

Durango's Municipal Elections—Then and Now





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Please email any comments on this history to todd.ellison@durangogov.org

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The City of Durango was one of the first in the state and the nation to be self-governed by Home Rule, and has had a history of conducting municipal elections fairly and equitably for over 130 years. Here are some historical nuggets about the City's past elections, and facts about voting in the City of Durango's elections nowadays.

How do I register to vote? Where do I vote?

Register to vote at the La Plata County Clerk and Recorder's Office:
98 Everett St., Suite C
Durango, CO 81301 Phone (970) 382-6294

Going to a polling place on election day has become much less of a common thing in recent years. Although City Council has to decide the method of voting for each election (and whether to coordinate it with the election the La Plata County Clerk and Recorder facilitates), voting via mail ballot is the norm nowadays.

Who is eligible to vote?

Any resident of Durango who is a U.S. citizen, is at least 18 years old by Election Day and who has resided inside the state of Colorado for at least the past 22 days preceding the election may vote in the City election. Registered electors of the County who have moved into the city and resided in the state for 22 days preceding the election must change their legal address of residency with the County Clerk on or before election day.

When are elections held?

Durango voters elect Council members in the regular municipal election that is held on the first Tuesday in April in every odd-numbered year. It has been this way since the start. Councilors serve for a term of four years. The Office of the City Clerk manages every City of Durango election, but the La Plata County Clerk and Recorder maintains the voter lists and conducts coordinated elections for the City when the City has a matter to bring to the City's voters on a November ballot.

What about special elections?

Sometimes a matter cannot wait for the regular municipal election every other April or the County's November election. In such a case, so long as it doesn't involve voting on a tax increase, Council can decide to announce a special election. A special election can be for the purpose of amending the City's charter (the City's basic governing document) or filling a vacancy on Council, or it can be called as a

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result of a citizen *Initiative* (proposing a City ordinance and requiring a vote on it), a *Referendum* (in which the Electors of the City require the reconsideration by the Council of any adopted ordinance), or *Recall* of a Council member. The minutes of a stormy Council meeting on September 4, 1891 tell of a special election for the election of the mayor.

One of the first special elections was in 1882, as described in Ordinance O-1882-0046, for the purpose of obtaining voters' approval for incurring bonded debt to build the City's water works. State law, known as the Colorado Taxpayer's Bill of Rights, now requires all potential tax increases to be approved by the voters during the municipal election in April or in the November election—no longer by special election.

The City held a special election on March 25, 1902 regarding granting a gas franchise. 231 voted for granting and giving unto J. Watson Hay and George W. Franklin and George C. Franklin a franchise and the right to erect gas works, etc. Only one person voted against it.

To the right is the notice the City published in the February 13, 1906 *Durango Democrat* to announce the upcoming special election to approve the City's electric franchise, which comes due every 20 years.

Sometimes the City puts an issue on the November ballot, coordinated by the La Plata County Clerk and Recorder. One example of this was the election on November 6, 2012, to determine whether the City would grant a franchise to La Plata Electric Association to operate an electric utility within Durango. To attain the victory (and the tax revenues) the City desired, City Council had held a special election on July 31 to ask the voters to change the City's charter to remove the requirement that a resident must be a Durango property tax payer to vote on a franchise issue. In the special election just before that (on April 3, 2012), the City's taxpaying electors voted down the previous LPEA franchise agreement ballot question, by just 41 votes. The City spent \$41,073 to conduct these three elections pertaining to the LPEA franchise.

NOTICE OF SPECIAL ELECTION.

Notice is hereby given that there will be a special election held in the City of Durango at the usual polling places in said City, on Monday, the 23rd day of July, 1906, between the hours of 7 o'clock A. M. and 7 o'clock P. M. of said day for the purposes, and in accordance with the provisions of the following ordinance duly adopted and passed June 26th, 1906, to-wit:

ORDINANCE NO. 430.

AN ORDINANCE GRANTING TO THOMAS L. LOFTUS, HIS GRANTEES, SUCCESSORS AND ASSIGNS, A FRANCHISE AND RIGHT TO ERÉCT ELECTRIC LIGHT AND POWER WORKS AND MACHINERY FOR THE MANUFACTURE, DISTRIBUTION AND SALE OF ELECTRICITY IN THE CITY OF DURANGO.

