CORTEZ CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2026

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, Chief of Police Vernon Knuckles, Director of General Services/Interim Director of Public Works Casey Simpson, IT Director Jay Rohrer, Parks and Recreation Director Creighton Wright, Assistant Parks and Recreation Director Jenni Bandy, Airport Director Jeremy Patton, Human Resources Director Matt Cashner, Finance Director Randy Bailey, Interim Community and Economic Development Director/City Planner Jason Armstrong, Community and Economic Development Specialist Helen West, Contract City Planner Nancy Dosdall, City Clerk Danielle Wells, City Manager Drew Sanders and City Attorney Patrick Coleman. There were 10 members of the public present in the audience.

   Councilmember Lewis moved that Council approve the agenda as presented for January 13, 2026. 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

   Mayor Medina announced her resignation from City Council effective April 28, 2026. Serving as Mayor has been one of the greatest honors of her life and she will always remain a steadfast supporter of the City of Cortez. The remaining term will be on the upcoming election on April 7, 2026.

2. CONSENT AGENDA

   a. Approval of the minutes for the City Council meeting on December 9 and Special City Council Worksession on December 17, 2025.

   b. Approval of the Expenditure List for January 13, 2026

   c. Approval of a Hotel and Restaurant Liquor License renewal for Rudosky Unlimited LLC, DBA Rudosky Unlimited, located at 2310 East Empire Street, Cortez

   d. Approval of a Fermented Malt Beverage and Wine Off Premises Liquor License renewal for Safeway Store No. 1892, located at 1580 East Main Street, Cortez

   e. Approval of a Hotel and Restaurant Liquor License renewal for Lakeside Lanes Inc., DBA Lakeside Lanes, located at 410 Lakeside Drive, Cortez

   f. Approval of a Hotel and Restaurant Liquor License renewal for El Burro Pancho, LLC, DBA Gustavo's Authentic Mexican Restaurant and Bar, located at 125 East Main Street #A, Cortez.

   g. Approval of a Hotel and Restaurant Liquor License renewal for Hunan Kitchen, Inc., DBA Hunan Chinese Restaurant, located at 2561 East Main Street, Cortez

   h. Approval of a Special Event Permit to allow For Pets' Sake to host an event in the Turquoise Raven Art Gallery, located at 104 E. Main St, Cortez, on March 21, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

   Councilmember Dobry moved that the Council approve the Consent Agenda. 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

James McGinley spoke about his concerns for the community related to economic development and living wage jobs.

4. PRESENTATIONS: None

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

a. Resolution No. 1, Series 2026 presented by Nancy Dosdall, Contract City Planner

The site plan submitted by 1880 Industrial Road LLC, DBA LePew for the location of 1880 Industrial Road, Cortez was presented to Council. The applicants were in attendance at the meeting, with Contract Engineer Andrew Chambers of Bohannan Huston Inc and legal representative on behalf of the applicants, Laurel Quinto participating virtually. Staff explained that the application has been in process for an extended period and is therefore being reviewed under the previous land use code. The project is located in the industrial park, and staff acknowledged an oversight in which a building permit was issued before a site plan was approved; the business is currently operating under a temporary certificate of occupancy. The site plan review focused on paving, drainage, parking, and landscaping requirements, including the code requirement that 10% of the commercial property be landscaped. The applicants requested waivers related to access and shared drainage with an adjacent parcel. The Planning and Zoning Commission voted 3–0 on April 1, 2025, to move the project forward. BHI reported that drainage concerns have been addressed, though the applicants propose only 400 square feet of landscaping near the entrance, which staff noted reflects 10% of the building footprint rather than the full property. The applicants also requested a waiver to allow a gravel driveway despite the old code prohibiting gravel; they cited steep grades, stormwater management, and limited public access as justification. BHI confirmed that the driveway slopes meet city standards and noted that gravel has been approved in the industrial park for similar heavy equipment use. Quinto supported staff’s recommendations and clarified that gravel is common in the area. Property owner Jenna Thompson reviewed the project timeline, including purchase in 2022, grading and building permits issued in 2022–2023, multiple inspections, and the temporary certificate of occupancy issued pending site plan approval. She expressed concern about delays and associated costs despite acting in good faith. LePew Engineer Kevin Kissler added that concerns about gravel should apply to parking areas, which are concrete, and emphasized that a gravel driveway better supports natural drainage patterns by allowing water to flow similarly to pre-development conditions.

