

CORTEZ CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2025

1. The work session was called to order at 6:45 p.m. in the City Council Chambers. Councilmembers present included: Mayor Rachel Medina, Mayor Pro Tem Dennis Spruell, Robert Dobry, Matthew Keefauver, Bill Lewis, April Randle, and Lydia DeHaven. Staff members present included: Interim Community and Economic Development Director/City Planner Jason Armstrong, Community and Economic Development Specialist Helen West, City Manager Drew Sanders, City Attorney Patrick Coleman, and City Clerk Danielle Wells. There were five members of the public in audience.
2. City Council interviewed Charles Borchini Jr. for the open seat on the Planning and Zoning Commission. Mr. Borchini has lived in Cortez for five years and expressed strong interest in joining the commission, emphasizing the importance of clear laws and structured planning to ensure sustainable growth within the City. A graduate of the University of Baltimore School of Law with training in real estate law, the candidate highlighted the need to build strong relationships between residents and industries to foster positive cohabitation and long-term planning. He identified the City's most pressing issue as becoming more pedestrian-friendly, aiming to encourage visitors to stop and engage with the community rather than simply pass through. Mr. Borchini is committed to promoting the City, volunteering his skills, and contributing to community development. Drawing on diverse experiences as someone who has lived in many places, he believes he can add valuable perspective and is prepared to devote as much time as necessary to serve the City.
3. City Council interviewed Diane McBride for the open seat on the Historic Preservation Board. Ms. McBride has extensive experience in prehistoric preservation, having directed the Cultural Site Stewardship Program under Southwest Colorado Canyons Alliance with the Bureau of Land Management and San Juan Mountain Association for almost 20 years. She oversaw 125 monitored sites in Canyons of the Ancients with 65 volunteers and conducted archaeological surveys. She has been volunteering with the Historic Preservation Board since February and emphasized the value of historic preservation in fostering community pride, engaging youth, reducing vandalism, and promoting tourism beyond Mesa Verde National Park. Ms. McBride highlighted her appreciation for preserved local landmarks such as the KSJD/Bank building and Calkins, noting their successful reuse as vital parts of the community.
4. A second candidate, Lex Johnson, was scheduled to interview for the open seat on the Historic Preservation Board, however he did not attend the meeting.
5. Ben Burkett, the President of the Tri-City Soccer Association, presented to Council on the organization's mission as a nonprofit providing affordable soccer opportunities for youth in Cortez and the surrounding community, emphasizing skill-building, teamwork, and community. Participation has grown from 235 players four years ago to 475 this fall, supported by 43 volunteer coaches, scholarships for families in need, and strong collaboration with the Parks Department and City. The Association operates two seasons annually, maintains 14 fields, and continues to seek support for equipment upkeep and growth, expressing gratitude for the City's ongoing assistance.
6. During the general discussion, Councilmembers Keefauver and Lewis attended the first annual Cortez Celebrates event at the Cortez Cultural Center. M.B. and Chuck McAfee, Jack and Judy Schuenemeyer, Vangi McCoy, and Rose Jergens were awarded for their many years of service on non-profit boards in the community.

The work session was adjourned at 7:11 p.m.