What positions in the City of Durango are elected?

City Councilors are elected by the citizens. Council appoints the City Manager, the City Attorney, the Municipal Court judges, and members of all City boards and commissions. All other staff are appointed by the City Manager or by the City Manager's designee.

Who is eligible to run for City Council?

A candidate for the Durango City Council must be:

1. A registered elector
2. 18 years old by Election Day
3. A resident of Durango, or a territory recently annexed to Durango, for the 12 consecutive months prior to Election Day.
4. City Council members are limited to serving two 4-year terms.

How does a potential candidate start the process?

1. Get a nomination petition form from the City Clerk. Petitions are available 55 days before the election.
2. Get your petition form signed in ink by at least 25 registered electors who live in the City of Durango.
3. Return your petition to the City Clerk before the end of the business day on the 35th day before the election.

What are the salary and benefits for City Councilors?

Each City Council member is paid \$500 per month (\$750 for the mayor), plus medical, dental and vision benefits.

What does it take to be on Council?

To get *onto* Council, if recent elections are a good indication, a person needs the votes of at least 1,700 to 2,100 eligible electors (i.e., at least 1/10th of Durango's population)—depending on the turnout for that particular election, and how many are running for the available seats. More than that, though, it takes character, people skills, listening skills, wisdom, and leadership. Council members are often faced with difficult decisions, ones that pit sometimes equally compelling principles against each other. A Council member who truly cares about the present and future health and vitality of the people, the businesses, the community, and the place will face challenges and have the opportunity to show courageous and wise leadership that will benefit Durango for years to come. As departing City Council member Paul Broderick told the *Durango Herald* (1/19/2013) regarding serving on Council, "You're not city staff. You don't work for the city. You work for the people."

Why do people run for City Council?

If there is a dominant underlying reason why a person decided to run for Council, perhaps it is that the individual saw something that needed correcting in the City—whether it was to repair a dangerous plank in the board sidewalk in front of his property (as in the case of W. C. Chapman in 1886), or to push for the City to provide more affordable housing or to push it into being more “green”, in the early 21st century.

The Colorado Municipal League (CML), in its Handbook for Municipal Elected Officials (2006), suggests that typically persons run for local office because they:

- think certain issues (important to them) are being ignored
- disagree with the ideological position(s) of the incumbents
- love being engaged in politics
- have the time to commit to it
- want to give back to the community
- got drafted into running by a group they're involved with
- ran because no one else would
- felt that the elected body needed someone on it that was more representative of the diversity of the community

Having stated this, CML also noted that, “the reasons that prompt a person to run and serve may change once they have been sworn into office and served for some time. Indeed, what happens before an election and afterward can seem like two different worlds.” (p. 60)

What does it take to place an issue on a ballot?

To be placed on the ballot, a citizen-initiated petition must be submitted to the City Clerk's Office with eligible signatures of at least 15% of the total votes cast at the previous regular municipal election (i.e., about 500 signatures).

Because of the high cost of conducting an election, the City sometimes is under pressure to reach some other means of deciding an issue. The *Durango Herald* (9/8/2012) decried how the Council responded to this pressure when the proponents of pesticide-free city parks submitted enough names on a petition to bring this to a vote. Rather than hold an election with its cost and divisive nature, the City reached an agreement to hire a consultant. This enabled the City to persuade the proponents to withdraw their petition.

