

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

***Subject to approval at
the November 18, 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, November 4, 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:

Jeremiah Stoker, Ward 2
Joe Ayala, Mayor
Chandra Ochoa, Ward 2
Lisa Pantoya, Ward 3
Maureen Rikhof, Ward 3

Absent: Damon Ramirez, Ward 1
Paul Velasquez, Ward 1

Also present: Brad Davidson, Interim City Manager
Erin Harris, City Attorney
Cristina Estrada, Deputy City Clerk
Aliza Libby, Director of Finance
Joanna Tilton, La Junta
Dottie Burnett, La Junta
Johnnie DeLeon, Blue Stem
Cassie Campos, La Junta
Kathy DelRio, La Junta
Randal LaRue, La Junta
Nancy Harrington, La Junta
Erika Lively, La Junta, 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 October 21, 2024. Hearing none, the mayor asked for a motion to approve the minutes as published.

MOTION TO ACCEPT THE OCTOBER 21, 2024 MINUTES AS PUBLISHED: Stoker

SECOND: Rikhof

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 5-0 (Ramirez and Velasquez absent)

PROCLAMATION – NOVEMBER 2024 AS HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE CARE MONTH. Mayor Ayala proclaimed November 2024 as Hospice and Palliative Care Month.

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

1. Randal LaRue for Kathy DelRio, 320 Carson Avenue: Wants to know why she was overcharged on her water bill this month. Director of Finance Libby explained that it was an oversight on their end and it has been fixed.
2. Aliza Libby, Director of Finance: Promoting budget billing for City of La Junta utilities. This will help people who are on a fixed income. Stop by the office or call 719-384-2546.

CITY COUNCIL MEETING – November 4, 2024**REPORT**

- A. **BLUE STEM NURSING HOME**, Johnnie DeLeon: Celebrated their grand opening on October 13, 2023 and hired a total of thirty-three employees. They enrolled their first “villagers” in November of 2023. In that same month, inclement weather occurred freezing the fire suppression pipes in the ceilings. As the pipes thawed, they burst causing leaks in the north and south buildings. They have been fighting insurance carriers since they have over one million dollars in the claims. Over the next five to six months there were investigators, the USDA, general contractors, sub-contractors, etc. making reports foreseeing a possible law suit. After several set-backs, they hope to be moving “villagers” back in the first of the year.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. **City Manager Search.** Interviews have been pushed to next week. There are still nine candidates.
- B. **Second Reading/AN ORDINANCE FIXING THE MILL LEVY FOR ASSESSMENT OF VALUATIONS FOR THE YEAR ENDING ON DECEMBER 31, 2024 (FISCAL YEAR, 2025).** 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: Pantoya

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 5-0 (Ramirez and Velasquez absent)

- C. **Second Reading/THE ANNUAL APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE: APPROPRIATING SUMS OF MONEYS TO DEFRAY EXPENSES AND LIABILITIES OF THE CITY OF LA JUNTA, COLORADO FOR THE CITY'S FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2025 AND ENDING ON DECEMBER 31, 2025.** 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: Pantoya

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 5-0 (Ramirez and Velasquez absent)

NEW BUSINESS**A. Liquor Licenses**

1. **Application for a Special Events Permit by Inspiration Field, Brittany Baylor, Event Manager. The event is Lewis Bolt and Nut Christmas Party to be held December 7, 2024 from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. at 612 Adams 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 INSPIRATION FIELD FOR THE LEWIS BOLT AND NUT CHRISTMAS PARTY TO BE HELD DECEMBER 7, 2024 FROM 8:00 A.M. TO 11:00 P.M. AT 612 ADAMS AVENUE: Rikhof

SECOND: Stoker

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 5-0 (Ramirez and Velasquez absent)

2. **Application for a Special Events Permit by Inspiration Field, Brittany Baylor, Event Manager. The event is SECOM Christmas Party to be held December 13, 2024 from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. at 612 Adams 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.

CITY COUNCIL MEETING – November 4, 2024

MOTION TO GRANT A SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT TO INSPIRATION FIELD FOR THE SECOM CHRISTMAS PARTY TO BE HELD DECEMBER 13, 2024 FROM 8:00 A.M. TO 11:00 P.M. AT 612 ADAMS AVENUE: Rikhof

SECOND: Stoker

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 5-0 (Ramirez and Velasquez absent)

3. **Application for Renewal of a Fermented Malt Beverage and Wine Liquor License by Tran & Yen LLC, d/b/a Asian Café, 414 W. 1st Street.** 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 City Attorney recommends approval.

MOTION TO GRANT A RENEWAL OF A FERMENTED MALT BEVERAGE AND WINE LIQUOR LICENSE BY TRAN & YEN LLC, D/B/A ASIAN CAFÉ, 414 W. 1ST STREET: Rikhof

SECOND: Stoker

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 5-0 (Ramirez and Velasquez absent)

4. **Application for Renewal of a Retail Liquor Store License by Punjabi 4 Corp., d/b/a Big D's Liquor Mart, 26730 W. US Highway 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 City Attorney recommends approval.

MOTION TO GRANT A RENEWAL OF A RETAIL LIQUOR STORE LICENSE BY PUNJABI 4 CORP., D/B/A BIG D'S LIQUOR MART, 26730 W. US HIGHWAY 50: Rikhof

SECOND: Stoker

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 5-0 (Ramirez and Velasquez absent)

5. **Application for Renewal of an Alcohol Beverage Tastings Permit for Punjabi 4 Corp., d/b/a Big D's Liquor Mart, 26730 W. US Highway 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 City Attorney recommends approval.

