

# TOWN OF LA JARA

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

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer

Regular Meeting  
Date: June 11, 2020

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/townofajara](http://www.colorado.gov/townofajara)

## Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the La Jara Town Board of Trustees was called to order by Mayor Medina at 6:00 p.m. Meeting was held at Northerner's Senior Center (413 Main Street)

## Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Medina.

## Roll Call

Present were Trustees: Chavez, Gallegos, Villagomez, Wagoner, Mayor Pro Tem Valdez, and Mayor Medina. Trustee Espinoza arrived at 6:21 pm.

Absent: None

A quorum was present.

Also present were: Maintenance Supervisor Matthew Herrera, Building Inspector Joseph Trottnner, Town Manager Larry Zaragoza, Town Attorney Ben Pacyga and Town Clerk Shawn Pagnotta.

## Approval of Agenda

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

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

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

## Guests

Joseph Baroz addressed the board regarding his candidacy for Conejos County Commissioner. He explained his accomplishments serving the community, the various boards that he sits on and his desire to help the community. He explained, if elected, he would like to prioritize the budget and spending with full transparency and accountability. He stated he was raised with a solid work ethic and strong Christian values that he will carry in his position as county commissioner. Trustee Gallegos asked Baroz what he would do to help people get off public assistance. Mayor Pro Tem Valdez stated that he had always dreamed of having a community recreation center and asked Baroz's opinion on it. Baroz replied that he too wanted to have a rec center or a youth program to give the kids something to do. Mayor Medina stated that she would like to see the commissioners be more interactive in the community and wished him luck in the election.

Julian Espinoza was on the agenda, but was not present.

### **Citizen Comments**

No Citizen comments were made.

### **Consent Calendar**

**Motion:** Trustee Gallegos moved to approve the consent calendar; seconded by Trustee Chavez.

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

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

### **Old Business**

Approval of Plat for Salazar Property – Town Manager Zaragoza explained the Ray Valdez finished the agreement and the plat. Town Attorney Pacyga explained the legal description of the property that was sold to the Salazar's for \$5,000.00.

Trustee Espinoza arrived at 6:21 pm.

**Motion:** Mayor Pro Tem Valdez moved to approve the plat for the Salazar property; seconded by Trustee Gallegos.

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

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

Approval for plans for Harmon Hostetter – Town Manager Zaragoza explained that Hostetter had a proposal to change the right-of-way for a piece of property along the Richfield Ditch. He stated that Hostetter will be requesting a variance with the Planning and Zoning Committee.

COVID update/concerns – Masks recommended – Mayor Medina wanted to ensure the health and safety of the community and felt the people are being lax in wearing masks when out in public. She suggested taking formal action requiring masks to be worn in stores and businesses. Trustee Wagoner stated that if the town was going to require people to wear masks then the town would need to provide them. Trustee Villagomez stated that the hospital requires masks. He also stated that the San Luis Valley was a hot spot with an increased number in COVID Cases. Mayor Medina suggested mandating that masks be worn when entering businesses. Trustee Gallegos asked how wearing masks would be enforced. Town Attorney Pacyga was asked to research the issue. Trustee Wagoner suggested meeting with the business owners to get them in compliance. Trustee Espinoza again asked about the enforceability of the issue. Attorney Pacyga will draft an ordinance requiring masks until the governor lifts the restrictions. Trustee Villagomez mentioned that there would be a drive through test site at the Knights of Columbus on June 23. Trustee Gallegos suggested drafting an information flyer to be circulated to all businesses. A special meeting was scheduled for 6 pm on Tuesday, June 16 to review and approve the mask ordinance.

Trustee Espinoza stated that the lease for the BMX Track was still not executed. Attorney Pacyga stated that the lease was approved with a clause that was added to avoid multi-year commitments under TABOR. He prepared a draft of the lease with the modification and stated it could be executed this evening. Attorney Pacyga stated that the minutes from the previous meeting had already approved the lease with the change. He noted that at the previous meeting there were items that were mentioned that are worthy of addressing in the lease, however he felt that it is important to honor the lease that was approved last year. He stated that the lease should be executed and then address those other items in the next lease.

Mayor Medina addressed Julian Espinoza stating that he was on the agenda as guest and asked if there was anything further that he wanted to discuss. Julian Espinoza stated that besides the lease for the BMX Track he would continue to work to get water to the property.

The next Planning and Zoning Meeting was scheduled after the Special meeting on June 16 at 6:30.

### **New Business**

No New Business

### **Reports**

#### **Town Manager Report**

Town Manager Zaragoza stated that he is just as concerned about the COVID issue as everyone else and will reach out to other town managers to find out what they are doing.

Town Manager Zaragoza thanked Town Clerk Pagnotta for setting up the meetings and preparing water and snacks.