Table of expenses of City of Durango elections, 2001-2017

Date	Election	Total cost	# ballots issued	# ballots counted	% of eligible electors who voted ¹	Cost per ballot voted
4/2/2019	Regular ²	\$17,914	12,113	4,470	37%	\$4.00
11/5/2018	County-coordinated ³	\$15,096	15,864	9,297	59%	\$1.62
11/7/17	County-coordinated ⁴	\$14,375		4,795		\$3.00
4/4/2017	Regular ⁵	\$18,059	12,197	4,900	40%	\$3.69
4/7/2015	Regular	\$18,583	10,323	3,954	38%	\$4.70
11/5/2013	County-coordinated ⁶	\$11,000	11,185	4,840	43%	\$2.27
4/2/2013	Regular	\$17,210	9,882	3,442	37%	\$5.00
11/6/2012	County-coordinated ⁷	\$15,500	13,188	8,202	62%	\$1.89
7/31/2012	Special ⁸	\$12,588	7,281	2,072	29%	\$6.08
4/3/2012	Special ⁹	\$12,985	3,765	1,429	38%	\$9.09
11/1/2011	County-coordinated ¹⁰	\$13,539		3,246		\$4.17
4/5/2011	Regular	\$12,342	6,602	3,403	51%	\$3.62
4/7/2009	Regular	\$15,570	9,272	3,175	34%	\$4.90
11/4/2008	County-coordinated ¹¹	\$19,051				
4/3/2007	Regular	\$3,880	6,968	3,880	56%	\$2.91
11/7/2006	County-coordinated ¹²	\$7,145				
4/5/2005	Regular ¹³	\$18,011	8,810	3,776	43%	\$4.77
4/1/2003	Regular	\$13,725	6,320	3,685	58%	\$3.72
4/3/2001	Regular ¹⁴	\$6,500		2,160	19%	\$3.01
Totals:		\$263,073				

¹ Based on total number of ballots distributed (not all of these are delivered; some, the Post Office returns, undeliverable).

² Including ballot question 1-A, which increased City taxes for 10 years for the purpose of funding street improvements

³ Ballot question 2A: proposed increases in City sales tax and mill levy up to \$8.7M per first year for 25 years, to fund police, public safety and code enforcement, construction etc. of a police station et al. and street improvements (defeated: 61% no.; 39% yes).

⁴ Ballot question 2A: City property tax increase of up to \$1.5M in first year, to fund the Durango Fire Protection District.

⁵ Including citizen-initiated ballot question 1A (defeated) to prohibit continued fluoridation of Durango's municipal water supply.

⁶ Durango Fire Protection District agreement with the City and Bag Fee Referendum Ballot Issue,

⁷ LPEA franchise approval (2nd attempt).

⁸ 7/31/12 Special election to amend Article IX, §1 of the Charter of the City of Durango to remove the requirement that voters at franchise elections must be tax-paying electors and to change antiquated references to the City Treasurer to refer to the City Clerk.

⁹ 20-year franchise agreement in favor of La Plata Electric Assn., subject to approval of the registered **tax-paying** electors of the City.

¹⁰ Approval of \$4 million in debt to allow the City of Durango to purchase water from the Animas La Plata Project.

¹¹ City of Durango \$17.6M indebtedness for Florida Road Reconstruction Project bond issue.

¹² \$15.9 million in sales and use tax revenue bonds to fund site purchase and construction of new Durango Public Library.

¹³ This ballot included a debt-funding question half-cent sales tax increase to fund the Durango Public Library and parks and open space), therefore the City was required to mail a TABOR notice to every registered active voting household.

¹⁴ April 3, 2001 was the last polling-place election; subsequently, they included a mail-in option.

What does an election cost the taxpayer?

As shown in the chart on the preceding page, the City has spent \$263,073 (not counting the time of its own staff) on conducting 19 elections in the past 19 years. The cost per ballot voted has ranged from \$1.62 to \$9.09. The City's expenses include printing, postage, paying election judges, and use of County ballot-counting machines and, in recent years, mail ballot elections managed by the County. The move to mail-in ballots and the increase in the number of eligible voters have been the two main factors to cause an increase in the cost of running City elections. Special elections tend to be the most costly, because no other government entity is funding an issue on that ballot.

How have elections in Durango changed since 1881?

There have been six significant aspects of electoral change in Durango.

~1~ Originally, **most of the top officials in Durango were elected** by the people; now, only the City Councilors are. Here the *Durango Democrat* of 3/7/1900 reported on the races for the upcoming City election:

City clerk was instructed to give usual notice of annual city election, April 3. Officers to be elected are as follows: City marshal, city clerk, city attorney, police magistrate, city street supervisor, one alderman for each ward and one alderman for Fourth ward to fill vacancy.