MOTION TO GRANT A RENEWAL OF AN ALCOHOL BEVERAGE TASTINGS PERMIT FOR PUNJABI 4 CORP., D/B/A BIG D'S LIQUOR MART: Rikhof

SECOND: Stoker

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 5-0 (Ramirez and Velasquez absent)

6. **Application for Renewal of a Fermented Malt Beverage and Wine Liquor License by Safeway Store 46 Inc., d/b/a Safeway Store #3723, 315 W. 2nd Street.** 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 City Attorney recommends approval.

MOTION TO GRANT A RENEWAL OF A FERMENTED MALT BEVERAGE AND WINE LIQUOR LICENSE BY SAFEWAY STORE 46 INC., D/B/A SAFEWAY STORE #3723, 315 W. 2ND STREET: Rikhof

SECOND: Stoker

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 5-0 (Ramirez and Velasquez absent)

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7. **Application for Change of Manager from Chris Winter to Heather Henderson by Safeway Store 46 Inc., d/b/a Safeway Store #3723, 315 W. 2nd Street.** The application is in order and has been reviewed by City supervisor. The City Attorney recommends approval.

MOTION TO GRANT THE CHANGE OF MANAGER FROM CHRIS WINTER TO HEATHER HENDERSON BY SAFEWAY STORE 46 INC., D/B/A SAFEWAY STORE #3723, 315 W. 2ND STREET: Rikhof

SECOND: Stoker

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 5-0 (Ramirez and Velasquez absent)

8. **Application for Renewal of a Fermented Malt Beverage and Wine Liquor License by Family Dollar Stores of Colorado LLC, d/b/a Family Dollar #25100, 614 E. 1st Street.** 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 City Attorney recommends approval.

MOTION TO GRANT A RENEWAL OF A FERMENTED MALT BEVERAGE AND WINE LIQUOR LICENSE BY FAMILY DOLLAR STORES OF COLORADO LLC, D/B/A FAMILY DOLLAR #25100, 614 E 1ST STREET: Rikhof

SECOND: Stoker

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 5-0 (Ramirez and Velasquez absent)

9. **Application for Renewal of a Club Liquor License by BPOE Lodge 701, d/b/a BPOE Lodge 701, 119 Colorado Avenue.** 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 City Attorney recommends approval.

MOTION TO GRANT A RENEWAL OF A CLUB LIQUOR LICENSE BY BPOE LODGE 701, D/B/A BPOE LODGE 701, 119 COLORADO AVENUE: Rikhof

SECOND: Pantoya

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 4-0 (Ramirez and Velasquez absent; Stoker abstained)

B. Committee/Board Reports

1. There were no committee/board reports.

C. Interim City Manager's Comments

- The Line Crew's tree trimming project is complete for this year.
- Christmas decorations will start going up earlier than normal this year to help not interfere with other projects for the department.
- The Engineering and Police Departments are going to start working on intersections and sight plans. They will go around town and prioritize the dangerous intersections. The City will notify the property owner giving them the requirements regarding bushes, tree limbs, parked cars, etc. If the property owner does not comply, the City will go back and clean up that intersection. This will make it a lot of safer around town.
- The new sign at Brick & Tile Park is making good progress. The footer was poured last week and they are on track to meet the deadline.
- The CDOT grant for the multi-modal project has finally been signed to receive the \$525,000 grant. This will go for planning and design.
- Last week, the Code Officer was separated from his employment. Colby Martinez, who is going through the policy academy, has been coming in doing some of the work to help get things caught up. A position vacancy has been posted.

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- Beginning January 1, 2025, the state has enacted a new law regarding hands free cellphone use while driving all vehicles, not just CDL vehicles. We as the City want to be ahead of the game in being a good example to the community. We are currently working on a policy and a plan.
- Have been working on some things to help the employees out. One is changing the hours when certain City buildings and operations will be conducted. Most departments will be working a four-and-a-half-day work week. Some will be work four ten-hour days per week. City Hall, the Senior Center and the Warehouse will be open from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 7:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon on Fridays. The Library will change it's Saturday hours from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. to 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m.
- Amtrak is in the process of replacing all the concrete on the back side of the t train station and the dock area. They are also remodeling the bathrooms to completely meet ADA requirements and codes.

D. Governing Body's Comments

1. Council Member Rikhof:
 - November 11th is the next Ward 3 Listening Event at Casa del Sol.
 - The Homeless Committee is now known as YEEHAW which stands for "Yielding Equitable Entry to Housing and Well-Being." Their first official meeting was held in October. The next meeting will be November 19th.
 - The Red Cross Shelter training will be held November 15th from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Contact Christine Coffield with the Otero County Health Department.
2. Council Member Stoker:
 - Thanked his fellow veterans for their service and sacrifice to this country.
3. Mayor Ayala:
 - Introduced the City's new Deputy City Clerk, Cristina Estrada.
4. Council Member Ochoa:
 - The Chamber of Commerce invites everyone to the 2024 Veteran's Day Celebration, Monday, November 11th at 1:30 p.m. at the La Junta Intermediate School.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

ATTEST:**CITY OF LA JUNTA**

 Melanie R. Scofield, City Clerk

 Joseph Ayala, Mayor