



CITY OF ROCKY FORD – CITY COUNCIL MEETING

City Council Chambers | 203 S. Main Street, Rocky Ford, CO

April 28, 2026

REGULAR MEETING: 6:00pm

Rocky Ford City Council met in Council Chambers on Tuesday, April 28, 2026. Mayor Duane Gurulé called the meeting to order.

Those present at roll call were:

Mayor: Duane Gurulé

Councilmembers: Nicholas Martinez, Robert Barron, and Nicole Roberts. Councilmembers Thomas Mullins and Nanette Mosby were in attendance by Zoom.

City Staff: City Manager Stacey Milenski, City Clerk Michelle Grasmick, Police Chief Matthew Wallace, Public Works Director Rick Long, Public Works Foreman Cuco Ruiz. City Attorney Dan Harvey was in attendance by Zoom.

Public attendance: JR Thompson, Joseph Pentlicki, Gary Reed, James Budnick.

Mayor Duane Gurulé led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilmember Roberts read aloud the City of Rocky Ford's Mission Statement.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Gary Reed, county resident, expressed concerns regarding the mayor's leadership, alleging efforts to circumvent legal requirements. Reed urged the mayor to resign, citing concerns about the mayor's potential pursuit of a Colorado Senate position and the ability to remain focused on local responsibilities. Reed also criticized the city's current legal counsel, questioning the value and consistency of the advice provided, and advocated for hiring a new or expanded legal team.

6. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Gurulé declared a conflict of interest as the applicant for the Cinco de Mayo Fiesta (Small Town Project) and stated he would abstain from voting.

Councilmember Barron moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Councilmember Roberts raised questions regarding fees associated with street closures for special events. Discussion followed

concerning whether applicants should be charged for trash dumpsters and barricades in accordance with the fee schedule, noting current application forms are inconsistent and do not clearly outline such charges.

Mayor Gurulé, speaking as a representative of Small Town Project, confirmed willingness to pay applicable trash toter fees. Council directed removal of Item 6.3 (Cruisin' Into Summer) pending confirmation with the applicant, Sarah Dillon.

Councilmember Barron amended the motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented with the removal of 6.3 **Request for a Special Event on a Public Street – Cruisin' Into Summer Festival – June 6, 2026**, from 7:00am-5:30pm. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Martinez.

YES: Barron, Mullins, Mosby, Roberts, Martinez

NO: None

ABSTAIN: Gurulé

Motion carried: 5-0 with one abstention

Consent Agenda Items approved were:

6.1 **Approval of Council meeting minutes from April 14, 2026** – Regular meeting at 6:00pm

6.2 **Request for a Special Event on a Public Street – Arkansas Valley Cinco de Mayo Fiesta – May 3, 2026**, from 8:00am-6:00pm

6.4 **Lease Agreement – Arkansas Valley Exposition and Fair Association (Fair Board)**

7. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Proposed changes to the agenda included removing Item 10.2 Discussion/Action - **Ordinance No. 995 - Changes or considerations for moving forward with Second Reading** to allow for proper first and second reading procedures and adding Item 11.3 **Request for a Special Event on a Public Street – Cruisin' Into Summer Festival – June 6, 2026**, from 7:00am-5:30pm.

Councilmember Martinez motioned to approve the Agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Roberts.

Voting results were:

YES: Mullins, Mosby, Roberts, Martinez, Barron, Gurulé

NO: None

Motion carried: 6-0

8. PRESENTATIONS, AWARDS, PROCLAMATIONS

8.1 **Presentation** - Community Water Conservation – Rick Long

Public Works Director Rick Long provided Council with handouts outlining a water supply update in response to questions regarding how to address potential drought conditions. Public Works Director Rick Long reported that, despite drought conditions and limited junior water rights deliveries, the City's current storage and projected supply remain sufficient. Modeling indicates adequate carryover into a

second dry year, and no mandatory watering restrictions are recommended at this time. Staff recommends voluntary conservation measures and will continue monitoring conditions and updating Council as needed.

9. PUBLIC HEARING

9.1 None

10. OLD BUSINESS

10.1 Discussion/Action - Letters of Interest - Ward II Vacancy

City Clerk Michelle Grasmick reported one letter of interest was received by the extended deadline (April 28th) from Dr. Joe Pentlicki. Council invited Dr. Pentlicki to address the body and responded to standard questions, including confirmation of no conflicts of interest. Dr. Pentlicki outlined scheduling limitations due to work commitments, medical recovery, and a standing conflict with a monthly hospital board meeting. Council acknowledged his community involvement and expressed appreciation for his interest and service.

Councilmember Roberts motioned to appoint Dr. Joe Pentlicki to the vacant Council seat in Ward II. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Barron.

Voting results were:

YES: Mullins, Mosby, Roberts, Martinez, Barron, Gurulé

NO: None

Motion carried: 6-0

Oath of Office – Dr. Joe Pentlicki, Councilmember Ward II

City Clerk Michelle Grasmick and City Attorney Dan Harvey clarified that, as this is an appointment, the seat will be subject to election in November 2027.

10.3 Discussion/Action - Employee Handbook

City Manager Stacey Milenski presented revisions to the 2026 Employee Handbook incorporating prior Council feedback, including updates on PTO donations, search of City property, volunteer service eligibility, and policies for employees running for political office. The handbook has been reviewed by the City Attorney.

