TOWN OF LA JARA

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Regular Meeting

Date: May 13, 2021

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**

To help prevent the spread of COVID-19 the Regular Meeting of the La Jara Town Board of Trustees was held virtually via ZOOM. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Medina at 6:13 pm after a quorum was determined.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Medina.

**Roll Call**

Present were Trustees: Gallegos, Wagoner, Mayor Pro Tem Valdez, and Mayor Medina. Trustee Villagomez arrived at 6:23pm., Trustee Espinoza arrived at 6:30 pm, and Trustee Chavez arrived at 7:37 pm.

Absent: None

A quorum was present.

Also present were: Chief Lujan, Town Manager Larry Zaragoza, Town Attorney Ben Pacyga, Public Works Supervisor Jimmy Hinojos and Town Clerk Pagnotta.

**Approval of Agenda**

***Motion:*** Trustee Gallegos moved to approve the agenda; seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Valdez.

***Vote Results:*** Ayes: Trustee Gallegos, Wagoner, Mayor Pro Tem Valdez, and Mayor Medina.

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

**Consent Calendar**

***Motion:*** Trustee Gallegos moved to approve the consent calendar; seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Valdez.

***Vote Results:*** Ayes: Trustees Gallegos, Wagoner, Mayor Pro Tem Valdez, and Mayor Medina.

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

**Guests**

Mary Livingston addressed the board explaining the 4H program and the different projects that the members participate in. She explained that many of the projects include raising farm animals such as goats and asked the board to reconsider allowing goats in the town limits. Livingston introduced Paradise Archuleta who is a 4H member that is raising 3 goats that are currently being boarded out of town. She suggested allowing a temporary permit to 4H members so that they can have the experience raising their animals on their own. They would only need to house the animals in town until the fair in August. Livingston stated that the neighbors of Archuleta are willing to submit letters of support if needed.

Trustee Villagomez arrived at 6:23 pm.

Town Manager Zaragoza asked if barking dogs would be an issue if goats were allowed in town limits. Mayor Medina stated that the current ordinance does not allow any hooved animals in the town limits.

Trustee Espinoza arrived at 6:30pm.

Town Attorney Pacyga stated that the ordinance could be changed if the trustees agreed. Trustee Gallegos felt that the current ordinance should remain prohibiting hooved animals in town limits. Trustee Espinoza opposed changing the ordinance to allow animals stating ordinances are put in place for a reason and animals should not be allowed in town limits.

No motion was made to amend the current ordinance, therefore Mayor Medina stated that the ordinance prohibiting hooved animals stands.

**Citizen Comments**

No Citizen Comments.

**New Business**

GIS proposal – Town Manager Zaragoza explained the current mapping situation for the town stating the town does not have a good map showing the location of the underground utilities. He stated that he was contacted by iamGIS, an asset management software company that proposed a program to map the town’s water and sewer lines and other underground utilities. The cost of the program would consist of $3,000 for the software and a onetime implantation fee of $6,000; with discounts the total upfront costs would be $9,000. There would be an annual cost of $3,000. Public Works Supervisor Jimmy Hinojos explained the program would be very beneficial to locate water/sewer lines as well as shut-off valves and fiber optic lines. Trustee Espinoza questioned if the program provided the locates of the existing lines or base data. She explained that the software was just one piece, and the actual locates are the biggest part of the mapping process and very expensive. Mayor Medina asked Town Manager Zaragoza to find out from Xcel Energy, Jade Communication, and any other utility providers if they could provide the location of their services. Town Manager Zaragoza was going to invite a representative from iamGIS to attend the next board meeting so they could answer any questions the trustees had.

CML Conference – Mayor Medina asked those that are interested in attending the conference in September to let Town Clerk Pagnotta know.

