

CORTEZ CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, APRIL 14, 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 Pro Tem Dennis Spruell, Matthew Keefauver, Bill Lewis, Robert Dobry, Lydia DeHaven and April Randle. Mayor Rachel Medina was absent. Staff present included: Chief of Police Vernon Knuckles, IT Director Jay Rohrer, Parks and Recreation Director Creighton Wright, Finance Director Randy Bailey, Interim Community and Economic Development Director/City Planner Jason Armstrong, Community and Economic Development Specialist Helen West, Airport Director Kyle Sloan, General Services and Public Works Director Casey Simpson, Court Clerk/Administrator Carla Odell, Library Director LeRoy Harris, City Clerk Danielle Wells, City Manager Drew Sanders and City Attorney Patrick Coleman. There were six members of the public present in the audience.

Councilmember Dobry moved that Council approve the Agenda as presented for April 14, 2026. Councilmember Lewis seconded the motion and the vote was as follows:

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

2. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Approval of the minutes for the City Council meeting on March 24, 2026
- b. Approval of the Expenditure List for April 14, 2026
- c. Approval of four Special Event Permits to allow Cortez Retail Enhancement Association (CREA) to host the Third Thursday events on June 18, July 16, August 20, and September 17, 2026 from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The events will be held in Montezuma Park at the corner of Market Street and Montezuma Avenue, Cortez
- d. Approval of two Special Event Permits to Fundamental Needs Inc. to host two special events on April 30, 2026 from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. and May 28, 2026 from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. to be held at 209 W. Main St, Cortez
- e. Approval of a renewal of a Fermented Malt Beverage and Wine Liquor License for Worldwide Restaurant Corporation, DBA Pizza Hut of Cortez, located at 1119 East Main Street, Cortez
- f. Approval of a renewal of a Fermented Malt Beverage Off Premises Liquor License for Western Refining Retail, LLC, DBA Speedway #9496, located at 2021 East Main Street, Cortez
- g. Approval of a renewal of a Fermented Malt Beverage Off Premises Liquor License for Western Refining Retail, LLC, DBA Speedway #9492, located at 2320 East Main Street, Cortez
- h. Approval of a renewal of a Hotel & Restaurant Liquor License for Thai Cortez, LLC, DBA Thai Cortez, located at 1430 East Main Street, Suites 1,2,3, Cortez
- i. Approval of a Transfer of Ownership of a Fermented Malt Beverage and Wine License for Paragon Business Investments, LLC DBA Gopher Food & Fuel, transferring ownership to UPOP Holdings, LLC DBA J.R.'s Country Store #49
- j. Approval of a renewal of a Retail Marijuana Store License for Durango Organics, LLP, DBA DO Cortez, located at 1013 East Main Street, Cortez
- k. Approval of a renewal of a Retail Marijuana Store License for Mountain Annie's LLC, located at 435

East Main Street, Cortez

Councilmember Dobry moved that 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	Absent	Yes	Yes

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

James McGinley urged the council to pair its strong forward planning with essential backward planning to ensure long-term funding and prevent future operational failures.

4. PRESENTATIONS: None

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

a. Ordinance No. 1362, Series 2026 presented by Patrick Coleman, City Attorney

City Attorney Coleman presented the second reading of an ordinance adopting an employment agreement and fixing compensation for City Manager Drew Sanders. City Attorney Coleman explained that amendments to compensation for appointed officials must be accomplished through ordinance adoption. The public hearing was opened with no public comments received. Councilmember Dobry clarified that the salary increase follows the City's established pay scale, representing one step increase consistent with all city employees, and was developed with assistance from a consulting company.

Councilmember Lewis moved that Council approve on second and final reading Ordinance No. 1362, Series 2026, and ordinance adopting an employment agreement and fixing the compensation for City Manager Drew C. Sanders at \$191,776 effective April 13, 2026. Councilmember Dobry seconded the motion and the vote was as follows:

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

b. Ordinance No. 1363, Series 2026 presented by Drew Sanders, City Manager

City Manager Sanders presented the second reading of an ordinance adopting an employment agreement and fixing compensation for City Attorney J. Patrick Coleman. City Manager Sanders explained that this represents a new, more concise employment contract that consolidates four years of contract provisions into a standardized format. The public hearing was opened with no public comments received. Councilmember Randall and Councilmember Lewis both commended the standardization effort, noting it improved upon the previous practice of multiple addendums to the original contract.

