

CORTEZ CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR WORKSHOP/SPECIAL MEETING
TUESDAY, MAY 11, 2021, 5:30 p.m.
Hybrid Meeting/in-person and Virtual Contact by ZOOM

1. The workshop was called to order at 5:30 p.m., with a Hybrid Meeting/in-person and Virtual Contact by ZOOM format. Councilmembers present in the Council Chambers included Mayor Mike Lavey, Robert Dobry, Mayor Pro-tem Rachel Medina, David Rainey, and Arlina Yazzie. Councilmember Orly Lucero participated by ZOOM. Director of Finance Kelly Koskie, Recyclable Material Coordinator Colby Earley, City Engineer Chad Hill, Director of General Services Rick Smith, Director of Public Works Phil Johnson, Director of Parks and Recreation Dean Palmquist, Chief of Police Vernon Knuckles, Interim City Manager Chris Burkett, City Clerk Linda Smith, City Attorney Mike Green, IT Support Technician Kyle Kuhn, IT Support Technician Jason Gray and System Analyst Shay Allred were present in the Council Chambers. There were three people signed up as participants on ZOOM and five people present in the Council Chambers.

2. Recyclable Material Coordinator Earley gave an update on the material management information that is located on the City of Cortez website. He scrolled through the website pointing out various topics noting the list of what is allowed in the recycling (green) bins. He noted that the site is a multi-jurisdiction (Region 9 participants) and has a pull-down tab that specifically notes the City of Cortez information. Discussion was held on the regular pick-up days.

3. An update was given on the Paths to Mesa Verde Trail by James Dietrich, Natural Resources Planning and Public Lands Coordinator. He gave an overview of the project which began in 2003 and commented on the plan which is divided into four sections: Section A is Cortez high school to the fairgrounds; Section B is the fairgrounds to Mesa Verde; Section C is Mesa Verde to Mud Creek; and Section D is Mud Creek to Mancos. He spoke about working on the project with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and the submittal of Federal grants to help fund the project. He stated that the Mancos side has been progressing forward; however, the Cortez side has not proceeded as quickly. He spoke about funding of the City's side and what the plan may look like should it proceed. He spoke about working with the private landowners to obtain the rights-of-way to complete the trail. Mr. Dietrich spoke about funding that is due from the City from the initial agreement that was made in 2015 and commented that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) should be made with the City should the project continue forward. Mayor Pro-tem Medina asked that Director of Finance Koskie look into the agreement and what may be owed to Montezuma County for the project. Discussion was held on the importance of keeping recreational activities moving forward in the community.

4. Council held discussion on the current Local Vendor Preference regulations. Director of General Services Smith reviewed the current City regulations adopted in 2009 as well as the previous regulations that were in place from 1986-2009. He stated there are two sides to having a local vendor preference as one side supports local business and the other side is Council spending taxpayer's money responsibly. Discussion was held on the bidding process and how

the bids are posted on the Bid Net system. Director of General Services Smith spoke about what other communities have done in regards to local vendor preference and discussion was held on the City of Durango's regulations compared to the City of Cortez regulations. Councilmember Dobry stated that he would like the City's regulations updated to be similar to the Durango regulations (local preference not to exceed \$25,000 instead of \$2,500 and raise the percentages on the preferences). Discussion was also held on who should be included in the preference (City/County limits/other). Council will continue discussion on the issue at the next worksession.

5. Discussion was held on why the Tree Commission was joined with the Parks and Recreation Board creating the Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Advisory Board. Director of Parks and Recreation Palmquist spoke about the arborist position, which he noted is an employee of the Public Works Department. He reviewed the information received from the Public Works Department regarding the maintenance of the City trees in 2020. He spoke about the budget for maintaining the trees in Cortez and commented that the amount is not enough for a preventative maintenance program. Roman Jefferson, Certified Arborist and currently serving on the Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Advisory Board, spoke about his reasoning as to why he is requesting that the Tree Commission be re-established. He noted that the trees in the community are not the focus of the Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Advisory Board and that the trees are really important and the City should have a full-time arborist. It was noted that a tree assessment was completed by the Colorado Forest Service in 2009 and that a new assessment should be done. Discussion was held on who would serve on the Tree Commission (how many members, etc.) and Director of Parks and Recreation Palmquist commented that the Parks and Golf Superintendents should be a part of the commission if it was re-established as they are responsible for the City's trees in the parks and golf course. Discussion was held on budgeting in 2022 for tree maintenance so preventative care can be done in the future.

6. Director of Public Works Johnson spoke about the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) Multimodal Options Fund Grant noting that in January 2020 the City applied for, and was approved for, a \$146,000 matching fund grant to improve safety on certain street crossings/intersections. He stated that discussion has been held on the bidding requirements of CDOT which he noted drive the costs higher due to their construction requirements. He stated that staff would like to recommend that the proposed 2021 City project (which is not in CDOT right-of-way) be reduced to improving the area on the south side of Main Street via Madison Street within the City's current budget and rejecting the CDOT grant. He stated that the Montezuma Avenue project could be done at a later date. Council asked that more information be shared with Council on the costs (with CDOT funding and without) at a future worksession. Discussion was held on how other CDOT projects have caused extra funding/work for other projects in the community. City Engineer Hill commented that engineering has been completed but will be significant for the projects should CDOT be involved as they would require property surveys as well as other items which drives the cost up.

7. Karen Sheek spoke about the background of the Imagination Library Grant which is funded by the Dolly Parton Foundation (in honor of her father) which was originally started in 1995. She noted that the Cortez program began through the Rotary Club in 2012 and in 2017 approximately 650 children received books each month. She noted that the Rotary Club discontinued the program in 2019 due to funding, which is the postage portion. She spoke about the value of books being read by children and that children are the future of the community. She commented

that an anonymous donation of \$100,000 was recently given for the Imagination Library program and after speaking with the Onward Foundation it has been determined that an additional \$100,000 would need to be raised to make the program sustainable. Discussion was held on where additional funding could come from to increase the endowment and Council asked if funding could be given from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Ms. Sheek stated that she looks forward to hearing from Council on the possibilities of helping with the program.

8. General Council Discussion included the City approving a Proclamation for Pride Month at the next Council meeting and the possibility of changing the Council worksession to another night, start the worksession later (possibly 6:30 p.m. rather than 5:30 p.m.), or allowing for a break between the worksession and the regular Council meeting. Council agreed that discussion would be held with the new City Manager on how to conduct the worksession/agenda in a more timely manner.

The worksession meeting was adjourned at 7:27 p.m.