Resolution 2021-2 Town Manager Zaragoza explained the rates for water and sewer needed to be increased by $23 for the Town to be eligible for grant funding for the sewer lagoon project. He stated that the increase could be spread out over a three-year period. Trustee Espinoza suggested holding a Town Hall to inform the public. Town Manager Zaragoza stated that CDPHE had a list of guidelines to follow when increasing the rates and informing citizens. Mayor Medina stated the resolution that is presented is just a suggestion for the board to review prior to adoption. Town Clerk Pagnotta explained that the increase in rates is to make the water and sewer fund sustainable for the debt service for the $1.5 million project to correct the sewer lagoon violations. Mayor Pro Tem Valdez stated the Town’s rates are the lowest in the state and funding agencies will want the Town to be able to support itself before they are willing to help financially. Attorney Pacyga explained the resolution as drafted would adopt the rate changes as outlined in Attachment A. He went on to explain the resolution was circulated early so that the trustees could have some discussion.

***Motion:*** Trustee Gallegos moved to table Resolution 2021-2 to increase the water and sewer rates until Town Halls can be scheduled; seconded by Trustee Espinoza.

***Vote Results:*** Ayes: Trustees Espinoza, Gallegos, Villagomez, Wagoner, Mayor Pro Tem Valdez, and Mayor Medina.

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

**Old Business**

Mayor Medina reminded trustees and staff of the mandatory training with Sam Light from CIRSA on May 24th at Wagon Wheel.

**Reports**

**Town Manager Report**

Town Manager Zaragoza reported on the following items:

* Attended the So Co Economic Development Summit
* Downtown Sidewalk Project is complete. Flower boxes, bike rack, and light poles will be installed. East corner (Walnut & Main in front of Dr. Jackson’s office will be finished later.
* Received a $10,000 grant for lagoon project – earmarked for Needs Assessment.
* Mosquito Fogger update – the machine was not maintained or calibrated annually. Alamosa Mosquito District has had the fogger for a couple of months and has put in over $2,000 worth of work on the machine and replaced many parts. The Town had to purchase a new circuit board at the cost of $900.
* Roll-offs for Spring Cleanup is completed.
* Mel’s Restaurant has been sold and the new owners plan to open in July.
* New laundromat will be opening soon.
* Wastewater state inspection was held on 4/27. Several concerns/findings need to be addressed
* Joe Valdez annexation discussions are underway.
* La Jara Glory Days committee has set a date for August 14th. Need volunteers. They had some great ideas from trustees and employees. Planning on having a beer garden.
* Town needs to begin considering replacing the water meters. Possible funding may be available. Meeting with a representative from Winwater to look at the cost.
* Veteran’s Blvd of Conejos County is requesting support and contributions to help with the maintenance.

***Motion:*** Trustee Gallegos moved to donate $125 to Veterans Blvd of Conejos County; seconded by Trustee Wagoner.

***Vote Results:*** Ayes: Trustees Espinoza, Gallegos, Villagomez, Wagoner, Mayor Pro Tem Valdez, and Mayor Medina.

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

Town Manager Zaragoza requested permission to attend the annual CCMA conference in Glenwood Springs on June 22 to 25th. Trustees agreed for him to attend.

Trustee Chavez arrived at 7:37pm.

Town Manager Zaragoza will be meeting with CE Corps to continue discussion regarding the water pressure issues on May 19. He invited Fire Chief Austin Valdez and other representatives from the hospital and nursing home to share their issues.

**Town Attorney Report**

Town Attorney Pacyga reported on the following:

* Contacted by Robert Taylor who provided a plat of his property where he is proposing to put a drive through for the coffee shop. Taylor is wanting to have a tree stump removed. Attorney Pacyga explained that Taylor would have to survey the property to determine the easement.
* Drafted the resolution regarding the water and sewer rate increase.
* Reviewed some of the files from the previous Town Attorney where he found some interesting and useful information including the Debrucing measure as well as some information regarding the Town’s ownership of streets and sidewalks.
* Met with Town Manager and the new accountant regarding some TABOR issues.

Trustee Espinoza asked if Robert Taylor had discussed his proposal with Xcel Energy about the electric pole and guide wire that would potentially set in the middle of the easement. Attorney Pacyga was not sure if he had reached out to the electric company but indicated that Taylor needed to determine the boundary lines and location of an easement before the Town could proceed. Town Manager Zaragoza stated Taylor has requested the removal of the tree stump in that area, again Taylor would need to contact Xcel Energy regarding the light pole and guide wire prior to anything being done with the tree stump.

