

CORTEZ CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR WORKSHOP/SPECIAL MEETING
TUESDAY, JUNE 8, 2021, 5:45 p.m.
Hybrid Meeting/in-person and Virtual Contact by ZOOM

1. The workshop was called to order at 5:45 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 was absent. Director of Finance Kelly Koskie, Director of General Services Rick Smith, Director of Parks and Recreation Dean Palmquist, Assistant Chief of Police Andy Brock, City Clerk Linda Smith, City Manager Drew Sanders, City Attorney Mike Green, IT Support Technician Kyle Kuhn, Network Administrator Bill Kuhn, and System Analyst Shay Allred were present in the Council Chambers. There were six people present in the Council chambers and three people on ZOOM.

2. Interviews were held with the four candidates interested in the open Council seat: Houston Frizzell, Matthew Keefauver, Alan Rolston, and Mitchell Toms. Consideration for filling the open seat would be held by Council during the regular meeting (New Business 7i).

3. Discussion was held on the City considering a possible occupation tax/fee being placed on the transactions of marijuana sold at the dispensaries in Cortez. City Clerk Smith commented that information received from Durango notes that they did not implement a transaction fee and feel that their licensing fees cover the amount that they would possibly receive from an additional tax. She commented that Mancos does charge the fee and introduced Mancos Town Administrator Heather Alvarez who spoke about the process they have implemented and the ordinance which was taken to the voters of Mancos and approved in 2014. She commented that the tax would need to comply with TABOR and commented Sherman and Howard (finance/bond counsel) worked with the Town of Mancos to prepare the ordinance/ballot question for compliance. She spoke about the transaction fee (\$2 to \$10) that was implemented by Mancos and commented that the ballot question approved allows Council to set the fee as they feel is needed. She noted that if the fee was more than the ordinance allowed, it would require voter approval. She noted that currently there is a \$3 fee on each marijuana transaction. She spoke about the amount that is received from the occupation tax and noted that the amount is not designated for a specific fund but is accounted for in the General Fund and can be restricted by the Town Board as they chose. She commented that currently the funds are being held for Capital Projects. Council asked for staff to look into the issue more and report back.

4. Parks and Recreation Director Palmquist spoke about the “rotary forum” panels that are being proposed for the park. He commented that the Cortez Rotary Club and the City’s Public Arts Advisory Committee have been working together on a concept to provide art in public places. He spoke about the panels which are artwork attached to metal panels and are proposed for location in Veteran’s Park. Bill Teetzel, Rotary Club President, spoke about the project which includes portable panels that would be placed along the sidewalk with various cultural narratives and would include a chalkboard adjacent to the playground for children to enjoy. It was noted that the Veteran’s group would be involved in the discussion as the vision of the

panels/project moves forward. Discussion was held on the panels being tagged/vandalized and how to keep the panels maintained. Also, the size of the panels was discussed.

5. Discussion was held on budget adjustments that are being recommended for reconsideration by Council. Director of Finance Koskie stated that City revenues are continuing to come in higher than projected and higher than previous years. She commented that she would like the budget cuts that were recommended in 2021 to be reinstated as some of the funding is crucial for each department to fulfill the needs of City functions. Discussion was held on City staff positions that were not filled during the COVID pandemic and it was noted that some positions would be filled with the approval. It was noted that travel and training may not be used by the departments if training is not available or can be obtained on-line. Council supported moving the recommendations forward for Council to review.

6. General Council Discussion. Mayor Pro-tem Medina spoke of a USDA Rural Development housing preservation grant and staff was asked to look into the grant. Councilmember Yazzie asked if someone could speak on the road construction issues that are continuing in the community. City Manager Sanders stated that the construction company has been in communication with the City and he would reach out to see if more information can be distributed on the continued construction that will be happening throughout the summer in Cortez.

The worksession meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.