

TOWN OF LA JARA

PO Box 273
La Jara, CO 81140
Phone: (719) 274-5363
Fax: (719) 274-5986

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Regular Meeting
Date: October 13, 2022

A permanent set of these minutes are maintained in the Town Clerk's Office. Approved Minutes are also available on the web at www.colorado.gov/townoflajara

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Medina at 6:00 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Medina led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Present were Trustees: Chavez, Rendon, Villagomez, Wagoner, Mayor Pro Tem Valdez, and Mayor Medina.

Absent: None

Also present were Town Manager Zaragoza, Town Clerk Pagnotta, Chief Lujan, Public Works Supervisor Thomas Dufresne, Building Inspector Darrin Rodriguez, Town Attorney Farish and Town Attorney Seth Walker.

Approval of Agenda

Trustee Rendon requested to add update on the CML Policy Committee and water webinar to the agenda; it was added as item "d" under New Business.

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Valdez moved to approve the agenda with the added items; seconded by Trustee Rendon.

Vote Results: Ayes: Trustees Chavez, Rendon, Villagomez, Wagoner, Mayor Pro Tem Valdez, and Mayor Medina.

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

Consent Calendar

Trustee Rendon mentioned a few typos in the minutes.

Motion: Trustee Rendon moved to approve the consent calendar; seconded by Trustee Wagoner.

Vote Results: Ayes: Trustees Chavez, Rendon, Villagomez, Wagoner, Mayor Pro Tem Valdez, and Mayor Medina.

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

Guests

No guests were present.

Citizen Comments

None

Karen Hinojos from the Conejos County Housing Authority, attending virtually, requested to make her presentation prior to other agenda items because she had another meeting to attend. She gave a brief background on the housing study that was completed in July of 2021. As a result of the study an action plan was developed focusing on educating the community on the need for housing; improving the existing inventory by addressing the abandoned houses to make them livable again; and building 15 to 20 new homes within the next five years. She asked if the board had discussed how they plan address the housing needs. She suggested collaborating with the Town and proposed using the land at 312 S. Main to build new homes. She suggested a land grant, leasing the land for a period of 99 years, or purchasing the land to acquire the building site. She explained there are many granting agencies that could assist with funding to address housing needs. It was the consensus of the board to collaborate with the housing authority to build a workable partnership and begin educating the community. Mayor Medina suggested meeting with Town Manager Zaragoza to determine what the next steps should be. Hinojos stated the next step would be to determine how to acquire the land. Trustee Rendon brought up concerns about water and sewer demands for the new homes. Conejos County Housing Authority Chairperson Skotty Morris and Board Member Laura Schell were also present at the meeting and reiterated the need to acquire the land for housing development.

New Business

Appointment to trustee vacancy – Curt Wilson, Fred Velasquez, Jr., and Arthur Rendon submitted applications and letters of interest to fill the vacant trustee position. Curt Wilson and Fred Velasquez, Jr. were present. Mayor Medina asked the trustees to complete a secret ballot to vote for their choice to fill the vacancy. There was a tie vote between Curt Wilson and Fred Velasquez, Jr. Trustee Rendon suggested the candidates explain why they wanted to serve on the board. Velasquez and Wilson addressed the board. Mayor Medina stated she hoped the person not selected would be willing to serve on the Board of Adjustments. Citizen Larry Sisneros stated that he highly recommended Wilson to serve as trustee; Velasquez concurred and graciously withdrew as a candidate. Curt Wilson was sworn in by Attorney Gene Farish.

2023 Budget – Town Clerk Pagnotta presented the 2023 budget. A work session was scheduled for October 27 at 6pm.

Adoption of 2020 Model Traffic Code – Attorney Farish explained the process of adopting the newest version of the Model Traffic Code. He explained that he removed the language that was not applicable to the town and prepared booklets that would be easy for the officers to carry. There was discussion on setting a flat \$50 surcharge on all fines. Chief Lujan stated his concern on the surcharge being a flat \$50 and stated that the current surcharge is 40% of the fine. It was mentioned that the C.R.S. states that a 50% surcharge could be imposed.

Motion: Trustee Wilson moved to keep the surcharge at the current 40%; motion died with no second.

Motion: Trustee Rendon moved to increase the surcharge to 50% of the fine; seconded by Trustee Chavez.

Vote Results: Ayes: Trustees Chavez, Wilson, Rendon, Villagomez, Wagoner, Mayor Pro Tem Valdez, and Mayor Medina.

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

Motion: Trustee Rendon moved to set a hearing for the adoption of the 2020 Model Traffic Code; seconded by Trustee Wagoner.

Vote Results: Ayes: Trustees Chavez, Wilson, Rendon, Villagomez, Wagoner, Mayor Pro Tem Valdez and Mayor Medina.

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

Trustee Rendon questioned the process of becoming a court of record. Attorney Farish explained the difference between a court of record and a court of non-record, further explaining the appeal process. Further discussion was tabled until the next meeting.

Old Business

Joe Fernandez land purchase – Trustee Villagomez reported that the Planning and Zoning Committee heard Fernandez’s request to purchase a section of land approximately 15ft x 92ft of land that borders his property located at 617 First. Trustee Villagomez stated there would be no issues with the driveway. The P&Z Committee has no issue with selling the land to Fernandez. Town Manager Zaragoza will have the land appraised. The issue was tabled until the next meeting.

