

*Subject to approval at
the December 18, 2023
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, December 4, 2023, 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: Rick Klein, City Manager
Bill Jackson, Asst. City Manager
Melanie Scofield, City Clerk
Paula Mahoney, Admin. Asst.
Aliza Libby, Director of Finance
Gary Cranson, UB Vice-Chair
Douglas Golding, La Junta
Patrick Berg, La Junta
Betty Velasquez, La Junta
Adam Frisch, Aspen
Connie Shane, La Junta
Cathy Hurd, La Junta
Everett Edger, La Junta
Susan Dietrich, La Junta
Greg Kolomitz, Chamber of Commerce
Chad/Hannah Penner, La Junta

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 20, 2023. Hearing none, the mayor asked for a motion to approve the minutes as published.

MOTION TO ACCEPT THE NOVEMBER 20, 2023 MINUTES AS PUBLISHED: Ramirez

SECOND: Stoker

DISCUSSION: Council Member Rikhof thought that the Mayor's comments during the presentation of years of service were very thoughtful and worthy of being memorialized.

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

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Adam Frisch, Congressional District 3 Candidate: Here for questions during the Listening and Learning week. It's all about protecting our way of life in a small rural town. Will be back after the first of the year.

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

1. Greg Kolomitz, 717 Belleview Avenue: Thanked the City departments for their help during the Parade of Lights. It was a success. The next big event will be the Annual Banquet on January 29th. The theme is Celebrating La Junta.
2. Douglas Golding, 1316 Lincoln Avenue: Asked the council to create a system for citizens of La Junta to be able to bring ideas before the council for consideration.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. **Second Reading/AN ORDINANCE MAKING SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS TO THE GENERAL FUND, PROPERTY MANAGEMENT FUND, ELECTRIC FUND, AND WASTE WATER FUND FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2023.** It is capital improvements (not just the roof) to the building located at 27786 Railroad Avenue Bldg. 82. It is not to the business Ark Valley Pallet; they are the lessee. The ordinance was introduced by title only, there being copies available to those in attendance.

MOTION TO PASS THE ORDINANCE ON SECOND READING: Pantoya

SECOND: Velasquez

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

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

NEW BUSINESS

- A. **Application for Renewal of a Tavern Liquor License by Ross V. Leyba, d/b/a B.J.'s Sports Bar, 10 E. 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 Manager recommends approval.

MOTION TO GRANT A RENEWAL OF A TAVERN LIQUOR LICENSE BY ROSS V. LEYBA, D/B/A B.J.'S SPORTS BAR, 10 E. 2ND STREET: Ochoa

SECOND: Rikhof

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

- B. **Application for Renewal of a Tavern Liquor License by Eagle Lanes LLC, d/b/a Eagle Lanes, 2420 San Juan 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 Manager recommends approval.

MOTION TO GRANT A RENEWAL OF A TAVERN LIQUOR LICENSE BY EAGLE LANES LLC, D/B/A EAGLE LANES, 2420 SAN JUAN AVENUE: Pantoya

SECOND: Rikhof

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

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- C. **Application for Report of Change of Ownership and Manager for Eagle Lanes LLC, from Rick J. Harper and Judy Harper to Judy Harper.** The application shows change of ownership and manager. The City Manager recommends approval.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE CHANGE OF OWNERSHIP AND MANAGER FOR EAGLE LANES LLC, 2420 SAN JUAN AVENUE: Ochoa

SECOND: Rikhof

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

- C. **First Reading/AN ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE IMPOSITION OF AN ADDITIONAL TAX OF ONE PERCENT ON ALL SALES WITHIN THE CITY OF LA JUNTA; PROVIDING OTHER MATTERS AND RATIFYING ACTIONS PREVIOUSLY TAKEN RELATING THERETO.** The ordinance was introduced by title only, there being copies available to those in attendance.

MOTION TO PASS THE ORDINANCE ON FIRST READING: Pantoya

SECOND: Ochoa

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

D. **Committee/Board Reports**

1. Utility Board (Council Member Velasquez):

- Had a 50-amp fuse blow in the 1400 block of Adams Avenue. Replaced the old cut-out with a 200-amp one.
- Started inspecting and putting up the Christmas decorations.
- There are a total of thirty-five solar customers. Twenty-three customers returned power for a savings of \$26.17 per customer.
- Clean up month was in October: 330 gallons of oil, 55 gallons of anti-freeze, 66 units of freon and 1400 tires (the State picked up the tab on 1,000 of them.)
- Clean Valley Recycling cleaned up the arroyo at 3rd and Adams. Thank you.
- The water break in North La Junta just as you cross the bridge was a break of a cast iron pipe that was there since 1951. Special thank you to the City of Rocky Ford for donating time and equipment, the vac truck, which keeps the area safe for our crews to do their job.
- The City of La Junta lighting contest is ongoing now. Have your lights turned on by 5:00 p.m. on the 14th to be judged. \$300 for 1st place, \$200 for 2nd place and \$100 for 3rd place.

