

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

*Subject to approval at
the March 6, 2023
City Council Meeting*

CALL TO ORDER: A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of La Junta, Colorado, was called to order by Mayor Ayala on Tuesday, February 21, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building.

INVOCATION: Council Member Vela gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Council Member Velasquez led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: The following Council Members were present:

Damon Ramirez, Ward 1
Paul Velasquez, Ward 1
Elaine McIntyre, Ward 2 – arrived at 6:27 p.m.
Joe Ayala, Mayor
Chandra Ochoa, Ward 2
Edward Vela, Ward 3
Lisa Pantoya, Ward 3

Absent: none

Also present: Bill Jackson, Asst. City Manager
Phil Malouff Jr., City Attorney
Melanie Scofield, City Clerk
Paula Mahoney, Admin. Asst.
Todd Quick, Chief of Police
Mitch Zgorzynski, Police Sergeant
Scott Copley, Police Deputy Chief
Jessica Madrid, Communications Supervisor
Betty Velasquez, La Junta
Tom Henley, Black Hills Energy
Bethany Bender, La Junta
William Macdonald, La Junta
Bette McFarren, RF Gazette

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: Mayor Ayala asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting of February 6, 2023. Council Member Vela had an addition. Under City Manager Comments, Brick & Tile Park, add: “asked if the Brick & Tile Park was all funded by grants and Mr. Klein said yes.” Hearing no further corrections or additions, the mayor asked for a motion to approve the minutes as amended.

MOTION TO ACCEPT THE FEBRUARY 6, 2023 MINUTES AS AMENDED: Vela

SECOND: Ramirez

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

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

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BLACK HILLS ENERGY: COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY & BILLING ISSUES – Mr. Tom Henley with Community Affairs shared the following information:

- Black Hills Energy is a regulated, publicly traded electric and natural gas company serving eight states, 1.25 million electric and natural gas utility customers in 800 plus communities.
- They serve over 302,500 utility customers, including natural gas and electric, in 199 communities throughout Colorado.
- Have more than 617 megawatts of owned wind, solar and natural gas power generation capacity in Colorado.
- Their natural gas utilities have reduced GHG emissions by more than one-third.
- Nearly 99% of infrastructure comprised of materials with the lowest emissions factors.
- Completing replacement of all remaining unprotected pipe before 2035.
- Target for net zero emissions is by 2035.
 - Updated clean energy target to further reduce methane emissions associated with their natural gas utility system.
 - Net Zero Target by 2035 complements their commitment to safety and determination to achieve a cleaner energy future.
 - Focuses on emissions reductions from activities and owned assets without their control.
- Why your bill is so much higher this year:
 - The cost of natural gas varies by state, but increased as much as 56% from December 2021 to December 2022
 - Average residential usage billed in December 2022 increased by 35% compared to December 2021
 - Compared to December 2021, our average residential natural gas customers saw an increase of 60% in December 2022
- Bill resources and self-service options
 - Budget billing
 - Auto pay
 - Payment arrangements and extensions
 - Regional Energy Assistance
- For more information: www.blackhillsenergy.com/sustainability

SYNCHRONICITY DANCE PRODUCTIONS presents Crown. Crown is based on a twisted chess game. The cast has been filming episodes of the beginning of the performance and will be showing the finale live. Performances will be February 24th, 25th, and 26th. Tickets are available at the Koshare Museum from 12:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday. You may also call 719-384-4411 or email synchronicitydanceproductions@gmail.com to reserve your tickets. The cast of the crew are: Maribella Salazar, Emma Jones Fredrickson, David Eckhart, Miah Rapp, Lilianna Farmer, Acynn Good-Coates, Fatimah Mirakor, Terra McClure, Cora Frausto, Gracie Martinez, Isabel Roybal and Sarah Mahoney, owner and director.

POLICE DEPARTMENT Update provided by Police Chief Todd Quick:

- 2022 All Offense Types

○ Crimes Against Property	378
○ Burglary/Breaking & Entering	65
○ Drug Arrests	24
○ Robbery	1
○ Shoplifting	118
○ Motor Vehicle Theft	33
- Calls For Service
 - 2020 there were 22,005 calls
 - 2021 there were 22,344 calls
 - 2022 there were 22,905 calls

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- Current Staffing Level
 - 1 Chief
 - 1 Deputy Chief
 - 4 Sergeants
 - 1 School Resource Officer
 - 1 Police Officer II/Code Enforcement
 - 7 Patrol Officers
 - 1 Communication Supervisor
 - 6 Communication Officers

Deputy Chief Scott Copley is excited about looking into ways to improve and change the environment that the officers are experiencing. There is a constant fight between proactive and reactive work. It is also recognized that the Department is a young workforce. They are looking forward to the opportunity to bring some training and new experience, along with mentoring to help these young officer move forward using the tools offered by the City. There is also the concern of the volume and workload, the stress and strain, that's put on the officer. The goal is to create a balance of quality of life, good working environment and good culture for the Police Department.

Chief Todd Quick talked about the La Junta Police Department Memorial Training buildings which were brought about by the Colorado Peace Officer Standards Training grant. They offer certain amounts of money to each region of the State. Starting back in 2016, the monies were used for the next few years to improve the range into an actual training facility. This facility can be used by nine counties having sixteen agencies.

Sergeant Mitch Zgorzynski talked about the need for police and community partnership. The Citizens Academy is a great way to let the citizens know what the police do on a daily basis, some of the limitations and things that they struggle with. At the same time, the police get approximately ten or so sessions to learn the concerns of the citizens. That's extremely important. The La Junta Police Department will be trying to kick off their Citizen's Academy in March. If you are interested in attending, please stop by the police department and pick up your application. Definite dates and times for the academy will be determined once the applications have been received and reviewed.

