

CORTEZ CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2025

1. The meeting was called to order in the City Council Chambers at 7:35 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, Lieutenant Angelo Martinez, Director of General Services/Interim Director of Public Works Casey Simpson, IT Director Jay Rohrer, Interim Community and Economic Development Director/City Planner Jason Armstrong, Contract City Planner Nancy Dosdall, Parks and Recreation Director Creighton Wright, City Clerk Danielle Wells, City Manager Drew Sanders, and City Attorney Patrick Coleman. There were two members of the public present in the audience.

Councilmember Dobry moved that Council approve the agenda as presented for November 12, 2025. 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

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

a. ~~Approval of meeting minutes from October 28, 2025~~

b. Approval of the Expenditure List for November 12, 2025

c. Approval of a Renewal Application for a fermented malt beverage and wine liquor license for Walmart Inc., DBA Walmart Store #0966, located at 1835 East Main Street, Cortez.

d. Approval of a Renewal Application for a hotel and restaurant liquor license from New Hong Kong of Cortez, Inc., DBA New Hong Kong Chinese Restaurant, located at 332 West Main Street, Cortez.

e. Approval of a Renewal Application for a tavern liquor license for Cortez Veterans, Inc., located at 320 North Harrison, Cortez.

f. Approval of a Renewal Application for a brew pub liquor license for Four Corners Brewing LLC., DBA Main Street Brewery & Restaurant, located at 21 East Main Street, Cortez.

g. Approval of a Special Event Permit for The Cortez Area Chamber Of Commerce event on November 13, 2025, on the premises of Four Corners Community Bank, located at 77 West Main Street, Cortez.

h. Approval of a Special Event Permit for Fundamental Needs Inc. on December 31, 2025 located at 209 W. Main Street, Cortez.

Councilmember Randle requested that “Item a” be moved to the next meeting. Councilmember Dobry moved that Council approve the Consent Agenda with the change that Councilmember Randall suggested. 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

Tai Rogers invited Council to the Southwest Colorado Futures Fair on December 3, 2025 at the Montezuma

County Fairgrounds, where 50–60 industry partners will engage 8th–12th grade students in exploring career pathways, including city-represented fields like IT and GIS.

4. PRESENTATIONS

a. Proclamation In Recognition of Greenlight A Vet

Councilmember Spruell moved that Council approve the Mayor to issue a Proclamation in recognition of Greenlight A Vet. 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

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

a. Ordinance No. 1350, Series 2025 presented by Drew Sanders, City Manager

Council reviewed the recreation center sales tax history, noting the 2001 levy of .55%, its reduction to .35% with indefinite extension in 2018, and bond retirement in 2022. An omission discovered in the 2026 budget process requires an ordinance to formally reduce and continue the tax, ensuring funds remain for facility maintenance. Discussion emphasized correcting the error, establishing safeguards, and maintaining public trust through proper council action. The public comment period was opened; no input was received, and this portion of the hearing was closed.

Councilmember Lewis moved to approve Ordinance No. 1350, Series 2025, an ordinance amending the City of Cortez code of ordinances concerning a reduction of the family recreation center sales tax. Councilmember Randle 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. 1351, Series 2025 presented by Randy Bailey, Finance Director

The yearly budget process provides a focused time to look at our communities needs, wants and opportunities and priorities them. Council reviewed the 2026 budget totaling \$38.4 million, including \$7.2 million for capital projects and equipment, \$1.4 million for purchase of the Empire Electric Building, and Recreation Center Fund reserves for critical upgrades and to offset reduced tax revenue. The public comment period was opened; no input was received, and this portion of the hearing was closed.

Councilmember DeHaven moved to approve Ordinance No. 1351, Series 2025, an ordinance approving the appropriations and budget for fiscal year 2026. Councilmember Randle 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. Appointments to the Library Advisory Board, the Golf Advisory Committee, and the Parks, Recreation and Forestry Advisory Board presented by Danielle Wells, City Clerk

Vacancies for various boards and commissions were open due to terms ending and advertisements were placed on the City's web page, Facebook, and the newspaper regarding the open seats. Three applications

were received and three interviews were conducted during the earlier work session.

Councilmember Spruell moved that Karen Sheek be appointed to the Library Advisory Board for a two-year term, Sam Jarvis be appointed to the Golf Advisory Committee for a three-year term, and Erik Hendrickson be appointed to the Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Advisory Board for a two-year term. 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

b. Ordinance No. 1349, Series 2025 presented by Nancy Dossdall, Contract City Planner

Council discussed the new code adopted three months ago, noting edits and inconsistencies and requesting public review and feedback. Topics included ADU occupancy requirements, with differing views on alignment with state recommendations, and sign regulations related to window visibility. Planning Commission has approved moving forward, and further discussion will continue at the next meeting.

