

***Subject to approval at  
the March 7, 2022  
City Council Meeting***

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

**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 Monday, February 22, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building.

**INVOCATION:** Council Member McIntyre gave the invocation.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Mayor 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  
Joe Ayala, Mayor  
Chandra Ochoa, Ward 2  
Edward Vela, Ward 3

Absent: Lisa Pantoya, Ward 3

Also present: Rick Klein, City Manager  
Bill Jackson, Asst. City Manager  
Phil Malouff Jr., City Attorney  
Debi Fraker, Admin. Asst.  
Paula Mahoney, Admin. Asst.  
Todd Quick, Chief of Police  
Mike Engebrecht, Police Department  
Jessica Madrid, Police Department  
Gary Cranson, UB Commissioner  
Johnnie DeLeon, Health Service District  
Julie Worley, La Junta  
Chelsea Herasingh, Otero College  
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 7, 2022. After hearing none, the Mayor asked for a motion to approve the minutes as published.

**MOTION TO ACCEPT THE FEBRUARY 7, 2022 MINUTES AS PUBLISHED:** Ochoa

**SECOND:** Velasquez

**DISCUSSION:** There was no discussion

**VOTE:** The motion carried 7-0

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

1. Chelsea Herasingh, Strategic Planning Committee Chair, Otero College: We have started our 5 year strategic planning process. Part of this process includes reaching out to the community and partner organizations to get your input on the direction you'd like to see us go over the next 5 years. To learn more, go to our website [www.otero.edu](http://www.otero.edu).

**\*\*\*Council Member McIntyre left the meeting\*\*\***

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING – February 22, 2022****REPORTS**

- A. Health Service District.** Johnnie DeLeon, President/Chairman of the Health Service District shared a power point presentation on the progress that has been made to this point. It's been a long four years. The committee has worked hard and I would like to thank them: Janet Hill, Lynn Horner, Diane Fowler, Paul Yoder and Adela Licano our Community Relations Director. I would also encourage you to take a drive out there and check it out. The walls are finally going up. Construction started on October 7<sup>th</sup> and we had our official groundbreaking on October 14<sup>th</sup>. We are 426 days to completion. We have already been approved by Medicaid and CDPHE. For more information, follow us on Facebook or you can go to [www.ljhdsd.org](http://www.ljhdsd.org). (Discussion continued regarding the construction progress.)
- B. Police Department.** Todd Quick shared a brochure comparing how many calls for service there have been over the last five years along with the types of calls they received. He also shared the following quote from Sir Robert Peel, who in 1829 established the Metropolitan Police of London: "The Police are the Public; the Public are the Police. The Police are paid to give full time attention to duties that are incumbent upon every citizen in the interest of community welfare and existence." This statement is as true today as it was back then.

Mike Engebrecht shared how social media, Facebook, is used to share information with the community and to also have the community involved in helping to apprehend criminals. It's not to instill fear but just to communicate. Using social media has really helped the department.

Asst. City Manager Jackson: Explained the quotes received from Digitcom Electronics for the surveillance cameras for the downtown. This will help out tremendously to deter crime.

Chief of Police Quick: Want to let everyone know we will be resuming our Police Academy in August. I encourage any of the council who has not attended to do so.

MOTION TO ACCEPT THE QUOTE FROM DIGITCOM AS PRESENTED AND PROCEED WITH OBTAINING THE SECURITY SYSTEM: Vela

SECOND: Ochoa

DISCUSSION: There was no further discussion

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

**NEW BUSINESS****A. Committee/Board Reports**

1. Utilities Board (Council Member Vela):
  - There's been movement on the Arkansas Valley Conduit due to financing with the Feds. We're still awaiting the engineering report before we approve it on our end.
  - Assisting with water line installation at the new nursing home.
  - The Christmas decorations have been taken down and they were as good as ever.
  - There is still discussion on the solar grid and limits on generation.
  - There will be some efficiency changes to the sanitation pick up which will be implemented on March 6<sup>th</sup>.
  - A possible increase to the City for use of the County landfill because it will be running independently and is expected to cost \$10,000 more a year, amounting to a 3% increase.
2. City Manager Klein: Elaine wanted to thank the cemetery workers for the work they did to fix her husbands headstone.
3. Planning Commission (Council Member Ochoa):
  - Met last week, there was a lot of discussion regarding re-zoning and annexations. There will be a lot of work to be done this upcoming year.

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING – February 22, 2022**

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**B. City Manager's Comments**

- We are selling 207 Colorado Avenue (Core Building) to Sangre De Cristo.
- We have put 301 Santa Fe (Presbyterian Church) up for sale.
- We are finishing taking out the foundations on the properties that EPA helped with on demolition of some burnt out houses.
- We are continuing to feel pressure on companies coming after our workforce due to salaries. This is a big problem here and in America. We have to make adjustments now.
- It will be April when the company can resurface the tennis courts at College Overlook.
- We had 18 headstones knocked over. We are investigating.
- Mike Weber will be leaving on March 9<sup>th</sup>.
- Sales tax has come up by 1%.

**C. Governing Body Comments**

1. Council Member Velasquez:
  - We had an amphitheater meeting and its gaining momentum. It's exciting.
2. Council Member Vela:
  - Attended the dinner theater that was held at the golf course over this past weekend. It was a great show.
3. Mayor Ayala:
  - I've had a lot of complaints about cats. Cats downtown, cats in neighborhoods, cats all over the city. The way I see it, these cats need to be spayed or neutered. Not just fed.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

**ATTEST:**

**CITY OF LA JUNTA**

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Melanie R. Scofield, City Clerk

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Joseph Ayala, Mayor