

CITY COUNCIL MEETING – July 21, 2025

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

CALL TO ORDER: The regular meeting of the City Council of the City of La Junta, Colorado, was called to order by Mayor Pro Tem Pantoya on Monday, July 21, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building.

INVOCATION: Mayor Pro Tem Pantoya gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mayor Pro Tem Pantoya 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
Chandra Ochoa, Ward 2
Lisa Pantoya, Ward 3
Maureen Rikhof, Ward 3

Absent: Joe Ayala, Mayor

Also present: Michael Hart, City Manager
Melanie Scofield, City Clerk
Aliza Libby, Director of Finance
Brock Hinkhouse, Director Parks/Rec
Chris Arguello, Electric Superintendent
Gary Reed, Rocky Ford
Alex Reed, La Junta
Henry Miller, La Junta
Julie Worley, La Junta
Nancy Bennett, La Junta
Tim "Radar" Snyder, La Junta
Michael Cook, La Junta
Adrian Hart, SECO News
Bette McFarren, RF Gazette



Subject to approval at the
August 4, 2025
City Council Meeting



PLAYS IN THE PARK: July 24-26, 2025. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Show starts at 7:00 p.m. at Live Well park. Bring your own seating. Tickets can be purchased using the QR code on Facebook or at the door.

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) REGARDING A POTENTIAL LETTER OF INTENT RELATED TO CITY-OWNED LAND: Stoker

SECOND: Velasquez

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

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

The Council went into Executive Session at 6:07 p.m. and reconvened at 6:21 p.m.

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MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: Mayor Pro Tem Pantoya asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting of July 7, 2025. Hearing none, the mayor pro tem asked for a motion to approve the minutes as published.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE JULY 7, 2025 MINUTES AS PUBLISHED: Rikhof

SECOND: Ramirez

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

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

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION (5-minute time limit per person):

1. Tim "Radar" Snyder and Michael Cook: Wreaths Across America will be December 13, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. at the cemetery. You may purchase 10 wreaths at \$17.00 each.
2. Nancy Bennett: Brewfest is this Saturday from 6:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. at the Santa Fe Plaza. Tickets are \$25.00 and you must be 21 and older.

COMMUNITY EVENT ANNOUNCEMENTS (Council Members):

1. La Sandia Project this weekend from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. in Rocky Ford.

EMPLOYEE SERVICE AWARDS**A. July 2025**

1. **Kevin Grasmick, Water – 5 years.** Kevin was hired on July 1, 2020 as a Water Maintenance Worker I and is currently Level C Water certified.
2. **Henry Miller, Electric – 10 years.** Henry was hired on July 1, 2015 as a Light Plant Operator Apprentice and then became Light Plant Operator on November 1, 2017. He then transferred to the Line Crew in September 2019 and is currently an Electric Meter/Substation Technician.

REPORTS

- A. Property Management Fund Audit.** The purpose of the audit was to better understand where Property Management was in terms of funds, properties, leases, etc. For the most part, everything is going well. There was one lease that we discovered that had expired in 2023. We were able to get that lease newly signed with no issues. There was another lease that was non-performing and we were able to work with those folks and get them back into performing. Some of the things we're going to work on is we have a few properties that Property Management has that are just junked up. A couple specific ones were out by the airport and one out at Prairie View. Also, Property Management has three houses at the old bomb plot. One of the issues that first came up with the whole Property Management audit was that we were looking at a shortfall situation. So, if something does happen and Property Management does look like its going to have another shortfall, we will look into surplusizing those properties and selling them. Going forward, we are going to be making arrangements to clean up the identified properties. Also, we are going to be able to track our stuff a little bit better so we don't have those leases that fall off. We're going to create a spreadsheet that they'll be able to forecast when they expire and what not. One of the other issues that we did see is some of the deferred maintenance that we have on a lot of these properties. Lots of roofs, sidings, HVAC systems, etc. that are all going to come due one of these days and its gong to be a matter of us planning properly in order to make sure we stay on top of that stuff while staying within the budget.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. First Reading/AN ORDINANCE MAKING SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS TO THE OUTDOOR CONSERVATION FUND FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2025.** The ordinance was introduced by title only, there being copies available to those in attendance.

MOTION TO PASS THE ORDINANCE ON FIRST READING: Rikhof

SECOND: Stoker

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

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

- B. A Resolution for a Declaration of Special Events.** Resolution No. R-10-2025 was presented for council's consideration.

MOTION TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. R-10-2025: Stoker

SECOND: Velasquez

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

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

C. Committee/Board Reports

1. Utilities Board (Council Member Velasquez):
 - Routine maintenance at the RO Plant.
 - Continued hydrant maintenance in Distribution.
 - Water Department doing two-four service repairs a day.
 - Electric Department experiencing a few minor interruptions with the Light Plant Substation. There are currently 3,000 customers being served by this substation.
 - Continuing tree trimming and pole reinforcement.
 - Martin Montoya is going around to various commercial entities for the cardboard program.

D. City Manager's Comments

- Getting ready to start the budget process.
- Still in process of rolling out the MMOF.
- Working on the ordinance for the trailer parking on city streets.
- Working with Pam Denahy on an ordinance for lodging regarding short-term rentals, Airbnb's and VRBO's.
- Still putting together the Economic Development bylaws, board make-up, etc.
- To date, we have had 1,443 fare free rides at the Senior Center.
- Recommend going to see the Play Annie Jr. and shout out to the Picketwire for Anastasia.
- Police in the Park will be August 1st from 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
- The Brewfest is this weekend.
- Two of my kids are here tonight, Kayleigh and Gavin. They're staying here over the summer.
- July 30th, Public Budget Outreach at the Senior Center from 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

E. Governing Body's Comments

1. Council Member Ramirez:
 - Registration for Parks & Rec. youth volleyball and flag/tackle football from July 21st – August 22nd. \$30.00 thanks to a gracious donation by Inspiration Field.
 - Congrats to Zeke Ayala who was invited to Paint St. Louis 2025 on Labor Day weekend, August 29th – 31st.
2. Council Member Rikhof:
 - Inspiration Field did a very generous donation of \$1,600 to make the fees for participating in Parks & Rec. more achievable.
3. Council Member Stoker:
 - Not only La Junta but all the surrounding recreation departments as well.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

ATTEST:

CITY OF LA JUNTA

Melanie R. Scofield, City Clerk

Lisa Pantoya, Mayor Pro Tem