

*Subject to approval at
the April 17, 2023
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, April 3, 2023, at 5:58 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
Elaine McIntyre, Ward 2
Joe Ayala, Mayor
Chandra Ochoa, Ward 2
Edward Vela, Ward 3
Lisa Pantoya, Ward 3

Absent: none

Also present: Rick Klein, City Manager
Bill Jackson, Asst. City Manager
Melanie Scofield, City Clerk
Paula Mahoney, Admin. Asst.
Michael Yerman, My Rural Planner
Gary Cranson, Utility Board
Betty Velasquez, La Junta
Jackson Smith, La Junta
Casey Weaver, La Junta
Zoey Montoya, La Junta
Andrea Montoya, La Junta
CJ Montoya, La Junta
Angela Ayala, La Junta
Maureen Rikkof, La Junta
Everett Ediger, 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 March 20, 2023. Hearing none, the mayor asked for a motion to approve the minutes as published.

MOTION TO ACCEPT THE MARCH 20, 2023 MINUTES AS PUBLISHED: McIntyre

SECOND: Velasquez

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

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INFORMATION

- A. **LJHS Science Fair:** Zoey Montoya and Everett Ediger are students at La Junta High School and did a science project for the Regional Fair on Native Colorado Brown Tarantulas. They competed at the regional science fair and had a lot of success there. They qualified for State which will be next week and the International Science Fair to be held in the middle of May. They specifically studied how qualities of soil affect where the tarantula burrow in the Comanche National Grasslands.
- B. **Eagle Scout Project:** Jackson Smith is a Junior at Tiger Trades Academy and is currently the historian for Boy Scout Troop 232 in La Junta. He started working on his Eagle Project in March. It is to make and distribute handmade blankets to veterans at Evergreen Gardens. He chose this project because of his Uncle Cory who was a Sergeant in the United States Marine Corps. He was seriously injured in Afghanistan. While recovering, he was given a blanket, which he kept with him for a very long time. That made an impact on him and he wanted to give back what Project Linus did for his uncle. There are twenty-five blankets already completed from twenty-two contributors. Contributions can be taken to the Koshare Indian Museum.
- C. **City-Wide Cleanup:** Angela Ayala with ReMax Advantage, the Murphy Group will be putting together an Earth Day cleanup on April 22nd. She is looking for volunteers to come and help in the downtown area from 10:00 a.m. to noon. You will meet at the ReMax office next to Copper Kitchen. She will provide everything you need. Clean Valley Recycling has generously given recycled bags. They will start on 1st Street on Santa Fe and Colorado Avenues and head south. If she can get enough volunteers, she'd like to make this a monthly activity. It's important that people give back to their community where they live, work, play, and enjoy.
- D. **Tarantula Fest Update:** Angela Ayala would love for Zoey and Everett to be a part of their educational pavilion. It will be held on Saturday, September 30th. This year will be bigger than last year. Have been in talks with a group out of Denver called the Spider Riders motorcycle club. They have a huge national following and want to be a part of the Tarantula Fest. The committee is looking into how to put things together to utilize the layout better to fit more people into the community.

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

- Edward Vela: Congrats to the La Junta High School baseball team beating Lamar for the first time in ten years. It is phenomenal. Also, had a Vietnam veteran ask about striping 10th Street on San Juan and Carson Avenues. They're pretty dim.

City Manager Klein: Those streets aren't striped.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Liquor Licenses

- Application for a Special Event Permit by Otero Museum Association, Event Manager, Dave Hill. The event is their Annual Museum Benefit to be held April 21, 2023 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at 218 Anderson 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 OTERO MUSEUM ASSOCIATION FOR THEIR ANNUAL MUSEUM BENEFIT TO BE HELD APRIL 21, 2023 FROM 5:30 P.M. TO 7:30 P.M. AT 218 ANDERSON AVENUE: Pantoya

SECOND: Vela

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

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2. **Application for a Special Event Permit by La Junta Rotary, Event Manager, Aimee Hill. The event is their Annual Fundraiser to be held April 29, 2023 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at 315 Santa Fe 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 LA JUNTA ROTARY FOR THEIR ANNUAL FUNDRAISER TO BE HELD APRIL 29, 2023 FROM 9:00 A.M. TO 4:00 P.M. AT 315 SANTA FE AVENUE: Ochoa

SECOND: Velasquez

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

B. Tourism Board Recommendation for Funding.

1. **\$500.00 to Studebaker Drivers Club North Central Zone Meet – June 22-24, 2023, advertising and marketing.**

MOTION TO APPROVE THE EXPENDITURE OF TOURISM TAX REVENUE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$500.00 TO STUDEBAKER DRIVERS CLUB NORTH CENTRAL ZONE MEET TO BE HELD JUNE 22-24, 2023 FOR ADVERTISING AND MARKETING: Vela

SECOND: Ochoa

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

- C. **First Reading/AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF LA JUNTA AMENDING TITLE 17 OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE.** The City Attorney explained that Mr. Yerman has been working on reconstructing the City's Title 17. The entire ordinance is very technical. The need to redo this ordinance, is in part, based on things going on at the State level. This has been reviewed by the Planning Commission, City Management, and myself. The ordinance was introduced by title only, there being copies available to those in attendance.

