

Minutes

The City of Douglas Mayor and Council met in a Regular Meeting on Wednesday, January 14, 2026, at 6:00 p.m., at City Hall Council Chamber, 425 10th Street. The Honorable Mayor Jose Grijalva called the meeting to order.

1. **CALL TO ORDER. 6:00 p.m.**
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE. By Council.**
3. **INVOCATION. Pastor Fernando Betancourt - Ministerios Tierra de Bendición.**

Pastor Fernando Betancourt from Ministerios Tierra de Bencidion delivered the invocation. Following the invocation, Mayor Grijalva asked Pastor Betancourt to share information about his ministry. Pastor Betancourt explained that his church is located in the old Kmart building on Highway 80, with bilingual services held every Sunday at 10:30 a.m. He expressed his love for the Douglas community and his desire to help the community prosper.

4. ROLL CALL.

	PRESENT	ABSENT
MAYOR, JOSE GRIJALVA	X	
MAYOR PRO TEMPORE, RAY SHELTON	X	
COUNCILMEMBER, MELISSA RODRIGUEZ	X	
COUNCILMEMBER, JOSE MONTANO	X	
COUNCILMEMBER, GUSTAVO DURAZO JR.	X	
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	

5. EVENTS UPDATE.

Representatives from the Aquatics and Recreation Departments provided updates on upcoming events. The Aquatic Center will be closed for renovations of the men's restroom. Thunder Mountain Wrestling will present "The Summit" on January 31st at Paul Huber Middle School. A glass painting workshop titled "Love is in the Art" will be held on February 6th at Raul Castro Park, with separate sessions for youth and adults. Los Apson will be performing on February 14th at the Cochise County Fairgrounds.

The Douglas Public Library presented their January calendar of events, including relaxing activities on Mondays, STEAM Club on Tuesdays, movies for kids and teens on Wednesdays, and story time on Thursdays. Special events include a movie for teens on January 22nd, winter paint night for adults on January 23rd, and "Songs and Stories of the American West" on January 28th.

6. MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBER UPDATES AND/OR REPORTS.

Council Member Rodriguez shared results from her December 20, 2026, youth engagement event held during an ice-skating day. She gathered feedback about what young people like about Douglas and what they would like to see in the city. Key findings included a high demand for recreational spaces and activities, interest in free or low-cost events, and requests for more food and shopping options. Specific attractions desired by teens included a trampoline park, mini golf, bowling alley, and movie theater. Safety and infrastructure concerns included better street lighting, safer crossings, and improved grass in parks.

Council Member Montano reported meeting with constituents who had questions about the Boys and Girls Club and community kitchen. He also organized a golf outing with approximately 22 golfers from outside Douglas, providing them with information about the progress of the golf course.

Council Member Durazo, newly appointed to the council, shared that during his first week in office, constituents had raised concerns about street conditions, especially potholes after recent rainfall. Business owners on G Avenue have also discussed better organization and publicity for events.

Mayor Pro Tempore Shelton reported positive feedback from constituents about the golf course, the airport park's walking area, Ross store's positive impact on JC Penney, the ice-skating event, and new sidewalks on Tenth Street.

Council Member Dillman thanked the city for their work on holiday events, congratulated the Mayor on his State of the City address, and recognized Finance Director/Treasurer Mr. Martinez for the certificate of achievement for excellence in financial reporting.

Council Member Acosta raised concerns about the lack of places for high school students to gather for study and project work. He noted that businesses close early, limiting options for students who need places to meet outside school hours.

Mayor Grijalva thanked attendees of the State of the City address, including council members and the Mayor of Sahuarita. He mentioned the Herald's recognition of him as Person of the Year, congratulated Council Member Durazo, and provided updates on the asphalt plant, G Avenue events, and an upcoming Los Apson performance on Valentine's Day. He also noted a concern about sidewalks near Huber Middle School and expressed appreciation for positive media coverage about lighting in Quail Run.

