

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Gallup City Council, City of Gallup, New Mexico held in the Council Chambers at Gallup City Hall, 110 West Aztec Avenue at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 24, 2026.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor DePauli.

Upon roll call, the following were present:

Mayor: Marc DePauli

Councilors: Linda Garcia
Sierra Yazzie Asamoa-Tutu
Sarah Piano
Ron Molina

Also present: Frank Chiapetti, City Manager
David Eason, City Attorney

Mayor DePauli acknowledged the increase in public attendance and reminded attendees that public comments are limited to two minutes. He addressed Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham's offer to send the National Guard to the City of Gallup, stating there was no current plan to do so and noted the National Guard was previously deployed to Gallup during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. He recognized State Senator Shannon Pinto and State Representative Patty Lundstrom who were in attendance.

Comments by Public on Non-Agenda Items:

Janice Peterson, McKinley County resident, reported the theft of her son-in-law's vehicle a few months prior and questioned the Gallup Police Department's response to the incident, specifically regarding the investigation and the subsequent judicial outcome, which she characterized as insufficient. She suggested more thorough investigative procedures and expressed concerns regarding the overall community safety.

Dr. Connie Liu, a local OB-GYN, presented a letter signed by 32 medical professionals expressing opposition to the potential deployment of the National Guard to Gallup. Dr. Liu advocated for sustainable, public health-oriented solutions to address recidivism, homelessness and substance use such as requesting immediate state support for permanent housing and the rehabilitation of existing structures. She emphasized that connecting housing with medical, behavioral health and social support would reduce cold exposure admissions and infection rates. Dr. Liu further requested support for medication-assisted treatment in jails and noted that local providers are prepared to offer continued care for individuals released from the Detention Center. She called for expanded youth programming, specifically community violence intervention and urged the City to include experienced medical professionals in future decision-making processes regarding these issues.

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Geneva Shelton, a Registered Nurse at Gallup Indian Medical Center (GIMC), requested clarification on the specific benefits of deploying the National Guard. She shared personal observations from living in areas with a National Guard presence, noting the tendency for certain population to be targeted and urged the Council to define the desired outcomes of such a deployment and to evaluate how it would effectively serve the City's interests.

Michael Daly, resident, expressed appreciation for the Council's service. Mr. Daly stated his opposition to the deployment of the National Guard. He shared his background as a sponsor in Alcoholics Anonymous and recommended that the Council focus on the substance abuse treatment options and further suggested that in instances where treatment is unsuccessful, incarceration be considered to maintain community safety.

Presented to the Mayor and Councilors were the following Presentation and Information Items:

1. Legislative Update – Representative Patty Lundstrom

State Representative Patty Lundstrom provided an update on the recent 30-day Legislative Session, noting it was her 25th year presenting to Council. She highlighted the passage of House Bill 99, a Medical Malpractice Bill, which establishes caps on damages and higher standards of proof to assist smaller hospitals and improve physician recruitment. Representative Lundstrom provided an update on Senate Bill 2, noting her role as a primary House Sponsor, which authorizes bonding capacity for 19 roadway projects, including six in McKinley County and highlighted the inclusion of pullouts on I-40 until a more long-term goal of installing a third lane. She reported that the House received \$2.5 million in capital outlay funding and securing \$500,000. for the Allison Road Corridor Utility Relocation, a requirement for the \$52 million in federal matching funds. She also noted legislation establishing an authority for the redevelopment of the Prewitt Industrial Park referenced the Governor's State of the State Address, directed Council to the Legislative Portal for a full list of supported projects and funding allocations, expressed appreciation for the pins provided by Mr. Chiapetti and to Councilor Garcia for taking the seniors to the State Capitol.

Discussion followed regarding appreciation of Representative Lundstrom's legislative service over the past 25 years, details of House Bill 99 with regard to individual physician practices and Senate Bill 2's intentions for large interstate or connector projects, possibility of a third lane on I40.

