



**MINUTES**

The City of Douglas Mayor and Council met in a Special Meeting on Wednesday, October 29, 2025, 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, DANYA ACOSTA	X	X (EXCUSED)
COUNCILMEMBER, MELISSA RODRIGUEZ		X (EXCUSED)
COUNCILMEMBER, JOSE MONTANO	X	
COUNCILMEMBER, RAY SHELTON	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 (EXCUSED)
CITY CLERK, ALMA ANDRADE	X	

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

Ms. Andrade stated no public participation forms were submitted.

4. **READING OF PROCLAMATIONS.**

**A. EXTRA MILE DAY.**

Mayor Grijalva read a proclamation declaring November 1, 2025 as Extra Mile Day, detailing Douglas as a community that recognizes the special vibrancy created when citizens collectively go the extra mile in personal effort, volunteerism, and service. It encouraged citizens to maximize their personal contributions to the community and celebrated individuals and organizations who make a difference and lift up fellow community members.

Mayor Grijalva presented Extra Mile Day awards to three honorees:

Ruth Betty Durazo was recognized for her contributions to the Douglas community through her family businesses, Border Taco and Chatitas, and her active involvement in community events and church programs. The award was offered in honor and memory of her recently deceased father, Francisco Durazo, who was described as a beloved pillar of the community. Mayor Grijalva shared personal memories of Francisco Durazo's dedication to helping the community and noted how Ruth continues that legacy through her businesses' support of fundraisers and community events, particularly mentioning their accommodation of senior citizen events and donations to Loretto fundraisers.

Margaret White was honored for her service as City Library Manager at the Douglas Public Library for the past nine years. With dual master's degrees in English and Library and Information Science, she brought over 25 years of experience from public, academic, and special libraries. Under her leadership, the library recently won first place for customer service in the annual Best of Douglas Competition. Mayor Grijalva praised the library as a safe haven and de facto community center, noting the warm welcomes, clean facilities, and exemplary customer service provided by White's team. He suggested the library staff could teach customer service classes to others.

Ida Pedrego, Mayor Grijalva's former third-grade teacher from A Avenue Elementary School, was recognized for her lifelong contributions to the Douglas community. Though a written biography was not available, the Mayor spoke extemporaneously about her impact. He credited her with teaching him budgeting skills and citizenship values in

elementary school. He noted her ongoing community involvement through initiatives like Energize Douglas and spring festivals, and her role as president of the Pan Am credit union. Despite health challenges, she continues to advocate for the community, serving as a liaison between residents who feel uncomfortable attending meetings and city leadership.

Following the presentations, Mayor and Council posed for photos with the award recipients.

**B. VETERANS DAY.**

Mayor Grijalva read a proclamation declaring November 11, 2025 as Veterans Day. The proclamation honored the courageous men and women of the United States Armed Forces who have served and sacrificed to protect freedoms and values. It quoted President Eisenhower's 1954 proclamation calling for solemn remembrance of sacrifices made on seas, in the air, and on foreign shores. The proclamation recognized veterans as representing the highest ideals of patriotism, dedication, and honor, and acknowledged Douglas as a Purple Heart City. It called upon citizens to display the American flag, support patriotic activities, and participate in commemorative expressions and programs.

Mayor Grijalva emphasized that America's greatness exists because of veterans' service and sacrifice. He expressed pride in Douglas being a Purple Heart City and in displaying veterans' banners throughout the community, while acknowledging more could be done to honor veterans.

**5. DISCUSSION/DECISION on APPROVAL of CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:**

A. **RESOLUTION NO. 25-1697**, a Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the City of Douglas, Cochise County, Arizona, **ACCEPTING GRANT FUNDING** from **ARIZONA COMPLETE HEALTH** to support the purchase of essential equipment and to complete consulting services provided by Local First Arizona's Director of Food Entrepreneurship for the **DOUGLAS COMMUNITY KITCHEN PROJECT** in the amount of \$25,000, and authorizing the city manager to execute all necessary documents.

B. **RESOLUTION NO. 25-1698**, a Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the City of Douglas, Cochise County, Arizona, **ACCEPTING GRANT FUNDING** from **FREEPORT MCMORAN** to partially fund consulting services provided by Local First Arizona's Director of Food Entrepreneurship for the development of the **COCINA COMMUNITARIA: COMMUNITY KITCHEN DEVELOPMENT PLAN** in the amount of \$5,000, and authorizing the city manager to execute all necessary documents.

