



MINUTES

The City of Douglas Mayor and Council met in a Special Meeting on Wednesday, April 22, 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	
COUNCILMEMBER, IDA ANN PEDREGO	X	
COUNCILMEMBER, JOSE MONTANO		X (excused)
COUNCILMEMBER, GUSTAVO DURAZO JR.	X (virtual)	
COUNCILMEMBER, RAY SHELTON	X	
COUNCILMEMBER, MARIA DILLMAN	X	
COUNCILMEMBER, RICHARD C. ACOSTA		X (excused)
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 to recognize April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month. She noted that while she understood the constraints of agenda-setting, she wished to bring awareness to the prevalence of sexual violence, its various forms, and the growing concern of technology-facilitated sexual violence. She shared that she had been personally affected and encouraged community members to support survivors, remain vigilant, and speak up when they observe concerning behavior.

4. PRESENTATION on PUBLIC HEARING.

A. The purpose of the **PUBLIC HEARING** is to allow public participation pertaining to the **2026-2027 PROPERTY TAX LEVY**.

Alejandro Martinez presented the purpose and findings of the Public Hearing regarding the proposed 2026–2027 Property Tax Levy. He explained that the City of Douglas is annually required to adopt its property tax levy and submit certification to the Cochise County Board of Supervisors no later than the third Monday in August, with this year's deadline being August 17, 2026.

Mr. Martinez reported that on February 10, 2026, the city received its 2026 net assessed primary valuation, establishing a primary assessed value of \$69,631,679, with \$1,121,004 added to the tax rolls through new construction. He emphasized that the city is proposing to hold the property tax rate steady at 1.0783 per \$100,000 of assessed value, unchanged from the prior year. Because maintaining the same rate on a higher valuation produces a higher total levy — \$750,838 compared to \$724,941 the prior year — state law requires a truth-in-taxation public hearing. He noted that when isolating the effect of new construction, the net increase attributable solely to higher property valuations amounts to approximately \$14,000. Mr. Martinez clarified that no formal action would be taken at this meeting, as the first reading of the levy ordinance is scheduled for the June regular council meeting, with a second reading at a special meeting in July.

Mayor Grijalva requested that in future presentations, staff emphasize at both the opening and closing that the tax rate is not being increased.

Public Hearing was closed at 5:40 p.m.

5. READING OF PROCLAMATIONS.

- A. PROFESSIONAL MUNICIPAL CLERKS WEEK.
- B. THE NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER.
- C. FRONTLINE WORKERS APPRECIATION MONTH.
- D. NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH.

Mayor Grijalva read the proclamations. Following the readings, Mayor Grijalva extended personal appreciation to City Clerk staff Alma and Cynthia, to the city's first responders and health care workers, and to local educators. He also acknowledged Diana LaMar's earlier remarks and expressed regret that Sexual Assault Awareness Month had not been included on the agenda.

6. DISCUSSION/DECISION on APPROVAL of CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS.

- A. FINANCE COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT of IDA ANN PEDREGO as CHAIR.
- B. INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY APPOINTMENT of JAVIER FIMBRES.
- C. **RESOLUTION NO. 26-1731**, a Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the City of Douglas, Cochise County, Arizona, **APPROVING** the Selection of TYLin for the amount of **\$459,912.70** and **AUTHORIZING** the execution of a **PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT** for a **SAFETY ACTION PLAN** and **COMPLETE STREETS STUDY** Funded by the Safe Streets and Roads for all (SS4A) Grant Program.

Motion by Council Member Dillman, second by Council Member Shelton to approve consent agenda items A and B.

Roll call: Voted in Favor: Mayor Jose Grijalva, Council Members: Ida Pedrego, Gustavo Durazo, Ray Shelton, and Maria Dillman. Voted Against: None.

Karl Rockwell presented Resolution No. 26-1731. He explained that the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant, administered by the Federal Highway Administration, was secured to fund a comprehensive safety action plan and complete streets study for Douglas. The study will examine all city streets with respect to motor vehicle safety, pedestrian and alternative transportation infrastructure, and ADA compliance. He noted that the study directly aligns with and supports the previously approved RAISE grant, which targets nine commercial corridors for reconstruction, as the RAISE application included a commitment to complete such a study.