~2~ Originally, **candidates affiliated themselves by party** and there were "tickets" on the ballot—as noted by the following examples of "tickets" advertised in the local newspapers. The *Durango Democrat* was pleased to announce on April 16, 1901 "BODY DEMOCRATIC NOW." Nowadays, candidates for City Council do not declare their political party affiliation. This change and the change already mentioned as to voting for the City's top administrative officials are unlike the situation of La Plata County, where the City Clerk, Treasurer, Sheriff etc. are elected and represent a political party.

City Councils of Durango Met Last Night.

BODY DEMOCRATIC NOW

Mayor McConnell Praised City Government and Thanked Co-Laborers for Distinguished Services—Mayor Wall in Accepting the Office Promised a Fair and Economical Administration

The old council met last night with Mayor McConnell and all members present. The room was crowded with visitors and occupying positions of honor were Messrs. Buskirk, McGuire and Skoog, councilmen-elect and mayor-elect, Hon. Sam G. Wall.

In an op-ed article (1/19/2013), the *Durango Herald* remarked that “City Council elections are a far cry—and a welcome relief—from the increasingly nasty and polarized tone of state and national politics. And they are at least as important, which further highlights the fact that ugliness need not be a part of democracy.”

The 3/31/1899 *Durango Democrat* published the ticket for the upcoming City election (reproduced on the next page):

Information for City Officers of the City of Durango, to be voted for at Election to be held on the 4th day of April A. D., 1899, filed in the Office of the City Clerk of said city according to law.

To vote a Straight Party Ticket place a Cross (X) with Ink in the Spaces opposite your Party Emblem.

Democratic Ticket	
Republican Ticket	
Silver Republican Ticket	
People's Party Ticket	

If you have not voted a Straight Ticket as above, place a Cross Mark (X) with Ink opposite each name you wish to vote for the blank space left for that purpose.

On March 27, 1901 the *Durango Democrat* posted the tickets for that year's election:

A LIST OF NOMINATIONS

persons to be voted for at an election to be held April 2, 1901, certified to by the City Clerk of the City of Durango, Under the provisions of the Act in relation to elections, etc., approved March 26, 1891 and amended February 27, 1894. Approved May 3, 1899.

To vote a Straight Party Ticket, write within the blank space immediately herein—under the name of the Party you wish to vote for.

<p>I HEREBY VOTE A STRAIGHT _____ TICKET</p> <p>Except where I have marked opposite the name of some other candidate</p>

If you have not voted a Straight Ticket above, place a cross-mark (X) with ink opposite each name you wish to vote for in the blank space left for that purpose.

FOR MAYOR (Vote for One)		FOR ALDERMAN, Second Ward (Vote for One)	
<p>CHAS. H. McLANE Place of business, cor. First avenue and Ninth St. Residence, Third avenue.</p>	Republican	<p>N. OSCAR BUSKIRK Place of business cor. First avenue and Tenth St. Residence, Third Ave. bet. Ninth and Tenth Sts.</p>	Democratic
<p>SAM. G. WALK Place of business, cor. First avenue and Tenth St. Residence, Third avenue.</p>	Democratic	<p>FRANK H. GALOTTI Place of business, Cor. First Ave. and Ninth St. Residence, block 54 Fourth Ave.</p>	Republican

FOR TREASURER (Vote for One)	FOR ALDERMAN, Third Ward (Vote for One)
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The following ads in the *Durango Democrat* are for the Republican City ticket/Anti-Gambling ticket of 1905:

REPUBLICAN CITY TICKET.

For MAYOR,
DAVID RAMSEY.
 For Treasurer,
W. H. LACOUNT.
 For Clerk,
WILLIAM T. DAVIS.
 For City Attorney,
R. S. CLEMENTS.
 For Marshal,
W. J. PATTERSON.
 For Police Magistrate,
JOSEPH P. AIRY.
 For City Engineer,
J. E. TIFFANY.
 For Street Commissioner,
ED. HILL.
 For Aldermen,
 First Ward.
J. M. JOHNSON AND D. M. LOGAN.
 Second Ward.
**C. M. ELLIOTT AND HARRY
 SCHRADER.**
 Third Ward.
**HERMAN HANNO AND CHARLES
 NAGELIN.**
 Fourth Ward.
J. W. SITES AND WM. DOBBINS.

