CORTEZ CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2025

1. The meeting was called to order in the City Council Chambers at 7:30 p.m., with the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll Call was taken and the following Councilmembers were present: Mayor Rachel Medina, Mayor Pro-tem Dennis Spruell, Matthew Keefauver, Lydia DeHaven, Robert Dobry, Bill Lewis, and April Randle. Staff present included: Municipal Court Clerk Carla Odell, Finance Director Randy Bailey, Interim Chief of Police Andy Brock, Director of General Services Casey Simpson, Director of Parks and Recreation Creighton Wright, Airport Director Jeremy Patton, Community and Economic Development Director Rachael Marchbanks, City Planner Jason Armstrong, Human Resources Director Matt Cashner, Library Director Beth Edson, Project Engineer Noah Peterson, IT Director Jay Rohrer, City Clerk Danielle Wells, City Manager Drew Sanders, and City Attorney Patrick Coleman. There were five members of the public present in the audience.

   Councilmember Lewis moved that the agenda for August 26, 2025, be approved. Councilmember Dobry seconded the motion and the vote was as follows:

DeHaven	Dobry	Lewis	Keefauver	Medina	Randle	Spruell
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

2. The Consent Agenda items acted upon by Council were as follows:

   a. Approval of minutes from the July 15, 2025 Natural Medicine Special Worksession.

   b. Approval of the Expenditure List for August 26, 2025

   c. Approval of a Special Event Permit for The Cortez Celtic Fair -- Oktoberfest to be held on September 27, 2025.

   d. Renewal Application on a Hotel and Restaurant Liquor License for El Campestre Mexican Restaurant LLC, located at 1430 East Main Street #6, Cortez.

   Councilmember Dobry moved that Council approve the Consent Agenda. Councilmember Lewis seconded the motion and the vote was as follows:

DeHaven	Dobry	Lewis	Keefauver	Medina	Randle	Spruell
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None

4. PRESENTATIONS: None

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

   a. <u>Ordinance No. 1345, Series 2025</u> concerning an extension of the natural medicine moratorium was presented by City Attorney Patrick Coleman on second reading and public hearing. The current moratorium ends on August 26, 2025. The three-month extension will set the end date to November 26, 2025 or it will end upon passage of a natural medicine ordinance. Discussions are ongoing, but the goal is to bring an ordinance forward for a first reading on future regulations. Council believes a time extension is necessary to ensure the matter receives thorough consideration.

   Councilmember Keefauver moved that City Council adopt on second reading Ordinance No. 1345, Series 2025, an ordinance approving a three-month extension to the current temporary six-month moratorium on the acceptance, processing and approval of applications for licenses or permits for Natural Medicine healing centers, cultivation facilities, product manufacturing, testing facilities, and any other related license or permit involving Natural Medicine to allow the City to finalize the drafting and adoption of local regulations concerning the same. Councilmember DeHaven seconded the motion and the vote was as follows:

DeHaven	Dobry	Lewis	Keefauver	Medina	Randle	Spruell
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

b. Ordinance No. 1335, Series 2025 was presented by Airport Director, Jeremy Patton. This ordinance concerns a lease agreement change from a personal name to a business name.

Councilmember Lewis moved that Council approve on second reading Ordinance No. 1335, Series 2025, an ordinance approving the assignment of Eli Tomac's Land Lease and Hangar Development Agreement to Echo Tango3 LLC. Councilmember Spruell seconded the motion and the vote was as follows:

DeHaven	Dobry	Lewis	Keefauver	Medina	Randle	Spruell
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

7. NEW BUSINESS

a. Ordinance No. 1344, Series 2025 was presented by Airport Director Jeremy Patton. This item seeks to approve, on first reading, Ordinance 1344, Series 2025, the assignment of an airport land lease agreement. The owner of the hanger, Lane Kim sold his hanger on South Lot #8; Robert J. Brown will assume this lease agreement if approved.

Councilmember DeHaven moved that City Council approve on first reading, Ordinance 1344, Series 2025, an ordinance approving the assignment of Lane Kim's 40-year land lease agreement to Robert J. Brown, and set for public hearing and second reading on the 9th of September 2025. Councilmember Keefauver seconded the motion and the vote was as follows:

DeHaven	Dobry	Lewis	Keefauver	Medina	Randle	Spruell
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

b. Resolution No. 9, Series 2025 was presented by City Planner Jason Armstrong. Council considered a resolution to approve an exception to the Cortez Land Use Code for a fence at 26 East Driscoll Street, where the code limits fence height to four feet. The property, located near the Carpenter Recreation Area, experiences significant parking and pedestrian activity, and the owner seeks to replace an old fence with a taller privacy fence. This represents a minor deviation, with no staff recommendation provided. Council reviewed vision clearance requirements and determined the proposal does not impact traffic safety. Given the lot’s configuration, where the front yard functions more like a side yard, Council agreed the request meets the criteria for an exception.

