

MINUTES

The City of Douglas Mayor and Council met in a Special Meeting on Wednesday, January 7, 2026, at 5:30 p.m., at City Hall Council Chamber, 425 10th Street. The Honorable Mayor Jose Grijalva called the meeting to order.

1. **CALL TO ORDER.** 5:30 p.m.

2. **ROLL CALL.**

	<u>PRESENT</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
MAYOR, JOSE GRIJALVA	X	
MAYOR PRO TEMPORE, RAY SHELTON	X	
COUNCILMEMBER, MELISSA RODRIGUEZ	X	
COUNCILMEMBER, JOSE MONTANO	X	
COUNCILMEMBER,		
COUNCILMEMBER, MARIA DILLMAN	X	
COUNCILMEMBER, RICHARD C. ACOSTA	X	
CITY MANAGER, ANA URQUIJO	X	
CITY ATTORNEY, DENIS FITZGIBBONS	X	
CITY TREASURER, ALEJANDRO MARTINEZ	X	
CITY CLERK, ALMA ANDRADE	X	

3. **PERSONS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL IN WRITING OR VERBALLY ON ANY ITEM NOT ON THE AGENDA.**

Diana LaMar of 1303 F Avenue addressed the council, she thanked Police Chief Fullen and the City of Douglas for their professionalism during recent peaceful rallies, and referenced the January 6 Capitol riot as a reminder to rely on facts over harmful rhetoric.

Ms. LaMar raised concerns about surveillance and community militarization, citing reports that Flock license plate reader systems may be used by ICE and could collect and share personal data without public consent. She stated Douglas has an estimated five cameras and requested the council increase transparency, clarify ownership, reconsider the technology's use, and address the issue promptly.

Mayor Grijalva directed staff to update the council regarding the cameras.

4. **DISCUSSION/DECISION on APPROVALS.**

- A. **RESOLUTION NO. 26-1711**, a Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the City of Douglas, Cochise County, Arizona, **AUTHORIZING** the City of Douglas to **ACCEPT GRANT FUNDING** and **ENTER** into a **SUBGRANTEE AGREEMENT** with the **STATE OF ARIZONA** for a **REIMBURSABLE GRANT FUND** allocation in the amount of **\$396,000** for **EQUIPMENT** under the **LOCAL BORDER SUPPORT** program.

Chief Fullen provided background on the item. He informed the council that the Arizona Department of Public Safety awarded the department \$396,000 through the Local Border Support program, with a performance period from July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2027. He credited Lieutenant Lomeli for securing the funding, which will be used to purchase \$330,000 in multi-band mobile radios and \$66,000 for their installation and programming.

Chief Fullen explained that the program supports enhanced law enforcement efforts related to border-related crimes through cooperation between DPS and the Douglas Police Department. He also described existing partnerships with Cochise County and SEACOM that have improved dispatch redundancy and noted that the new radios would enhance interoperable communications for officers with local, county, state, and federal partners. Chief Fullen commended Lieutenant Lomeli's initiative and requested council approval.

Motion by Council Member Acosta, second by Council Member Shelton to approve Resolution No. 26-1711.

Roll call: Voted in Favor: Mayor Jose Grijalva, Council Members: Melissa Rodriguez, Jose Montañó, Ray Shelton, Maria Dillman and Richard Acosta. Voted Against: None.

5. DISCUSSION with POSSIBLE DECISION on WARD 3 SEAT VACANCY.

A. WARD 3 CANDIDATE INTERVIEWS.

Alma Andrade addressed the council regarding the process to fill a council vacancy, citing City Charter Article 2, Section 13b, which requires the council to appoint a qualified resident from the affected ward by majority vote within a specified timeframe. She reported that former Council Member Danya Acosta resigned on December 10, 2025, prompting a public notice process to solicit candidates, which resulted in three qualified letters of interest, while two additional individuals were deemed ineligible due to residency requirements. Ms. Andrade further cited Article 2, Section 13c, explaining that because more than two years remain in the term, the appointed member will serve until the next election, after which an elected council member will complete the remainder of the term. She noted that the seat will appear on the ballot for the August primary election.

Mayor Grijalva explained the interview process, noting it would be different from Ms. Dillman's appointment since she was the only candidate. He stated he had talked to the candidates and they would be called up to read their letter of interest and state their case, after which council could ask questions. The candidates were comfortable with everyone being in the same room. He informed council that while executive session was not mandatory on the agenda, the option was available if any council member felt they should go into executive session during the process. The interviews would proceed in the order applications were received.

Gustavo Durazo formally expressed his interest in serving as the Ward 3 representative for the City of Douglas, citing his lifelong ties to the community, commitment to public service, and desire to contribute to the city he calls home. A Douglas native, Mr. Durazo emphasized his understanding of local needs and values, particularly for working families, seniors, and underserved residents.