C. **RESOLUTION NO. 25-1699**, a resolution of the Mayor and Council of the City of Douglas, Cochise County, Arizona, **APPROVING** and **AUTHORIZATING** the submission to HUD of the City of Douglas **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) for PY 2024**.

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

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

**6. DISCUSSION/DECISION on APPROVALS of ORDINANCE.**

A. **SECOND READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 25-1218**, an Ordinance of the Mayor and Council of the City of Douglas, Cochise County, Arizona, **AUTHORIZING** the **ABANDONMENT WITHOUT COMPENSATION** of a portion of the city right-of-way located on **EAST 16TH STREET**, as legally described in exhibit A, to **BW GAS & CONVENIENCE REAL ESTATE, LLC**, pursuant to abandonment agreement entered into by the parties; establishing severability of components of ordinance; and establishing an effective date thereof.

Denis Fitzgibbons requested that Council table this ordinance authorizing the abandonment of a portion of city right-of-way on East 16th Street to BW Gas & Convenience Real Estate LLC. He explained that the party planning to purchase the two pieces of property had not yet completed the purchase, which was expected toward the end of the year. He recommended bringing the ordinance back when the purchase was ready to proceed.

Ms. Andrade requested that the item be postponed to a future meeting rather than tabled. Mayor Grijalva confirmed with council that postponement was acceptable, and the item was postponed without requiring a motion.

**ITEM # 6A WAS POSTPONED FOR A FUTURE MEETING.**

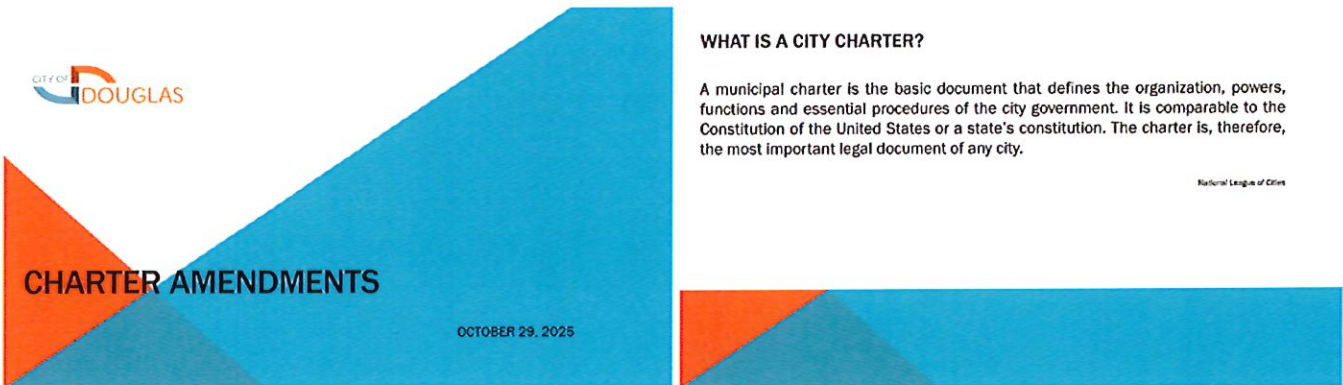
**7. PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION.**

**A. 2026 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS** to the **CITY OF DOUGLAS CHARTER**, which shall be **VOTED UPON** by the **QUALIFIED ELECTORS** of the City of Douglas at the **SPECIAL CITY ELECTION** to be held on **MAY 19, 2026**, and providing direction and authorization related to such election.

Ms. Andrade introduced the proposed charter amendments intended to enhance cooperation with local legislation and address necessary updates. She noted that city staff and the legal department had reviewed the proposals, and that some amendments previously voted down in 2022 would be resubmitted for voter consideration. She emphasized that staff would educate the public on the amendments before placing on the ballot.

Ms. Andrade explained what a city charter is - the basic document defining the organization, powers, functions, and essential procedures of city government, comparable to the U.S. Constitution. She noted that charter revisions allow the city to evaluate operations, determine changing needs, and bring forth updates for voter approval while maintaining the balance between public interest and organizational efficiency.