7. READING of PROCLAMATION.

A. BLACK HISTORY MONTH.

Mayor Grijalva read a proclamation declaring February 2026 as Black History Month, recognizing the contributions of African Americans to the community, state, nation, and world. The proclamation acknowledged the history of Black History Month dating back to 1926, the diversity of Douglas's founding population, and the achievements of African Americans in various fields.

B. MEXICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE DAY.

Mayor Grijalva read a proclamation declaring February 2, 2026, as Mexican American Heritage Day in Douglas. The proclamation recognized the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo signed on February 2, 1848, which created the Mexican American identity, and acknowledged the contributions of Mexican Americans to the nation's cultural, economic, and social fabric.

8. PRESENTATION of AWARDS.

A. AWARD of CERTIFICATE of ACHIEVEMENT for EXCELLENCE in FINANCIAL REPORTING for FY 2024 AUDIT.

Mr. Martinez announced that the City of Douglas Finance Department had received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for fiscal year 2024. He noted that the city has received this award every year since 2008. The award represents the highest honor in government accounting and financial reporting, demonstrating the city's commitment to excellence, honesty, and transparency.

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

- Ida Ann Pedrego of 1815 5th Street presented a petition signed by 247 citizens opposing the widening of sidewalks and narrowing of streets in the downtown area. She expressed concern about the removal of turning lanes and argued that many council members had not adequately consulted with constituents before voting on the project. Council Members Montaño and Shelton briefly responded, with Council Member Montaño stating he had reviewed the plans before voting and Council Member Shelton indicating willingness to look into the concerns.
- Steve Helfrich of 1303 F Avenue, an architect with Studio Architecture, introduced himself to the council. He mentioned that he has purchased and renovated the old Douglas Hotel and offered his professional services to the city for various projects, including the streetscape plans, community kitchen, and work with micro-businesses and arts initiatives.
- Diana LaMar of 1303 F Avenue addressed statements labeling protest groups like Douglas Indivisible as terrorist organizations. She emphasized that peaceful protest is a constitutional right and requested that the council affirm its commitment to free speech, due process, and limited cooperation with ICE. She asked that these commitments be formalized as a resolution.
- Supervisor Kathleen Gomez of 2350 12th Street, discussed county islands within Douglas, including the area around the Jewish cemetery. She mentioned a meeting with Sunnyside Fire District regarding budget impacts from the city's annexation part of their service area and emphasized the need for collaboration with SEACOM. She outlined plans for an economic study focused on Douglas and the port as priority areas, efforts to establish a hospital in Douglas, and work on a new port of authority board.

10. DISCUSSION/DECISION on APPROVAL of CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:

- A. **EXPENDITURES** for the month of **DECEMBER 2025** totaling **\$5,050,809.31**.
- B. **MEETING MINUTES** for **DECEMBER 10, 2025**.
- C. **FINANCE COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT** of **DANITZA MORENO** and **KATHLEEN GOMEZ**.
- D. **FIRE PUBLIC SAFETY RETIREMENT BOARD APPOINTMENT** of **ANA URQUIJO**.
- E. **MUNICIPAL PROPERTY CORPORATION-GOLF COURSE APPOINTMENT** of **JOSE GRIJALVA**.
- F. **PLANNING and ZONING COMMISSION APPOINTMENT** of **RAY NOVOA**.
- G. **BID AWARD** to **SMYTH INDUSTRIES, INC** for the **INSTALLATION** of the **EQUIPMENT** for the New Water Production **WELL #18**.
- H. **BID AWARD** of Request for Qualifications for Economic Development Consulting Services to **RAMIREZ ADVISORS INTER-NATIONAL, LLC**.
- I. **RESOLUTION NO. 26-1712**, a Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the City of Douglas, Cochise County, Arizona, **AUTHORIZING** the execution of the **INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT** between the **CITY of DOUGLAS** and **COCHISE COUNTY** to **PROVIDE CERTAIN ELECTION SUPPLIES** and **SERVICES** for the **City of Douglas Special Election** scheduled for **May 19, 2026**.
- J. **RESOLUTION NO. 26-1713**, a Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the City of Douglas, Cochise County, Arizona, **ADOPTING** the City of Douglas **2026 PUBLIC SAFETY PERSONNEL RETIREMENT SYSTEM PENSION FUNDING POLICY**.
- K. **RESOLUTION NO. 26-1714**, a Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the City of Douglas, Cochise County, Arizona, **RATIFYING** the City Manager's signature **ACCEPTING** the **SAFE STREETS FOR ALL (SS4A) GRANT AWARD** in the amount of **\$440,000**, **APPROVING** the required **LOCAL MATCH** of **\$110,000**.
- L. **RESOLUTION NO. 26-1715**, a Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the City of Douglas, Cochise County, Arizona, **ACCEPTING GRANT FUNDING** from the **LEGACY FOUNDATION** of Southeast Arizona for Project Lifeline: Advancing CPR with Innovation, in the amount of **\$50,000**.