Councilmember Lewis moved to approve on first reading Ordinance No. 1349, Series 2025, an ordinance approving revisions to the Cortez Land Use Code as set forth in the Ordinance, and set the ordinance for a second reading and public hearing on November 25, 2025. Councilmember Lewis seconded the motion and the vote was as follows:

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

c. Ordinance No. 1352, Series 2025 presented by Nancy Dossdall, Contract City Planner

Council discussed the state mandated fast-track requirements under Proposition 123 and the plan to adopt code amendments by 2025 to qualify for a \$50,000 grant with no match. Staff proposed a new code section titled Incentives to include fast track review, density bonuses, and raising the minor site plan threshold from 4 units (current) to 16 units for staff review; the Planning Commission recommended keeping the threshold at 4. Councilmembers weighed the incentive benefits for small affordable housing developers against home-rule and public engagement concerns, suggesting compromises such as raising the threshold to 8 units instead of 16, and noting that staff level decisions would remain appealable to Planning Commission and Council. DOLA has responded positively to the Fast Track process of the City and invited City staff to join a state peer-review panel. Councilmembers emphasized the need to codify state requirements, preserve community input, and ensure clear affordability provisions and appeal processes.

Councilmember DeHaven moved to approve on first reading Ordinance 1352, Series 2025, an ordinance revising the Land Use Code to add incentives for affordable housing projects and set the ordinance for a second reading and public hearing on November 25, 2025. 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

d. Request for Mayor Signature for LPC supplemental grant funds presented by Jason Armstrong, Interim Director of Community and Economic Development

Council discussed sending a letter to DOLA requesting supplemental grant support to expand an AI pilot that assisted housing development review and processing. The request would extend an existing grant and align with DOLA's new supplemental program to help communities meet Proposition 123 fast track goals. Staff previously ran a limited pilot this year and found the tool sped research and improved response times to applicants. The grant would supplement already budgeted funds, include participation in a state

learning collaborative, and build on pilots which involve five front range communities, though award is not guaranteed after letter submission.

Staff will pursue formal application and standard procurement to secure an AI contractor whether or not the grant is awarded, targeting implementation in the first quarter of next year. The pilot showed promise in delivering clearer, faster answers to the public, and staff estimates the tool could reduce application processing times by roughly 50–75%, freeing capacity for larger projects, improving customer service, and supporting faster achievement of fast track housing objectives.

Councilmember Lewis moved that Council authorize the Mayor to sign a letter to the Department of Local Affairs requesting supplementary grant funds of \$9,600 that will support purchase of an Artificial Intelligence (AI) platform. 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

e. Possible cancellation of December 23, 2025 Council Meeting presented by Danielle Wells, City Clerk

Council has historically canceled the second Council meeting in December due to its scheduling proximity to the year-end holidays. This year the fourth Tuesday in December will be December 23, 2025.

Councilmember Dobry moved that Council approve the cancellation of the Council meeting scheduled for December 23, 2025, due to the holidays. 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

8. DRAFT RESOLUTION/ORDINANCES: None

9. CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT: None

10. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

- a. Library Director Search: The application filing deadline was November 9. We received 32 applications. Preliminary interviews with Columbia, Ltd. will take place November 18 and 19. Finalist interviews here in Cortez will be December 10 and 11, 2025.

11. CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. Mayor's Report on Workshop: Council interviewed three candidates for various board positions. Council also discussed lodging tax uses.
- b. Other Board Reports
- i. Golf Advisory Board: On November 7, 2025 the golf operations reported October rounds and revenue were down due to heavy rain; the season ends Sunday with irrigation water turned off, and the committee discussed proposed fee changes including a 10% increase and a \$50 increase for individuals that have private carts.
- ii. Public Arts Board – The board will be presenting to Council on December 9, 2025.
- iii. Historic Preservation Board: Met on November 4, 2025 and discussed the 140th City celebration for next year, noted the honor of being nominated for the Steven H. Hart Award, and discussed proposed changes to Chapter 7 of the land use code and historic designation provisions.

- iv. Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Advisory Board: Met on November 6, 2025. The new Teen Night has been successful (stronger middle school turnout than high school); Parks & Rec master plan and FY26 budget presentation progress were reviewed, accomplishments were noted from 2025, and program (parks, rec, aquatics) surveys and code and charter review discussions are underway.

12. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None

13. OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS

a. Executive Session concerning negotiations

Councilmember Dobry moved that City Council go into executive session pursuant to C.R.S. Section 24-6-402(4)(e) for the purpose of determining positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations, developing strategy for negotiations, and/or instructing negotiators concerning (1) the City's efforts to select a developer-builder and develop and build housing on land located on West 7th Street, and (2) the City's efforts to purchase and remodel the office building known as the Empire Electric Building, located at 801 N. Broadway. 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 9:13 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 9:14 p.m.

Rachel B. Medina, Mayor

ATTEST:

Danielle Wells, City Clerk