The presentation was conducted by Mayor Grijalva, City Clerk Andrade, and City Manager Urquijo, who took turns presenting various proposed amendments:



**CHARTER AMENDMENTS**  
OCTOBER 29, 2025

**WHAT IS A CITY CHARTER?**

A municipal charter is the basic document that defines the organization, powers, functions and essential procedures of the city government. It is comparable to the Constitution of the United States or a state's constitution. The charter is, therefore, the most important legal document of any city.

National League of Cities

**WHY DOES A CITY CHARTER NEED REVISION?**

Occasionally, a city will seek to revise its charter. There are several reasons to do so, since the charter affects everything the city government does. It provides the basis for most municipal regulatory functions and for the delivery of municipal services. \*National League of Cities

Allows the city to reevaluate present operations, determine changing needs and bring forth updates for voter approval.

**ORGANIZATIONAL EFFICIENCIES**

The city strives to maintain the right balance between preserving public interest and participation while using technology to improve efficiency in policy-related functions. The public process and community voice remain central to all policy decisions.



## ARTICLE II. MAYOR AND COUNCIL

### ARTICLE II. SECTION 2. NUMBER; SELECTION.

- The Council shall consist of a Mayor nominated and elected at large and six Councilmen nominated and elected AT LARGE--from within their respective City Wards. There shall be one Councilman from each Ward.

## INCREASE PUBLIC OFFICE INTEREST

Revisions that are intended to increase interest in elected office within the community. These propositions are intended to provide incentive for community members to run for Mayor or Council seats.

### Related to:

- Term Limit Mayor, Term Limit Council
- Residency
- Stipend Mayor
- Stipend Council



**Article II, Section 2 - Members and Selection:** The proposal would change council elections from ward-based to at-large, allowing any qualified resident to run for any council seat rather than being restricted by ward boundaries. Mayor Grijalva explained this would address situations where only one person applied for vacant seats because potential candidates couldn't run if they didn't live in that specific ward.

## TERM OF MAYOR/COUNCILPERSON

### Article II. Section 4.

Commencing with the election held in 2012, the Mayor shall be elected for a term of four years and serve until THE MAYOR'S successor is elected and qualified OR APPOINTED. No person shall serve more than two consecutive terms, partial terms exempted.

### Article II. Section 5.

COUNCILPERSONS serving on the date this Charter takes effect shall continue to serve until the election and qualification of each member's successor at the election held in 1984. Commencing with the election held in 1984, the Council seats for Wards 2, 4, and 6 shall have a two-year term of office and the Council seats for Wards 1, 3, and 5 shall have a four-year term of office. At each subsequent election the term of office for all Council seats shall be four years AND A COUNCILPERSON SHALL SERVE UNTIL HIS OR HER SUCCESSOR IS ELECTED AND QUALIFIED OR APPOINTED. No Councilman shall serve more than two consecutive terms, partial terms exempted.

## TERM OF COUNCILPERSON

Article II. Sections 4 and 5

Cities with Term Limits	Cities without Term Limits
Casa Grande	Prescott
Nogales	Bisbee
Winslow	Holbrook
Chandler	Tucson
Goodyear	Glendale
Peoria	Tempe
Avondale	Yuma
Scottsdale	Tombstone
Mesa	Flagstaff
Phoenix	



**Article II, Sections 4 and 5 - Term Limits:** The proposals would eliminate term limits for both mayor and council positions. Currently limited to two terms each, the change would allow officials to serve as long as voters elect them. Mayor Grijalva noted this would prevent the current practice of officials serving two terms, sitting out one term, then returning. He presented data showing most Arizona cities of similar size don't have term limits, and that Douglas and Nogales are the only ones in their population category with both ward systems and term limits.

THIS SLIDE WILL SHOW DATA FROM THE LEAGUE OF ARIZONA CITIES AND TOWNS, HIGHLIGHTING THAT MOST CITIES HAVE NO COUNCIL TERM LIMITS AND DO NOT USE WARDS OR DISTRICTS.

