

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

*Subject to approval at
the August 1, 2022
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 Monday, July 18, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building.

INVOCATION: Council Member Vela 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
Elaine McIntyre, Ward 2
Joe Ayala, Mayor
Chandra Ochoa, Ward 2
Edward Vela, Ward 3
Lisa Pantoya, Ward 3

Absent: Paul Velasquez, Ward 1

Also present: Rick Klein, City Manager
Bill Jackson, Asst. City Manager
Phil Malouff Jr., City Attorney
Melanie Scofield, City Clerk
Paula Mahoney, Admin. Asst.
Frank McKenzie, Utility Board Chairman
MJ Romano, La Junta
Heather Pidcock-Reed, La Junta
Bethany Taullie, La Junta
Tracy Taullie, La Junta
Mike Bourget, Utility Board Commissioner
Nancy Bennett, La Junta
Angela Ayala, La Junta
Gary Cranson, Utility Board Vice-Chair
Bette McFarren, RF Gazette

PUBLIC HEARING SET FOR 6:00 P.M.

- A. Application for a New Retail Fermented Malt Beverage Off-Premises Liquor License by Family Dollar Stores of Colorado LLC, d/b/a Family Dollar #25100, 614 E. 1st Street.

City Attorney Malouff explained that the publication notice was published for today's meeting, July 18 at 6:00 p.m. however, the poster was posted as July 16 at 6:00 p.m. There is a requirement by statute that requires posting at least ten days prior to the hearing. Because the poster had the incorrect date, I don't believe sufficient notice was given to the public for purposes of this hearing.

This Public Hearing was re-set for August 1st at 6:00 p.m. The City Clerk was directed to create a new poster to be posted on the premises and place a new publication in the newspaper.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: Mayor Ayala asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting of July 5, 2022. There was no mention of Council Member Vela's motion of up to \$5,000 from the Tourism Board fund to be granted to the Tarantula Fest Committee and that it died with no second. After hearing no further corrections or additions, the Mayor asked for a motion to approve the minutes as amended.

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MOTION TO ACCEPT THE JULY 5, 2022 MINUTES AS AMENDED: Ochoa

SECOND: Pantoya

DISCUSSION: There was no further discussion

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

PICKET WIRE THEATRE - MATILDA: Heather Pidcock-Reed, Miss Honey, and Bethany Taullie, Matilda gave a summary of “Matilda the Musical” as follows:

Matilda is a little girl with astonishing wit, intelligence and psychokinetic powers. She's unloved by her cruel parents but impresses her schoolteacher, the highly loveable Miss Honey. Over the course of her first term at school, Matilda and Miss Honey have a profound effect on each other's lives, as Miss Honey begins not only to recognize but also appreciate Matilda's extraordinary personality. Matilda's school life isn't completely smooth sailing, however – the school's mean headmistress, Miss Trunchbull, hates children and just loves thinking up new punishments for those who don't abide by her rules. But Matilda has courage and cleverness in equal amounts, and could be the school pupils' saving grace!

Packed with high-energy dance numbers, catchy songs and an unforgettable star turn for a young actress, Matilda is a joyous power romp. Children and adults alike will be thrilled and delighted by the story of the special little girl with an extraordinary imagination.

Join us for an evening of entertainment from this amazing cast and crew of hard-working community members! Tickets are on sale now at www.picketwireplayers.org/tickets or call 719-384-8320. July 20, 21, 22, 23 at 7:30pm, Tickets are \$15.

Heather and Bethany than sang a duet from the musical.

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

1. MJ Romano, minister at La Junta Presbyterian Church: On Sunday, July 31st at 10:00 a.m. our church service will be making a special emphasis to be praying for the renewal of our city. If you know of anything in particular to be praying for our community, please let me know.
2. Frank McKenzie, 1202 Raton Ave., Utility Board Chairman: The formation of the Utility Board consists of five members, three being elected, one is the Mayor and one is an appointed councilman. My concerns are about Mr. Ed Vela. Mr. Vela's unwillingness to adhere to the rules of governing elected officials has put all of us in jeopardy. I am asking the City Council to appoint a different council member to fill his seat on the Utility Board. This hasn't come lightly

Mr. Vela responded to Frank McKenzie's comment. Mr. Malouff suggested that both sides need the opportunity to be heard and we need to respect the rights and the timeliness of due process. Mr. McKenzie's request is appreciated. There needs to be an executive session with the Council and the Utility Board members, if they would like to attend.