Motion by Council Member Rodriguez, second by Council Member Shelton to approve the consent agenda items as presented.

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

11. DISCUSSION/DECISION on APPROVALS.

A. SECOND READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 25-1217, an Ordinance of the Mayor and Council of the City of Douglas, Cochise County, Arizona, **AMENDING CHAPTER 8.28** of the **DOUGLAS MUNICIPAL CODE** relating to NOISE, establishing severability of components of ordinance; and establishing an effective date thereof.

Ms. Andrade explained that this ordinance amends Chapter 8.28 of the Douglas Municipal Code relating to noise. The amendment clarifies when activities are in violation of the noise ordinance and adds an exception for special occasions and social gatherings between 10 PM and 12 AM midnight on Fridays and Saturdays that do not create unreasonable noise.

Motion by Council Member Montaño, second by Council Member Dillman to approve the second reading of Ordinance No. 25-1217.

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

B. SECOND READING OF ORDINANCE 25-1223, an Ordinance of the Mayor and Council of the City of Douglas, Cochise County, Arizona, **AUTHORIZING** the **EXECUTION** of a **PROPERTY EXCHANGE AGREEMENT** with the **DOUGLAS UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 27**, for sections of real property, identified as the **DOUGLAS AQUATIC CENTER**, the **OLD SEGREGATED HISTORIC SCHOOL** and **OTHER VACANT LAND PARCELS** in exchange for sections of real property identified as the **ARMANDO DE LUCAS FOOTBALL** and **COPPER KING BASEBALL STADIUMS**; Establishing severability of components of ordinance; and establishing an effective date thereof.

Mr. Pedroza presented the property exchange agreement with Douglas Unified School District. The agreement would transfer ownership of the football and baseball fields to DUSD, while the city would receive the aquatic center, the old segregated historic school, and six vacant parcels. The properties are of approximately equal value (\$435,282 for DUSD properties and \$438,058 for city properties). Both parties will continue to share facilities through new intergovernmental agreements.

Motion by Council Member Shelton, second by Council Member Acosta to approve the second reading of Ordinance No. 25-1223.

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

12. CITY MANAGER REPORTS.

Ms. Urquijo provided updates on several topics:

- The Douglas Regional Economic Development Corporation (DREDC) has been dissolved as it has become primarily a pass-through for payments to a contractor.
- Los Apson will perform at the fairgrounds on February 14 from 7-11 PM, with ticket sales beginning on Friday.
- A futures meeting with the council is scheduled to prepare for the upcoming budget cycle.
- Infrastructure updates included progress on the SCADA system for monitoring water wells and the equipping of Well 18 at Causey Park.

- The GSA meeting regarding the port of entry confirmed the project remains on schedule.
- A Brownfield Coalition grant application is being prepared with multiple counties.
- The west annexation plan is proceeding with pre-annexation agreements.
- The asphalt plant timeline includes training in Tennessee next week, construction phases from February through April, and production beginning in May-June.
- The Boys and Girls Club have 20 registered participants and is setting up an innovation lab donated by Cox Communication.

13. FUTURE AGENDA ITEM REQUESTS from **MAYOR and **COUNCIL**.**

No future item requests from council.

14. ADJOURNMENT.

Motion by Council Member Rodriguez, second by Council Member Montaño to adjourn the meeting at 7:16 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Prepared by:



Alma Andrade, City Clerk