ANTI-GAMBLING TICKET.

MAYOR, David Ramsay.
 Clerk, C. L. Russell.
 Treasurer, W. H. LaCount.
 Attorney, R. S. Clements.
 Marshal, W. J. Patterson.
 Street Commissioner, Edward Hill.
 Police Magistrate, Joe Airy.
 Alderman, First ward, David Logan,
 Horace McCanna.
 Second ward—C. M. Elliott, C. E
 Dudley.
 Third ward—Charles Naeglein.
 Fourth ward—J. W. Sites, William
 Dobbins.

The *Durango Wage Earner* posted the Democratic tickets on April 1, 1909 (below left) and March 23, 1905 (right). By the way, Miss Helen Rodgers (who was on the 1905 ticket) had, years before, in 1894, become the first female City Clerk and Recorder and the City's first female elected official.



DEMOCRATIC TICKET.

MAYOR George Goodman
 Clerk Jacob G. Wilson
 Treasurer W. H. LaCount
 Aldermen.
 First Ward—A. B. Nelson, Cy Craden.
 Second Ward—C. E. Dudley, Thos
 Smith.
 Third Ward—John W. Turner, A
 W. Parker.
 Fourth Ward—Patrick F. Cummins
 Florence O'Driscoll.
NOTE IT STRAIGHT.

DEMOCRATS NOMINATE.

The following ticket was nominat-
 ed by the Democrats Saturday night:

C. E. McConnell for mAYOR,
 Clem Russell for clerk.
 Miss Helen Rodgers for treasurer.
 William Wickline for marshal.
 W. A. Reese for attorney.
 B. F. Houx for police judge.
 John Dupraw for street commission-
 er.
 W. H. Wigglesworth for surveyor.
 Herman Berndt and Dr. H. McCanna
 for aldermen from the First ward.
 Frank Rivers and F. S. Balster for
 aldermen from the Second ward.
 William Degenhardt and George E.
 West for aldermen from the Third
 ward.
 John Casey and Frank Gonnor for
 aldermen from the Fourth ward.

The members of the city central
 committee are: First ward, H. S.
 Butler and Harry Jackson; Second
 ward, W. T. Darlington and Barry
 Guthrie; Third ward, George G.

The parties in Durango even held political conventions—at least this one mentioned by the *Durango Democrat* on March 4, 1900:

Democratic City Convention

A convention of the Democratic party of Durango is hereby called to meet at the City Hall in said city, on the 16th day of March, 1900, at the hour of 7:30 p. m., for the purpose of nominating candidates to fill the following offices to be voted for at the spring election in the City of Durango, viz:

- 1 Candidate for City Marshal.
- 1 Candidate for City Attorney,
- 1 Candidate for City Clerk.
- 1 Candidate for City Engineer.
- 1 Candidate for City Street Supervisor.

Primaries are hereby called to be held on the 15th day of March, from 7 to 8 o'clock p. m., at the following places;

First Ward—Wood & Morgan's stable, Second avenue.

Second Ward—Court House.

Third Ward—Steiniger's stable.

Fourth Ward—North Durango Hose House for the purpose of electing seven delegates from each Ward to said convention.

The voters at the primaries in each Ward shall select some candidate for Alderman in such Ward, and the voters at said primaries in the Fourth Ward one candidate for Alderman to fill vacancy, such selections to be subject to the ratification of the city convention.

Such City Convention shall also select the City Central committee for the coming year and transact such other business as may properly come before it.

By order of Committee,

W. A. REESE, Chairman Pro Tem.

W. H. MOORE, Secretary Pro Tem. 3-11

~3~ Until the election of September 3, 1912 when the City's voters (464 voted for; 202 against) adopted a home rule charter, **each City Council member represented a geographic ward of the City.**

The first municipal elections to select Commissioners (as City Council members were called then) under the terms of the home rule charter were held on April 1 and April 15, 1913. On May 1, 1913, Council held its last meeting under the Aldermanic form of government and its first meeting under the Commissioner form of government. Prior to 1913,

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voters would elect 9 Aldermen: a mayor and four pairs of elected Council members who represented the four wards of the City.

