



MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING LA JUNTA URBAN
RENEWAL AUTHORITY
LA JUNTA, CO
MARCH 26, 2026
4:00 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
601 COLORADO AVENUE

CALL TO ORDER (Chairperson)

ROLL CALL (City Clerk/Deputy)

Board Members

Ayala

Bennett

Fleischacker

Johnson

Linder

Madrid

Mason

Miner

Saucedo

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

There was no citizen participation.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Chairperson)

A. Regular Meeting February 26, 2026

Chairperson Mason asked if there were any corrections or additions to be made to the February 26, 2026, minutes. Toni Madrid added a correction in the Financial States; \$135,000.00 needs to be changed to \$145,000.00. Cheryl Lindner added that mentioning the specifics regarding the SPARK grants (these funds are for current, existing business storefront improvements) as well as the mentioning of proposed work session(s) for the non-profit fee structure, bid parameters, and the downtown beautification projects.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Treasurer)

A. February 2026

The URA received \$1,044.94 in interest. In the expenses, there are \$50,000.00 for Thyme Square for their final grant; \$42.25 was spent for the electricity for the Welcome Sign outside of town.

REPORTS

A. Plaza Building (Bennett/Mason)

Martin Montoya:

- Not sure if the Board has been by the Plaza lately, but there have been some significant changes there.
- Paved the parking lot with concrete (a choice made by Martin) considering the issues with elevation that there are in the location. It felt like this should be done once and only once; concrete was decided upon so it would be a concrete parking lot forever.
- Still have a lot of concrete to do — currently focusing on the curb and gutter for the next week, along with the pan, which will take the water away from the parking lot out to the highway.
- Used some of the information from the prints provided by the URA. Some elevations were used from that set of prints. However, some of the elevation levels were not entirely accurate. Had to make my own changes. What is being done out there now was definitely not on the set of prints, but what is being done is definitely good and will look good as well.
- As the asphalt from the current parking lot was being removed, it was discovered that there was actually a concrete slab foundation below the asphalt. Nobody was prepared for that, unaware that the concrete slab foundation existed. Will ask for more funding from the URA, as well as time. The concrete slab covered nearly the entirety of the property. Didn't ask for permission to continue with the removal of the concrete slab foundation due to the time constraints with TLM Construction for completion, as this took another week to complete. Unsure of the total costs currently, but will get together with Melanie and will have it broken down by the next meeting, so the board is aware of the charges.
- There are two points of the entire project that kind of dictate what is going on, and they are the elevation of the back door (west side of the building) and the lowest point of the lot, which happens to be near the highway, which is where the water is being funneled to. There are only ten inches difference from those points of elevation. With what has to be put in place, that knocks it down to 8–9 inches, which is not a lot of fall for the distance (about 200 feet). It has to go from the back parking lot directly east and toward the highway. There may be some puddling, depending on the levels of moisture that falls. More water would push it out faster, and there is nothing that can be done. To reiterate: there will be a lot less fall in the parking lot than was anticipated.

Ben Mason:

- The electrical is done inside except for some cabinet lighting malfunctions, and they are waiting for new fixtures for that.
- The problem with the stairwell regarding the minimum height required between the electrical fixtures to the floor and some adjustments being need has been remedied.

- Next week, they are planning on working on the exterior fixtures. The projected completion date for the exterior fixtures should be about a week, according to Summit.
- As for permitting, everything has passed inspections. Still waiting for plumbing due to a circuit board with the water heater. They have installed three of them so far and the water heaters keep failing. Summit and Adam (plumber) have installed the third water heater. As soon as the plumbing and electrical inspections are complete, then SECCP can call Martin to issue a certificate of occupancy.

B. Promenade (Fleischacker)

Melanie Scofield:

- The end of April will be the 180 days.
- Had to back order an air compressor for the outside HVAC unit.
- Everything else is ready.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Spark Grant Application (Wild Roots Kava Co)

Carly Johnson was not in attendance.

- Cheryl Lindner: Recused herself from this discussion due to possible conflict of interest.
- Angel Saucedo: It would be nice to hear from Carly about what she would like to do, as it does not seem clear here in her application.
- Toni Madrid: Was the cap for the Spark grants not set at \$5,000.00 per grant?
- Joe Ayala: Had a similar question. Wasn't sure due to missing the February meeting if it was bumped up. On the application, the original amount was crossed out and \$10,000.00 was written in.
- Toni Madrid: Businesses are allowed to apply for more than one grant; if she applied for a Spark grant and received \$5,000.00, she could still request a grant/loan from the URA. That is the direction that would need more clarity on. The Spark grants are dedicated for the storefronts, not windows in the back of the property. Also, with the new windows and a new awning on the description or concept, it appears on the picture that there is signage/lettering that is not originally part of a window or awning, so I would like to see a more comprehensive description of what she is wanting, besides just new windows and a new awning.
- Ben Mason: Thinks that the board should table this application and reach back out to Carly to get another application filled out and ask her to come and speak to the board about it.
- Toni Madrid: Also, the Board should encourage her to complete an application for

other URA funds.