Brandon Howe, Deputy Director of the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments (NWNMCOG), presented a legislative funding recap for the City of Gallup, noting current allocations from Senate Bill 240 included:

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- \$500,000. – Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements Project
- \$200,000. – Affordable and Workforce Housing Development
- \$100,000. – Regional Library Acquisition
- \$500,000. – Allison Road Corridor Utility Relocation Design

He added the Downtown Utilities Replacement Project, Road Improvements, Airport Terminal Construction and the New Municipal Complex were not funded. Mr. Howe reported that the Coal Avenue Alley Improvement Project is transitioning into the Route 66 Alleyway Project following full funding. He confirmed \$1 million was secured for Recreation Projects and expressed appreciation to Senator Pinto for her assistance with securing funding for the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Mr. Howe reported an increase in Capital Outlay requests from non-profit organizations; noting that the City agreed to serve as fiscal agent for the Southwest Indian Foundation (SWIF) Industrial Workforce Program, which was awarded \$100,000 from Representative Lundstrom for building improvements and Battered Families Domestic Violence Shelter which was funded \$500,000. for building renovations. Mr. Howe highlighted successful funding for the Senior Center in the amount of \$1 million and McKinley County for Red Rock Park in the amount of \$5 million. He stated the COG would provide a detailed report and work with staff to identify capital outlay applications for next fiscal year.

Brief discussion followed regarding a timeframe for when the Governor will sign legislation and the potential for her to veto any of the items.

2. Housing Information Presentation – Keegan Mackenzie-Chavez, City Project Manager and Tammy Parker, Housing Manager

Ms. Mackenzie-Chavez introduced Tammy Parker, Housing Manager, to provide monthly updates on nationwide housing practices, explained the session's purpose and noted the session's subject matter does not pertain to Planning and Development or the Land Development Standards.

Ms. Parker provided a briefing on national housing practices and their relevance to local operations. She identified technical and fiscal tools from national partners including YIMBY, Turner Center, Up for Growth and National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC) and noted Gallup Housing Authority programs address several of the same issues.

Discussion followed regarding the alignment of an upcoming Master Plan with partner resources, the importance of these components in local planning, the possibility of amending Land Development Standards to facilitate housing growth and methods to streamline the development process with stakeholders to simplify development procedures.

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Presented the Mayor and Councilors were the following Consent Agenda items:

1. Approval of Minutes from the Regular Meeting of January 6, 2026
2. Confirmation of Sports Commission Members

Mayor DePauli requested to provide additional information regarding Item 2 of the Consent Agenda, therefore it was removed from the Consent Agenda for additional discussion.

Councilor Piano made the motion to approve Item 1 of the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Councilor Yazzie. Roll call: Councilors Piano, Yazzie, Molina, Garcia and Mayor DePauli all voted yes.

2. Confirmation of Sports Commission Members – Mayor DePauli

Mayor DePauli provided a brief history of the Sports Commission, noting its establishment in 1992, which originally focused on baseball and softball and now includes basketball, soccer, football and involves collaborations with Gallup-McKinley County Schools. Mayor DePauli noted that the bylaws and charter have not been updated since their inception and require revision, further noted necessary board reinstatements that were delayed due to the pandemic and requested Mr. Eason provide additional comments.

Mr. Eason identified two procedural issues regarding the Sports Commission. First, current members are serving in a holdover status due to expired terms. He noted the current agenda only specifies the appointment of two new members and recommended reappointing the entire body to two-year, non-staggered terms, necessitating an amendment to the enabling Resolution and Charter. Second, Mr. Eason noted the Charter designates the Commission as a public body subject to the Open Meetings Act (OMA). He advised that OMA compliance must be maintained and recommended that Council confirm all appointments while directing staff to update the underlying Resolution and Charter.

Discussion followed regarding tabling the item for alignment with a Charter update, confirmation of new members versus and reappointment of the current active body, confirmation of the continuous meeting history of the Commission and the active status of all listed members.

Councilor Piano made the motion to confirm all members of the Sports Commission. Seconded by Councilor Molina. Roll call: Councilors Piano, Molina, Yazzie, Garcia and Mayor DePauli all voted yes.

Presented to the Mayor and Councilors were the following Discussion /Action Topics:

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1. Request for a Budget Adjustment for the Water Department in the Amount of \$814,650.00 – Jan Boone, Water Superintendent

Mr. Boone said the project is funded by the Bureau of Reclamation, is 100% reimbursable and consists of a storage tank, 12, 10 and 8-inch water lines and two PRVs to provide better water pressure in the Boardman area.

Mayor DePauli noted an upcoming Discussion/Action Item for the approval of the Water Trust Board WPF 6576 for the construction and highlighted the fact that with these two projects, the City is getting closer to the cost cap for the Navajo Gallup Water Supply Project (NGWSP) and should get full credit for Project WPF 6576.