Council discussed concerns related to cell phone use, social media policy, rehire eligibility, PTO cash-out, and bereavement leave. Clarification was provided that existing policy limits social media use to work-related purposes as authorized, though enforcement during employee breaks remains challenging. No changes were recommended.

Additional discussion addressed management and control of official City social media accounts following prior access issues with the Library and Museum, emphasizing the need for administrative oversight and City ownership of accounts.

Councilmember Roberts motioned to approve the Employee Handbook as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Mullins.

Voting results were:

YES: Mosby, Roberts, Martinez, Barron, Pentlicki, Mullins, Gurulé

NO: None

Motion carried: 7-0

10.4 Discussion/Action - Museum Bylaws

City Manager Stacey Milenski presented proposed revisions to the Museum Bylaws, noting they are largely consistent with existing bylaws but include minor corrections and clarifications. Changes include removal of language restricting trustee succession, correction of titles (City Administrator to City Manager), and clarification that building security is a City responsibility. Revisions also specify that the board may recommend, rather than oversee, facility remodeling and renovations.

Councilmember Martinez motioned to approve the Museum Bylaws as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Roberts.

Voting results were:

YES: Roberts, Martinez, Barron, Pentlicki, Mullins, Mosby, Gurulé

NO: None

Motion carried: 7-0

11. NEW BUSINESS

11.1 Discussion – Canal Safety

Council discussed canal safety, building on prior stakeholder meetings and community input, with emphasis on a multi-faceted approach combining education, outreach, and targeted physical measures. Council identified public education as a key strategy, including demonstrations, safety materials, school-based outreach, and participation in community events. Partnerships with organizations (e.g., ABA, CDS, and other service providers) and use of tools such as GPS monitoring devices were discussed, though limitations were noted.

Input from families and community members emphasized that while outreach is valuable, physical barriers, particularly in high-risk areas, could significantly reduce incidents. Council discussed pursuing data-informed, targeted solutions such as temporary or flexible fencing near known risk locations, while acknowledging constraints related to private property rights, canal maintenance access, and feasibility.

Additional ideas included increased signage (including warnings and location markers for emergencies), advance notification when canals are active, and resources to support at-risk populations. Some community partners expressed willingness to assist financially once solutions are identified.

Council agreed to continue data gathering, stakeholder coordination, and development of practical, collaborative safety strategies, with potential future action to be considered.

11.2 Discussion/Action – **Vendor Application – Consider addition of one-day license**

Council discussed adding a one-day vendor license option to accommodate short-term and out-of-area vendors, with a proposed fee of \$25 in addition to the \$50 annual application fee. Current license options (1-week, 6-month, 1-year) and associated fees were reviewed.

Discussion focused on whether the application fee should be charged once annually or with each application, balancing administrative workload with fairness to vendors. Council also considered aligning licenses to a calendar year for consistency and ease of administration.

Concerns were raised regarding administrative burden, vendor affordability, and impacts on event participation. It was clarified that vendor licenses apply to retail, food vendors, peddlers, and solicitors, and include verification requirements.

City Attorney Dan Harvey advised that changes to license types and fees require updates to the fee schedule and potentially municipal code. Additional discussion identified the need to review and clarify background check requirements and related procedures.

Council agreed to table pending further review and required updates.

11.3 **Request for a Special Event on a Public Street** – Cruisin’ Into Summer Festival – June 6, 2026, from 7:00am-5:30pm

Council discussed whether to approve the street closure request in light of ongoing fee policy updates. Consensus supported beginning to charge for trash totes based on the existing fee schedule, while recognizing the need for clearer standards and consistency.

Discussion also addressed charging for barricades and associated labor; however, Council noted the need for clearer definitions, adequate equipment, and formalized fee structure before full implementation. Members expressed interest in establishing an effective date for broader fee changes to ensure fairness and adequate notice.

Council emphasized the importance of clear expectations for applicants, including options for providing their own barricades under defined standards. Additional discussion encouraged consideration of alternative venues such as the Fairgrounds and Library Park to reduce costs and logistical challenges associated with street closures.

Councilmember Roberts motioned to approve the **Request for a Special Event on a Public Street – Cruisin’ Into Summer Festival – June 6, 2026**, from 7:00am-5:30pm with the provision that the trash toters are paid for. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Pentlicki.

Voting results were:

YES: Barron, Pentlicki, Mosby, Roberts, Martinez, Gurulé

NO: None

ABSENT: Mullins

Motion carried: 6-0

12. STAFF REPORTS

12.1 **City Manager** – *Stacey Milenski summarized written City Manager’s report to Council. Milenski included updates that occurred after the report was written.*

13. COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilmembers provided updates and reports on their respective boards and community events. Mayor Gurulé also provided his Mayor’s report, a written report was not provided in advance of the meeting.

14. PUBLIC COMMENT

14.1 None

15. EXECUTIVE SESSION

15.1 None

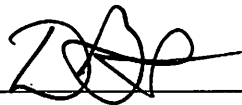
16. UPCOMING MEETINGS

16.1 May 5, 2026, from 2:00pm – 4:00pm City Council Work Session

16.2 May 12, 2026, at 6:00pm - City Council Regular Meeting

ADJOURN

There being no further business, Mayor Gurulé adjourned the meeting at 8:49pm.



Mayor Duane Gurulé



City Clerk, Michelle Grasmick