NAME	CITY/TOWN	INCORPORATED	CHARTER ADOPTED	2013 ESTIMATE \$	COUNTY	GENERAL ELECTION YEAR	MONTH	GENERAL ELECTION SEATED	ALL MAX. ELECTIONS	DIRECTLY ELECTED	MAYOR TERM LENGTH	MAYOR TERM LIMITS	COUNCIL TERM LIMITS	WARD OR DISTRICT SYSTEM
PANADGE VALLEY	TOWN	1981	NO	12,552	MARICOPA	NOVEMBER	Even	January	YES	YES	2	No	No	No
SOTTONWOOD	CITY	1978	NO	15,174	YAVAPAI	NOVEMBER	Even	November	YES	YES	4	No	No	No
OHIO VALLEY	TOWN	1971	NO	11,815	YAVAPAI	NOVEMBER	Even	December	YES	YES	2	No	No	No
BOBERTON	CITY	1918	NO	14,594	YUMA	NOVEMBER	Even	November	NO	YES	4	No	No	No
DOUGLAS	CITY	1905	1922	15,532	COCHISE	MAY	Even	June	NO	YES	4	Yes-2	Yes-2	Ward
RAYSON	TOWN	1973	NO	18,721	GILA	NOVEMBER	Even	December	YES	YES	2	No	No	No
COOLIDGE	CITY	1945	NO	12,221	PINAL	NOVEMBER	Even	December	NO	YES	2	No	No	No
BLOY	CITY	1949	NO	11,523	PINAL	NOVEMBER	Even	December	NO	YES	2	No	No	No
NOGALES	CITY	1922	1928	12,721	SANTA CRUZ	NOVEMBER	Even	January	NO	YES	4	Yes-2	Yes-2	No
FOUNTAIN HILLS	TOWN	1989	NO	23,811	MARICOPA	NOVEMBER	Even	December	YES	YES	2	No	No	No



**Article II, Section 6 - Qualifications:** The proposal would lower residency requirements from three years to two years for council candidates and require proof of residency through mortgage or utility bills.

## COUNCILPERSON RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT

### Article II. Section 6. Qualifications

- Lowers the residency requirement in Douglas to run as a councilperson from three to TWO years; and SHALL PROVIDE PROOF OF RESIDENCY, MORTGAGE AND/OR UTILITY BILLS.

### MAYOR'S STIPEND

- Article II, Section 9.
- Increases the stipend paid to the Mayor from \$300 to \$1,000 per month.
- The data on the right side was compiled as part of the review process, which aided in making this recommendation.

Mayor		
City	Annual	Monthly
Douglas	\$1,870	\$156
Phoenix	\$4,800	\$400
Flagstaff	\$8,965	\$747
Chino Valley	\$5,900	\$492
Cottonwood	\$5,000	\$417
Coalinga	\$7,200	\$600
Essex	\$12,000	\$1,000
Flagstaff	\$600	\$50
San Luis	\$4,000	\$333
Average	\$6,375	\$531
Average Remaining Regions	\$3,570	\$298
Phoenix	\$1,800	\$150
Flagstaff	\$1,800	\$150
Chino Valley	\$1,200	\$100
Cottonwood	\$7,800	\$650
Coalinga	\$1,800	\$150

### COUNCILPERSON STIPEND

- Article II, Section 9.
- Increases the stipend paid to a Councilperson from \$200 to \$500 per month.
- The data on the right side was compiled as part of the review process, which aided in making this recommendation.

Councilmember		
City	Annual	Monthly
Douglas	\$2,400	\$200
Phoenix	\$6,000	\$500
Flagstaff	\$6,000	\$500
Chino Valley	\$6,000	\$500
Cottonwood	\$6,000	\$500
Coalinga	\$4,000	\$333
Essex	\$1,000	\$83
Flagstaff	\$500	\$42
San Luis	\$12,000	\$1,000
Average	\$6,750	\$563
Average Remaining Regions	\$1,000	\$83
Phoenix	\$1,000	\$83
Flagstaff	\$2,000	\$167
Chino Valley	\$1,000	\$83
Cottonwood	\$1,000	\$83
Coalinga	\$1,000	\$83
Essex	\$400	\$33



Article II, Section 9 - Stipends: The proposal would increase the mayor's stipend from \$300 to \$1000 and council stipends from \$200 to \$500. City Manager Urquijo noted these rates hadn't changed since 1982 and showed comparison data demonstrating Douglas has among the lowest stipends statewide. She noted Nogales officials receive only \$50 but also get healthcare benefits.

### VACANCIES IN COUNCIL AND OFFICE OF MAYOR

- Article II, Section 13 B.
- In case of a vacancy, for whatever reason, in the Council, the remaining members, including the Mayor, shall, by a majority vote, select a qualified person from the Ward CITY. The vacancy in the Council shall be filled within thirty-one days, but not less than fifteen days from the date of the vacancy. The appointed Councilman shall serve until the next general election, or until his successor shall have been qualified.