Mr. Rockwell described the consultant selection process, in which eight proposals were received and independently scored by a four-member internal professional panel. TYLin, a large firm with a Phoenix-based office and experience in Southern Arizona border communities, was selected as the top-ranked proposal. He highlighted the firm's community engagement approach and expressed a desire to have TYLin participate in Douglas Days with a public outreach presence.

Council Member Shelton inquired about the firm's geographic scope of work, and Mr. Rockwell confirmed it is a large national firm with relevant regional experience. Council Member Shelton also asked about the anticipated start date, and Mr. Rockwell indicated work would commence promptly following contract execution by the City Manager.

Steven Helffrich of 1303 F Avenue, asked several questions regarding the relationship between the SS4A grant and the RAISE grant. Ana Urquijo clarified that the SS4A grant was not anticipated at the time the RAISE grant was submitted, and that the \$500,000 originally budgeted within the RAISE grant for a complete streets study would now be redirected to construction, effectively saving those funds. She explained that the safety action plan would ideally be completed corridor by corridor to align with and not delay the design and engineering work being conducted by ADOT on the RAISE grant streets.

Mr. Helffrich also inquired about the exclusion of A Avenue from the RAISE grant corridors. Luis Pedroza explained that the nine corridors were prioritized based on the Pavement Condition Index and prior treatment history, and that A Avenue had received prior attention, making other streets more urgent. Ms. Urquijo noted that A Avenue could

receive attention through the SS4A study and that it aligns with broader regional pathway planning efforts with Cochise County.

Further Mr. Helffrich addressed the status of the Chino Road environmental study, which confirmed the presence of a landfill beneath the roadway, with engineers evaluating alternatives including excavation or stabilization injection methods. Mr. Helffrich also raised the status of the Brian's Way crosswalk safety project, and Ms. Urquijo indicated that a \$40,000 grant had been secured for that improvement but that installation was being coordinated to align with the broader RAISE grant work in that area.

Motion by Council Member Shelton, second by Council Member Dillman to approve consent agenda item C.

Roll call: Voted in Favor: Mayor Jose Grijalva, Council Members: Ida Pedrego, Gustavo Durazo, Ray Shelton, and Maria Dillman. Voted Against: None.

6. DISCUSSION/DECISION on APPROVALS.

ADDENDUM AGENDA POSTED APRIL 20, 2026 AT 4:45 P.M.

1. DISCUSSION/DECISION on APPROVALS.

A. RESOLUTION NO. 26-1732, 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 DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY for a REIMBURSABLE GRANT FUND allocation in the amount of \$3,000 for REALLOCATION EQUIPMENT under OPERATION STONEGARDEN Fiscal Year 2023 Grant Program Award - Reallocation.

Lieutenant Michael Lomeli explained that the Arizona Department of Homeland Security selected the department to receive \$3,000 in funding under the FFY 2023 Operation Stonegarden Grant Program reallocation, with a performance period of April 13, 2026 through July 31, 2026. The funding is designated for a vehicle speed measurement device. Lt. Lomeli described the Operation Stonegarden program as a cooperative border security initiative between state, local, and federal law enforcement to target criminal smuggling routes. He noted that the department has participated in the program since its inception and that all prior expenditures have been fully reimbursed.

Motion by Council Member Pedrego, second by Council Member Dillman to approve Resolution No. 26-1732.

Council Members expressed support for the item, commending the department for its continued participation in the grant program.

Roll call: Voted in Favor: Mayor Jose Grijalva, Council Members: Ida Pedrego, Gustavo Durazo, Ray Shelton, and Maria Dillman. Voted Against: None.

A. SECOND READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 26-1230, an Ordinance of the Mayor and Council of the City of Douglas, Cochise County, Arizona, **AUTHORIZING** the **ACCEPTANCE** of **DONATED VACANT UNIMPROVED REAL PROPERTY** from Ray Mehan consisting of a 6.35 acre parcel with assessor's parcel number 410-12-035 in the City of Douglas, Cochise County, Arizona, establishing severability of components of ordinance; and establishing an effective date thereof.