Councilmember DeHaven moved that Council approve Resolution No. 9, Series 2025, a resolution approving the request for an exception to Land Use Code Section 5.05 Fences and Walls. Councilmember Spruell seconded the motion and the vote was as follows:

DeHaven	Dobry	Lewis	Keefauver	Medina	Randle	Spruell
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

c. Possible change of meeting date for the November 11, 2025 Council meeting that currently falls on the

Veteran's Day holiday was presented by City Manager Drew Sanders. City Council would like to honor and respect Veteran's and City staff time on this holiday.

Councilmember DeHaven moved that the City Council approve a change in workshop and regular stated meeting date from Tuesday, November 11, 2025, to Wednesday, November 12, 2025 in order to avoid conflicting with the Veteran's Day holiday. Councilmember Dobry seconded the motion and the vote was as follows:

DeHaven	Dobry	Lewis	Keefauver	Medina	Randle	Spruell
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

d. Hybrid City Council Meetings/Remote Appearance by Council was presented by City Manager Drew Sanders for discussion. Mayor Medina noted Cortez lags behind most communities, as 90% of mayors that she spoke with at the Colorado Municipal League Conference and many boards allow hybrid meetings. Council opinions differed: some feared abuse of the policy, while others cited successful use elsewhere. Councilmember Dobry and Randle argued the charter doesn't permit Council to change this meeting requirement through the ordinance process but only through a question on a ballot. Councilmembers DeHaven and Lewis, along with counsel from City Attorney Coleman, believe that City Council can change the code through an ordinance. Councilmember Lewis proposed increasing the use of virtual attendance by Council to 25% of the yearly meetings. Discussion covered voting impacts, meeting location requirements, and legal precedent for virtual attendance. City Attorney Coleman advised clarifying the issue in an amendment.

Councilmember Lewis moved that the City Council resolve to permit future remote appearance of City Council members at public meetings, and direct staff to prepare the appropriate legal research and legislative documents necessary to prepare the Council to fully adopt this measure at a future meeting. Councilmember DeHaven seconded the motion and the vote was as follows:

DeHaven	Dobry	Lewis	Keefauver	Medina	Randle	Spruell
Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No

8. DRAFT RESOLUTION/ORDINANCES: None

9. CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT: No report given. Mayor Medina asked City Attorney Coleman present a plan for the charter code updates at the next regular meeting.

10. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT: No report given.

11. CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Mayor's Report on Workshop

i. Council had a presentation on tax increment financing and urban renewal authorities as well as discussion on the natural medicine and marijuana draft ordinances.

b. Other Board Reports

ii. Library Advisory Board: The Library is transitioning to the Aspen Cat Library System. The Library Patron Code of Conduct has been updated and is posted online. On October 23, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. there is an author event featuring Alana Yazzie, creator of *The Modern Navajo Kitchen* cookbook. Movies in the Park will take place on September 5, 2025, featuring *Minecraft*, and on October 3, 2025, featuring *Lilo and Stitch*.

iii. Golf Advisory Board: The Pinto Bean Classic had 224 participants, the Ladies Tee Cup had 74 golfers, and 85 players participated in the high school tournament. Current revenue is $541,463 which is an increase from last year's revenues. End of year revenue is projected to be $600,000-$630,000. The board approved the proposed project priorities that were presented by Parks and Recreation Director Creighton Wright.

12. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: This agenda item was advanced in the order to accommodate members of the public in attendance, allowing them to participate without waiting through the executive session.

    a. Public comment was made by Christopher Matima concerning hybrid meetings.

13. OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS

    a. Executive Session concerning personnel matters. Council requested that appointed staff meet with them on a quarterly basis for ongoing review and discussion, expanding upon the dialogue typically reserved for the annual review. This meeting marks the presentation of the first quarterly report of its kind.

    At 8:22 p.m., Councilmember Dobry moved that Council go into executive session for discussion of a personnel matter under C.R.S. Section 24-6-402(4)(f) and not involving: any specific employees who have requested discussion of the matter in open session: any member of this body or any elected official: the appointment of any person to fill an office of this body or of an elected official: or personnel policies that do not require the discussion of matters personal to particular employees. Specifically, the purpose of the executive session will be to conduct a quarterly appointed official performance update with Drew Sanders, the Cortez City Manager. Mr. Sanders has not requested that this executive session occur in an open meeting. Councilmember Lewis seconded the motion and the vote was as follows:

DeHaven	Dobry	Lewis	Keefauver	Medina	Randle	Spruell
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

    Close of Executive Session: Meeting resumed at 9:14 p.m. Those persons participating in the meeting were Mayor Rachel Medina, Mayor Pro-tem Dennis Spruell, Councilmembers Lydia DeHaven, Matt Keefauver, Bill Lewis, April Randle, and Robert Dobry, City Manager Drew Sanders, and City Attorney Patrick Coleman. No adoption of any proposed policy, position, resolution, rule, regulation or formal action occurred during the executive session.

14. The meeting was adjourned at 9:16 p.m.

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Rachel B. Medina, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Danielle Wells, City Clerk