### VACANCIES IN COUNCIL AND OFFICE OF MAYOR

- Article II, Section 13 C.
- If the vacated Council seat has in excess of two years remaining in its term, the appointed Councilman shall serve THE REMAINDER OF THE TERM, until the next election. At that election, candidates for Councilman from said Ward shall run for the remainder of the unexpired term of the vacated Council seat, and the ballot shall designate that said candidates are running for the unexpired term, or other suitable designation indicating that it is a "short-term" of two years. In the event that the unexpired term shall be in excess of two years, but there is insufficient time within which candidates can have their name placed on the ballot for the primary election, then, in that event, the Council, including the Mayor, shall fill the vacated Council seat in the same manner as if the vacancy were for a period of two years or less.



Article II, Section 13 - Vacancies: Two changes were proposed. First, removing the word "ward" if at-large elections are approved. Second, eliminating the requirement for appointed council members to face election at the next primary, instead allowing them to serve the remainder of the term.

### CONSIDERATION OF PETITIONS

- Article II, Section 19.
- Any citizen of the city may appear before the council at any regular meeting and present a written petition. Such petitions shall be considered and action taken thereon by the council at the next regular meeting AT THEIR DISCRETION.

### POWER OF APPOINTMENT AND REMOVAL

- Article III, Section 7C
- The Manager shall appoint, remove, promote and demote any and all officers and employees of the city, except City Magistrate, City Attorney, City Clerk and Treasurer, City Physician and Counsel. All this shall be subject to all applicable personnel ordinances, rules and regulations.
- Removing City Physician and Counsel from this section since these positions are not used by the city.



Article II, Section 19 - Consideration of Petitions: The proposal would remove the requirement that written petitions be acted upon at the next regular meeting, allowing more flexibility in scheduling.

Article III, Section 7C - Power of Appointment and Removal: A housekeeping item to remove obsolete positions like city physician from the list of mayoral appointments.

**ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENTS, OFFICES AND EMPLOYEES**

Article IV, Section 1 C

Administrative Departments and Officers.

- The Council shall provide for the qualifications, powers, duties and compensations of the City Manager, City Attorney, City Treasurer, CITY CLERK and City Magistrate and for the number and a compensation schedule for all employees of the City.

**ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENTS, OFFICES AND EMPLOYEES**

Article IV, Section 6 B

Removal of a Merit System Board. The charter does not provide a purpose for the merit system board.

~~Merit System Board-There shall be a Merit System Board consisting of five members appointed by the Mayor, with the approval of the Council, from the qualified electors who have been bona fide residents of the City for at least five years next preceding such appointment. No more than three members shall be the same political affiliation. The Personnel Director shall provide necessary staff assistance to the Merit System Board.~~

~~1-The term of office shall be for three years. Terms will expire on June 30, except that a member shall continue to serve until his successor is duly appointed and qualified. Of the members of the Board first appointed, two shall be for a term ending June 30, 1983; two for a term ending June 30, 1984; and one for a term ending June 30, 1985. Each and every appointment thereafter will be for three years.~~



Article IV, Sections 1C and 6B - Administrative Departments: These housekeeping items would place the city clerk back under administrative departments and remove references to the merit system board, which no longer has a defined purpose in the charter.

**ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS**

Article VII, Section 6 A.

- Copies of a proposed ordinance or proposed resolution having the effect of an ordinance shall be made available to the Mayor and Council at least forty-eight TWENTYFOUR hours prior to the meeting. Other than emergency measures, Ordinances shall have two (2) separate readings at any special or regular meeting, except that at least one (1) readings shall occur in a regular meetings.

Article VII, Section 6 B.

- ~~There shall be a full reading of proposed ordinances or resolution having the effect of an ordinance unless the full reading is waived by a majority of the Council.~~ **ORDINANCES OR RESOLUTIONS HAVING THE EFFECT OF AN ORDINANCE. Hereafter, those ordinances or resolutions heretofore mentioned may be read by number and title only. An ordinance identified as an emergency measure and deemed necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health or safety may be placed on its first reading at the same meeting as when first introduced upon the affirmative vote of five members of the Council.**

**CONTRACTS**

Article VIII, Section 1.

