

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING LA JUNTA BOARD OF
UTILITIES
LA JUNTA, CO
SEPTEMBER 8, 2026
4:00 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
601 COLORADO AVENUE

CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Utilities of the City of La Junta, Colorado, was called to order by Vice-Chairman Paul Velasquez on Tuesday, September 8, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building.

ROLL CALL (City Clerk)

Present: Joe Ayala, Mayor
Patrick Berg, Chair — via phone
CaSandra Thomas, Commissioner
Paul Velasquez, Vice-Chair/Mayor Pro-Tem

Absent: None

Also Present: Michael Hart (City Manager), Melanie Scofield (City Clerk), Tom Seaba (Director of Water Utilities), Chris Arguello (Electric Superintendent), Martin Montoya (Director of Engineering), Aliza Libby (Director of Finance), Paula Mahoney (Admin. Asst.), Zach Miner (La Junta)

OATH OF OFFICE TO NEWLY APPOINTED COMMISSIONER (City Clerk)

A. Zach Miner

The City Clerk administered the oath of office to the newly appointed commissioner, Zach Miner.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Chairperson)

A. Regular Meeting Minutes August 11, 2026

Vice-Chairman Velasquez asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes of the Regular Meeting of August 11, 2026. Hearing none, the Vice-Chairman asked for a motion to approve the minutes as published.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 11, 2026 MINUTES AS PUBLISHED: Ayala

SECOND: Thomas

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 5-0

INFORMATION

A. Second Cycle Utility Billing (Aliza Libby)

Aliza Libby, Director of Finance, spoke about the issues of the Cycle 2 Utility Billing. If it's a hardship economically for anyone affected, please come in to the office for assistance.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION (5-minute time limit per person)

There was no citizen participation.

REPORTS

A. ARPA Board (Gary Cranson)

Gary Cranson submitted the following report:

1) Summary of July 2026 Financial Statement:

In July, power sales revenue was greater than budget by \$268,474 (10.4%)

Cost of goods sold was over budget at \$211,811 (12.9%)

Net operating revenue for July was \$923,817

2) Year to Date Income Statement:

Revenue from power sales was under budget by \$45,102 (0.3%)

Total revenues were more than budget by \$91,733

The total cost of goods sold was over budget by \$80,148 (0.8%)

Total A & G expenses were under budget by \$158,773 (4.3%)

YTD Net Revenue was greater than budget by 2.2 million dollars (8.4%)

Average of 155 days cash on hand

Debt service coverage year to date is 1.28X

3) July Operating Report:

Member Energy sales were 9.46% more than the budget in July and 4.9% less than they were in July 2025

Member energy sales YTD were 0.7% less than budget and 2.5% less than YTD 2025 sales

Member demands of 73 mW were 2.6% higher than in July 2025

All in cost to members YTD was \$0.09278 per kWh

The avoided cost rate for August will be \$41.15 per mWh

The 2026 YTD blended rate for power is \$42.10 per mWh compared to \$43.08 per mWh in 2025, about 2.2% cheaper

In July, ARPA purchased 15,526 kWh from individual La Junta renewable (solar) generators for \$633.15

4) Next Regular Meeting: October 29, 2026, at 10:00 AM at Otero College in La Junta.

B. Water & Wastewater Treatment (Tom Seaba)

R.O. Plant

- Routine maintenance: Cleaned chemical injectors and flushed lines, inspected reserve and airbase tank, well static levels.

- Diagnosed chlorine controller readout and fixed display issues.
- Replaced meter assembly on well #13.
- Fixed scale inhibitor line leak.
- Replaced motor on fan in well #7 well house.
- Additional facilities and grounds maintenance; meter reading.

Distribution

- Continued on system expansion on 24th Street between Carson and Belleview.
- Replaced/repairs several services.
- Replaced leaking service line that was discovered to be lead.
- Mowed farm fields and ditches.
- Assisted with fire system flow tests.
- Meter Reading and utility billing office generated work orders, equipment maintenance.

Wastewater

- Treated 24.762 million gallons. Removed 28ft³ of screenings and 47ft³ of grit.
- RO concentrate discharge to plant was 22.362 million gallons.
- Jetted 7,597' of collection line for 7 emergency calls and 14 manhole locate requests.
- Installed new check valve on blower #2.
- Cleaned weirs on both clarifiers.
- Received training on sludge press and began pressing operations. 80,000 gallons of sludge was pressed in August.
- Additional facilities and grounds maintenance.

Other Notables

- Grant applications for new water meters and replacement/upgraded measuring weirs on farms.
- Engineering discussions for upcoming projects.
- Training with Colorado Rural Water.
- River bottom tour with a Riparian Ecologist – Flood Resilience Specialist for potential action funds for potential flood and fire mitigation projects.

Pueblo Sewage Spill

Since this spill occurred, the river has been monitored more closely. The CDPHE has now put up a website where it shows all their different testing sites for e-coli and other contaminants. The test is measured in CFUs or colony-forming units. The Colorado Swim Beach Safe level is 235 CFUs. The sample from La Junta taken on September 6th showed 770.1 CFUs. To clear this spill basically comes down to sunlight, air and gravity. A natural process that normally breaks down most of your harmful bacteria that do not like UV light. This spill will basically just take its time. It is suggested to follow all normal guidelines that is being put forth by the CDPHE, Pueblo County Health Department and Otero County Health Department. Don't swim, wade, kayak, or do anything in the river. Definitely do not drink from the river or allow your animals to drink from the river. Don't use river water or untreated shallow well water for cooking, bathing or other consumption. Don't use for cleaning vegetables or preparing meals. It's an unfortunate event. It was a spill where it was an older pipe that had a plug that popped

out, and they didn't notice it for about thirty-six hours.

C. Electric Department (Chris Arguello)

In addition to daily reads, disconnects, and maintenance, the crew performed the following additional tasks:

- Tree trimming on the east side of town.
- Upgraded overloaded transformers at the following locations: 901 Lincoln Avenue, 718 Grace Avenue, 1108 San Juan Avenue and 908 Topeka Avenue.
- Removed a tree from a service at 422 Cimarron Avenue.
- Addressed damage to a streetlight pole struck at 1st and Lewis Avenue.
- Responded to an incident at the Knights of Columbus where a service burned up due to overload.
- Repaired burnt wire in a disconnect box at the Rodeo grounds.
- Fixed a broken stinger at Morgan & Sons.
- Replaced a CT meter bank on Highway 109

System Update: The solar project has been postponed.

Solar Accounts: In August, a total of 12,806 kWh was returned to the grid.

D. Sanitation (Martin Montoya)

- The free curbside recycling will be coming soon. Hopefully before the end of the year.
- We are down four employees, which affects the streets operation.
- La Junta is charging \$14.33 per tote for residential. Rocky Ford is charging over \$33.00, Lamar is around \$20.00 and Las Animas is at \$24.00. We're basically providing a trash service at cost.
- October Community Cleanup will be open Monday through Saturday from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (in the month of October).

NEW BUSINESS

A. City Manager Comments

- We will be briefly talking about the budget tonight at the city council meeting.

B. Governing Body's Comments

Mayor Ayala: Everyone in the city of La Junta receives a utility bill, not just an electric bill. So when you're making comparisons, make sure you're comparing apples to apples.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:58 p.m.

ATTEST:

CITY OF LA JUNTA

Melanie R. Scofield, City Clerk

Patrick Berg, Chairman