

CITY COUNCIL MEETING – January 21, 2025

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 21, 2025, 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
Jeremiah Stoker, Ward 2
Joe Ayala, Mayor
Maureen Rikhof, Ward 3

Absent: Chandra Ochoa, Ward 2
Lisa Pantoya, Ward 3

Also present: Brad Davidson, Interim City Manager
Erin Harris, City Attorney
Melanie Scofield, City Clerk
Jenny Mathews, La Junta
Everett Ediger, La Junta
Brittany Baylor, Inspiration Field



Subject to approval at the
February 3, 2025
City Council Meeting



MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: Mayor Ayala asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting of January 6, 2025.

Council Member Rikhof: Doesn't believe the conversation was correctly recorded regarding the resolution on where public notices are displayed.

MOTION THAT THE JANUARY 6, 2025 MINUTES ACCURATELY REFLECT THAT A MOTION FOR AN AMENDMENT WAS MADE: Rikhof

SECOND: Ramirez

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 5-0

MOTION TO ACCEPT THE JANUARY 6, 2025 MINUTES AS AMENDED: Rikhof

SECOND: Velasquez

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 5-0

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS (5-minute time limit per person):

1. Jenny Matthews, 113 W. 7th Street: Shared an experience with the City regarding Ordinance No. 1643, trailers parked on a public street. On January 2nd, she went home mid-day to find a "Notice to Tow" sticker on her camper, along with a door hanger, asking her to contact Code Enforcement, Officer Griffin. Officer Griffin explained that the camper had to be hitched to a vehicle. She was then

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transferred to Officer Shelefontiuk for more information. He either didn't know or didn't want to share the information and directed her to discuss the matter with city council. She asked for an extension and was told, no, that wouldn't be fair to everyone else. This situation was not only an inconvenience but a hardship for Ms. Matthews. (She went on to explain her hardship.) Treating people this way makes them frustrated and angry. A revision of the ordinance would be appreciated implementing a permit system that a citizen could request to park unhitched on a public street.

PROCLAMATION: Mayor Ayala proclaimed January 25, 2025 as Court Little Flower Number 925, of the Catholic Daughters of America, day. They will be celebrating its 100th year anniversary on January 26th beginning at 12:30 p.m. at the Catholic Church Hall.

BOB'S RULES OF ORDER: During Joe's first year of being Mayor, he attended a CML presentation from a guy named "Bob" and he explained that he did a version of Robert's Rules of Order. At that time, the mayor was informed by the former City Attorney, that the City had accepted Bob's Rules of Order. This item will be placed on the next council agenda.

NEW BUSINESS**A. Liquor Licenses**

1. **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 27, 2025 from 5:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. at 1802 Colorado Avenue.** The application is in order and has been reviewed by City supervisors for compliance with City and State codes. The appropriate fee has been tendered and the premises have been posted. The City Clerk recommends approval.

MOTION TO GRANT A SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT TO LA JUNTA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOR THEIR ANNUAL BANQUET TO BE HELD JANUARY 27, 2025 FROM 5:30 P.M. TO 10:00 P.M. AT 1802 COLORADO AVENUE: Ramirez

SECOND: Rikhof

DISCUSSION: Although these are "permits" being issued, they fall under "liquor licenses" due to the consumption of alcohol at these events, which require this permit.

VOTE: The motion carried 5-0

2. **Application for a Special Events Permit by Inspiration Field, Brittany Baylor, Event Manager. The event is "Lovers Steak Night" to be held February 14, 2025 from 4:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. at 612 Adams Avenue.** The application is in order and has been reviewed by City supervisors for compliance with City and State codes. The appropriate fee has been tendered and the premises have been posted. The City Clerk recommends approval.

MOTION TO GRANT A SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT TO INSPIRATION FIELD FOR THE LOVERS STEAK NIGHT TO BE HELD FEBRUARY 14, 2025 FROM 4:00 P.M. TO 11:00 P.M. AT 612 ADAMS AVENUE: Ramirez

SECOND: Rikhof

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 5-0

3. **Application for a Special Events Permit by Inspiration Field, Brittany Baylor, Event Manager. The event is their "4th Annual Mardi Gras" to be held February 28, 2025 from 4:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. at 612 Adams Avenue.** The application is in order and has been reviewed by City supervisors for compliance with City and State codes. The appropriate fee has been tendered and the premises have been posted. The City Clerk recommends approval.

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MOTION TO GRANT A SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT TO INSPIRATION FIELD FOR THEIR 4TH ANNUAL MARDI GRAS TO BE HELD FEBRUARY 28, 2025 FROM 4:00 P.M. TO 11:00 P.M. AT 612 ADAMS AVENUE: Ramirez

SECOND: Rikhof

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 5-0

4. **Application for a Special Events Permit by Inspiration Field, Brittany Baylor, Event Manager. The event is their “40th Annual Inspiration Field Golf Tournament” to be held May 9, 2025 from 4:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. at 612 Adams Avenue.** The application is in order and has been reviewed by City supervisors for compliance with City and State codes. The appropriate fee has been tendered and the premises have been posted. The City Clerk recommends approval.