***Motion:*** Mayor Pro Tem Valdez moved to approve the town attorney’s report; seconded by Trustee Gallegos.

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

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

**Police Report**

Police Chief Lujan presented a written report and asked if there were any further questions. Trustee Gallegos complained about the school buses blocking the view on the highway when they are parked at the bus garage. She also requested to see more patrolling in her neighborhood.

**Maintenance Report**

Maintenance Supervisor Jimmy Hinojos submitted a written report and offered to answer any questions.

**Clerk Report**

Town Clerk Pagnotta submitted a written report and offered to answer any questions.

**Inspector Report**

Building Inspector Darrin Rodriguez was absent but submitted a written report.

**Committee Reports**

Planning and Zoning Commission – Trustee Villagomez gave a brief report stating the commission reviewed the replat for Dollar General and will have more details later. He stated they also discussed condemning dilapidated buildings on Main Street. They also discussed the fence at the hemp building at the end of Broadway and RFPs for future housing developments. The commission discussed the annexation of the property for Jared Anderson.

Policy and Procedures Committee – Town Manager Zaragoza reported that he has been looking at and making some revisions to the current personnel policy. He stated there are a few items that will need to be addressed. He will set a meeting with these committee members.

Community Engagement Committee – Trustee Espinoza reported that there was a meeting with SLVGO to talk about green spaces in La Jara. She mentioned an initiative called Safe Route 2Schools which will create safe walking routes to the schools and library. They discussed coordinating with DCI to create a walking path along the Richfield Ditch. Trustee Espinoza stated that these two groups will help to provide outdoor activities for kids. Trustee Gallegos asked about a bike safety program for the kids. Trustee Espinoza encouraged others to step up and help with these or other projects.

**Trustee Comments**

Trustee Villagomez – Stated concerns about the amount of trash along the Richfield Ditch. Trustee Gallegos suggested sending a letter to the residents asking them to clean up the trash.

Trustee Espinoza – Questioned if the board had made a motion to enter into the loan agreement for the maintenance building. Town Clerk Pagnotta stated that the board gave permission to proceed with pursuing a loan, but no actual motion was made. Town Manager Zaragoza stated that he is still in the process of gathering information and does not have a complete loan agreement yet. The total cost of the building is $88,000. Trustee Gallegos made a motion to accept the loan, but later withdrew her motion as there is nothing to approve. Trustee Villagomez asked if the loan would include the plumbing and electrical. Trustee Espinoza has concerns about the debt load and the debt service. Public Works Supervisor Hinojos suggested waiting until the cost of materials drop to build the shop. Town Manager Zaragoza suggested tabling this discussion until the paperwork has been prepared.

Trustee Gallegos – Requested more patrolling. She mentioned the SLVE911.org website where citizens can register their phone to get emergency notifications. She asked if there was a way to do automatic billing for the water and sewer bills. Town Clerk Pagnotta explained the town did not have that program, but she would research pricing. Trustee Gallegos questioned the installation of the water meters.

Trustee Chavez – Asked about providing a dirt bike track for kids to ride dirt bikes. She asked about planting trees on the east side of the train track, it was explained the land belonged to the railroad.

Mayor Pro Tem Valdez – Commented on the sidewalk project on Main Street stating it looks nice and commented on the great job.

Mayor Medina – Reported that she, Town Manager Zaragoza and Chief Lujan attended the law enforcement recognition event to honor the local law enforcement. She stated it was a nice event. She mentioned a letter that each trustee received from the City of Alamosa requesting participation in the Dumb Friends League. She stated that the town will continue to use the services from San Luis Animal Shelter because it is more cost effective.

Trustee Wagoner – Reported that on the past Earth Day she helped organize a trash pickup day in Capulin and suggested organizing something in La Jara along the highway near Wagon Wheel. She reported on the Restart Destination Program to jumpstart tourism that was impacted by COVID. This program is an opportunity to receive $10,000 for consulting information to draw tourism to town. She stated that she would submit a letter of interest and do a little more research in the program.

Mayor Medina suggested more community involvement from the trustees. She stated Glory Days is an upcoming event where they could use volunteers.

**Adjournment:**

**Mayor Pro Tem Valdez moved to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:52 pm.**

**Respectfully Submitted by**

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**Town Clerk – Shawn Pagnotta Mayor / Mayor Pro Tem**