- All contracts shall be drawn under the supervision of the City Attorney, must be in writing, executed in the name of the City of Douglas by the Mayor or Manager OR DESIGNATED AGENTS, except as it may be otherwise provided either by this Charter or by law, and must be countersigned by the City Clerk, who shall number and register the same in a book kept for that purpose.

Article VIII, Section 3 B1.

- Increases the value from \$500 to \$5,000 for when City Manager may dispose of city property through auction. Written advice NOTICE shall be given to the Council prior to such sale or disposal.



Article VII, Section 6A and 6B- Ordinances and Resolutions: Two changes were proposed. First, reducing the required advance distribution time from 48 to 24 hours to match agenda posting requirements. Second, eliminating the requirement for full readings of ordinances at meetings.

**CONTRACTS**

Article VIII, Section 3 B5

- No City employee, elected or appointed City official or member of his immediate family, as defined and modified from time to time in A.R.S. Section 39-502 (9), shall be permitted to bid, purchase or acquire any City property, EXCEPT FOR ONLINE AUCTIONS OUTLINED IN ARTICLE VIII, SECTION 3(B)2).

**ELECTIONS**

Article IX, Section 5B

Arrangement of names on ballot.

- The names of the candidates for Councilman shall be arranged AT LARGE by the Ward they represent and as provided by law. Nothing on the ballot shall be indicative of the source of the candidacy or of the support of any candidate.

Article IX, Section 6C

Nomination for primary election.

- The petition or petitions for nomination of a Councilman, shall contain the signatures of qualified voters, aggregating not less than 5% nor more than 10% of the number of electors voting for Mayor in the nominee's Ward, at the last preceding election at which a Mayor was elected.



Article VIII - Contracts: Several efficiency measures were proposed, including allowing designated agents to execute contracts, increasing the city manager's authority to dispose of property from \$500 to \$5,000, and allowing city employees to bid on city property through online auctions only.

**ELECTIONS**

**Article IX, Section 8B. Nomination for general election.**

- If in a primary election one candidate for Councilman in a Ward does not receive a majority of the votes cast at large for Councilman, then the two candidates with the highest number of votes will be considered nominated and their names will appear on the ballot of the general election. In case of a tie for second place that candidate with the highest number of votes and those tied for second place, will appear on the ballot of the general election. These shall be the only candidates for Councilman from that Ward in the general election.
- If at any primary election there be any office or offices to which no candidate therefore was elected, then, said election shall be considered to be a primary election for the nomination of candidates for such office or offices, and a second or general election shall be held to vote for candidates to fill such office or offices. The candidates, not elected at such first election, equal in number to twice the number to be elected to any given office, or less if so there be, and who received the highest number of votes for the respective offices at such first election, shall be the only candidates at such second election; provided that if there be any person who under the provisions of this section, would have been entitled to become a candidate for any office except for the fact that some other candidate received an equal number of votes therefor, then all such persons receiving said number of votes shall likewise become candidates for such office.

**ELECTIONS**

**Article IX, Section 14.**

Canvassing returns and declaring of election results.

- Within **TWENTY DAYS** seven-days after any election, the Mayor and Council shall canvass returns and declare the results of such election. The City Clerk shall issue a certificate to each candidate elected to office at any election.

**Article IX, Section 15.**

**Section 15. Alignment of Ward Boundaries.**

- A. Within twelve months of the effective date of this Charter and using the 2010 census official count, the Council shall reorganize and realign the boundaries of wards.
- B. Such realignment shall thereafter be made within ten months after receipt of official census information indicating a shift in population which results in an imbalance of more than five percent in ward population.



Article IX - Elections: Various changes to align with potential at-large elections, including removing ward references and adjusting signature requirements for nominations.

Article IX, Section 14 - Canvassing Returns: Extending the timeframe to canvass election results from 7 to 20 days to accommodate county scheduling.

Article IX, Section 15 - Ward Boundaries: Complete removal if at-large elections are approved.



ANY QUESTIONS?  
THANK YOU!



During extensive council discussion, Council Members Montaño, Shelton, and Acosta expressed significant concerns about eliminating ward representation. Council Member Montaño worried that at-large elections could lead to the south side of town being forgotten, as growth occurs in the north. Council Member Shelton expressed concern about Douglas's "cliquish" nature and the possibility of organized groups electing multiple like-minded candidates. He worried about losing the current system where each area has a dedicated representative. Council Member Acosta agreed, stating the current ward system has worked well and questioning why it should be changed.