Luis Pedroza presented the item, explaining that property owner Ray Mehan approached the city about donating a 6.35-acre vacant unimproved parcel adjacent to the city's golf course and State Route 80, identified as Assessor Parcel Number 410-12-035. The parcel carries an assessed valuation of \$36,378 and has unpaid property taxes totaling \$33,154.27, accrued since 2008. As part of the donation negotiation, Mr. Mehan requested that the city absorb those outstanding taxes. Mr. Pedroza noted that utilities are nearby, the parcel is currently zoned residential with potential for commercial rezoning, and its location presents development opportunities aligned with the city's growth goals.

Council Member Pedrego addressed the nature and amount of the back taxes, as well as whether the parcel had been used as a dump site. Mr. Pedroza indicated there were no known visual environmental concerns but confirmed that a title report would be completed as part of due diligence.

Steven Helffrich of 1301 F Avenue, argued that the transaction, while described as a donation, functions effectively as a city purchase of approximately \$33,000 given the tax absorption requirement. He raised concerns about the parcel's development viability, citing lack of direct road access, potential floodplain constraints, and proximity to an intersection that may limit access points. He suggested that the property might be better absorbed by adjacent private landowners to the east, who could consolidate it into a larger developable parcel, and expressed the view that the property would not be suitable for commercial development under the city's existing general plan and zoning framework.

Ms. Urquijo responded that staff had reviewed the gift clause implications internally and considered the acquisition consistent with the city's development and growth strategies, particularly in terms of attracting investors and developers to that corridor. She deferred further comments to Mr. Fitzgibbons and acknowledged that access considerations would be addressed as part of a broader development plan.

Motion by Council Member Pedrego, second by Council Member Shelton to approve the second reading of Ordinance No. 26-1230.

Council Member Pedrego stated that she was not comfortable voting on the item given that she felt some of the questions raised had not been fully resolved, and she noted her agreement that the transaction more closely resembles a purchase than a donation. Following this discussion, Mayor Grijalva indicated a motion to postpone would be entertained to allow Council Member Pedrego, who had been in office for approximately one week, additional time to review the matter.

Motion by Mayor Jose Grijalva, second by Council Member Dillman to postpone the second reading of Ordinance No. 26-1230 until the next regular meeting.

Roll call: Voted in Favor: Mayor Jose Grijalva, Council Members: Ida Pedrego, Gustavo Durazo, and Maria Dillman. Voted Against: Council Member: Ray Shelton.

B. FIRST READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 26-1231, an Ordinance of the Mayor and Council of the City of Douglas, Cochise County, Arizona, **AMENDING CHAPTER 2.02** of the **DOUGLAS MUNICIPAL CODE** specifically as to section **2.02.020 RULES OF CONDUCT** for **COUNCIL MEETINGS**, establishing severability of components of Ordinance; and establishing an effective date thereof.

Ms. Andrade provided background information explaining that the ordinance would amend Chapter 2.02 of the Douglas Municipal Code to add Cochise County government updates as a standing agenda item for regular council meetings, as directed by the Mayor.

Motion by Council Member Shelton, second by Council Member Pedrego to approve the placement of Ordinance No. 26-1231.

Mr. Fitzgibbons suggested that the standing item be broadened in scope and labeled as a general governmental update, rather than being limited to Cochise County updates. He reasoned that this would provide flexibility for the Mayor and staff to include state representatives or other governmental contacts under that item, allowing for substantive discussion beyond the three-minute public comment limitation. Mr. Fitzgibbons advised that the broader language could be incorporated at the second reading.

Roll call: Voted in Favor: Mayor Jose Grijalva, Council Members: Ida Pedrego, Gustavo Durazo, Ray Shelton, and Maria Dillman. Voted Against: None.

Motion by Council Member Pedrego, second by Council Member Shelton to approve the first reading of Ordinance No. 26-1231.

Roll call: Voted in Favor: Mayor Jose Grijalva, Council Members: Ida Pedrego, Gustavo Durazo, Ray Shelton, and Maria Dillman. Voted Against: None.

7. ADJOURNMENT.

Motion by Council Member Pedrego, second by Council Member Shelton to adjourn the meeting at 6:24 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Prepared by: Cynthia Acuña Robles, Deputy City Clerk