B. Elks Lodge Grant (Mike Perez)

Mike Perez:

- The last time I was here was in January and was asked to acquire more bids. This was attempted.
- Contacted several construction companies for a quote, and they never responded. The same goes for electricians, and they also never responded. However, I was able to get one bid for each.
- To recap: the Elks Lodge applied for a grant from the URA in January for repairs to the upstairs lodge room. Was asked by the URA to gain more quotes in addition to the primary quote provided. Had the roof repaired, so there are no more leaks. There is still water damage from the roof issues. The lighting is less than sufficient. The lodge is looking to upgrade/redo the lighting. As the board sees, they provided the same bid from SBT Electrical (who will do all the construction part, the patching of the ceiling, the painting, the removal of the lights, the reinstallation of the light fixtures and installation of eight large lights — which is everything). If visiting the separate route with the second provided bid, it would be \$9,560.00 for just the construction; for the electrical portion (electrician), the cost would be \$10,000.00. The total would be \$19,560.00. With SBT, it is significantly less.
- The Elks is a very established organization for the City of La Junta.
- The Elks do not pay property tax, as it is a nonprofit organization. The Elks do pay sales tax (due to having the club room).
- The lodge room is essential not only for the Elks' functions, but also for public functions as it is available to be rented out to the public for a myriad of events. It needs to be usable and repaired. It cannot look in disrepair, as it currently does.

Zach Miner: Appreciated Mike for coming in person. Understands the frustration with getting more quotes. The reason for being on the board is to ensure that taxpayer money is being wisely spent.

Ben Mason: In January it was discussed that a lot of the wiring needed to be replaced as well, correct?

Mike Perez: Yes and no. That conversation regarded the replacement of the potential old wiring due to it being a safety hazard. The only way that it can be known if there is old or faulty wiring is when the electrician gets up there to see it. They will replace all old/faulty wiring. This will not increase the loan request amount as it is included in the bid amount.

Cheryl Lindner: Should there be tax included in the bid amount if the Elks Lodge is a nonprofit organization?

Mike Perez: Not sure if the tax-exempt status extends to the Elks Lodge. Has never had to purchase anything for the Elks Lodge, but would imagine that the tax should not be applied. So, the amount would be less than the tax amount of \$264.13.

Zach Miner: The main conversation regarding percentage is outside the structure.

Ben Mason: It is in the URA bylaws that the board can, if they feel that it would be more beneficial to a particular business of the community to do something different than the grant/loan match, then the board can do so by vote. The bylaws can also be amended as such.

Cheryl Lindner: Believes that parameters should exist for consistency for every tax-exempt entity that comes forward.

C. Director Comments

Melanie Scofield: Going back to the discussion from the February meeting of the two vacant lots that the URA owns located on 16th Street and 18th Street, Bradish Avenue. Spoke with Michael Hart and since the city does not own it, there are no issues there. Did suggest that the URA goes through a formal bid process through the purchasing director like the city would do, and that is following the city procedure. Have been working with the different utilities (as these lots are not within city limits and are in the county) to get a package together to see what it would cost to have utilities connected to these lots, or if it is even possible to have utilities connected. I will gather the information and give it to the purchasing director as a formal bid can be put out. Will keep the board updated on the progress of that.

Zach Miner: Did speak with Martin regarding sewer location. As far as the legality of the bid process or just listing with a real estate agent. Sometimes, when things are placed out to bid, it could potentially drive the price/value down due to those bids being cash buyers usually, but give someone else the opportunity as well.

Joe Ayala: A minimum can be set.

Melanie Scofield: Believes that the board should try to follow proper protocols if the city administration has them set up, which explains why the bid route is being discussed.

Cheryl Lindner: The bid would open it up to the public, versus just the person interested?

Melanie Scofield: Yes, that is correct. It goes out to the public. Will share the information with the board prior to posting it and making it live. The downtown beautification for the vinyl of the Presbyterian Church. Could someone from the board look into that?

Toni Madrid: Volunteered to reach out to the church for more information.

Melanie Scofield: The downtown lighting. I have been speaking with Pam Denahy and will get together with the electric department to get an actual inventory of the lighting downtown. Is it the brackets, the lights, the globes, the pedestals, etc? The reason for involving the electric department is that boards have done things in the past for downtown, and it was not feasible for the other city departments to do their job efficiently. They may have better ideas to share with the board. The work session regarding T.O.'s Tavern, Digital Signage, and the nonprofit fee structure. Is that all that is wanting to be discussed at the next work session?

Cheryl Lindner: Also including the bid parameters as a subject of discussion.

Ben Mason: The last work session was specifically dedicated to the Main Street collaboration. So there hasn't been a good work session since December.

Toni Madrid: Would like the subject of community outreach and how it could look added to the work session agenda. This could also provide clarity regarding Spark grants vs. the Blight and Safety grant/loan.

Cheryl Lindner: Wondered if it would not be beneficial to make a report before City Council on terms of what is occurring within the URA and thinks that is part of outreach and communication.

Joe Ayala: The URA is not a city board, but they can absolutely give a report to the council.

Cheryl Lindner: Asked for progress regarding Mickey Bethel's application submitted for the sidewalk at the Oper House Block as was noted in last month's minutes.

Melanie Scofield: Mickey has come back in and would like to redo the application. When he received his initial bid, he did not realize that the whole sidewalk around his property can e done. He will get bids for the entire project rather than just the portion that is needing replaced.

Cheryl Lindner: Is the city doing the 50/50 sidewalk program this year?

Melanie Scofield: No, as it was not funded this year.

D. Governing Body's Comments

Ben Mason: For those that were not in attendance at the last work session, just a reminder that Maureen Rikhof approached the board in regard to providing a letter of support for what they are doing with the Chestnut Apartments. Will be working with Melanie on that letter. Before the letter is sent to Maureen, it will be emailed out to the board.

ADJOURN

ATTEST:

CITY OF LA JUNTA

Melanie R. Scofield, City Clerk

Joseph Ayala, Mayor