ceremony just on our own and we'll do it for pennies, peanuts or donations and we'll do our own thing because people are not going to get in the van and go all the way down here because it's so far away,” he said. “Let us be something to encourage, to celebrate the success that we have here...”

A special meeting/study session of the board of trustees is set for 4 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 26 in Assembly Room (CL 101) in the Classroom/Lab Building on the main campus at One College Drive in Blythe, California.

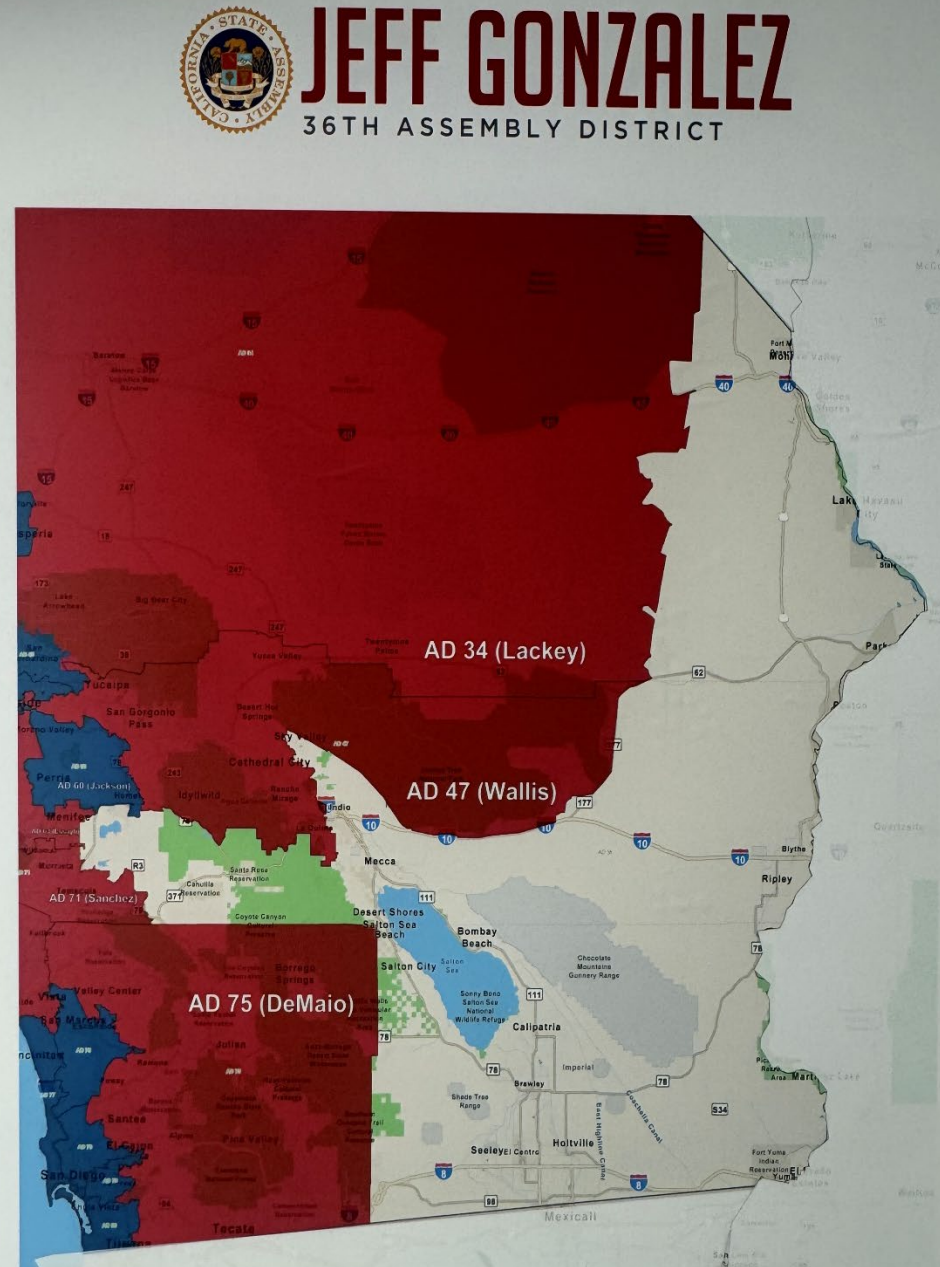
For more information, contact Naomi Alaniz at naomi.alaniz@paloverde.edu or visit go.boarddocs.com/ca/pvccd/Board.nsf/Public.

