

TOWN OF LA JARA

PO Box 273

La Jara, CO 81140

Phone: (719) 274-5363 Fax: (719) 274-5986

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Regular Meeting

Date: November 14, 2024

A permanent set of these minutes are maintained in the Town Clerk's Office. Approved Minutes are also available on the web at www.townofajara.colorado.gov

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Medina at 6:00 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Medina led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Present were Trustees: Rendon, Salazar, Villagomez, Wagoner, and Mayor Medina. Mayor Pro Tem Wilson attended virtually.

Absent: Trustee Cummings

Also present were Town Clerk Pagnotta, Police Chief Swartz, Public Works Supervisor Martinez, Town Attorney Farish and Town Attorney Walker. Town Manager Zaragoza was absent.

Police Chief and Officer Oath

Mayor Medina announced that the new officers would be sworn in and asked Attorney Farrish to administer the oath. Citizen Arthur (Tom) Rendon disrupted the meeting complaining that the number of people in the room exceeded the occupancy limit. Mayor Medina stated that the officers invited family members to observe the ceremony and if anyone felt uncomfortable, they could wait outside while the officers were being sworn in and could return when the ceremony concluded. Mr. Rendon continued to be disruptive and was removed from the meeting. The meeting was delayed for approximately 25 minutes.

Attorney Farrish administered the oath to Police Chief Michael Swartz, Officer Maria Flores and Officer Brandon Sanchez. The chief and officers were pinned with their badge by a family member or friend.

2025 Budget Public Hearing

Attorney Walker declared the public hearing open stating the time as 6:49 pm with quorum of the Board of Trustees present. He noted the procedures. He stated the budget was presented to the trustees at the October board meeting and the public hearing notice was published in the Valley Courier on October 19. He read Resolution 2024-9 summarizing the expenditures and revenues for each fund and Resolution 2024-10 appropriating sums of money to the various funds. Attorney Walker opened the floor to any public comment in support of the budget. Citizen Larry Sisneros asked board members if they were comfortable with the budget. Attorney Walker noted that approximately 8 members of the public were in attendance. He asked for comments in opposition; none noted. The floor was open to the board to ask questions of the staff. Mayor Medina stated she reviewed the budget thoroughly and noted the clean audit; she was in support of the proposed budget. Trustee Rendon asked for clarification on the Conservation Trust Fund balance. Mayor Pro Tem Wilson commented that the performance over time report was appreciated as he cross referenced it with the audit; noting that the reports show fiscal responsibility. Attorney Walker noted the time as 6:56 pm and closed the public hearing for the 2025 budget. Resolution

2024-9 and Resolution 2024-10 were remanded to the board for further action. Mayor Medina announced the public hearing was closed and called the Regular Town Board meeting for November 14, 2024 back to order.

Motion: Trustee Rendon moved to adopt the 2025 budget for the General Fund, Water and Sewer Fund and Conservation Fund; motion seconded by Trustee Salazar. Trustee Rendon moved to amend her motion to include adoption of Resolution 2024-9, summarizing expenditures and revenues for each fund and Resolution 2024-10, appropriating sums of money to the various funds; seconded by Trustee Salazar. Attorney Walker read the titles of the resolutions for clarification.

Vote Results: Ayes: Rendon, Salazar, Wagoner, Villagomez, Mayor Pro Tem Wilson, and Mayor Medina.

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

Approval of Agenda

Motion: Trustee Wagoner moved to approve the agenda as presented; seconded by Trustee Rendon.

Vote Results: Ayes: Trustees Rendon, Salazar, Wagoner, Villagomez, Mayor Pro Tem Wilson, and Mayor Medina.

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

Bart Shawcroft addressed the board asking if his concerns were on the agenda. Mayor Medina explained that it was decided to have a meeting with Town Manager Zaragoza, Mayor Pro Tem Wilson and Trustee Villagomez and members of the Richfield Ditch Company to be able to discuss the issues in more detail. It was decided to allow Mr. Shawcroft to make his presentation during citizen comments.

Consent Calendar

Motion: Trustee Salazar moved to approve the consent calendar; seconded by Trustee Wagoner. Trustee Rendon had questions about a few items on the bills to be paid list; Mayor Medina asked if those questions could be addressed with the clerk individually.

Vote Results: Ayes: Trustees Rendon, Salazar, Wagoner, Villagomez, Mayor Pro Tem Wilson, and Mayor Medina.