Reports

Town Manager Report

Town Manager Zaragoza read a “Thank You” note from JT Medina. He read through his report. He noted that Jimmy Hinojos resigned from the Maintenance Department; Thomas Dufresne was promoted as Maintenance Supervisor and Rodney Saenz was promoted to a full-time employee.

He reported that the maintenance department needs a new pick-up; the ball joints on the 2008 Chevy are worn out and it is undriveable. He stated that there is truck available at L&M Auto Sales in Alamosa.

Motion: Trustee Rendon moved to authorize Town Manager Zaragoza to purchase a new/used, 3/4 -ton truck for the maintenance department with a cap of \$25,000; seconded by Trustee Wagoner.

Vote Results: Ayes: Trustees Chavez, Wilson, Rendon, Villagomez, Wagoner, Mayor Pro Tem Valdez and Mayor Medina.

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

Town Manager Zaragoza invited Mayor Medina and Trustee Rendon to attend the housing work conference on November 2.

Town Attorney Reports

Town Attorney Walker reported that he and Attorney Farish attended the CML annual seminar on municipal law that provided an annual update on recent law and case law. One topic that was discussed was affordable housing. He attended SLVCOG meeting where the topic of discussion was the 1041 powers; Town Manager Zaragoza attended this meeting as well. He and Attorney Farish explained the purpose of the Regulation 1041 powers would give the valley more control over water withdrawal attempts by forming a collaboration between the counties and municipalities in the San Luis Valley through an IGA.

Attorney Farish reported on the seminar that he attended noting a presentation that discussed when municipalities have legislative power and when the state preempts the legislation, such as TABOR. He reported on the conversations that he had with Bond Council Tom Peltz and Kevin Carpenter from CDPHE regarding the wastewater loan and noted that there needs to be better communication with all parties. He reported that getting the MTC settled gives them more time to focus on the other codes and policies that need to be addressed.

Approval of Reports

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Valdez moved to approve the town manager and town attorney reports; Seconded by Trustee Rendon.

Vote Results: Ayes: Trustees Chavez, Rendon, Villagomez, Wagoner, and Mayor Medina.

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

Police Report

Chief Lujan submitted a written report. Trustee Wilson thanked the police department for patrolling the elementary school. Trustee Chavez asked for an explanation on the number of tickets that each officer issues.

Public Works Report

Thomas Dufresne reported that they have been working on installing the new meters. He explained that they are having difficulty locating some of the meters or the meters are too deep and will need to be dug out. He noted that they are continuing with water and wastewater ORC training. He offered to answer questions.

Clerk Report

Town Clerk Pagnotta submitted a written report. She reported that the Christmas party will be on December 10th and Santa will be in town that day as well. She also mentioned that the trustees should be thinking about nominations for Citizen of the Year. She reported that she would be attending CMCA Conference in Canon City.

Building Inspector Report

Building Inspector Darrin Rodriguez submitted a written report. He noted that there have been a few new projects.

Trustee Comments

Trustee Rendon – Attended a webinar on water law and asked what the town could do to keep water from being taken out of the valley; 1041 powers were mentioned. While listening to the webinar she learned that storm water cannot be captured per SB15-212 without the proper water rights. She mentioned this because of the work session on the I&I study where it was discussed that the town's storm water could possibly be diverted to a pond outside of town; she cautioned that the regulations should be reviewed before doing so. She stated that CML will be conducting a governance webinar that she would like to attend; the fee is \$50. She suggested using the board room if other trustees wanted to attend the webinar. She stated that she learned that CML is a great organization that is looking out for small towns and works to keep the control at the local level.

Trustee Wilson – Expressed his gratitude for the appointment to the board. He stated that he would like to meet with Town Manager Zaragoza to discuss the vision and direction concerning the East La Jara Water Company, housing issues and growth.

Trustee Villagomez – Encouraged the Police Department to keep patrolling and working to keep the community safe. He congratulated Thomas Dufresne on his promotion.

Trustee Chavez – Thanked Town Manager Zaragoza for all his hard work as well as the attorneys.

Trustee Wagoner – Stated that she feels the board is gathering momentum. She stated that she is looking forward to working with Trustee Wilson as he is a great addition to the board. She reported that she spoke with the library director about using laptop computers for the youth entrepreneur program. The computers can be checked out long term to any youths that are involved with the program. She also reached out to the high school and middle school who are very interested in this program as well.

Mayor Medina mentioned that Trustee Wilson would serve on the Community Outreach Committee with Trustee Wagoner.

Mayor Pro Tem Valdez – Reported that he attended the CML District meeting in Monte Vista.

Mayor Medina – Asked about the Fall Clean up; Town Manager Zaragoza reported that the dates have been pushed back to October 20, 21 and 22 and because most of the leaves haven't fallen yet. The tree limbs will be chipped for mulch that will be made available to the community. He stated that the clean up is for yard waste only, no household trash.

Trustee Valdez asked about the building on Main Street. Town Manager Zaragoza explained that he has been working with the Building Inspector and will be sending a letter to the owners again requesting 30 days to respond.

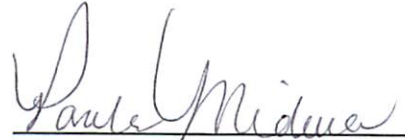
Adjournment:

Mayor Pro Tem Valdez moved to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:41 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by


Town Clerk – Shawn Pagnotta




Mayor / Mayor Pro Tem