He outlined his professional background as an adult gerontological primary care nurse practitioner with Chiricahua Community Health Centers, noting that his healthcare experience has strengthened his skills in listening, ethical decision-making, and advocacy. He stated that these skills, along with his roles as a husband and father, inform his approach to leadership and policy-making.

In response to council questions, Mr. Durazo identified Douglas's greatest strength as its strong sense of community and its primary challenge as limited public awareness of available resources, particularly in healthcare and transportation. He discussed the importance of better connecting residents to existing services and amplifying community strengths. He affirmed his availability to meet the demands of the position and expressed interest in projects that promote responsible growth, economic development, tourism, and preservation of Douglas's history and character, including opportunities related to the airport and community events.

Mr. Durazo concluded by stating that he would serve with integrity, compassion, and objectivity, emphasizing his ability to set aside personal beliefs to focus on the broader needs and best interests of the Douglas community.

Beth Phagan addressed the council and expressed her interest in representing Ward 3, citing her deep family roots in Douglas and her commitment to integrity, collaboration, and practical problem-solving. She outlined her educational background in construction project management from Arizona State University and explained how her training provides insight into infrastructure, budgeting, and contract oversight.

Ms. Phagan described her 30-year career as an independent insurance broker, emphasizing her experience in risk assessment, regulatory compliance, financial analysis, and contract management as skills relevant to municipal governance. She also noted that she is bilingual in English and Spanish and has experience in community service and nonprofit financial oversight.

In response to council questions, Ms. Phagan identified economic conditions, job opportunities, access to healthcare, and neighborhood services as key issues for Ward 3. She stressed the importance of listening to

constituents, building relationships, and understanding community priorities before advancing initiatives. She explained that her professional background has prepared her to navigate regulatory environments, manage contracts responsibly, and engage with the public in a small-town setting.

Susan Kramer addressed the council and expressed her interest in serving, highlighting her long-standing residency in Douglas since the early 1980s and her extensive background in education, public service, and community involvement. She outlined her career as a teacher with Douglas Unified School District, her long-term leadership roles in the Douglas Education Association, and her subsequent service as an elected school board member for eight years. Following retirement, she became a local business owner and continued active civic engagement.

Ms. Kramer described her leadership roles with the Greater Douglas Chamber of Commerce and other community organizations, emphasizing her belief that active involvement is essential to community health. She cited her strengths in communication, accessibility, and consensus-building, developed through her teaching and school board experience, and stated her intention to be highly available to residents of her ward.

In response to council questions, Ms. Kramer discussed challenges facing the Chamber, efforts to rebuild membership, and the importance of revitalizing downtown Douglas, promoting economic activity, and effectively communicating the benefits of development to the public. She emphasized collaboration, transparency, and her willingness to recuse herself from council matters involving the Chamber to avoid conflicts of interest, stating her commitment to ethical service and the long-term growth and vitality of Douglas.

Mayor Grijalva then asked council if there was a motion to go into executive session to discuss the interviews. No motion was made.

B. COUNCIL MEMBER APPOINTMENT for WARD 3.

Motion by Council Member Montaña, second by Council Member Rodriguez to appoint Gustavo Durazo as Ward 3 Council Member.

Roll call: Voted in Favor: Mayor Jose Grijalva, Council Members: Melissa Rodriguez, Jose Montaña, Ray Shelton, Maria Dillman and Richard Acosta. Voted Against: None.

C. POSSIBLE OATH of OFFICE to the NEW COUNCIL MEMBER.

The oath of office was administered, and Ms. Andrade presented a certificate of appointment and photos were taken.

D. POSSIBLE COMMENTS by NEWLY APPOINTED COUNCIL MEMBER.

Council Member Durazo stated he would try his best to represent his ward and the community as a whole, and be as objective as he can, as he does every day at work.

6. DISCUSSION/DECISION to call for and CONDUCT an EXECUTIVE SESSION.

- A. Under the authority of ARS 38-431.03 (A3) and (A7) to consider its position, instruct its representatives and obtain legal advice regarding the **purchase, sale or development of real property within the City of Douglas or near the new commercial port of entry.**


Motion by Council Member Rodriguez, second by Council Member Shelton to enter into executive session at 6:33 p.m.

Roll call: Voted in Favor: Mayor Jose Grijalva, Council Members: Melissa Rodriguez, Jose Montaña, Gustavo Durazo, Ray Shelton, Maria Dillman and Richard Acosta. Voted Against: None.

Executive session was adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

7. ADJOURNMENT.

**Motion by Council Member Shelton, second by Council Member Dillman to adjourn the meeting at 7:09 p.m.
Motion passed unanimously.**

Prepared by:  Cynthia Acuña Robles, Deputy City Clerk