

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

*Subject to approval at
the September 16, 2024
City Council Meeting*

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, September 3, 2024, 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
Chandra Ochoa, Ward 2
Lisa Pantoya, Ward 3
Maureen Rikhof, Ward 3

Absent: none

Also present: Brad Davidson, Interim City Manager
Erin Harris, City Attorney
Melanie Scofield, City Clerk
Aliza Libby, Director of Finance
Todd Quick, Chief of Police
Josh Harris, La Junta
CaSandra Thomas, La Junta
David, Jacob, La Junta
Betty Velasquez, La Junta
Henry Ediger, La Junta
Nancy Bennett, La Junta
Dottie Burnett, La Junta
Elaine McIntyre, La Junta
Gary Cranson, UB Chairman
Julie Worley, La Junta
Adrian Hart, SECO News
Bette McFarren, RF Gazette

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS: Mayor Ayala asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting of August 19, 2024. The mayor asked for a motion to approve the minutes as published.

MOTION TO ACCEPT THE AUGUST 19, 2024 MINUTES AS PUBLISHED: Rikhof

SECOND: Ramirez

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

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

1. Jeremiah Stoker, Exalted Ruler, La Junta Elks Lodge No. 701, 119 Colorado Avenue: The Elks Lodge donated \$2,500 to the John Fisher Hose Company to be used for an EV blanket and their fire safety program. They also donated \$1,000 to the Police K-9 Program.

Chief Todd Quick: They currently have two dogs that will be trained in tracking and drug intervention. The biggest part of the program is funded by public donations.

2. Director of Finance Aliza Libby: Delivered the 2025 budget and explained the different sections.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. **City Manager Search.** The job posting went back out last Wednesday. It is on the City's Facebook Public Notices page and the new website. It is nationwide. The Search Committee will need one, possibly two, positions filled.

- B. **Second Reading/AN ORDINANCE MAKING SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS TO THE INTERNAL SERVICE FUND FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2024.** 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: Velasquez

DISCUSSION: This is a one-person multi-use vehicle.

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

NEW BUSINESS

- A. **A Resolution Concerning the Annexation Filed by Pamela Sisson.** Resolution No. R-12-2024 was presented for council's consideration.

MOTION TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. R-12-2024: Rikhof

SECOND: Velasquez

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

- B. **First Reading/AN ORDINANCE CONCERNING AN ANNEXATION FOR PROPERTY OWNED BY PAMELA SISSON.** The ordinance was introduced by title only, there being copies available to those in attendance.

MOTION TO PASS THE ORDINANCE ON FIRST READING: Ramirez

SECOND: Stoker

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

- C. **First Reading/AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NUMBER 1242 (THE ZONING ORDINANCE) OF THE CITY OF LA JUNTA AS CONCERNS AN APPLICATION FOR ANNEXATION BY PAMELA SISSON.** The ordinance was introduced by title only, there being copies available to those in attendance.

MOTION TO PASS THE ORDINANCE ON FIRST READING: Velasquez

SECOND: Stoker

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

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- D. First Reading/AN ORDINANCE CONCERNING CAMPING WITHIN CITY LIMITS.** The ordinance was introduced by title only, there being copies available to those in attendance.

MOTION TO PASS THE ORDINANCE ON FIRST READING: Ochoa

SECOND: Velasquez

DISCUSSION: Chief Quick explained that the last section of the ordinance regarding camping by water ways and urinating and defecating would help in moving them along. Then when they do move along, there is usually massive amounts of trash that is left behind. You can go up and talk to them and try to get them to talk with someone, like Ft. Lyon, but if they don't want to, that's as far as we can go. But with this ordinance, the police will be able to stay and push the issue a little more and continue to try to get them to talk to someone. Lengthy discussion continued amongst the board and those in attendance. (See "City of La Junta Public Notices" Facebook page, City Council September 3, 2024.)

VOTE: Those voting YES: Velasquez, Stoker, Ayala, Ochoa, Pantoya

Those voting NO: Ramirez, Rikhof

The motion carried 5-2

E. Committee/Board Reports

1. Senior Citizens Advisory Board (Council Member Velasquez):
 - Next meeting will be this Thursday.
2. Urban Renewal (Nancy Bennett, Chair):
 - The Plaza Building should be done by the end of the year or the end of January. The electricity has been the biggest road block so far. Once completed, it will be a jewel for La Junta. SECCP has done a great job taking on this project.

