

*Subject to approval at
the October 17, 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, October 3, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building.

INVOCATION: MJ Romano 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 6:07 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
Melanie Scofield, City Clerk
Todd Quick, Police Chief
Mike Engebrecht, Deputy Chief
Chris Arguello, Electric Superintendent
Randall & Marty Roberson, La Junta
Marvin & Tammy Schlegel, La Junta
Julie Worley, La Junta
Eldon & Sylvia Stoker, La Junta
Keith Goodwin, La Junta
CaSandra Thomas, La Junta
MJ Romano, La Junta
Leon Berry, La Junta
John Canaday, La Junta
Bob & Kathy Benz, La Junta
Rosalie Valdez, La Junta
Gordon & Tiffany French, La Junta
Jesse & Kathy Hight, La Junta
Ezekiel Ayala, La Junta
Gary Cranson, UB Commissioner
Gloria Shoptese, La Junta
Bethany Bender, La Junta
Adrian Hart, SECO News
Bette McFarren, RF Gazette

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MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: Mayor Ayala asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting of September 19, 2022. After hearing none, the Mayor asked for a motion to approve the minutes as published.

MOTION TO ACCEPT THE SEPTEMBER 19, 2022 MINUTES AS PUBLISHED: Vela

SECOND: Pantoya

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

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

ELECTRIC DEPARTMENT UPDATE: Chris Arguello, Electric Superintendent, explained the recent outages the City has had and how they were fixed. The most recent one was an underground feeder to the Safeway Store that failed. It took out the tie breaker that protects the power transformer. It was decided to start splitting the load. They took roughly 1200 customers from the west side and transferred them to the Gardener Sub which is by the compactor. Then they took 1700 customers and transferred them to the Airbase sub to get power back to them. Those that stayed without power were Safeway, WW Feed and the Santa Fe yards due to pulling new conductor in the ground.

Some of the outages people are seeing on the east side of town is because part of their power is coming from the airbase sub, where it is more likely to experience more wind, more birds, etc. Whatever is experienced out there will affect parts of the east side of town. When you see your lights flicker but stay on, there's somebody else without power. If you see your lights flicker three times that's because the breakers are designed to take three hits before they lock out. There are times we have to ride the lines or isolate certain areas of town to pinpoint where the outage is.

We have to take the steps for safety because they're dealing with high voltage. We do tail gates. We make sure everybody's on the right page. I ask for the public to bear with us and have patience. We're dealing with an old infrastructure trying to get the power back on to the people. My goal at the end of the day is to send everybody home to their families.

THE A.R.T PROJECT: Zeke Ayala thanked the council, the community and everybody for allowing this project to happen. He is very appreciative of everybody's supports and is looking forward to doing it again.

WILLIAM CULVER, DA: Mayor Ayala, Todd Quick, Mike Engebrecht and Will Culver had a meeting to go over what can be done, what can't be done, what are the steps of taking care of the crime going on in our area. We ask that you take a step back and see the full picture before saying someone is not doing this or doing that. These guys put a lot on the line every time they go out, just like the electric crew, they want to go home to their families every night.

Will Culver, DA, talked about living in 2022 with a 2012 mindset. During this timeframe, a lot of laws have changed. For example, one of the problems that plague our community is drugs. Back in 2012, possession of any methamphetamine, heroin, cocaine, the serious drugs, was a class 4 felony, punishable by two to six years in prison. In 2013, that law was changed where it made it a drug felony class 4. If you possessed a small amount of methamphetamine, cocaine or heroin, you could do up to a year in prison. That changed again in 2022. The current state of the law is that possession of methamphetamine, heroin or cocaine is a class 1 drug misdemeanor punishable by 6 to 18 months in the county jail. We have seen a real increase in drug use in our communities.