Regarding stipend increases, council members generally expressed they didn't seek the position for money. Council Member Shelton mentioned he didn't even know it was a paid position until after being appointed and donates his stipend to DARC. Council Member Acosta similarly didn't know it was paid and emphasized they serve for love of community, not compensation.

Council member Dillman offered a different perspective, stating the community should help each other regardless of ward boundaries. She seemed more open to the at-large concept.

Public comments included:

- Ida Pedrego acknowledged concerns about Ward 1 being underrepresented but noted the lack of candidates running for office. She emphasized the need for qualified, caring people to run and mentioned that current council members were mostly appointed rather than elected through competition.

- Abe Villareal appreciated the discussion about increasing citizen involvement and the value of competitive races for democratic society. He noted that in Douglas's small, monolithic community, walking from one ward to another doesn't reveal significant differences in needs or demographics.

Ms. Andrade added context, noting she had encountered interested candidates who could not run because they lived outside the ward with vacancies. She emphasized that at-large elections would give all citizens opportunities to run and that voters would ultimately decide on any changes. Regarding stipends, she noted they hadn't been adjusted since 1982.

Mayor Grijalva pointed out that ward boundaries had not been updated since 2008 and do not account for recent growth like La Perilla Apartments or planned westward annexation. He noted that under current boundaries, one or two council members could end up representing vastly expanded areas after annexation. He emphasized that while he had personal opinions on the proposals, his philosophy was to let voters decide.

**B. TOURISM PROGRAM.**

Jennifer Smith presented a comprehensive update on the city's tourism program. She outlined the program's vision to position Douglas as a premier destination showcasing unique cultural, historical, and natural assets while fostering sustainable tourism growth. The tourism motto focuses on Douglas's history, art, culture, and outdoor attractions.

Ms. Smith detailed the program's structure, including Tourism Coordinator Dave Nevins and part-time tourism aid Brenna, with recruitment underway for another part-time position. The program operates from two locations: the Visitor Center near the police department and the Border Air Museum (BAM).



Purpose of Tonight's Presentation:

- Overview of Tourism Program
- Share Highlights & Achievements
- Moving Forward

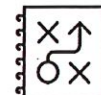


Tourism Program Overview

**Our Vision**  
 To position Douglas, Arizona, as a premier destination that showcases the unique cultural, historical, and natural assets of the region, while fostering sustainable tourism growth that benefits the local community and preserves the town's heritage.

Motto: History ~ Art ~ Culture ~ Outdoors

- Guiding Docs**
- Strategic Tourism Plan for Douglas, Arizona
  - Douglas Vision 2032
  - Project Matrix
  - 2025/2026 Budget



## Tourism Program Overview

### Team Structure

- Community Services & ED Director
- Tourism Coordinator
- Tourism Aide
- Tourism Aide

### Key Partners

- Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT)
- Cochise County Tourism & Economic Council (CCTEC)
- Local Attractions
- Highway 80 Foundation
- Binational Partners in Agua Prieta & Sonora



## Key Partners



## Cochise County Tourism & Economic Development Council (CCTEQ)

- IGA by Mayor & Council Approved – May 2025
- Deliverable Highlights:
  - ✓ AOT Co-op FY 26 Marketing grant match - **Awarded \$48,500**
    - ✓ See Supplemental Handout
    - ✓ Approved - 3 Digital Ad products, 6 Print Ads, 2 Engagement Tools
  - ✓ VC Staff Quarterly Visits
  - ✓ Governors Conference on Tourism
  - ✓ Placier.ai – Analytic Platform



## Tourism Highlights & Achievements



## Visitor Center Display



## The Numbers...



## Programs

- Explore Douglas Passport Program
- Explore Douglas Tours
- Douglas Community Guide (Welcome Wagon)
- AOT AVIC Accreditation
- Arizona Mural Project
- RERC Grant

## Events

- Cochise College Pit Fire & Pottery Festival
- Borderland Gravel Bike Race
- Native American Festival
- Boxing
- Wrestling
- Douglas Days
- Mexican Baseball Fiesta

Thank you!