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

Guests/Citizen Comments

Bart Shawcroft from the Richfield Ditch Company addressed the board regarding some concerns with the installation of the culvert on Myran Way asking why it was not installed as promised. He stated that the culvert was to be widened and the side walls to the culvert were to have concrete around them. He felt Richfield Ditch Company should be reimbursed for the culvert in the amount of \$2,615.57. He stated that he would like to work with the town and the citizens so the ditch could be maintained. Mayor Pro Tem Wilson, Trustee Villagomez and Town Manager Zaragoza will meet with Mr. Shawcroft and Richfield Ditch board members to discuss the issues in detail.

Larry Sisneros signed in for citizen comments but didn't have any comments.

Trustee Rendon addressed the board as a citizen expressing her appreciation of the maintenance department for the snow removal, however snow was piled in front of the driveways. She asked if more effort could be made to assist in clearing the snow from frontages and driveways and suggested using TextMyGov to ask citizens to move vehicles so that these areas could be cleaned.

New Business

EForce proposal for Police Department – Chief Swartz presented a proposal for EForce RMS System, a report management program that enables officers to improve efficiency, organization and provide legal protection. He explained that currently there is no system in place to track or organize case reports or evidence from past cases. Megan Bagwell from the D.A.s office was present to offer support to the chief in his proposal. It was explained that EForce is compatible with every agency statewide giving access to case reports, booking records and jail reports from other jurisdictions to support inter-agency collaboration; as well as streamlining E-Filing with the District Attorney’s Office. Chief Swartz explained the total cost for the system is \$25,005.69, but was able to get a 30% savings costing the town \$17,503.98. He explained that the town was approved for a payment plan with the initial payment of \$5,000 and then 12 monthly payments of \$1,000. This will serve a two-year contract. The annual license and support fee would be \$3,000 annually, after the initial two-year term.

Attorney Farish questioned the TABOR Clause that is required for governmental agreements. Ms. Bagwell mentioned that grant funds could be available to help fund the system.

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Wilson moved to allow the police department to move forward with the EForce System; seconded by Trustee Salazar. Mayor Pro Tem Wilson amended his motion to approve the agreement conditional of the TABOR Clause review by legal counsel; seconded by Trustee Salazar.

Vote Results: Ayes: Trustees Rendon, Salazar, Wagoner, Villagomez, Mayor Pro Tem Wilson, and Mayor Medina.

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

Chief Swartz expressed his appreciation for the support from the board.

Resolution 2024-11 Loan agreement with CWRPD – Town Clerk Pagnotta explained that that the Town received a Design and Engineer Loan to fund the engineering costs for the wastewater system project. She explained that the loan expired in July leaving about \$55,000 of unspent funds. She explained that Element Engineering submitted some invoices after the loan had expired. The Town was able to rescind the remaining funds and re-establish the loan in the amount of \$134,000. The resolution is needed to approve the loan agreement. Town Clerk Pagnotta stated the resolution is the same as the original resolution with the only change being the amount of the loan. Attorney Farish suggested postponing the approval until the December meeting to allow them to review the agreement.

Old Business

4-Day Work Week – Mayor Medina stated that the 4-Day work week has been in place for about a year and had not heard any negatives until the petition was circulated a few months back. Town Clerk Pagnotta explained how the idea of the 4-Day work week was established, stating that Fridays were typically slow in terms of citizens that call or coming into Town Hall. She explained that employees are working 10-hour shifts. Maintenance Supervisor Martinez explained that the maintenance department would be available 5 days a week with some employees working Monday through Thursday (10-hour shifts) and the others working Tuesday through Friday (10 hour shifts).

Motion: Mayor Medina moved to approve the 4-Day work week as presented with the maintenance department on a staggered schedule; seconded by Trustee Villagomez.

Vote Results: Ayes: Trustees Salazar, Wagoner, Villagomez, Mayor Pro Tem Wilson, and Mayor Medina.

Nays: Trustee Rendon

Motion Carried.

Susan Robins – Conejos County Gift of Giving – Mayor Medina stated that she sent an email explaining that Mrs. Robins was unable to attend the November meeting to request a donation for the Conejos County Gift of Giving. The donation is used to purchase Christmas gifts for underserved children. In order to purchase the gifts before Christmas the donation was needed before December. Mayor Medina

stated she heard from four trustees that agreed to donate \$300, but she wanted to formally approve the donation. Mayor Pro Tem Wilson supports the donation and attests to the huge effort that goes into this program.

Motion: Trustee Rendon moved to donate \$300 to Conejos County Gift of Giving; seconded by Trustee Salazar.