Nowadays, all five City Council members serve the community at-large; they do not represent specific voting precincts of the City. April 2013 is the centennial of Durango's move into the home rule form of government, which was rather an innovation at the time. Durango was the fourth in the State of Colorado to adopt home rule—preceded only by Denver, Colorado Springs and Grand Junction.

Durango, Colorado, April 7th 1915.

The City Council of the City of Durango, Colorado met in regular adjourned session in the City Hall Wednesday afternoon, April 7th AD 1915 at two o'clock and upon roll call the following members were present:

Mayor Henry R. Scanton
 Commissioner Jacob G. Willson
 Commissioner Henry W. Redman

Roll Call

All members being present, the following business was transacted:

As provided by Section 6c of Article VI of the Charter of the City of Durango, the City Council convened to vote had an April 6th, 1915 for the election of one Commissioner of Public Affairs for the full six year term and upon the question of the adoption or rejection of the Charter amendments providing for Commission-Manager Form of Government, and the following results were ascertained to wit:

Name of Candidate or Proposition	Precinct No						Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Andrew J. Boad Commissioner of Public Affairs	121	89	66	86	63	96	521
Henry R. Scanton Do Do Do Do	61	80	25	45	51	105	367
George O. Logan Do Do Do Do			1				1
For the Charter Amendments providing for Commission-Manager Form of Government:	100	100	63	97	67	130	557
Against the Charter Amendment providing for Commission-Manager Form of Government:	68	71	35	41	48	73	336
Boad's Majority - 158 votes. Majority for the amendments 221 votes.							

~4~ **The mayor is no longer the top administrator of the City.** In the general municipal election on April 6, 1915 (as noted in the minutes of the Council meeting of April 7, 1915, handwritten on page 528 of a red leather-bound ledger that is now on display in a case up-

stairs in the Durango Public Library—as reproduced above), citizens voted by a sizeable majority (557 for, 336 against) to amend the City Charter to move to a Commissioner-Manager form of government. That form of government lasted until the election of November 7, 1978 when voters adopted the Council-Manager form of government as a result of the work of the City's second charter convention. Durango was one of the first municipalities in the US to adopt the City Council [or City Commissioner]/City Manager form of governance, in which the Council (elected by the people) would set policy and the City Manager (chosen by Council) would implement it, rather than having a mayor who would head up the day-to-day administration of the City's affairs, as was the case in Durango from 1881 until 1915.

~5~ The citizens no longer vote for the mayor.

Until the City Charter was changed in 1912, citizens voted for the mayor. An individual would run for the office of mayor. Now, each year in April the Council members vote among themselves to select the Mayor, who, by tradition, is the person they voted to be Mayor Pro Tem for the previous year, at the first meeting of the new Council. The Council member chosen to be Mayor Pro Tem usually was one of the two top vote-getters in the Council election, two elections back.

Here is an early example of this: Mayor McConnell resigned on the spot on September 17, 1907, after Council discussed that he had accepted \$25 and issued a license for a tent/pony/vaudeville show without authority to do so. Council elected Herman Berndt as mayor on October 1, 1907, to fill the vacancy. Berndt was one of the two aldermen (that's what Council members were called until 1913) whom the citizens of the 1st Ward had elected in the municipal election. Council had elected him mayor pro tem on April 13, 1905, and thus it was logical that it elected him to serve as mayor to fill the remainder of McConnell's term.

~6~ There are fewer business owners on Council today than there usually were, in earlier decades. In the first half of Durango's history (through the 1950s) most of the Council members were established Main Avenue businessmen. The elected officials in the early years tended to be deeply rooted in the community and had significant vested interests in its prosperity. In recent years, few business owners have been on Council. Councilors in the more recent half of the City's history have included many who were academics or administrators at Fort Lewis College (which moved into Durango in 1955) and some who managed small businesses and/or non-profit

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organizations. Business owners have had a greatly reduced presence on Council. One possible theory as to why this change occurred is that business owners have not wanted to risk the economic backlash for any political decisions they would make on Council. One of the possible consequences of this diminishment of the influence of business owners in the City's governance is that business interests may sometimes have not been well defended in the fray and controversy that is part and parcel of the governance of any city or municipality.

Were there ever any shenanigans in Durango's elections? Recalls? Disputed election results? Irregularities?