During the public comment portion of the hearing, Sheldon Randal expressed concerns about inconsistent and unfair enforcement of the land use code, noting that his business was required to fully comply with paving and landscaping requirements. He stated that if the site review process had been properly followed, the current situation could have been avoided, and he urged the council to apply the code consistently rather than allowing exceptions after the fact. Tiffany Randal echoed these concerns, emphasizing the need for fair and uniform code enforcement and stating that granting exceptions retroactively undermines trust and creates uncertainty for future development. She stressed that city staff should adhere to established requirements and that all applicants should be held to the same standards. The public comment period was then closed.

Mr. Randal was recalled by the Council and asked if he had requested a variance to his site plan, to which he answered no. Further Council discussion noted that requiring 18,000 square feet of landscaping based on the full property size would be excessive. It was clarified that the driveway apron is not yet installed but is included in the site plan. Questions were raised about drainage, and staff confirmed that the current design adequately addresses and mitigates the drainage concerns. It was also emphasized that variances exist to allow for practical, common-sense adjustments when strict application of the code does not fit the circumstances, such as large properties where a full 10% landscaping requirement may not be reasonable.

Councilmember Lewis moved that the City Council approve Resolution No. 1, Series 2026, a resolution approving the site development plan for the building constructed on property located at 1880 Industrial Rd., Cortez, Colorado in the industrial (I) zone with the conditions as stated in the resolution. 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. 1353, Series 2026 presented by Patrick Coleman, City Attorney

The charter amendments were divided into four separate ballot questions, each accompanied by a summary and references to the corresponding exhibit in the ordinance. The first question covers non-substantive updates such as spelling, grammar, and gender-neutral language (Exhibit A). The second clarifies city council qualifications, duties, and compensation (Exhibit B). The third addresses the designated location for council meetings and permits electronic participation by council members (Exhibit C). The fourth authorizes the city, under its home rule authority, to adopt term limit provisions that differ from those in the Colorado Constitution, with Council consensus that the four-year separation requirement in Exhibit D be reduced to two years.

Councilmember Dobry moved that City Council approve, on first reading, Ordinance No. 1353, Series 2026, and set the Ordinance for second and final reading and a public hearing on January 27, 2026. 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. 1354, Series 2026 presented by Helen West, Community & Economic Development Specialist

Ordinance No. 1354, Series 2026 was presented on first reading to add 245 East Montezuma to the city's historic register, noting that the Historic Preservation Board voted unanimously in support of the designation. The property was described as a beautiful and noteworthy site worthy of recognition.

Councilmember Randle moved that City Council approve, on first reading, Ordinance No. 1354, Series 2026, and set the Ordinance for second reading and a public hearing on January 27, 2026. 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

c. Ordinance 1355, Series 2026 presented by Helen West, Community & Economic Development Specialist

Council reviewed Ordinance No. 1355, Series 2026, on first reading, which proposes adding the buildings at 410 East Empire Street to the City Register of Historic Resources. While the intent is to designate the property as historically significant, the measure did not receive unanimous support due to concerns related to the state's review process. Additional explanation and discussion are expected at the next meeting.

Councilmember Keefauver moved that City Council approve, on first reading, Ordinance No. 1355, Series 2026, and set the Ordinance for second reading and a public hearing on January 27, 2026. 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

d. Resolution No. 2, Series 2026 presented by Helen West, Community & Economic Development Specialist

Council reviewed a proposal to apply for a Certified Local Government grant in partnership with History Colorado to inventory eight commercial buildings and four schools for potential historic significance. The City has already been awarded $11,000 and is seeking up to $25,000 total to complete the survey, similar to past work done with the Civilian Conservation Corps and Woods Canyon. Potential sites include the Masonic Temple, the Cortez Mill, KRTZ Radio Station, Empire Electric offices, the Johnson Building, a former dry cleaners, a property located at 105 N. Sligo Street, Cortez Middle School, Downey Elementary School, Mesa Elementary School, and Beech Street Preschool. Participation by property owners is not required, as the survey relies solely on publicly available records.

Councilmember DeHaven moved that Resolution No. 2, Series 2026, supporting a grant application of no more than $25,000 to History Colorado, to inventory eight commercial buildings and four schools in Cortez be approved and further authorize the Mayor sign all documents necessary to proceed with the grant if awarded. 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

e. Award the 2025 Recreation Center Slide Tower Restoration Project presented by Creighton Wright, Director of Parks and Recreation

After damage was discovered on the slide tower, both the slide and the leisure pool were closed. The leisure pool was later reopened after the slide was secured with nylon construction fencing to prevent additional concrete from falling. Structural evaluations were completed, and staff recommended hiring a concrete specialist to conduct a full assessment and develop repair plans for bidding. It was determined that previous repairs had not penetrated deeply enough and that internal corrosion had caused pressure that pushed concrete off the tower. A full reconstruction would cost over $1 million, but repairs are considered feasible and are expected to extend the structure’s life by at least 10 years. The repair scope includes removing and replacing damaged concrete, replacing compromised rebar, installing anodes to protect against future corrosion, improving existing concrete, and sealing the structure against moisture. Costs may vary depending on the condition of the concrete and rebar once demolition begins, and a contingency is being requested. Structural Preservation Systems was identified as the most responsive bidder, offering the best price and fastest schedule. The timeline for repairs is not yet certain; staff hopes to complete the work while the outdoor pool is open but cannot guarantee the schedule, noting a desire to coordinate major projects whenever possible.

