

CITY COUNCIL MEETING – January 5, 2026

STATE OF COLORADO)
COUNTY OF OTERO) SS
CITY OF LA JUNTA)

CALL TO ORDER: The regular meeting of the City Council of the City of La Junta, Colorado, was called to order by Mayor Ayala on Monday, January 5, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building.

INVOCATION: Mayor Ayala gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mayor Ayala led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: The following Council Members were present:

Damon Ramirez, Ward 1
Paul Velasquez, Ward 1
Joe Ayala, Mayor
Chandra Ochoa, Ward 2
Lisa Pantoya, Ward 3
Maureen Rikhof, Ward 3

Absent: Carly Johnson, Ward 2

Also present: Michael Hart, City Manager
Erin Harris, City Attorney
Melanie Scofield, City Clerk
Pam Denahy, Director of Tourism/Econ. Dev.
Gary Reed, Rocky Ford
Betty Velasquez, La Junta
David Polley, La Junta
Norma Haugen, La Junta
Alison Penner, La Junta,
Everett Ediger, La Junta
Adrian Hart, SECO News
Nancy Harrington, SECO News
Bette McFarren, RF Gazette


Subject to approval at the
January 20, 2026
City Council Meeting



PROCLAMATION: America 250 – Colorado 150. Mayor Ayala proclaimed that the City of La Junta will fully engage in commemorative activities leading up to and during the Commission’s stated length of observance of July 4, 2025 through December 31, 2026. The City of La Junta pledges to uplift, support, and generate commemorative opportunities.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION (5-minute time limit per person):

1. David Polley, 622 Colorado Avenue: Wondered if he was the only one who sees the difference in fire fighting between 618 Colorado Avenue and a structure fire in the 400 block of East 7th Street yesterday. In December 2025, filed three FOIA requests with the City of La Junta and haven’t received anything. Would like to speak with any and all volunteer fireman that were dismissed on December 31st. Phone number is 719-492-0913. The FBI would also like to speak with them as well. 303-629-7171.

CONSENT AGENDA

A. Regular Meeting Minutes December 15, 2025

B. Application for a Special Events Permit by La Junta Chamber of Commerce, Christina Tozzie, Event Manager. The event is their Annual Banquet to be held January 26, 2026 from 5:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. at 1802 Colorado Avenue

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C. Application for Renewal of a Fermented Malt Beverage and Wine Liquor License by Mini Mart Inc., d/b/a Loaf'n Jug No. 13, 918 W. 3rd Street

MOTION TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 5, 2026 CONSENT AGENDA: Ramirez

SECOND: Rikhof

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 6-0 (Johnson absent)

NEW BUSINESS

A. Board Appointments

1. Reappoint Zach Miner to the Urban Renewal Board – term to expire 12/31/2030

MOTION TO REAPPOINT ZACH MINER TO THE URBAN RENEWAL BOARD: Ochoa

SECOND: Pantoya

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 6-0 (Johnson absent)

2. Reappoint Angel Saucedo to the Urban Renewal Board – term to expire 12/31/2030

MOTION TO REAPPOINT ANGEL SAUCEDO TO THE URBAN RENEWAL BOARD: Rikhof

SECOND: Ochoa

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 6-0 (Johnson absent)

3. Appoint Marty Fleischacker to the Urban Renewal Board – term to expire 12/31/2028

MOTION TO APPOINT MARTY FLEISCHACKER TO THE URBAN RENEWAL BOARD:
Ochoa

SECOND: Velasquez

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 6-0 (Johnson absent)

4. Appoint Cheryl Lindner to the Urban Renewal Board – term to expire 12/31/2027

MOTION TO APPOINT CHERYL LINDNER TO THE URBAN RENEWAL BOARD: Velasquez

SECOND: Rikhof

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 6-0 (Johnson absent)

B. Annual Resolutions

1. Posting of Open Meetings

2. Designating Official Depositories for City Funds

3. Offenses Against City Property

4. Publication of Legal Notices

5. Designating Enterprise Funds

MOTION TO ADOPT THE 2026 ANNUAL RESOLUTIONS: Ochoa

SECOND: Velasquez

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DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 6-0 (Johnson absent)

- C. A Resolution Reappointing Gary Cranson as the City of La Junta’s Representative to the Arkansas River Power Authority Board of Directors for a Four-Year Term.** Resolution No. R-6-2026 was presented for the board’s consideration.

MOTION TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. R-6-2026: Rikhof

SECOND: Velasquez

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 6-0 (Johnson absent)

- D. A Resolution of the City Council of the City of La Junta, Colorado, Approving and Authorizing the Execution of an Intergovernmental Agreement with the City of Rocky Ford for Emergency Dispatch Services.** Resolution No. R-7-2026 was presented for the board’s consideration.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY PANTOYA TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. R-7-2026. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED. WITH THE CONSENT OF THE BOARD, THE MOTION WAS WITHDRAWN BY PANTOYA.

E. Committee/Board Reports

1. Senior Citizens Advisory Board (Council Member Velasquez):
 - Meeting is this Thursday here at 10:00 a.m.

C. City Manager’s Comments

- Several job openings at the Senior Center: transportation dispatcher, part-time bus driver, activities coordinator.
- There is also a Property Management position open.
- Getting started on the restrooms at the golf course.
- Relocated the frisbee golf baskets off of 10th Street to the City Park.
- RFQ going out for the design and engineering services for the MMOF.
- The Electric Department has started removing all of the Christmas decorations.
- Fire and Police are still putting together numbers for total calls.
- Last night there was a structure fire in the 400 block of East 7th Street.
- The Police Department has three certified officers starting today.
- The teen activity group at the Library has moved to the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays.
- The Library will be starting ESL classes at the end of the month on the 26th.
- Free moving at the Fox is going to be on January 16th.
- There were fourteen babies born in 2025 to city employees.
- The Street Department finished cleaning up the demo at 1220 Rice Avenue.
- Street signs have been ordered and will be going up in the next couple of months.
- Finishing the curb and gutter work on 10th and Barnes Avenue.

D. Community Events/Council Reports

- The 124th Annual Chamber Banquet will be January 26th at the Rizzuto Banquet Room at Otero College. It starts at 5:30 p.m. with cocktails, 6:00 p.m. is welcome and 6:15 p.m. is the dinner, awards to follow. Tickets are available for \$45.00 per person or \$375.00 for a table of 8 which includes two bottles of wine.
- In December, TRY did the luminaries around the City Park. It was a lot of work but it looked really nice. Shout out to our linemen who helped dim the lights around the park.
- Jay’s Christmas Dinner was well attended. Thank you to all the volunteers that made that possible.

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E. Governing Body Reports

1. Council Member Velasquez: Shout out to Michael and Brock on the resurfacing of the tennis courts. It looks amazing.
2. Council Member Rikhof: Reminder that curbside recycling is available through Clean Valley Recycling for \$15.00 per month and you can have as many bags as you want.
3. Council Member Ramirez: Read an article that it's been approved at the state level for the producers to be charged for recycling. By mid-2026, free recycling will start in the state of Colorado for citizens.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:31 p.m.

ATTEST:

CITY OF LA JUNTA

Melanie R. Scofield, City Clerk

Joseph Ayala, Mayor