REPORTS

Economic Development Update. Cynthia Nieb, director of La Junta Economic Development gave the following update on economic development.

Economic Development is the creation of wealth from which community benefits are realized. It is more than a jobs program, it's an investment in growing the economy and enhancing the prosperity and quality of life for all residents according to targeted goals and objectives. For La Junta's Economic Development, there are targeted goals and objectives set in the La Junta Economic Development Action Plan, which all of you approved, as well as opportunities that pop up that benefit our municipality. One must be able to turn on a dime to make those opportunities realities.

In previous decades, economic development was measured by the attainment of manufacturing jobs. In the past year, we did have a Chicago manufacturer of gaskets who wanted to move here and bring 150 jobs. Even though the owner appreciated our hospitality and detailed information package, he declined to

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move here because of the lack of housing and lack of already trained workers. Here's how those gaps are being addressed:

Since that time, SE Colorado's economic developers have helped secure over 90 new housing units in SE Colorado, known as High Prairie Homes, with 3 units slated to be built in La Junta over the next year and more to come in an additional phase.

To make certain that local housing developers have an easier time at building new units and rehabilitating existing units—including downtown second floor apartments—I penned three grants to hire Michael Yerman to help us rewrite La Junta's code and land use policies. He is also creating a how-to guide to help us continue the good work and to show others how to replicate our success.

As you probably know, Otero College is stepping up with their planning and rollout of an enhanced trades program, and I am working with them to provide information on funding sources. That training should assist them in filling the gap of qualified workers and contractors in southeastern Colorado. They have not shared their total vision yet.

Main Street Open for Business closed their grant program on June 30, 2022. Here are the results:

- If you drive by the old Lincare building on Santa Fe, you'll see beautiful new windows. CaSandra Thomas also independently paid for a new swamp cooler and roof.
- The Warehouse, 401 Santa Fe, has wonderful Pella windows and a new roof. In addition, you will find a salon, and Pella Windows showroom and a Re-Use Store—those are new businesses.
- Jessie and Jaron Hinkley officially opened Kleinmakerspace on June 1. They have a wonderful ADA ramp, new windows, a roof, door, and more. You can weld, sew, 3-d print, engrave, and learn how to knit, crochet and macrame there. They'll be adding new possibilities as time rolls on.
- The Opera House, LLC received rehabilitation of their wooden windows, masonry repointing and a new roof on the 1st level loft, LED Lights and business signs, HVAC, the pizzeria awning replacement and repair of the Opera House Metal Awning, a high efficiency water heater, and more. Mondelo's Pizza, which would've been open by now if their pizza stone hadn't been shattered in transit, will open soon. They are a new business.
- The Fox Theatre was able to obtain a new roof, repointing of the masonry, and store front updates including new poster stations and doors that aren't drafty. I think all can agree that having a downtown theatre is a real boost to the community.
- Last but not least is JMP Holding Company, LLC, 13 W 3rd Street. You might have noticed the newly installed windows, a SoCo Froyo door that closes correctly, and new roof.

We do have an additional bilingual navigator—that's in addition to the Southern Colorado Economic Development District-- who can assist local businesses. First Southwest Community Fund is headquartered in Alamosa but serves rural Colorado in its entirety. Three local businesses have already taken advantage of their services.