Another example is with theft. Back in 2012, it was a class 2 misdemeanor if you stole less than \$500.00. If you stole more than \$500.00 but less than \$1,000.00 was a class 1 misdemeanor. If you stole more than \$1,000.00 it was a class 4 felony that would be two to six years in prison. In 2022, it is a petty offense. If you steal less than \$300.00 it is punishable by ten days in jail. It's a class 2 misdemeanor if you steal between \$300.00 - \$1,000.00 or 120 days in jail. A class 1 misdemeanor if

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you steal between \$1,000.00 - \$2,000.00 or 364 days in jail. You don't get to the felony level until you steal between \$2,000.00 - \$5,000.00 in Colorado. A class 6 felony is punishable by up to 8 to 18 months in prison. You can see what that does for street level and petty crimes in the cities.

Lengthy discussion continued amongst the council, Mr. Culver and those in attendance. We need to know our neighbors, get involved in the community and be good citizens. We need to create an environment where when people do wrong, they feel uncomfortable. Five percent of citizens are responsible for 95% of police calls.

Police Chief Todd Quick and Police Reserve Bob Benz spoke briefly about the Citizens Academy. There will possibly be one starting up in January. Being a reserve truly helps our police force.

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 the Chamber of Commerce, Angela Ayala & Timmery Foster, Event Managers. The event is the First Annual Tarantula Fest to be held October 8, 2022 from 12:00 noon to 11:59 p.m. at Live Well Park.** 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 Assistant City Manager recommends approval.

MOTION TO GRANT A SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT TO THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOR THEIR FIRST ANNUAL TARANTULA FEST TO BE HELD OCTOBER 8, 2022 FROM 12:00 NOON TO 11:59 P.M. AT LIVE WELL PARK: Vela

SECOND: Velasquez

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 6-0 (Ayala abstained)

2. **Application for Renewal of a Liquor Store License by Big D's Liquor Mart LLC, d/b/a Big D's Liquor Mart, 26730 W. US Hwy 50.** 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 Assistant City Manager recommends approval.

MOTION TO GRANT A RENEWAL OF A LIQUOR STORE LICENSE BY BIG D'S LIQUOR MART LLC, D/B/A BIG D'S LIQUOR MART, 26730 W. US HWY 50: Ochoa

SECOND: McIntyre

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

3. **Application for Renewal of an Alcohol Beverage Tastings Permit for Big D's Liquor Mart LLC, d/b/a Big D's Liquor Mart, 26730 W. US Hwy 50.** 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 Assistant City Manager recommends approval.

MOTION TO GRANT A RENEWAL OF AN ALCOHOL BEVERAGE TASTINGS PERMIT BY BIG D'S LIQUOR MART LLC, D/B/A BIG D'S LIQUOR MART, 26730 W. US HWY 50: Ochoa

SECOND: Pantoya

DISCUSSION: The tastings are done per a schedule of events.

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

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- B. First Reading/AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NUMBER 1242 (THE ZONING ORDINANCE) OF THE CITY OF LA JUNTA AS CONCERNS A REQUEST BY THE CITY OF LA JUNTA.** 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: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

C. Committee/Board Reports

1. There were no committee/board reports.

F. Assistant City Manager's Comments

- Don't forget about the Tarantula Fest this weekend.
- The crews have been dealing with faulty equipment and line failures.
- The new ladder truck is in service.
- All the personnel in the City are working hard. They all help each other out.

G. Governing Body Comments

1. Council Member Velasquez:
 - Thanked Zeke Ayala and the other artists that came down to the A.R.T. Project. It was such a positive vibe.
 - Thank you to the Line Crew for keeping the lights on.
2. Council Member Vela:
 - Weeds and tree branches are a big problem. We need to focus on getting the weeds cut on the vacant properties.
 - The entire month of October is "Love Where You Live City Clean Up". (Asst. City Manager Jackson read the flyer and reminded everyone that this is for La Junta residents only.)
3. Council Member Pantoya:
 - Thanked Zeke Ayala for the A.R.T. Project.
4. Mayor Ayala:
 - Don't forget about the Tarantula Fest this weekend.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:39 p.m.

ATTEST:

CITY OF LA JUNTA

Melanie R. Scofield, City Clerk

Joe Ayala, Mayor