MOTION TO PASS THE ORDINANCE ON FIRST READING: Pantoya

SECOND: Velasquez

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

D. Committee/Board Reports

1. Senior Citizens Advisory Board (Council Member Velasquez):
 - This week's meeting for the La Junta Senior Center Advisory Board is at 10:00 a.m.
 - Dues will increase to \$12.00 per year on May 1st. The cost of covered dish lunches will increase to \$3.00 per plate and Holiday meals will increase to \$5.00 per plate.
 - The community open house at the Senior Center will be on the 21st of April from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
2. Utility Board (Council Member Velasquez):
 - The Rate Increase Study was completed and we'll wait until May for the audit to be complete to see where we are financially.
3. AVRMC Board (Council Member McIntyre):
 - Health Fair on April 22nd from 7:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at Otero College. There's information on the AVRMC website or you can call the Director of Marketing, Janice, at 383-6009.
 - It's the Week of the Young Child. I had somebody reach out to me to read a book.

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D. City Manager's Comments

- There's somebody going around door-to-door stating that they are working with the City to put in some kind of electric meter, water meter. We are not working with them. If someone comes to your door, call dispatch so we can catch this person.
- Over the weekend, we had four different fires. It's Red Flag Warnings for a reason. Do not burn until you get a burn permit and go see the Fire Chief.
- The Brick and Tile playground should be completed, except for shelters, within the next couple of weeks. Weather has slowed it down.
- We poured the floor for the bathroom for the Brick and Tile Park. We will start building walls this next week.
- We received the Army Corps of Engineers 404 permit. Now we are waiting on CDOT to issue notice to proceed, then we'll start the bidding process for the trail.
- We are working with the Utility Board on the Rate Study.
- The Senior Center is having an open house on April 21st from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. showcasing their services.
- We have two of our Wastewater Operators leaving, one to Las Animas and one to retirement. We are working on replacements.
- Auditors are here, so we will be busy with them for a while.
- The EPA came through to evaluate our demolition buildings. They will schedule us for the next month or so. They are getting a review on whether they can help with nursing home west.
- Otero College held a regional tournament at our golf course with eight teams.
- Wildland fire season is here, be careful.
- Friends of the Library are having a book sale on the 29th of April on the library patio.

City Manager Klein: The Mayor has a letter in opposition of SB23-213. At this time, this bill would not affect us. Mr. Klein explained each of the following four codes that are in the bill. 1) ADU's (accessory dwelling units), 2) middle housing, 3) transit-oriented areas, and 4) key corridors.

Mayor Ayala: When the Governor ran for office last election, everyone kept complaining about not having enough housing. He's saying that the State is going to come in and do this for more housing. It doesn't affect La Junta right now but if they start building multi-family residences, they're going to start looking for more water. They're going to start looking to smaller municipalities and smaller towns. That's why I oppose this bill. I've been reading it nonstop. I didn't take this decision lightly. I went over it very thoroughly and that's the reason I had this letter drafted for us to send out.

MOTION TO DRAFT A LETTER FOR THE MAYORS SIGNATURE, SUPPORTED BY THE COUNCIL, TO OPPOSE SB23-213: Vela

SECOND: Pantoya

DISCUSSION: There was no further discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION:

- Asphalt for potholes
- Fire mitigation

CITY COUNCIL MEETING – April 3, 2023**E. Governing Body Comments**

1. Council Member McIntyre:
 - Last meeting it was mentioned about the weeds on the ditch on San Juan Avenue. I did contact them and they were able to get the weeds pulled out but they don't have anybody to haul them off. I know the area on San Juan is in the county. (Discussion continued.)
 - I was hoping to hear a report on the bike rental.
2. Council Member Velasquez:
 - Would like to congratulate the La Junta Livestock Commission for their 68-anniversary sale that they had. It's tremendous. They're a third-generation owner.
3. Mayor Ayala:
 - Attended Action 22 Leadership Academy with Lisa. We were in Pueblo at the Water Tower Place. This was our third class. They had very great speakers. There was a lot of leadership training, a lot of speakers, and a lot of group building activities. Also talked about non-profits and how we can work with leaders of non-profits help them succeed and still be able to do the things we need to do. I want to thank the council for sending us. This kind of information is stuff that we would have to try and fail on our own. Too many times in La Junta, in the Valley, we played defense. A bill like this comes out and by the time we hear about it, it's too late for us to do anything about it. Once we get done with this and we learn the ins and outs, we can start helping draft bills for our area to where we're playing offense. Going forward, we should start sending more council to it to really build those leadership positions here.
 - Did a proclamation for Week of the Young Child here at our local CDS and in Rocky Ford. It is very important to our area. It really helps grow these children. I think it's really important to have them in our Valley. In Rocky Ford they did a baby shower for the community. They had a whole bunch of resources. Everything from diapers, clothes, and the Workforce Center was out there too.
 - The La Junta High School baseball kids won their first ever Jim Sullivan Tournament. All the teams did great. We had a lot of people that were upset about the parking on 5th Street awhile back. This year there was not one car parked on that side of the street. We were very happy to see that. The new stands and bleachers looked amazing. Congratulations to all the teams but especially to La Junta High School.
4. City Manager Klein:
 - The Mayor reached out to the hospital board on the hospital fees, in regards to the Medicare presentation we received at our meeting with them, and asked if they wanted us to write a letter in opposition for it. Thank you, Joe.
5. Mayor Ayala:
 - The Hospital Board has a vacancy. That has been put out and the deadline is the 17th.
6. Council Member McIntyre:
 - Thanked everybody who was able to come to the group meeting with AVRMC and City Council members.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

ATTEST:

CITY OF LA JUNTA

Melanie R. Scofield, City Clerk

Joe Ayala, Mayor