Azrael Madrigal, the executive director, has funding and education for immigrant entrepreneurs and small businesses in rural Colorado through loans, education, and technical assistance. Highlights of First Southwest Community Funds programs are:

- The Innovate Onwards Fund provides flexible working capital up to \$500,000 to existing and new businesses across rural Colorado to build back our rural economies.
- A Food Truck Loan Program offers loans between \$5,000 and \$50,000.
- First Southwest Community Fund was one of three awardees that received funds through the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT) to create a revolving loan fund. The New Pioneers Fund provides microloans for startup farmers, small and emerging businesses, and women-owned and outdoor recreational businesses.
- The Intermediary Relending Program (IRP) provides fixed rate loans to businesses in rural communities that create jobs. For each proposed project, First Southwest Community

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Fund will evaluate the benefits to rural development at large, the partner organizations that can assist, and the impacts that can be tracked because of the investment.

- Rural Micro-entrepreneur Assistance Program (RMAP)
 - The Rural Micro-Entrepreneur Assistance Program (RMAP) provides micro-loans, training and technical assistance grants to entrepreneurs and small business owners. This program is supported by United States Department of Agriculture. The program enables entrepreneurs to take out a loan, and receive a technical assistance grant at the same time.
 - The First Southwest Community Fund also has incredible business workshops

Notable new businesses: What the Fudge, Pella Windows and Re-Use Store at The Warehouse, Steve & Tomies, Mondelos Pizzeria, CBD Body Blends on HWY 50, KleinmakerSpace, Auntie B's (featured at KleinmakerSpace), and Lisa Villanueva—Arts Education, Activism.

James Russell at DoLA is working on getting us started on developing tourism operators through their Rural Technical Assistance Program.

Recent Opportunities Sent out on Facebook, mostly from the Office of Economic Development and International Trade include: Ways to become a Colorado Film Location, New or Endangered Meeting and Events Cash Rebate, Rural Tourism Entrepreneurship Scholarship for those wanting to start a business, Colorado Enterprise Fund Loans, The Colorado Community Revitalization Grant, and Redline Contemporary Art Center, which lists most Colorado Cultural grants that are available

PROJECTED LAUNCH: SEPTEMBER 2, 2022—SECCP/Ashley Bass

First Friday Art Walk is a creative focused evening full of art shows, open mic night, concerts, food vendors, live art exhibits, and more! It occurs the first Friday of every month, from 6-9 pm. Guests are encouraged to park downtown and walk around the square, but there will be stops all around town. There will be a map of who is participating, what artist is displaying their work where that evening, where you can get some names, as well as places to shop. And even stops for photo ops!

Are you a business that wants to be a stop on the map? Are you an artist that wants to show your work, or perform, etc., but you need a location to do so? We will link you with a business as your host! Food trucks can be in the park with a permit from the City of La Junta. If you would like to be involved with First Fridays in La Junta, please complete the form at this link: ashleybassphotography.com/firstfridaylj

SAFEWAY RENOVATIONS

Per a City Council request, I contacted Kristine Staff who is the Sr. Director of Public Affairs/Government Relations at Safeway. She, in turn, set up a meeting with her chief evaluation staff, and we toured Safeway to note any deficiencies. Here's what she said after the tour: *We review, plan and budget remodel projects 1-2 years in advance. The La Junta store was not part of our 2022 project list. We have added the store for consideration to the 2023 project list. Depending on the approval process, we should know more in the next few months. The construction team is reviewing age of the equipment in store along with exterior opportunities for improvement. Let's continue to stay in touch and reach out to me with any questions. I will keep you updated. - Kris*

MY DIRECTIVES FOR THE FUTURE

Rick Klein has asked me to add a funding focus on infrastructure for the next 4-5 years. There's money out there right now for roads, bridges, water mains, and large transportation projects. We need to act now.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. Second Reading/AN ORDINANCE CALLING AN ELECTION ON NOVEMBER 8, 2022 TO AUTHORIZE THE IMPOSITION OF AN ADDITIONAL 1% SALES TAX ON RETAIL SALES WITHIN THE CITY OF LA JUNTA; SETTING THE TITLE AND CONTENT OF THE BALLOT**

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ISSUE FOR THE ELECTION; PROVIDING OTHER MATTERS AND RATIFYING ACTIONS PREVIOUSLY TAKEN RELATING THERETO; AND PROVIDING THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS ORDINANCE. The ordinance was introduced by title only, there being copies available to those in attendance.

