

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

***Subject to approval at
the December 2, 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 18, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building.

INVOCATION: Council Member Pantoya 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
Patrick O'Harra, La Junta
Douglas Golding, La Junta
Adrian Hart, SECO News
Bette McFarren, RF Gazette

PUBLIC HEARING: Application for a New Hotel & Restaurant Liquor License by Steakhouse La Junta LLC, d/b/a Steakhouse La Junta, 27866 Frontage Road.

The City Attorney explained that the City of La Junta uses the same rules as are required by the State of Colorado. All liquor licensing is administered by the City Clerk. The Steakhouse La Junta has submitted a completed application, along with the proper fees, for a Hotel & Restaurant Liquor License. Mr. O'Harra, owner, has been fingerprinted and had a background check showing a clear record. The location, 27866 Frontage Road has no code violations. All documentation required by the State has been received. In addition to state requirements, Mr. O'Harra has also provided training certificates required by city ordinance. The City Clerk recommends approval of the application.

MOTION TO GRANT A HOTEL & RESTAURANT LIQUOR LICENSE BY STEAKHOUSE LA JUNTA LLC, D/B/A STEAKHOUSE LA JUNTA, 27866 FRONTAGE ROAD: Pantoya

SECOND: Rikhof

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

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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 November 4, 2024. Hearing none, the mayor asked for a motion to approve the minutes as published.

MOTION TO ACCEPT THE NOVEMBER 4, 2024 MINUTES AS PUBLISHED: Ochoa

SECOND: Ramirez

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

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

1. Douglas Golding, 1316 Lincoln Avenue: Has addressed the council on many occasions over the past years and is disappointed that none of his suggestions have been implemented. He questions whether the council has ever considered or discussed any of his ideas. He again suggested that the maintaining of the 5th Street Transfer Station and the Tree Dump was not the most cost-effective way of handling household refuse and tree limbs because of the expenses associated with having two employees. He has brought many ideas and solutions to the council over the past couple of years and have not heard nor seen any of them being implemented. Since he's heard no response from the council, he assumes that his ideas are unilaterally dealt with, forgotten or dismissed or simply not dealt with at all.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. **City Manager Search.** We have gone from ten down to four. These four will do a second round of background checks and social media checks. This is the same procedure as last time. We were not given just what people found on line but an expansive list of resources to look over. Hopefully something can be scheduled in mid-December. These are all really good candidates.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Committee/Board Reports

1. Council Member Velasquez (Utility Board):
 - The Water and Wastewater Departments are preparing for winter by changing out greases and oils using different viscosities.
 - The Line Crews were doing tree trimming and had the foresight to get the Christmas decorations up before this storm.
 - The City Line Crew are high-voltage linemen not electricians. If you have a power line go down from the pole to your house, it is the homeowners responsibility to hire an electrician, have it inspected, before the Line Crew will turn your power back on.
 - Electric Department power outage priority: 1) sparking lines, 2) transformers that are out, and 3) people without power.
 - You may sign up for budget billing in the Utility Department or call 719-384-2546.

B. Interim City Manager's Comments

- The range of snow we received was between twenty-six to twenty-nine inches in town and a little more outside of town. Hats off to all the employees who supported each other and those who came together to work.
- The following are some stats from the snow storm:
 - Fire Dept. – responded to twenty-seven weather related calls within a 3-day period
 - Police Dept. – responded to eighty-six weather related calls in three days
 - Closed down the City Building and all other services for a couple of days
 - Water Dept. – had thirty hours of overtime just during the snow storm assisting the Street Department in plowing as well as some call outs
 - Motor Pool – had six hours of overtime
 - Electric Dept. – had 108 after hours storm-related calls working 188 overtime hours
 - Had three big snow plows on the dump trucks, two loaders, two backhoes and five dump trucks working

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- The City has either big snow plows for dump trucks and front-end loaders or snow plows for the side-by-sides for sidewalks. We don't have anything in-between. Will be looking into this in the future.
- There were a couple of buildings at the Industrial Park that were damaged from the heavy snow.
- The Parks Department employees are out just as much as the Street Department taking care of our sidewalks around the City Building and making sure things are cleaned up around the parks.
- With this storm, comes a lot of damage that we're not going to see for a little bit. With that, is the topic of potholes. If you start seeing potholes popping back up again, just remember, we can't fix those right away until the snow is gone and the weather is more favorable. We encourage you to call the Engineering Department with the location of the potholes so they can begin making a list.
- Want to commend the public for wanting to make sure the tree branches are getting cleaned up.
- The location at 3rd and Adams Avenue was opened up for tree limbs/branches but is now closed.
- The Tree Dump will remain open seven days a week for this next week, maybe a little longer. Please place your tree limbs in its appropriate area.

C. Governing Body's Comments

1. Council Member Rikhof:
 - Shout out to the people who made sure that an emergency shelter was set up. There were six individuals that were served by the emergency shelter which was fantastic. Huge shout out to Sandy and Marty Lee for opening their church to be the physical place. Otero County Health Department did a bang-up job of getting supplies and both Chris Menges and Rick Ritter spent both nights at the shelter. Thank you to all the volunteers.
 - Had a Red Cross training on Friday. There are several churches that are working on a MOU to divide up and have a schedule for how and when emergency shelters will happen in the future. Sixty people are already trained. There will be four volunteers minimum, two men and two women, at every shelter. If people want to help, you can still volunteer without having gone through the training. It's amazing how fast things came together.
 - Next YEEHAW meeting will be tomorrow at 3:00 p.m. in the County Courthouse Room 107 if anybody would like to come and be a part of the efforts to assist with housing for all.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

ATTEST:**CITY OF LA JUNTA**

Melanie R. Scofield, City Clerk

Joseph Ayala, Mayor