Councilmember DeHaven moved that Council award the 2025 Recreation Center Slide Tower Restoration Project to Structural Preservation Systems, LLC for $211,181, approve an additional $30,000 contingency that may be allocated by the Parks and Recreation Director, and authorize the City Manager to negotiate, sign, and execute a contract. 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

f. Bidder Selection of 2026 Cortez Raw Water Valve Replacement Project presented by Casey Simpson, Interim Director of Public Works

Council received an update on the replacement of a long standing, nonfunctional water valve at the water treatment plant. Staff recommended awarding the work to TFK, noting that the company was significantly less expensive than other bidders and has a strong track record on previous plant projects. The project was originally budgeted at $470,000. Staff explained that the new valve will improve system redundancy by allowing the city to better monitor required inflow and outflow levels and to redirect water flow more efficiently during maintenance or emergencies. The valve replacement is one component of a larger effort that will eventually include replacing the entire raw water line and potentially adding a second line to ensure service continuity if the main line fails. While not a complete solution, the valve upgrade is an important step toward strengthening the system's long-term reliability.

Councilmember Dobry moved that City Council award the contract for the 2026 Cortez Raw Water Valve Replacement Project to TKF Contracting Inc. at its bid price of $350,447 and authorize the City Manager to negotiate and sign a contract on behalf of the City for this purpose. 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

g. Bidder selection for Professional Architectural Design and Engineering Services for Office Administration Building Renovation at the old Empire Electric Building presented by Casey Simpson, General Services Director

The City is under contract to purchase the Empire Building and plans to conduct a full assessment to determine its best long-term use, whether as office space or as a future home for the police department. Engineering and architecture firms submitted a wide range of proposals, all of which were strong, but prior positive experience and competitive pricing from Reynolds and Ash were significant factors in selecting a firm for the design assessment. The chosen team will evaluate both potential uses, provide cost estimates, and interview department heads to guide the City toward an informed decision. It was noted that if the building is considered for police operations, CDOT-related traffic requirements could add time to the process.

Councilmember Randle moved that City Council award the contract for the Professional Architectural Design and Engineering Services for Office Administration Building Renovation Project to Reynolds Ash & Associates, PLLC at its bid price of $48,270 and that the City Manager be authorized to sign a contract on behalf of the City for this purpose. 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

8. DRAFT RESOLUTION/ORDINANCES: None

9. CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT: None

10. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT: None

11. CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Mayor's Report on Workshop: None

b. Other Board Reports

i. Parks, Recreation and Forestry Advisory Board - Concerns have been raised about persistent mud conditions at the dog park since early November, as well as issues reported by Battle Rock School regarding the Parque de Vida playground. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan request for bid will be released in the coming weeks. The board is working with Southwest Open School to recruit a youth member. The annual plan and the Recreation Center Sales tax issue were discussed.

ii. Library Advisory Board – The meeting was cancelled.

iii. Public Arts Advisory Board – The meeting was cancelled.

iv. Historic Preservation Board – Well organized board that has an annual work plan and strives to educate the community of the history of our area.

v. Golf Advisory Board – Next meeting is January 15 at 8 am.

12. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None

13. OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS

a. Councilmember Spruell discussed community interest in starting an airport advisory board for the airport.

b. Executive Session

At 9:25 p.m. Councilmember Dobry moved that Council go into executive session for a conference with the City Attorney and outside legal counsel for the purpose of receiving legal advice on specific legal questions regarding the Recreation Center Sales Tax pursuant to C.R.S. Section 24-6-402(4)(b). 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

Close of Executive Session: Meeting resumed at 10:08 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, City Manager Drew Sanders, City Attorney Patrick Coleman, outside legal counsel Dalton Kelley and Don BookHardt, City Finance Director Randy Bailey, and Parks and Recreation Director Creighton Wright. No adoption of any proposed policy, position, resolution, rule, regulation or formal action occurred during the executive session.

14. The meeting was adjourned at 10:09 p.m.

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Rachel B. Medina, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Danielle Wells, City Clerk