MOTION TO GRANT A SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT TO INSPIRATION FIELD FOR THEIR 40TH ANNUAL INSPIRATION FIELD GOLF TOURNAMENT TO BE HELD MAY 9, 2025 FROM 4:00 P.M. TO 11:00 P.M. AT 612 ADAMS AVENUE: Ramirez

SECOND: Rikhof

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 5-0

5. **Application for a Special Events Permit by Inspiration Field, Brittany Baylor, Event Manager. The event is their “10th Annual Poker Run/5th Annual Smoke Out” to be held June 21, 2025 from 4:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. at 612 Adams Avenue.** The application is in order and has been reviewed by City supervisors for compliance with City and State codes. The appropriate fee has been tendered and the premises have been posted. The City Clerk recommends approval.

MOTION TO GRANT A SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT TO INSPIRATION FIELD FOR THEIR 10TH ANNUAL POKER RUN/5TH ANNUAL SMOKE OUT TO BE HELD JUNE 21, 2025 FROM 4:00 P.M. TO 11:00 P.M. AT 612 ADAMS AVENUE: Ramirez

SECOND: Rikhof

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 5-0

B. Annual Resolution Correction.

1. **A Resolution Concerning the Posting of Open Meetings.** Resolution No. R-1b-2025 was presented for council's consideration. This resolution is amended to include the phrase, “and the City website.”

MOTION TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. R-1B-2025: Rikhof

SECOND: Ramirez

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 5-1

C. Committee/Board Reports

1. Senior Citizens Advisory Board (Council Member Velasquez):
- They have secured tickets for the Rockies games. They may be purchased for \$13.00 a ticket. Contact the Senior Center if interested.
 - The Center will be closed on the 24th for CPR training.

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- Recognized Sr. Center Advisory Board Chairperson, Dortha McLain, she turned 90 years old last week and she is still volunteering.
2. Utilities Board (Council Member Velasquez):
 - Water/Wastewater: maintenance, repairing water main leaks, paperwork for upcoming grants.
 - Electric: Reminder to not stack trash/limbs around power poles. That's a spark point of origin. Removed Christmas lights.
 - Sanitation: There was discussion of posting rates for the use of the Transfer Station.
 - Clean Valley Recycling: Beginning 2026, the entire city will have recycling at no cost. It will be at the cost of the producers of the waste.
 - Gary Cranson resigned from the Utility Board but will remain on the ARPA Board. Patrick Berg is the new Chairperson.
 3. Tourism Board (Mayor Ayala):
 - Should have year end numbers at the February meeting.
 - Talked about Michael Hart and possibly having a city designee fill in until he is ready. Will talk about designees for the Library Board, La Junta Rise and the Tourism Board at the next council meeting.
 - Kudos to Martin and everything he brought to the last Utility Board meeting. He didn't just bring problems but he brought solutions.

D. Interim City Manager's

- The Google search for the City website has been corrected.
- We've had a major water break at 6th and Santa Fe Avenue this morning.
- Wal-Mart will begin their remodel project this week.
- Police Department has been working with CBI to help combat some of our drug issues.
- Due to the cold weather, you may think your pipes are frozen. Do not open the meter pits, please call the Water Department.
- A decision was made to relocate the Police Department to the armory. This will not affect dispatch. Day-to-day operations will not change.
- The Fire Department will move over into the Police Department offices and will be supervisors over dispatch.
- Dawn Block will be taking over Personnel Director and HR and moving into this building. The process of applying for jobs with the city is almost 100% online now.

E. Governing Body's Comments

1. Council Member Ramirez:
 - Thanks to all the departments within the city, especially the Fire and Police Departments, regarding the weather, the accidents and all the safety issues.
 - The 26th Annual Girls in the Middle will be Saturday, March 1st at Otero College. Registration is open now and closes February 6th at 5:00 p.m. It's limited to 200 students, 5th-8th grade girls. The purpose is to accelerate their interest in STEM.
2. Council Member Rikhof:
 - Planning Commission met on January 16th. They are working on changes to the subdivision requirements, setbacks and number of days for notices.
 - Ward 3 had their Listening Tour on the 13th. Lots of conversation about people serving on committees. There's a lot of interest. Need to do better getting people to serve, encouraging them to participate in city government.
 - Also, a lot of conversation about the speed trailer. It was a resounding, we are not interested, from the people attending the Listening Tour.
 - Next Ward 3 Listening event will be at Casa del Sol on February 10th.

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3. Mayor Ayala:
 - Michael Hart was selected as our City Manager. He will start on February 18th. If you're part of any group and you want Michael to meet your group, you need to run that through Paula Mahoney to schedule.
4. Council Member Velasquez:
 - Commend Officer Lovato with the La Junta Police Department. It's nice to see a resurgence of the cadets of the La Junta Explorer program.
5. Council Member Stoker:
 - Regarding utility bills and the new building hours, whatever your billing cycle is, if it's going to be a holiday, it's always due the next business day. You can also pay online.
6. Council Member Rikhof:
 - Commend the Search Committee and all those involved. That was a year-long process. Look forward to working with Mr. Hart.
7. Mayor Ayala:
 - The City has reserved a table at the Chamber Banquet, Monday the 27th.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

ATTEST:

CITY OF LA JUNTA

Melanie R. Scofield, City Clerk

Joseph Ayala, Mayor