F. Interim City Manager's Comments

1. The new website launched last Friday. We met the deadline for the grant. It's ADA compliant and meets the accessibility standards. We are still waiting on some updated information.
2. There's been a lot of work happening around Safety and the Light Plant with the electric crews. They were updating switches for the sub-stations. That job has been completed.
3. Football and volleyball are starting. Games will begin mid-September.
4. Kids programs at the Library starts up again this month with after school and Friday programming.
5. The Brick & Tile Park bridge project has begun. TLM started last week. It should be done by the end of the month. The Street Department is working on placing concrete along the 10th Street path.
6. Street Department will be finishing up the 3rd Street bridge project.
7. There was a water main break at 5th Street and Cimarron/Raton Avenue. When you see cones being put up or work going on, don't drive through the work zone. That's a safety hazard. That also goes with car accident's fire scenes, etc. Don't drive through the cones. Everybody wants to go home at the end of the day.
8. We have a balanced budget.
9. Chief Quick is in the final stages of a gentleman that's interested in the code officer position. He is already POST Certified.

G. Governing Body's Comments

1. Council Member Velasquez:
 - Regarding the Library during the last work session. It is an indispensable part of our community as are the employees. It's a patron-driven library.

Interim City Manager Davidson: It seems that there were some concerns; about 90% of the library's budget goes to salaries. Some of the big questions is why is there so many employees. Spoke to Heather this morning to do some homework so she could have a more detailed. It's been ran for so long the same way; is there a different streamline of

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running it. Maybe there's a possibility. Scheduling wise, how can we make it better. That's the goal. Reach out to other libraries to see.

Council Member Pantoya: I was looking at cost over value because of the complaints we get in the streets, cemetery and parks with their limited staff yet covering more property. The almost half a million dollars was concerning.

2. Council Member Ramiez:

- Regarding the budget, the turf tank, it's moving forward with equipment that in the long run is going to pay off. It's an automated lining/painting system that the Parks & Recreation Department purchased with the assistance of the School District and Otero College. That money was split between all of them. The lines were painted on Veterans Field in an hour as opposed to four hours and freeing up those employees to do other things. It saves on paint, time, and money in the long run. The new trucks for sanitation are also going to do the same thing.
- On the ordinance that just passed tonight, there was a lot of discussion, did we make the right decision? I don't know. Sometimes you have to do what you have to do to encourage more discussion. Those other entities need to stand up. Just because somethings an ordinance or a law, doesn't mean it can't be changed.

3. Council Member Ochoa:

- Early Settlers Day is Saturday, September 7th kicking off at 7:00 a.m. with the community breakfast. Additional events: Battle of the Banks Chalk Art Contest, 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament, Trike Races, Parade, Free Family Fun Zone, Cornhole Tournament, Kids Fishing Derby, Senior Lunch, Skate Competition and the Dog Parade. Along with lots of vendors. The Main Stage Entertainment is sponsored by Sutherlands.

4. Council Member Ramirez:

- The backend of the Safeway store is a mess. (Mr. Davidson spoke to one of the managers.)

5. Council Member Rikhof:

- During the budget process, was impressed with how Mr. Davidson recognized the employees and what they do for the city. The creativity of looking at holidays and potential flex scheduling and the concept of a 4-day work week. Appreciate the thinking outside the box.
- There is a forum tomorrow, community discussion, Homelessness in the Arkansas Valley, at the Otero campus in the Rizzuto Banquet Room from 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. Everyone is invited.
- On Friday, September 13th, the college is having their 2nd Annual HIS (Hispanic Serving Institution) Fest at the high school from 3:00 – 8:00 p.m. It coincides with the men's and women's soccer games.
- Asked about the process of how a council person goes about getting a work session scheduled. (Board discussion).

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

ATTEST:

CITY OF LA JUNTA

Melanie R. Scofield, City Clerk

Elaine McIntyre, Mayor Pro-Tem