Mayor Ayala: Patrick Berg had his first Utility Board meeting and it was a long one. He did very well. Thank you for stepping up to take that position. Also, in that meeting, the Utility Board will not be going back on its stance for the Arkansas Valley Conduit at this time. That proposal is still at council.

2. Senior Center Advisory Board (Council Member Velasquez):

- Board meeting will be held this Thursday at 10:00 a.m.

E. **City Manager's Comments**

- TLM Constructors has placed over 75% of the concrete trail between 1st and 10th Street at the Brick and Tile trail. They are working on street crossings and then bridge abutments.
- We need to pour pans on 2nd Street and patch back.
- The Fire Department sent personnel to the St. Charles fire which is mutual aid. They will reimburse us for labor. Our personnel are back.
- The EPA has cleared six more houses and we have next year's program of 5-6 more already.
- Working on winter maintenance.

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- Met with DOLA on the Brick and Tile park grant. We are looking good.
- Will be on vacation from the 13th to the end of the year.

F. Governing Body Comments**1. Council Member Rikhof:**

- Going along the trend of transparency, I've struggled with the website as a citizen, but now, as a council member, I'm struggling even more. There's not anywhere obvious to find the agenda. There's a lot of broken links. The site is unsearchable. I talked with Rick about it and I guess there is a plan. I just think it's worth people knowing.
- I was inspired to walk the trail between the Brick & Tile Park and the locomotive. I would be happy to walk it with anybody. We had a group go out and talk about making sure we maintain native plants in the area. I want to thank Steven Nielsen and Bethany Bender.
- The Otero College Master Plan public input meeting is tomorrow from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. in the Rizzuto banquet room. This is a 5-year master plan. This is the time for people to come and give their input about ideas of infrastructure, what our campus could look like, to better serve our community.
- On Wednesday night, Otero is having their first ever Frost Fest. There will be ice skating using a synthetic surface. It's free to the community. There will be booths with lots of fun activities, Santa Claus and Mrs. Clause, from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. and it's between McDivitt Hall and McBride Hall in the parking lots.
- The Parade of Lights on Saturday was awesome. Great job to the entire Chamber. Thanks for including the council in the tree lighting.
- I enjoyed the employee Christmas party. Thank you to Aimee Hill. She went out of her way to make it a lot of fun. Shout out to all the people that made that party happen.

2. Mayor Ayala:

- Last time we had an election, we did some tours, a parks tour and an Industrial Park tour. If you want to think of something for the new year, we'll coordinate with Rick.
- We have a lot of board vacancies. There are two positions in the Library, Planning Commission has one open vacancy, Senior Citizen Board has two vacancies and the Tourism Board has two vacancies. For council, we currently have the Utility Board, Planning Commission, Senior Citizens Board, the Hospital Board and the Tree Board. Then there's also the two mayor appointees for Planning Commission. Think about if you're able to serve on any of these boards.
- Picketwire tickets are now for sale for Peter Pan. The production will run December 14th through the 16th at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$18.00 and available 24/7 at the box office beginning December 11th.
- The other thing is understanding your roles. Make sure you read the Charter. There's not a whole bunch we can do as far as employees go. That's something you talk to Rick or Dean about. That's how we communicate. Dean is going to go over a refresher of what we can and cannot do.
- I also want to do a work session at some point to go over what 2024 looks like and what our goals are.

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MOTION TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DETERMINING POSITIONS RELATIVE TO MATTERS THAT MAY BE SUBJECT TO NEGOTIATIONS, DEVELOPING STRATEGY FOR NEGOTIATIONS, AND/OR INSTRUCTING NEGOTIATORS, UNDER C.R.S. §24-6-402(4)(e): Ochoa

SECOND: Pantoya

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

Council went into Executive Session from 6:47 p.m. until 7:09 p.m.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

ATTEST:

CITY OF LA JUNTA

Melanie R. Scofield, City Clerk

Joe Ayala, Mayor