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

1. There was no citizen participation.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Liquor Licenses

1. **Application for a Special Event Permit by Our Lady of Guadalupe/St. Patrick Parish, Michael Perez, Event Manager. The event is their annual St. Patrick's Day Dinner Auction to be held March 17, 2023 from 4:00 p.m. to 11:59 p.m. at 202 Lincoln 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 Attorney recommends approval.

MOTION TO GRANT A SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT TO OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE/ST. PATRICK PARISH FOR THEIR ANNUAL ST. PATRICK'S DAY DINNER AUCTION TO BE HELD MARCH 17, 2023 FROM 4:00 P.M. TO 11:59 P.M. AT 202 LINCOLN AVENUE: Ochoa

SECOND: Vela

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

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2. **Application for Renewal of a Tavern Liquor License by Ronald Hall, d/b/a The Railyard, 114 Colorado Avenue.** The application is in order and has been reviewed by City supervisors for compliance with City and State codes. Appropriate fees have been tendered and the City Attorney recommends approval.

MOTION TO GRANT A RENEWAL OF A TAVERN LIQUOR LICENSE BY RONALD HALL, D/B/A THE RAILYARD, 114 COLORADO AVENUE: Pantoya

SECOND: McIntyre

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

3. **Application for Renewal of a Fermented Malt Liquor License by Wal-Mart Inc., d/b/a Wal-Mart #1384, 6 Conley Road.** The application is in order and has been reviewed by City supervisors for compliance with City and State codes. Appropriate fees have been tendered and the City Attorney recommends approval.

MOTION TO GRANT A RENEWAL OF A FERMENTED MALT LIQUOR LICENSE BY WAL-MART INC., D/B/A WAL-MART #1384, 6 CONLEY ROAD: Ochoa

SECOND: Pantoya

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

4. **Application for a Modification of Premises by Wal-Mart Inc., d/b/a Wal-Mart #1384, 6 Conley Road.** The application is in order and has been reviewed by City supervisors for compliance with City and State codes. Appropriate fees have been tendered and the City Attorney recommends approval.

MOTION TO GRANT A MODIFICATION OF PREMISES BY WAL-MART INC., D/B/A WAL-MART #1384, 6 CONLEY ROAD: Ochoa

SECOND: Velasquez

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

5. **Application for a Modification of Premises by Safeway Stores 46 Inc., d/b/a Safeway Store #3723, 315 W. 2nd Street.** The application is in order and has been reviewed by City supervisors for compliance with City and State codes. Appropriate fees have been tendered and the City Attorney recommends approval.

MOTION TO GRANT A MODIFICATION OF PREMISES BY SAFEWAY STORES 46 INC., D/B/A SAFEWAY STORE #3723, 315 W. 2ND STREET: Pantoya

SECOND: Velasquez

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

B. Committee/Board Reports

1. Senior Citizens Advisory Board (Council Member Velasquez):
 - Held a work session and discussed increasing membership dues, how to get the word out better on all of the things provided by the Senior Center. Everything you receive is inclusive with the membership fee.
 - Thanked Betty Velasquez for attending and providing insight and suggestions. Rick Klein and County Commissioner Tim Knabenshue were also there.
 - Thank you to all of the departments that go out and buy the meals at the Senior Center.

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2. Utility Board (Mayor Ayala):

- Meeting will be next Tuesday.
- Utility Board did make a recommendation to council to back out of the Arkansas Valley Conduit. We are waiting for information from the Southeast Conservancy District, in addition to information from our water lawyer and the Federal government. It is not a time for council to have to make a decision on it yet. When that time gets closer, we will bring it back before this council when more information is known.

D. City Manager's Comments (Report given by Asst. City Manager Jackson):

- We are working on our 5-year Airport Improvement Plan with the FAA.
- We had another main break on Raton in the 2100 block.
- The Brick and Tile playground is being constructed this month.
- We are waiting for the weather to clear to pour the floor for the bathroom for the Brick and Tile Park.
- We are waiting for our notice to proceed to construct the trail from CDOT and the Army Corps of Engineers.
- The Fire Department hosted an ice rescue training where eight of our firemen were certified.
- The columbarium finally arrived over a year after we ordered it. It has been set.
- We have ordered the scoreboard for Veteran's field.
- The Library, Senior Center, Golf Course, and Pool are going to start having open houses showcasing their services.
- We are working with the School District on the bleachers, replacing seats.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION:

- Fountain lights have been replaced and have color.
- City crews did a good job cleaning up the snow around the park.

E. Governing Body Comments

1. Council Member Ramirez:

- We spoke last year about making contact with Safeway corporate regarding the look of that store. They're redoing all of their signage and some other work around the building. It looks really good.

2. Council Member Velasquez:

- Thanks to Julie Worley for the invitation to tour the Plaza Building. They've done a lot of work to the interior. It was a nice tour.

3. Mayor Ayala:

- The first day to pick up packets, if you're interested in running for Mayor or Council Member, is Tuesday, August 9th. The positions up this November election are Mayor, Ward 1 Mr. Velasquez, Ward 2 Ms. Ochoa and Ward 3 Mr. Vela. If you're interested, start thinking about it now.
- Thank Todd, Scott and the whole crew.
- If you can, go see Crown. Let's support our Arts.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

ATTEST:**CITY OF LA JUNTA**

 Melanie R. Scofield, City Clerk

 Joe Ayala, Mayor