Jeni Henderson

General Assignment Reporter

[Learn more about your privacy options](#)

2. DISTRICT 36 OPEN HOUSE



3. SAVE THE DATE STATE OF THE CITY

SAVE THE DATE

STATE OF THE CITY

**Thursday, September 25, 2025
6:00 PM**

El Garces, 950 Front Street, Needles, CA

Join us as we celebrate our city's achievements, share upcoming projects, and discuss our vision for the future.

Mark your calendars- all residents, business owners, and community parnters are encouraged to attend



5. CITYWIDE BEAUTIFICATION



4. PEANUTS WORLDWIDE PAINTFEST



4. PEANUTS WORLDWIDE PAINTFEST



4. PEANUTS WORLDWIDE PAINTFEST

FEATURED

Photos: Peanuts Paintfest at Colorado River Medical Center

By Jeni Henderson
Needles Desert Star
Aug 12, 2025

Dozens of community members from the Tri-state unleashed their inner artist at yesterday's Peanuts PaintFest at Colorado River Medical Center. Community members helped bring to life the two 56-inch by 49-inch paint-by-numbers style murals, which feature joyful Peanuts images: one of dancing Charlie Brown, Snoopy and Woodstock, Linus, Lucy, Sally, and Franklin, and a second mural—unique to Needles—featuring Spike, Snoopy, and Woodstock relaxing in the desert. Visitors also had the opportunity to take photographs with the famous larger-than-life Spike statue, on loan from the Needles Regional Museum and long-time Spike fan and Needles resident Joe Jones. River Communities Coalition in conjunction with the Woman's Club served root beer floats which was Snoopy's favorite drink. A cake walk was held in the halls of CRMD. The cake walk was similar to musical chairs, whoever lands on the number called, got to select a cake of their choosing.



Group Photo with Senator Steve Padilla rep Armando Avalos

By Jeni Henderson

Needles Desert Star Updated Aug 12, 2025

Group photo of River Valley Artists Guild, River Communities Coalition, City of Needles and Armando Avalos, district representative for Califo...



River Valley Artists Guild present diamond Art to Bing Lum

By Jeni Henderson

Needles Desert Star Updated Aug 12, 2025

The River Valley Artists Guild presented Bing Lum, Executive Vice President of Colorado River Medical Center, with a diamond art picture of th...



Janice Debenney & Deputy Edward Olmos paint Franklin of Peanuts

By Jeni Henderson

Needles Desert Star Updated Aug 12, 2025

Janice Debenney, left, from Willow Valley and San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department Deputy Edward Olmos paint Franklin.



Sarah & Logan Price

By Jeni Henderson

Needles Desert Star Updated Aug 12, 2025

Sarah Price, top, watches as her daughter Logan Price paints Lucy from Peanuts.



Sugar Cookies By Steph

By Jeni Henderson

Needles Desert Star Updated Aug 12, 2025

Stephanie Revelli, a granddaughter of Peanuts creator Charles M. Schulz, a baker and the creator of Sugar Cookies By Steph, provided Peanuts, ...



Artwork on display 1

By Jeni Henderson

Needles Desert Star Updated Aug 12, 2025

In the days leading up to the PaintFest, children had the opportunity to draw themselves as a Peanuts character on special coloring sheets cre...



Artwork on display 2

By Jeni Henderson

Needles Desert Star Updated Aug 12, 2025

In the days leading up to the PaintFest, children had the opportunity to draw themselves as a Peanuts character on special coloring sheets cre...

7. SENIOR CENTER A/C REPLACEMENT



8. ICE PLANT ROAD ENFORCEMENT



8. ICE PLANT ROAD ENFORCEMENT



9. NEEDLES SMASH BURGERS



9. KUSH 66 RIBBON CUTTING

