

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: March 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

Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the La Jara Town Board of Trustees was called to order by Mayor Zaragoza at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Zaragoza.

Roll Call

Present were Trustees: Valdez, Gallegos, Cummings, Mayor Pro Tem Medina and Mayor Zaragoza. Trustee Espinoza arrived at 7:30 pm.

Absent: None

A quorum was present.

Also present were: Town Manager Dennis Koenig, Police Chief Jerry Lujan, Building Inspector Joseph Trottnier Maintenance Supervisor Matthew Herrera, Town Attorney and Town Clerk Shawn Pagnotta.

Approval of Agenda

Mayor Zaragoza stated that one of the Trustees had requested an executive session; it was added to the end of the meeting.

Mayor Pro Tem Medina added Martin Reynolds as item "B" under Guests.

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Medina moved to approve the agenda with the two additions; seconded by Trustee Valdez.

Vote Results: Ayes: Trustees Valdez, Gallegos, Cummings, Mayor Pro Tem Medina and Mayor Zaragoza

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

Approval of Consent Calendar

Motion: Trustee Gallegos moved to approve the Consent Calendar; seconded by Trustee Cummings.

Vote Result: Ayes: Trustees Valdez, Gallegos, Cummings, Mayor Pro Tem Medina and Mayor Zaragoza

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

Recognition of Scheduled Public Comment

Paul Faucette and Monica Edgar were on the agenda, but were not present for the meeting.

Martin Reynolds from Reynolds Engineering reported to the Trustees regarding the non-compliance letter and Cease and Desist Order from the state regarding the sewer lagoons. He stated that he conducted a seepage study a few years back and determined that there was a little more seepage than what is allowed

by the state. Reynolds submitted a report to them and had not heard anything back until the Town received a Cease and Desist letter with violations. He stated that the violations had to do with the treatment of the lagoons. After looking at it he thought maybe there was not enough detention time in the ponds. He stated that he needed to respond to the notice, but because of the seepage issue he didn't want to propose a large costly project until he knew whether the state would accept the seepage reports. He stated that he had written a letter stating the measurements for the seepage didn't justify a whole project. He stated that he has not heard anything in return, but they did stop the time on the Cease and Desist Order. Reynolds stated that while the Town is waiting on a response from the state, he has come up with a few options to rectify the issues. He said initially he had thought that the town would have to put in an aeration system and possibly another lagoon, but after talking with a few other companies it was suggested to put in a floating aeration system and do away with the second lagoon. He thought this option would be the cheapest route, but didn't know what the costs would be. He also stated that the sludge will need to be removed from the lagoons as ongoing maintenance. Koenig stated that sludge was last removed in 2008. Koenig stated the sludge in cell #2 is fine, but the sludge in cell #1 is 12" to 14" deep; the town would be required to remove the sludge when it reaches 18" deep. Trustee Gallegos asked if the cost of the project would include Reynolds fees. Reynold stated that once the State Health Department gives direction then he will develop a proposal to do the engineering that would include development of a preliminary plan with cost estimates. Mayor Pro Tem Medina thanked Reynolds for working with the Town and providing his expertise on this project.

Citizen Comments

Joe Valdez addressed the Board and wanted to discuss the trees that were removed from Main Street. He came before the board to get some confirmation that the trees would be replaced and asked if street lights would be put up as well. Mayor Pro Tem Medina stated that it was the intent to have trees replaced. It was discussed to plant the trees in the spring.

Town Manager's Report

Town Manager Koenig presented the board with a "cheat sheet" with all the government acronyms.

Koenig reported that the flowers were ordered from North River Greenhouse in October and will be ready in May or June depending on the weather.

Koenig presented a resolution opposing the export of water out of the San Luis Valley by RWR (Renewable Water Resources). Koenig stated that Michael Carson, a council member from Alamosa, spear headed the opposition requesting a resolution from all the communities in the San Luis Valley. Trustee Gallegos asked about the paragraph in the resolution that states the Town would need to join a subdistrict, but stated there was no information on the subdistrict. Town Manager Koenig stated that he had discuss in the past that the Town would be required to either augment water or join a subdistrict, but stated that this current resolution was not pertaining to that issue. He did suggest that at a later time, the Town could consider joining the Conejos County subdistrict which would allow the Town to have a voice on the board. Koenig further explained that the resolution is to oppose allowing RWR to export water out of the San Luis Valley. Trustee Gallegos wanted more information on the subdistrict, to which Mayor Zaragoza replied that Conejos County Subdistrict is not fully functioning yet. Attorney Valdez talked about individuals from the Alamosa/La Jara Water Conservation District that are working with Clive Simpson, head of the Rio Grande Water Conservation District, to form a subdistrict comprised of the water users that draw water off the Alamosa and La Jara Creek, but are still in the formative stage.

Motion: Trustee Gallegos moved to adopt Resolution 2020-2, A resolution opposing the proposal of Renewable Water Resources to export underground water from the San Luis valley to the front Range; seconded by Trustee Valdez.