Sewage Lagoon violations – Town Manager Zaragoza stated that a top priority for the town should be the sewer lagoons. He stated that the town has been in violation since 2015 and the main concern is that the lagoons need to be dredged. Martin Reynolds is still the engineer on record. Town Manager Zaragoza met with Tim Melovick from CRWA who is willing to help the town with the lagoon issue. He also had a conversation with David Lewis with Direct Discharge Consultants who could possibly get the town a grant for \$300,000 to remove the sludge from the lagoons. The sludge removal would cost about \$350,000. Trustee Chavez asked if the town could seek other grants to offset the additional \$50,000. He stated that before the BioLynceus product could be used in the lagoons he needed to send a letter to CWPDA for their approval.

Weed Mitigation – Town Manager Zaragoza explained the different options that other towns have tried for mitigating weeds. He mentioned the letter that he received from Piedad Romero that suggested hiring individuals to work for town to remove the weeds. He stated that he also examined the weed killer that is used at the hospital and it also contains about 18% glyphosate. He mentioned that another town enacted a program where citizens would adopt a park or alley and would maintain it. He also looked in the Avenger Weed Control, however it was very expensive. He reported that other managers have tried many of these other methods for removing weeds, but have all returned to using the conventional methods such as using Roundup.

Zaragoza reported that the town received a CAF grant for El Pomar to assist businesses and select residents with water and sewer bills.

Tree Trimming bids – Zaragoza received a couple of bids for tree trimming or removal and met with Ken Shawcroft, who is an arborist that submitted a very reasonable bid. Shawcroft will look at the trees and trim them instead of removing them if possible.

New Police Vehicle – Zaragoza reported that the town got a great deal from CSP and the Chief is very happy with it.

**Planters – Zaragoza reported that he will have the maintenance set out 4 planters with flowers on Main Street where the trees were removed and at select businesses around town. He mentioned that the maintenance department has been busy cleaning alleys. He stated that he visited with the residents and encouraged them to not dump debris in the alley ways. He mentioned that the town may be at risk for allowing residents into the lagoons as the only people that should be allowed in are Maintenance Department personnel or himself. He set specific hours to allow residents to take organic material.**

**Glory Days – Zaragoza met with Trustee Espinoza, Town Clerk Pagnotta and Deputy Clerk Gomez and discussed some ideas for the annual celebration, however he felt that this event is something that can be done next year especially with the COVID Pandemic. Trustee Espinoza stated that she got a certificate to purchase fireworks, but it would still be available for next year. There was some discussion about the Stage 2 Fire Ban in Conejos County. Town Manager Zaragoza stated that there is a possibility to have one summer concert in July. Mayor Pro Tem Valdez explained the restrictions with a Stage 2 Fire Ban.**

**Grant application approval for SLVCOG for Senior Center car port – Zaragoza asked for approval to move forward with the \$5,000.00 grant from COG. He stated the project is \$7,500.00. He stated that there would be matching funds and suggested using part of the \$4,000.00 donation that the town gives to the senior center for the matching funds. He also stated that the senior center may also have some money for matching funds.**

**Lagoon trash site hours were changed to Friday's from 9am to noon.**

**Outdoor Programmable Scrolling LED Sign – Zaragoza talked about putting a sign next to Town Hall that would be beneficial to be able to communicate short messages to the residents. He stated that he researched a sign that would cost \$2,155. He also mentioned that the Martinez family is wanting to put flag poles out at the Pete Martinez Veterans Memorial Park. He stated that Martinez has agreed to pay for the poles. Trustee Espinoza suggested renting a corner of her property along the highway to put up a bigger sign. Trustee Gallegos felt that the sign should be kept on town property. Trustee Espinoza felt that a sign would be more visible along Hwy 285. Mayor Medina felt the sign might be better in front of the Town Hall so that it is more associated with the Town Hall. Trustee Espinoza suggested having a larger sign where businesses could rent ad space to offset the cost of a larger sign. Town Manager was going to research the cost of a larger sign.**

**CIRSA Audit – Zaragoza sat in on his first CIRSA insurance audit. He stated that he learned that there are a lot of things that the town staff does right to earn points, but he stated there are a lot of little things that could be done to earn more points. He talked about putting in a small park on the north end of town.**

**Water Restrictions – Zaragoza asked if the town needed to consider implementing water restrictions. He stated that this is a dry year at 25% drought. He noted that other towns around the valley have already implemented water restrictions. Mayor Pro Tem Valdez stated that water restrictions were implemented a few years back where residents with an odd numbered address would water on certain days and then even numbers houses would water on an opposite day at set hours. It was suggested to copy the resolution that was implemented in 2002 and 2003. Trustee Gallegos didn't feel that restrictions were necessary. Maintenance Supervisor Herrera was asked about the depth of the wells and if they were being impacted by the dry conditions. He responded that currently the wells seem to be operating ok. Herrera mentioned that as people are watering their lawns more chlorine is also being used. He stated that during the winter months a barrel of chlorine will last about three months compared to using a barrel every month in the summer. Mayor Medina suggested putting a notice in the water bills urging residents to conserve water.**

Trustee Chavez asked if the mosquito sprayer position was advertised; Zaragoza explained that it is a temporary part-time position and it was not advertised. Trustee Espinoza felt that all positions need to be advertised to be transparent to the community.