The City's minutes have no record of there ever having been a recall election, a disputed election, or a recount. The early local newspapers seem to have no record of such, either, though they often reported on voting irregularities elsewhere in the state and the nation.

Have there been close elections in Durango's past?

The 1903 election was a tightly contested one. William McEwen (a Republican) defeated McConnell by nine votes, as shown by the Council minutes of April 9, 1903.

Abstract of votes cast at an Election held in Durango, Colorado, on Tuesday, the seventh day of April, 1903.

Names of Candidates	Office voted for	Number of ballots and votes cast in each precinct						Total number of votes
		106	99	62	125	78	113	
Charles E. McConnell	Mayor	106	99	62	125	78	113	583
William H. McEwen		114	108	57	80	106	128	592
William de Le Bonnet	Treasurer	101	126	50	94	95	123	589
Andrew R. Lewis		117	82	67	113	65	118	582

This is how the *Durango Democrat* reported those election results on April 8, 1903:

The 1911 City election was another close one. Andrew F. Hood, a Republican, defeated John Morlock by 35 votes on April 4, 1911, as shown by the minutes

THE CITY ELECTION

Close, Hard Struggle and Few Votes Dividing

Durango's election passed off without a harsh word or unpleasant act. The vote was eighty per cent scratched, which must be accepted as evidence that it was a studied ballot. There were several combinations and a few "double crosses," or double combines. It has been an exceedingly close contest. Below we give the vote

of April 17, 1911, reproduced on the following page.

Abstract of Votes

The clerks presented and read the following abstract of votes cast at election held on April 4th AD 1911, as determined by canvass made by canvassing Board April 6th AD 1911, to-wit:

City Election	Names of Candidates	Office Voted for	Number of Precincts and votes cast in each						Total Number of Votes cast
			No. 1	No. 2	No. 3	No. 4	No. 5	No. 6	
April 4th 1911	Hood, Andrew J	Mayor	110	95	57	95	71	146	574
	Marlock, John	"	106	112	48	75	77	121	539
	Davis, Clara M	Treasurer	98	47	37	74	50	98	404
	Labount, William H	"	114	162	69	96	95	174	710
	Redeher, Frank A	City Clerk	62	72	31	46	46	78	335
	Milson, Jacob G	"	151	136	76	123	96	191	773
	Hornbush, J. T.	"							

Mayor Hood won despite derogatory comments by the Progressive local newspaper, the *Durango Wage Earner*, on March 30, 1911.



Official Ballot Enclosed

Elections reveal much about the fabric of a society and its dominant values. The experiment of representative democracy continues in the City of Durango, in April of every odd-numbered year and whenever there is a special election, and at least twice a month when City Council is in session in Council Chambers in City Hall. You are invited to vote in every City election, participate in those City Council meetings (there always is a section allocated early in the meeting for Public Participation), apply to serve on one of the many boards, commissions and advisory boards of the City, and perhaps even run for City Council.

COUNCIL MEETING

Mayor Hood presided and all members of the council were present at the regular meeting of the city council Tuesday evening. The minutes of the regular session of July 15 were read and declared approved.

The reports, for the month of July, of the different officers were read. The captain of the Salvation army asked permission to erect a tent on the vacant lot corner of Main avenue and Eleventh street. This is to be used for evangelistic services from Aug. 1 to 18, inclusive. The request was granted.

Chairman Hanno of the finance committee stated that after the bills for July were paid a balance of \$1,478.69 only would remain in the treasury.

This is one of a number of booklets produced by the Durango City Clerk's Office to inform, educate, and entertain those who live in Durango, visit it, or want to know more about a corner of the U.S. that has a lively, well-documented past and a vibrant current environment.



Informational eBooks and thousands of primary source documents of the City of Durango (ordinances, resolutions, minutes, agendas, etc.) from 1881 to the present are freely available and keyword searchable at the City's public online records portal at this page: <http://durangogov.org/190/Searching-the-Citys-Online-Records>

Durango, Colorado: Where the mountains meet the desert

**~ a playground of pine forests, aspen groves, lakes, streams,
and spectacular views ~**



City website: <http://www.durangogov.org/>