Vote Results: Ayes: Trustees Rendon, Salazar, Wagoner, Villagomez, Mayor Pro Tem Wilson, and Mayor Medina.

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

Reports

Town Manager Report

Town Manager Zaragoza was absent from the meeting but provided the following written report:

- I will be focusing on contacting the owners of the building on 417 Main Street. Time to seriously address this abandoned property!
- Christmas Party for Trustees and Staff planned for December 13th at Northerner's Senior Citizens, beginning at 5:30. Meals being catered by Sunflower from Monte Vista.
- Joe Fernandez's installation of the modular units north of the Elementary School just off of 1st and Poplar is on temporary hold. Needs to hire a crane to lift units onto foundations.
- Please turn in the "Goals for the Town of La Jara". I would like some guidance as to what the Board would like to focus on for the next few years. Return to clerks.
- Parking lines and cross walking areas have been painted by the maintenance dept.
- I would like to discuss the culvert situation with the canal personnel at a special meeting in January of 2025. Please inform any representative that is in attendance.
- CE Corp has completed the Preliminary Engineering Report for our water system. We had a virtual meeting with them to review the PER.
- November 12 attended the Conejos County Potential National Conservation Area (NCA) Discussion in Manassa. Will report in December Board Meeting what was discussed.
- Meeting with Joe Valdez to discuss installing water meters in the property on Main and Walnut. Presently there are four units all operating off of one meter. The corner property has been sold to Ray Smith for a business.
- I would like for the Board of Trustees to consider implementing a Position for a Code Enforcement Officer/Substitute Police Officer. This would be a Non-exempt Part-time position. I am in the process of developing a Town of La Jara Code Enforcement Policy/Job Description and will email each trustee within the next two weeks for your review and input.
- Chief Michael during his report would like to make a proposal to the Board for the purchase of E-force. I have had a conversation with Chief Swartz about this request and fully support this purchase.
- The Town of La Jara has been approved for a second WPCRF D&E IN THE AMOUNT OF \$134,000. Clerk will share. Need to pass a resolution for this.
- Reminder: With all due respect, please allow the La Jara staff to perform their duties. There is no need to direct the police department or check on business licenses. Allow us to do our Jobs! Thank you!
- The Maintenance department worked very hard all-day Thursday with snow removal. This was a very heavy and wet snow (approx. 8-10"). They were on the job at 5:00 AM and worked well after dark. Thank you maintenance!

Town Attorney Reports

Attorney Farish provided copies of the MTC books to the police department and court staff. He explained how the books are structured for quick reference for the officers. This version of the MTC was adopted with Ordinance 2022-1.

Attorney Walker reported that he continues to work on natural medicine regulations. He is drafting regulations that will allow natural medicines to be sold in the commercial highway and commercial business districts in daylight hours only. The regulations will be presented at the December meeting.

Approval of Town Manager's and Town Attorneys' Reports

Motion: Trustee Wagoner moved to approve the reports; seconded by Trustee Salazar.

Vote Results: Ayes: Trustees Rendon, Salazar, Villagomez, Wagoner, Mayor Pro Tem Wilson, and Mayor Medina.

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

Planning and Zoning Update

Trustee Villagomez spoke with Joe Fernandez about putting modular units on his property, but is having issues getting a crane to set the units. He stated that Fernandez plans to put in 7 additional units.

Police Report

Chief Swartz submitted a written report and highlighted the FTO progress with Officers Flores and Sanchez. He stated that in December the department will have a normal schedule. He noted that the officers have been trained and certified to use the tasers and body cameras. Chief Swartz created a fee schedule for records requests for body camera footage. He highlighted some cases that the department is working on. Chief Swartz stated that he applied for and was granted a subsidy for the dispatch fees. The fees for this year were \$6,794 of which the entire amount was subsidized.

Public Works Report

Public Works Supervisor Keith Martinez offered to answer questions. He highlighted a few projects that they are working on. There was some discussion on the snow removal plan. Mayor Pro Tem Wilson expressed his appreciation for the snow removal efforts. He added that a few street signs and stop signs needed to be replaced or straightened.

Clerk Report

Town Clerk Pagnotta submitted a written report. She reported that the heater at Town Hall was replaced. She stated that a Citizen of the Year needed to be selected. A few citizens were suggested but no decision was made. Trustees were asked to send in nominations sooner than later.

Trustee Comments

No Comments were made.

Adjournment:

Mayor Medina moved to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 9:01 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by


Town Clerk – Shawn Pagnotta