Councilmember DeHaven moved that Council approve on second and final reading Ordinance No. 1363, Series 2026, an ordinance adopting an employment agreement and fixing the compensation for City Attorney J. Patrick Coleman at \$174,342 effective April 13, 2026. Councilmember Keefauver seconded the motion and the vote was as follows:

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

c. Ordinance No. 1364, Series 2026 presented by Drew Sanders, City Manager

City Manager Sanders presented the second reading of an ordinance creating an airport advisory committee. Manger Sanders explained the historical context, noting that when the airport was jointly operated with Montezuma County, there had been an airport advisory board with governing authority.

After that was repealed in 2006, no advisory body existed. Manager Sanders emphasized the need for specialized input from the active local aviation community, including private aviation, air medical, and firefighting operations. Discussion arose regarding the proposed composition of two city members and three county members. Mayor Pro Tem Spruell suggested changing this to two city, two county, and one at-large member to provide flexibility in appointments. City Manager Sanders and City Attorney Coleman agreed this was feasible given the advisory nature of the committee. Councilmember Keefauver raised the importance of standardizing youth representation on advisory boards, noting variations across different committees. City Manager Sanders confirmed the ordinance includes provision for a youth member and discussed potential candidates from the Young Eagles program and Civil Air Patrol cadets. The public comment period was opened, and Helen West from the audience suggested a Young Eagles representative for the youth position. Public comment period was closed.

Councilmember Dobry moved that the Cortez City Council approve on second and final reading Ordinance No. 1364, Series 2026, an ordinance creating an airport advisory committee for the City of Cortez, Colorado. Councilmember Keefauver seconded the motion and the vote was as follows:

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

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

7. NEW BUSINESS

a. Consideration of acceptance and award of bid for the 2026 Service Center Upper Yard Fuel delivery System Decommission presented by Casey Simpson, General Services Director

General Services Director Casey Simpson presented the recommendation to award the fuel system decommission project to Advanced Petroleum Repair LLC. Simpson explained that the 1976 fuel delivery system has reached the end of its service life, with inoperable dispensers and increased risk of tank leakage. The City received four bids, with Advanced Petroleum offering the lowest bid at \$38,215, significantly lower than others due to being a local company (saving \$30,000-\$40,000 in mobilization costs) and their assessment that soil contamination is unlikely based on maintenance records. Director Simpson noted that the bid represents only 23% of the \$165,000 budgeted for the project, with potential savings allowing improvements to fuel systems at parks maintenance, golf maintenance, and airport facilities. He confirmed that Advanced Petroleum received the highest score on the evaluation matrix and came with strong references.

Councilmember Lewis moved that Council award the bid for the 2026 Service Center Upper Yard Fuel Delivery System Decommission to Advanced Petroleum Repair, LLC, at its bid price of \$38,215.00 and authorize the City Manager to negotiate and sign a contract with the company on behalf of the City. Councilmember Keefauver seconded the motion and the vote was as follows:

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

b. Vehicle Purchase for City Street Division presented by Drew Sanders, City Manager

City Manager Sanders addressed the council regarding an error in the bid process for purchasing a new one-ton pickup truck. Manager Sanders acknowledged that only receiving one bid raised concerns, particularly after Mayor Pro Tem Spruell's inquiry that morning revealed flaws in their bidding process. Manager Sanders emphasized the importance of accountability and transparency, thanking Mayor Pro Tem Spruell for pointing out the issue and noting that this represents the council system working as intended.

Councilmember Lewis moved to table the vehicle purchase for City Street Division and allow time to resubmit advertisement for bids. Councilmember Dobry seconded the motion and the vote was as follows:

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

c. Appointment to the Public Arts Committee presented by Danielle Wells, City Clerk

City Clerk Wells explained that two youth applicants, Will Blair and Ava Anderson, had applied for the single open position on the Public Arts Committee for a one-year term. Mayor Pro Tem Spruell proposed appointing both applicants, with one serving as a member and one as an alternate, emphasizing the value of youth involvement and the qualifications of both candidates. Councilmember Lewis supported this approach to avoid disappointing qualified applicants.

Councilmember Keefauver moved to appoint Will Blair as a youth member to the Public Arts Committee for a one-year term and Ava Anderson as the youth alternate for the Public Arts Committee for the same amount of time. Councilmember Randle seconded the motion and the vote was as follows:

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

8. DRAFT RESOLUTION/ORDINANCES: None

9. CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

City Attorney Coleman reported on ongoing litigation regarding the closure of the dead-end road on North Adams Street. The court has ordered mediation scheduled for May 14th, with trial scheduled for August if mediation is unsuccessful.

10. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

- I would like to thank our City Clerk, Danielle Wells, for the wonderful and thorough job she has done for the Cortez Municipal Election April 7, 2026. During this critical period, she demonstrated outstanding professional competence in managing the complex administrative demands associated with the election. Her efforts ensured that the coordination between municipal staff, the City Council, partner organizations, and the community remained seamless and transparent. Danielle's commitment to public service and ability to navigate the high-pressure environment of a municipal election reflect the highest standards of our organization. Her contributions have directly impacted the success of the 2026 municipal election cycle.
- I would also like to thank the eleven candidates who came forward to run for the five Cortez City Council open seats. We appreciate your willingness to pursue an elected position in service to your community.
- The City of Cortez will have the honor of hosting the U.S. Navy Brass Band in conjunction with their celebration of the United States 250th anniversary. The performance will take place Thursday, April 23, 2026 in Montezuma Park at 6 p.m. The Navy Band Southwest is stationed in San Diego, CA and performs throughout the Southwest region.

11. CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. Mayor's Report on Workshop – Mayor Pro Tem Spruell reported that the workshop included interviews with two youth candidates for the Public Arts Committee and an executive session where

Council received education from Affordable Housing Coordinator Jennifer Lopez about a proposed housing project on West Seventh Street.

b. Other Board Reports

- i. Golf Course Advisory Committee - Councilmember Lewis reported that the committee met April 3rd with revenues up from \$24,720 last year to \$28,226 this year to date. Water allocation discussions revealed the course will receive only 35% of normal allocation, likely lasting through June at best. The first tournament of the season, "the Masters," had over 100 players. The committee also reviewed the parks and recreation master plan.
- ii. Four Corners Community Band - Councilmember Randle attended their April 8th concert at the Lighthouse Event Center, praising their performance and noting the city's \$1,000 grant support. She was impressed to see Helen West performing with the 38-member band that practices every Monday.
- iii. Historic Preservation Board - Councilmember Randle provided an extensive report on the board's April 7th meeting, highlighting multiple anniversary celebrations: USA's 250th, Colorado's 150th, Cortez's 140th, Mesa Verde's 120th, and the Historic Preservation Board's 30th anniversary. The board, established in 1996 to protect historic signs, maintains a city register with over 50 eligible properties. May is Historic Preservation Month featuring two walking tours: a Montezuma Avenue residential tour and a downtown commercial buildings tour, both launching during Heritage Days May 1st-2nd. The board received approval for a CLG grant to survey commercial properties and school buildings, though funding remains pending. A special grant allows waiving the \$75 application fee for historic property registration through 2026, and new commemorative plaques will be available for registered properties. Councilmember Randle noted an interesting real estate trend: fewer home sales in Cortez but a 20% increase in prices, with properties staying on the market longer.
- iv. Library Advisory Board - Councilmember DeHaven reported increased visitation and circulation at the library. The Friends of the Library raised over \$800 through Valentine's Day activities. Story time participation has tripled, and interlibrary loans are up. The library updated computer software to resolve timing issues and added 3D printers and laptops. Programming includes monthly story times for families from Tec Nos Pos and master gardener workshops. Library Director LeRoy Harris has been updating job descriptions and reviewing all library policies. The library cleaned its system during the transition to Aspen Cat, resulting in 6,500 active cardholders.
- v. Parks Recreation Forestry Advisory Board - Councilmember Keefauver reported on the April 2nd meeting, noting subcommittee meetings and eight bids received for the master plan update. The board is developing a three-year planning approach with first-year planning, second-year design, and third-year build-out phases. They identified seven priority areas for 2027: master plan, rec center sales tax, financial planning, maintenance best practices, marketing and branding, leadership development. The pool is opening soon, the golf course is greening up, and the summer recreation program expects to be full.
- vi. Councilmember Keefauver reflected on his 13 years of service (second time around since 2006), praising all city employees for their dedication and responsiveness, encouraging new council members to ask questions and utilize staff expertise.

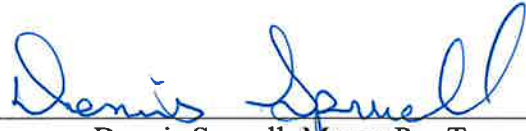
12. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None

13. OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS

- a. Mayor Pro Tem Spruell used this time to recognize the outgoing council members, praising the commitment and knowledge of Matt Keefauver, Lydia DeHaven, and Robert Dobry. He expressed

gratitude for their service and noted their willingness to continue helping the community and new council members.

14. The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.



Dennis Spruell, Mayor Pro Tem

ATTEST:



Danielle Wells, City Clerk