MOTION TO PASS THE ORDINANCE ON SECOND READING: Ochoa

SECOND: Ramirez

DISCUSSION: A motion moved by Council Member Vela to put a sunset on this for two years was not considered by the Council, as it didn't receive a second. Another motion by Council Member Vela to have dedicated spending to employees to make the City

of La Junta the employer of choice was also not considered by the Council, as it didn't receive a second.

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

NEW BUSINESS

A. Authorization to Commence Condemnation – Green Farms Holding LLC (27496 Frontage Road). This is the old Gibsons building on Highway 50.

MOTION TO AUTHORIZE THE CITY ATTORNEY TO COMMENCE CONDEMNATION ON GREEN FARMS HOLDING LLC (27496 FRONTAGE ROAD): Vela

SECOND: Ochoa

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 5-0 (Velasquez absent, McIntyre abstained)

A. Committee/Board Reports

1. Parks & Recreation (Council Member Ramirez):

- Visited the local golf course.
- Inaugural season of baseball for Parks & Recreation Department that was previously run by YBC. There were over 300 participants. It was a very successful season. Kudos to the department.
- Football sign-up runs through August 12th.
- Volleyball sign-up runs through August 19th.
- There was work done out at the golf course.
- The Brick & Tile Park is moving forward. They will be putting down the base.
- Working on drainage issues at several ball fields.
- Resurfacing the stadium seating at Big Potter and making it ADA compliant.
- Resurfacing College Overlook tennis courts to include pickle ball.
- Last two projects left at the City Park are the tennis courts and the caretakers unit.

Mayor Ayala:

- Will be doing more camps for football, volleyball and baseball. We will also be adding more adult programs too. The guys are doing a great job.
- This year football will be played at Veteran's Field. It was suggested if we could utilize more parking between 5th and 6th Street that way the kids are crossing the side street and not having to cross Adams.

B. City Manager's Comments

- We have started the budget process.
- Continuing to work on the 50/50 Tree Removal Program. First round has eight applicants and twenty more applications were received after the last storm.
- Stage 1 water restrictions.
- Long lead times and prices keep going up.
- Weed! Weeds! Weeds!
- Asphalt patching.

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- Storm damage at the golf course and Industrial Park. There were many damaged trees and a few buildings as well.
- Clean up of trees and insurance has been contacted for building damage.
- A transformer bank behind the Post Office was damaged and repaired as well as two poles needing to be reinforced.
- Airport fuel sales are steady even with higher fuel prices.
- Building upgrades are being done to house DNAV operations.
- It rained two inches in half an hour overloading our system.
- Fire Stage 1 fire restrictions.

C. Governing Body Comments

1. Council Member Pantoya:
 - Arkansas Valley Community that Cares is looking for your feedback to have your voices heard. They're trying to collect information on safe play places for kids and families to go. You can go to their Facebook page and there are instructions for the link to fill out the survey.
2. Council Member Vela:
 - To the public in Facebook land, and City of La Junta Public Notices, I want to take this opportunity to express to you my apologies for having inadvertently placed Tom Seaba's name in an email that our City Attorney said was a violation of the Sunshine Laws. A person's full name does not constitute discussion. For that I apologize to Facebook, the Council and the Utility Board.
3. Mayor Ayala:
 - Was approached at the Plays in the Park, by a gentleman who wants to do a give one take one book deposit at the old Book Stop.

MOTION TO MOVE INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR A CONFERENCE WITH THE CITY ATTORNEY FOR THE PURPOSE OF RECEIVING LEGAL ADVICE ON SPECIFIC LEGAL QUESTIONS UNDER C.R.S SECTION 24-6-402(4)(b): Ochoa

SECOND: Pantoya

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

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

Council went into Executive Session from 7:40 until 8:14 p.m.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

ATTEST:

CITY OF LA JUNTA

Melanie R. Scofield, City Clerk

Joe Ayala, Mayor