Vote Result: Ayes: Trustees Valdez, Gallegos, Espinoza, Cummings, Mayor Pro Tem Medina and Mayor Zaragoza

Nays: None
Motion Carried.

Town Manager Koenig explained the storage tank at the new business owned by Paul Faucette will be used to hold used oil drained from the semitrucks that will be used to heat the building. Mayor Zaragoza had concerns with the tank and wondered if there were any issues with the EPA or OSHA. He also had concerns with being in close proximity to the Catholic Church. Trustee Gallegos asked if they had the proper building permits. Trustee Valdez stated that the fire department should inspect the building with the tank so that they are aware of the location of tank as well as how much oil will be stored so that they are prepared in case of a fire.

Town Manager Koenig stated that the Fuacettes would be addressing the board about moving forward with putting in a truck stop. Koenig told the trustees to be prepared for the discussion when they came in.

Town Manager Koenig discussed the Salazar subdivision and stated that the Planning and Zoning Committee will be reviewing the plot plan and then make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees. Koenig stated that the Salazar's are proposing to put 5 houses on the plot. Attorney Valdez stated that he has the information with the legal description for a quit claim deed that will need the signatures of the mayor and town clerk.

Town Manager Koenig reported that the speed bumps on South Main have been knocked loose and damaged because of an individual plowing snow. He stated that he talked to the individual and addressed the issue. Mayor Zaragoza stated that he would like to meet with the Maintenance Supervisor and have them strategically placed.

Town Manager Koenig presented a hand out from the governor's office regarding COVID-19 and a possible pandemic. He stated that we are currently at Stage 3 and things will likely progress. Mayor Pro Tem Medina asked about getting information out to the public. Trustee Valdez suggested sending information to the citizens by going door to door.

Town Manager Koenig stated that this would be his last meeting and he has enjoyed his time working for the Town. He told the Trustees to trust each other and rely on each other as a board to get through the issues with the Coronavirus. Mayor Zaragoza stated that Koenig set the bar high and thanked him for his service.

Attorney Valdez talked about his health issues and the possibility of having a retirement party for himself and Town Manager Koenig. He stated that he didn't want to appear ungrateful, but given the information regarding the coronavirus and in the interest of public health and safety he thought it would be best to not have a party. Attorney Valdez stated that this would be his last board meeting and stated that "It has been one hell of a ride." He added that it is time for him to start focusing on his health and enjoying life. He thanked the board. Mayor Zaragoza wished him good health and stated that he wanted to get a picture of him to hang in the board room. In addition, he would like to name the board room the "Raymond Valdez Board Room". Attorney Valdez stated that he would be honored to have the room named after him.

Approval of Town Manager's Report:

Motion: Trustee Valdez moved to approve the Town Manager's Report; seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Medina.

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

Nays: None
Motion Carried.

Approval of Town Attorney's Report:

Motion: Trustee Valdez moved to approve the Town Manager's Report; seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Medina.

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

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

Town Manager Koenig asked to add an additional item, he stated that the town has the best staff in the valley. He stated that they are good people and are trained well in what they do and work hard. He stated that a good staff made his job look easy.

Trustee Comments

Trustee Valdez: Nothing to report.

Trustee Espinoza: Reported that there will be Women's Leadership Conference on April 7 at Adams State. She stated that the conference will be sponsored by First Southwest Bank and the proceeds will benefit women's athletic scholarships.

Trustee Espinoza asked if they have an active rental agreement for the BMX Track. Town Manager Koenig stated that the contract has not been executed. Trustee Espinoza stated that she has contracted for sanctioning and is hoping to have races this summer. She has been working on the paperwork for the 501(c)3 application. She asked if her husband Julian could be added to the April agenda to discuss getting water out to the track. Koenig added that the contract, because of TABOR, can only be for one year. Language can be added to cover TABOR. He stated that there are examples of that language.

Mayor Pro Tem Medina: Mentioned the Easter Egg Hunt and asked if a date and time had been set. She stated that her friend Julie is volunteering to be the Easter Bunny. The Easter Egg hunt was scheduled for April 11 at 10 am.

Trustee Cummings: Stated that since this is his last board meeting, he wanted everyone to know that it has been an honor working with everyone on the board. He reported that he volunteered to help with the Care and Share food distribution and will likely be volunteering again. The trustees thanked him for his contribution.

Trustee Gallegos: Nothing to report.

Mayor Zaragoza: Read a letter from Arlando Gallardo, who lives in the Fox Creek area and is requesting the boards support for Viaero wireless to provide cellular phone service to Conejos County at the Conejos County Canon area and west. Mayor Zaragoza asked Attorney Valdez if he would be willing to draft a resolution in support of the wireless service in that area.

New Business

Designating authority for banking privileges. Town Clerk Pagnotta stated that it would be best to hold off in making these decisions until after the elections as there will likely be a change in the board.

Old Business

None

Adjournment:

Mayor Pro Tem Medina moved to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by

Shawn Pagnotta
Town Clerk - Shawn Pagnotta



Paul Medene
Mayor / Mayor Pro Tem