

CORTEZ CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 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, Lieutenant Rogelio Maynard, 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, Human Resources Director Matt Cashner, 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 Dobry moved that Council approve the agenda as presented for 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

2. The Consent Agenda items acted upon by Council were as follows:
 - a. Approval of the minutes for meetings on October 28 and November 12, 2025, amended.
 - b. Approval of the Expenditure List for November 25, 2025
 - c. Approval of a Special Event Permit to allow The Cortez Area Chamber of Commerce to host an event on December 6, 2025 from 4:00--10:00 p.m., located at 20 West Main Street, Cortez.
 - d. Approval of a Special Event Permit to allow The Cortez Area Chamber of Commerce to host an event on December 11, 2025, from 4:00-9:00 p.m., on the premises of Nitty Gritty Off Road located at 33 East Main Street, Cortez.

Councilmember Dobry moved that the Council approve the Consent Agenda as amended. 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

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None

4. PRESENTATIONS: None

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- a. Ordinance No. 1349, Series 2025 presented by Nancy Dosdall, Contract City Planner

Following use of the new code, typos and reference issues were identified, leading to proposed changes across Chapters 1–6. Chapter 5 generated the most discussion, particularly regarding window signage. The current rule allows only 50% coverage, a new provision that has proven difficult to explain and enforce, with many businesses exceeding the limit. Clarification at 50% was suggested, though concerns remain about potential conflicts with nonconforming use. The public comment period was opened; no input was received, and this portion of the hearing was closed.

Councilmember Randle moved that Council approve on second reading Ordinance No. 1349, Series 2025,

an ordinance approving revisions to the Cortez Land Use Code as set forth in the Ordinance subject to the amendment to amend Table 5.6 Sign Measurements in the Land Use Code to remove the maximum amount of window that can be covered with signs per window. 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

b. Ordinance No. 1352, Series 2025 presented by Nancy Dosdall, Contract City Planner

To remain eligible for a \$50,000 grant supporting affordable housing, the City must adopt an ordinance by year-end as required by Proposition 123. The change is minor, formalizing the City's existing practice of processing applications within 90 days. Cortez has already added incentives such as density bonuses and fast-track stipulations. Discussion focused on whether to adjust the incentive level from 4 units to 16; while higher density could speed applications, it may limit public input. The Planning Commission recommended keeping the threshold at 4 units, consistent with residential mortgage standards, as anything above that is considered commercial. The public comment period was opened; no input was received, and this portion of the hearing was closed.

Councilmember Randle moved that Council approve on second reading Ordinance 1352, Series 2025, an ordinance revising the Land Use Code to add incentives for affordable housing projects with the following amendments: Add language to the Ordinance stating that land use is a Home Rule issue and not a matter of Statewide concern; remove incentive item 1 from Exhibit A in Section 3.07.5.A that allows for administrative approval of any number of units beyond the four already allowed in the Land Use Code. 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

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

7. NEW BUSINESS

a. Department of Local Affairs Housing Planning Program (HPLN) Grant presented by Jason Armstrong, Interim Director of Community and Economic Development

Under SB24-174, municipalities must adopt and update a water supply and strategic growth element every five years, with Cortez's deadline set for December 31, 2026. This element will integrate water planning with land use and housing development, supporting sustainable growth and affordable housing efforts. The City plans to issue an RFP in early 2026, engage a consultant by Q2, and complete a report by December, ahead of the 2027 Comprehensive Plan redraft. To fund the project, estimated at \$45,000, the City will apply for a DOLA Housing Planning Program Grant covering 75% of costs, with a \$11,250 local match already budgeted for 2026. Formal governing body approval is required, with the grant application deadline set for December 3, 2025.

Councilmember Lewis moved that Council authorize the Cortez Community & Economic Development Department to apply for the 2025 HPLN grant, supporting the development of Water Supply and Strategic Growth elements in the Comprehensive Plan. 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. Letter of Support for the Montezuma Heritage Museum presented by Drew Sanders, City Manager

A request for a letter of support for the Montezuma Heritage Museum's T-Mobile Hometown Grant was brought before Council. The museum, opened in 2022, is fundraising for updates and a potential pocket park.

Councilmember Dobry moved to authorize the Mayor to sign on behalf of the City the letter of support for the Montezuma Heritage Museum T-Mobile Hometown Grant. 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: A draft ordinance for charter amendments will be prepared prior to the December 9 work session, though the attorney's remote participation may be necessary due to a scheduled surgery. Discussion focused on the lodger's tax, which was adopted by ordinance and can be amended by ordinance, providing broad authority for uses such as advertising, services, and potentially water or street infrastructure. Raising the tax rate would require voter approval, but the tax itself is not part of the charter. Council noted this warrants a larger, more detailed discussion in upcoming sessions.

10. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:

- a. City Manager Sanders discussed local government and leadership with the current cohort of Leadership Montezuma on Thursday November 13, 2025 at City Hall.
- b. The City received 32 applications for the Library Director position. After the application and vetting process, we have selected four finalist who will be traveling to Cortez December 9-12, 2025. The interview process will begin on Wednesday, December 10, 2025 and will include a community 'meet and greet' from 5:00 – 6:30 p.m. in Council chambers. Individual candidate interviews will take place on Thursday December 11, 2025. Each candidate will interview with the leadership panel, a community panel, and the City Manager. Any and all participation and support is greatly appreciated.

11. CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. Mayor's Report on Workshop: Judge Beth Padilla presented municipal court statistics, noting increases in land use code and juvenile cases, and discussed potential for a teen court. Outreach Court has served 66 participants, with 14 graduates and 18 currently enrolled. Council held preliminary discussion on the Recreation Center tax issue and upcoming priorities, emphasizing water and master plans. A strong turnout was reported for recent food donations, with continued community support encouraged.
- b. Golf Advisory Board– Staff, assisted by 25 volunteers, covered the greens with tarps. The course is now closed for the season.
- c. National Rural Health Day: Councilmember Randle noted that the third Thursday of November is recognized as National Rural Health Day. Southwest Health System received an award acknowledging the hospital as #1 in service and care.

12. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None

13. OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS

- a. Executive Sessions

At 8:22 p.m., Councilmember Dobry moved that City Council move 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 a possible sale of three parcels of real estate owned by the City, identified by Assessor's Parcel Numbers 560919200001, 560919200002, 560919200003, and located adjacent to the driving range at Conquistador Golf Course, at an address to be determined off of North Dolores Road in Cortez, and also for the purpose of discussing a personnel matter as authorized by C.R.S. Section 24-6-402(4)(f)(I), for the specific purpose of conducting 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: The regular meeting resumed at 9:08 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. Also participating was City Manager Drew Sanders, Community and Economic Development Director Jason Armstrong, and City Attorney Patrick Coleman in part one of the executive session. Mr. Armstrong and Mr. Coleman did not participate in part two of the executive session. No adoption of any proposed policy, position, resolution, rule, regulation or formal action occurred during the executive session.

14. The meeting was adjourned at 9:09 p.m.

Dennis Spruell, Mayor Pro Tem

ATTEST:

Danielle Wells, City Clerk