Discussion followed regarding clarification on the account funding would be transferred from.

Councilor Molina made the motion to approve the budget adjustment for the Water Department in the amount of \$814,650. Seconded by Councilor Garcia. Roll call: Councilors Molina, Garcia, Piano, Yazzie and Mayor DePauli all voted yes.

2. Budget Adjustment into 219 for the Amount of \$10,000. to Cover Payroll Costs for the Remainder of the Fiscal Year – Steven Wargo, Senior Center Manager

Mr. Wargo reported that the Senior Center budget consists of three categories: congregate meals, home-delivered meals and transportation, noted a funding shortfall specifically within the city-match portion and acknowledged Councilor Garcia's recent site visits and support of the facility.

Brief discussion followed regarding next year's budget.

Councilor Garcia noted her support of the facility and identified inflation as the primary cause of the budget shortage.

Mr. Wargo presented construction updates and photographs of the facility, provided the total number of meals served daily and commented on the importance of the service they provide.

Councilor Garcia made the motion to approve the budget adjustment into 219 for the amount of \$10,000 to cover payroll costs for the remainder of the fiscal year. Seconded by Councilor Piano. Roll call: Councilors Garcia, Piano, Molina, Yazzie and Mayor DePauli all voted yes.

3. Wastewater Department Budget Adjustment – Redd Gashytewa, Wastewater Superintendent

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Mr. Gashytewa requested a budget adjustment in the amount of \$40,589. to cover the payroll for an employee who was transferred from the Wastewater Department to the Water Department.

Councilor Molina made the motion to approve the budget adjustment. Seconded by Councilor Yazzie. Roll call: Councilors Molina, Yazzie, Garcia, Piano and Mayor DePauli all voted yes.

4. Approval of the GUP-2604 New Mexico Department of Transportation Aviation Grant Agreement to Complete the Airport Master Plan – Robert Hamblen, Public Works Director

Mr. Hamblen presented a new grant agreement in the amount of \$56,034. to complete the Airport Master Plan. He noted that while the project and a contract with Armstrong Construction Inc. were originally approved in June 2023 under Resolution No. R2023-14, the previous NMDOT AV funding expired before completion. A new grant from NMDOT AV was issued and is intended to finalize the remaining project scope.

Discussion followed regarding clarification on the sufficiency of the current grant to finalize the project, the status of remaining FAA funds and the circumstances surrounding the expiration of the previous grant.

Councilor Piano made the motion to approve the GUP-2604 New Mexico Department of Transportation Aviation Grant Agreement to complete the Airport Master Plan. Seconded by Councilor Garcia. Roll call: Councilors Piano, Garcia, Yazzie, Molina and Mayor DePauli all voted yes.

5. Approval of Resolution R2026-11, Water Trust Board Project No. WPF-6576, Grant Agreement and Necessary Budget Adjustments – Jacqueline Leyba, Deputy Chief Financial Officer

Ms. Leyba outlined the NGWSP Reach 27.12 Project, which waterline construction, a two-million-gallon storage tank and two pressure reducing valve stations, in addition to necessary related work.

Mayor DePauli clarified that the project includes a single 2-million-gallon water storage tank.

Discussion followed regarding the City's cost cap for the NGWSP, the project's specific locations, status as the final project of the NGWSP transmission distribution and tank site and how it will benefit the South Fork area.

Councilor Yazzie made the motion to approve Resolution No. R2026-11. Seconded by Councilor Molina. Roll call: Councilors Yazzie, Molina, Piano, Garcia and Mayor DePauli all voted yes.

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6. Best of the Best – Frank Chiapetti, City Manager

Mr. Chiapetti requested guidance on the final year of Mr. Eddy's contract as Event Manager, in accordance with the RFP. He reported that the close-out process for the prior year is underway now that all documentation has been received, provided a brief summary of last year's event turnout, highlighted Mr. Eddy's workload between now and the event and noted Mr. Eddy was present for questions.

Mayor DePauli emphasized the importance of the Best of the Best as well as other Red Rock Park events.

Discussion followed regarding the June event date, appreciation for Mr. Eddy's coordination efforts, budget compliance despite inflation, the fiscal impact of the event, volunteer needs, overall positive participant feedback, the absence of spectator fees, the rodeo's conception, concerns with entertainment funding levels, lodger's tax as the events primary source for funding and the restricted use of lodger's tax, fiscal impact and tax revenue increases, a survey to measure actual economic impact, lodger's tax for Red Rock Park stall use and the current stall capacity and infrastructure improvements.