**Motion:** Mayor Pro Tem Valdez moved to accept Town Manager's report; seconded by Trustee Espinoza.

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

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

**Town Attorney Report** – Town Attorney Pacyga reported on the handful of issues that he had been working on, such as the missing provision for the BMX Track lease. He researched a question in the Fair Labor Standard Act and how it applied to the police department. He also worked on an issue with a permit and will continue to work with the Town Manager. He also reviewed the provisions in Title 25 that governs these permits.

**Motion:** Trustee Gallegos moved to accept Town Attorney's report; seconded by Trustee Wagoner.

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

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

**Police Report** – Chief Lujan was not in attendance. Town Manager Zaragoza reported that the chief is wanting to hire a 4<sup>th</sup> officer. Zaragoza stated that he would like to wait a few months to see if the sales tax revenues are going to be affected because of COVID-19 before hiring another officer. Mayor Medina asked what the town should be doing to be proactive given the current climate regarding police officers. Attorney Pacyga explained that he had prepared a power point presentation for the law enforcement academy at TSJC regarding civil liability and would be willing to meet with the police officers and the board make a presentation. Attorney Pacyga explained the bills regarding qualifying immunity that is passing through congress.

**Maintenance Report** – Maintenance Supervisor Herrera reported that Town Manager Zaragoza had already discussed the compliance issues with CDPHE that he has been working on. Trustee Gallegos had various questions.

**Motion:** Mayor Pro Tem Valdez moved to accept Town Maintenance's report; seconded by Trustee Chavez.

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

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

**Town Clerk Report** – Town Clerk Pagnotta stated that she submitted a written report but was happy to answer in any questions.

### **Trustee Comments**

Trustee Villagomez – Stated his concerns about COVID-19 and felt it would be beneficial to have the town comply with wearing masks.

Trustee Gallegos – Asked if speed bumps could be put down on Richfield Road. She stated that Piedad Romero asked for a cost comparison of what the town spends on weed spray verses hiring people to cut the weeds. Town Clerk Pagnotta stated that she was not sure how to provide her with those numbers.

Town Manager Zaragoza stated that he has been working on the weed issue and told Trustee Gallegos to have Romero come and visit with him regarding the issue. She stated that she liked the idea of putting planters on Main Street instead of trees. Town Manager Zaragoza stated that before trees or anything permanent is planted on Main Street the side walk would need to be repaired.

Trustee Chavez – Asked about the procedures and requirements for building permits. She also asked if the police department could provide a little more visualization near the corner of Broadway and the LDS Church.

Mayor Pro Tem Valdez – Voiced his concerns about COVID and mentioned that there will be a testing site at the Knights of Columbus.

Trustee Wagoner – Asked about getting a pedestrian cross walk on Highway 285. Mayor Pro Tem Valdez explained that the issue has been addressed several times with CDOT and was told that there was not enough foot traffic to necessitate installing a stop light.

Trustee Espinoza – Reported on the grants that have been awarded to local businesses. First Southwest Bank awarded two grants to two La Jara businesses. She voiced her concerns regarding the police dispatch service. Town Manager Zaragoza suggested that she contact him with nonemergency issues. Zaragoza stated that he would send a letter to the dispatch service addressing the concerns. She reported that the historic building inventory survey that was done in conjunction with the Sangre De Cristo Heritage Society was completed. She will report back on the findings when the report is finished. She requested that the Town Manager make sure that staff is using the proper PPE when spraying for weeds and mosquitos. She stated that she would like to discuss an annexation issue and asked that it be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

Trustee Gallegos suggested having a work session with the new board members to go over the policies and procedures. It was also discussed to have a retreat to provide some training to the new board members. Town Manager Zaragoza said that Sam Light from CIRSA is willing to come and provide a training.

Mayor Medina – Reported on the CML webinars that she watched that provided information and training for elected officials. She stated they are very beneficial and encouraged everyone to watch them. She asked Town Manager Zaragoza to talk about getting body cameras for the police department. Zaragoza explained that he is looking into purchasing new body cameras to be more proactive.

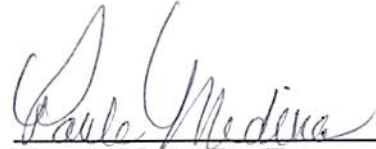
**Adjournment:**

**Mayor Pro Tem Medina moved to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:04 pm.**

**Respectfully Submitted by**

  
**Town Clerk – Shawn Pagnotta**



  
**Mayor / Mayor Pro Tem**