Key partnerships were highlighted:

- Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT): Provides statewide marketing campaigns, inclusion in tourism materials, access to cooperative marketing grants, and professional development opportunities

- Cochise County Tourism and Economic Council (CCTEC): A regional collaboration between Cochise County and member cities (Willcox, Sierra Vista, Benson, Bisbee, and Douglas) requiring a \$15,000 annual contribution from Douglas
- Local attractions: Including Art Car World, Last Supper Museum, Gadsden Museum, Border Air Museum, Douglas Williams House Museum, Casa de la Cultura, Slaughter Ranch, Agua Prieta Tours, Whitewater Draw Wildlife Area, Chiricahua Mountains, art galleries, downtown merchants, murals, and restaurants
- Highway 80 Foundation and Highway 80 East partnerships
- Binational partners in Agua Prieta and Sonora

Ms. Smith detailed CCTEC benefits, including a \$48,500 Arizona Office of Tourism marketing grant this year funding digital ads, print ads in RV and historic magazines, and engagement tools. The partnership also provides quarterly visitor center staff visits to each community, participation in the Governor's Conference on Tourism, and access to Placer.ai, an AI platform tracking visitor foot traffic and demographics.

Tourism achievements highlighted included:

- Development of social media presence on Facebook and Instagram with 667 followers
- Creation of city brochures, rack cards, and discovery maps
- DMO (Destination Marketing Organization) designation from AOT
- Launch of ExploreDouglasAZ.com tourism website
- Presentations to RV parks in neighboring communities
- Regular operating hours for Border Air Museum
- Interactive displays including a world map where visitors mark their origins

Impressive metrics were presented showing growth:

- Visitor Center attendance: 1,492 (through September 2025) vs. 1,450 (all of 2024)
- Conference room reservations doubled
- Website analytics up 240% with traffic from Phoenix and Las Vegas
- International visitors from Canada, United Kingdom, Italy, and India
- Transient tax revenue up 17% (\$89,138 through August 2025 vs. \$76,417 in 2024)

Upcoming programs included:

- Explore Douglas Passport Program launching soon
- Tourism van tours, potentially collaborating with Agua Prieta
- Douglas Community Guide completion
- Arizona Visitor Information Center (AVIC) accreditation pursuit
- Arizona Mural Project participation
- EPA Recreation Economy for Rural Communities technical assistance grant for potential rails-to-trails development

Ms. Smith concluded by listing major upcoming events including the Cochise College Pitfire and Pottery Festival, Native American Festival, Borderland Gravel Bike Race, boxing and wrestling events, Douglas Days, and Mexican Baseball Fiesta.

Council discussion included Council Member Shelton highlighting Douglas's 90-year golf tournament tradition and suggesting development of an Arizona Cattle, Cowboy, Copper, and Railroad Museum. He detailed Douglas's rich but underappreciated history, mentioning the Cowbells organization founded locally, railroad heritage, General Pershing's presence during the Mexican conflict, and various potential funding sources. He advocated for better utilization of vacant buildings and expansion of the airport museum.

Council Member Montañó agreed with Council Member Shelton's vision and suggested council should provide more direction to staff. Council Member Dillman added the importance of highlighting military history.

Ms. Urquijo emphasized the value of CCTEC membership, noting that Placer.ai access alone represents a \$25,000 annual benefit against Douglas's \$15,000 contribution. She stressed the importance of staff staying actively engaged to ensure Douglas is prominently featured in regional marketing efforts.

Mayor Grijalva praised the new approach to tourism, noting that special events like wrestling matches attract visitors from throughout the region and beyond. He highlighted how event organizers now handle their own marketing, reducing city burden while increasing reach. He mentioned growing relationships with Sonoran communities and their interest in Douglas shopping and events. Mayor Grijalva expressed pride in the tourism team's accomplishments and the positive trajectory shown by increasing metrics.

Ms. Smith responded to council comments by emphasizing her Douglas roots as a fourth-generation resident and how the tourism program balances preserving heritage while pursuing fresh approaches. She noted how economic development, downtown revitalization, and historic preservation efforts are all interconnected in building Douglas's future while honoring its past.

**8. ADJOURNMENT.**

**Motion by Council Member Shelton, second by Council Member Dillman to adjourn the meeting at 7:18 p.m.  
Motion passed unanimously.**



Prepared by: Cynthia Acuña Robles, Deputy City Clerk