Mr. Eddy thanked Mr. Eason for representing the City of Gallup at the NGWSP meetings in Washington, D.C.

Councilor Molina made the motion to approve the Best of the Best. Seconded by Councilor Garcia. Roll call: Councilors Molina, Garcia, Piano, Yazzie and Mayor DePauli all voted yes.

7. Request for Review and Action on Lease with Enchanted Technology Solutions and Huntington Technology Finance for GPD Laptop Cameras – Erin Toadlena-Pablo, Chief of Police, Billy Padavich, Deputy Chief of Police, and David Eason, City Attorney

Chief Toadlena-Pablo requested new laptops for the Police Department, stating that current hardware is obsolete and has exceeded their extended warranty life. She detailed the departmental function and operational tasks supported by this equipment.

Mr. Eason advised the Council that a commercial lease is the most viable option for replacing obsolete hardware. He outlined the \$167,000. annual fiscal impact and the necessity for annual appropriations. He detailed the legal risks associated with the contract's clauses and the personal liability risks to the City Attorney's Office. Mr. Eason requested any that any motion that approves this lease and related documents, the Council expressly undertake to indemnify and hold harmless the Legal Department against any claim that may be asserted with respect to a breach of the lease and/or failure of the attorney's opinion that would be required to provide to the lessor.

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Discussion followed regarding insurance coverage with regard to the equipment, the cost listed in the fiscal impact compared to the cost for a four-year term, legislative support and moving forward in the event the City receives future funding.

Councilor Piano made the motion to approve the request for review and action on the lease with Enchanted Technology Solutions, including indemnification of Mr. Eason, Erica Pirotte and the Legal Department based on the opinion they issued. Seconded by Councilor Garcia. Roll call: Councilors Piano, Garcia, Yazzie, Molina and Mayor DePauli all voted yes.

Comments by the Mayor and City Councilors

Councilor Yazzie expressed appreciation for public input regarding the National Guard and highlighted the importance of civic engagement, provided her thoughts pertaining to the presence of the National Guard when it comes to public or mental health matters as a Trauma Therapist, reviewed public health data, noted the local Council of Governments participation in behavioral health reform and announced the next public listening session for Behavioral Health reform and invited everyone to sit in on the Zoom call.

Councilor Garcia inquired about the logistics for the next Meet and Greet and provided feedback on the previous session, commented on Senior Day at the Capital and recognized the Senior Center Manager, representatives and senators for their participation and acknowledged Mr. Hamblen's birthday.

Councilor Piano recognized the State Legislative delegation for their support and noted the importance of maintaining intergovernmental relationships, provided additional feedback for the last Meet and Greet and recognized various departments for their presentations, announced a public library event and requested a status updated on the warming station.

Councilor Molina provided remarks on citizen-led governance, acknowledged local representatives and senators and reported on the approval of HB 99 and the impact of that bill.

Mayor DePauli said he recently attended the grand opening of the Gallup Community Health Clinic at UNM Gallup, provided information regarding his recent trip to Washington, D.C. with Mr. Chiapetti and McKinley County staff and provided details from a meeting at the White House with Medical Health and Human Services staff, Heide Overton, a former Gallup High School student.

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Comments by City Manager and City Attorney

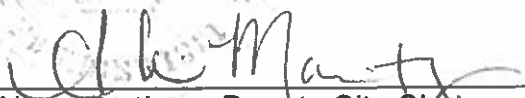
Mr. Chiapetti reported on the recent legislative trip to Washington, D.C. and confirmed that a summary of all meetings had been provided to the Mayor and Council via email. He provided an update on the proposed National Guard presence, focusing on support of the Gallup Police Department through construction and engineering training rather than active law enforcement duties. He noted that staff are continuing to evaluate support options and stated that all future deliberations regarding the matter will occur during scheduled Council Meetings.

Mr. Eason reported on the upcoming New Mexico Supreme Court removal trial of District Attorney Bernadine Martin, noting its status as a historic legal proceeding for the state. He commented regarding the transition to a new District Attorney and a fully funded department.

There being no further business, Councilor Molina made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Councilor Piano. Roll call: Councilors Molina, Piano, Garcia, Yazzie and Mayor DePauli all voted yes.



ATTEST:


Alicia Martínez, Deputy City Clerk


Marc DePauli, Mayor