

**VILLAGE OF QUESTA
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2016
VILLAGE OF QUESTA COUNCIL CHAMBERS
6:00PM**

I. CALL TO ORDER BY MAYOR MARK L. GALLEGOS

Mayor Gallegos called the meeting to order at 6:01pm.

II. ROLL CALL

Mayor Gallegos asked Village Clerk Renee Martinez to take roll.

Present:

Councilor Lawrence Ortega
Councilor Brent Jaramillo
Councilor Julian Cisneros
Councilor John Anthony Ortega

Also Present:

Administrator Loretta Trujillo
Village Clerk Renee Martinez
Finance Director Karen Shannon
Village Attorney Randy Autio
Mr. Anthony Martinez, WWTP Operator

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Gallegos asked for a moment of silence in memory of his Grandmother Eva who was laid to rest today on her 100th birthday.

Mayor Gallegos asked Councilor Lawrence Ortega to please lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councilor John Anthony Ortega motioned that Items VI and VII be switched on the agenda. Councilor Julian Cisneros seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

Councilor John Anthony Ortega	YES
Councilor Julian Cisneros	YES
Councilor Lawrence Ortega	YES
Councilor Brent Jaramillo	YES

Councilor Julian Cisneros motioned to move Item VIII after Item X. Councilor Brent Jaramillo seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

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51 Councilor John Anthony Ortega YES
 52 Councilor Julian Cisneros YES
 53 Councilor Lawrence Ortega YES
 54 Councilor Brent Jaramillo YES

55
 56 To approve the agenda as amended. All voted yes. Motion carried.

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 58 V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES –

- 59 • Regular Meeting November 22, 2016

60
 61 Motion: Councilor Julian Cisneros
 62 Second: Councilor Lawrence Ortega

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 64 In Favor: All
 65 Opposed: None

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 67 To approve the November 22, 2016 minutes as presented. All voted yes. Motion carried.

- 68
 69 • Emergency Meeting December 6, 2016

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 71 Councilor Lawrence Ortega stated that the meeting was called to order by Mayor Pro-Tem Julian Cisneros.

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 73 Motion: Councilor Lawrence Ortega
 74 Second: Councilor John Anthony Ortega

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 76 In Favor: All
 77 Opposed: None

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 79 To approve the Emergency Meeting minutes of December 6, 2016 as corrected. All voted yes. Motion carried.

80
 81 VII. UPDATES

82 A. Water Update

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 84 Ms. Trujillo read aloud the following update:

85
 86 On December 6, the Village of Questa governing body declared an emergency due to a failure in our municipal water
 87 system. Water delivery to our constituents became “spotty” with no effect to some residents while some did not have
 88 water at all, and others had very low pressure.

89
 90 Village Staff, along with staff from Taos County, Town of Red River, Village of Angel Fire, Kit Carson Electric,
 91 Questa Mine and subcontractors, and volunteers walked the municipal boundaries in an attempt to locate possible
 92 leaks. Due to low water in our system, and through the advice of New Mexico Environmental Department, the Village
 93 issued a water boil advisory on December 7th, and also asked residents and businesses who still have water to conserve
 94 as much as possible. During this time, Incident Command members were working to assess which residences had
 95 water service, and which were experiencing water outage or had low water flow.

96
 97 The Village Administrative Office became the distribution location for Questa residents to receive bottled water for
 98 consumption and non-potable water for household needs, and volunteers continue to deliver drinking water to elderly
 99 and homebound residents. To date, over 1,300 cases of bottled water and approximately 4,500 gallons of non-potable
 100 water have been distributed to Questa residents and businesses.

101
 102 On December 8, the Village confirmed that one of the wells was not producing sufficient water into the system.

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The Village submitted an application and received approval from the NM Office of the State Engineer (OSE) to commence drilling of an exploratory well to determine if sufficient water supply is available to supply to our municipal water system. Drilling operations began the morning of December 9, by Vigil Well Drilling, in the area adjacent to the previous well. The new well was planned for a depth of 500 feet and early estimates were that the process would take 4-5 days to complete. Operations continued over the weekend and drilling and casing of the new well was completed on Sunday, Dec 11. The well reached a depth of 500'.

The Village followed up with an application to OSE to transfer the existing water rights from the old well into the new well. Village staff continues to work closely with OSE and New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) in processing the required paperwork to ensure compliance with their procedures.

On Monday, Dec 12, Vigil Well Drilling began development of the well – testing the integrity of the well and casings.

On Tuesday, Dec 13, operations began to purge the well and prepare for water testing. Also, the pump was removed from the old well and placed into the new well. Disinfection has been added to pipes, it will sit overnight and a pot ability test will be done tomorrow. Wednesday and Thursday will be utilized for the required testing of the water to receive permission from the NM Environment Department to move forward. We are hoping to re-introduce the water into the Municipal Water system on Friday, December 16.

Councilor John Anthony Ortega commended Ms. Trujillo and her staff for their hard work.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS - *(It is the policy of the Governing Body to accept public comment. Because your particular issue is not on the agenda the Governing Body cannot respond immediately, but may direct staff to address issues at a future Council Meeting. Public comments are limited to a maximum of three minutes.)*

- Ms. Judith Cuddihy - Inquired how much of the Village is without water. Ms. Trujillo stated that we estimate about ¾ of the Village is currently without water. Ms. Cuddihy asked what the estimated time of restoration will be. Ms. Trujillo stated that it could be as early as Friday, or as late as Monday dependent on getting the go ahead from the NMED. Ms. Cuddihy asked that more information be available to the public. Ms. Cuddihy stated that the staff has been working hard and have been great.
- Mr. Max Ortega, Incident Commander – Stated that the staff has come together and have worked very hard. He has been impressed and amazed with their work. The command staff, who are volunteers, are working very hard. The command staff is working very hard at getting the information out.
- Ms. Gloria Gonzales – Thanked the Governing Body for their work. Her concern is that she has had problems all summer long. She called the Village about the pressure and air and never got a good response. This is why we are here today. It should not have happened. She stated that the Mayor should take care of the community. The mayor has to be on top of everything. She needs the Mayor to start listening more to the complaints. Ms. Gonzales asked who is going to come into our homes and fix our lines and water heaters once the water is turned on. It could happen and she would like to know what she needs to do. Mr. Anthony Martinez stated that there will be a plan to reintroduce the water back into the system. He stated that we have to build up the tank level to build up the pressure. We will be working in sections to minimize the impact on people's lines.
- Ms. Phyllis Zimmerman – Thanked Ms. Trujillo and her staff. Concerned about getting conflicting information. Would like daily updates on the Village website. Ms. Zimmerman is also concerned about leaks and the water heaters. What happens if something goes wrong? Is the Village responsible? Also inquired about the Village purchasing water rights from Mr. Eliu Romero. Ms. Zimmerman asked how the Village got to this point. Were the wells not being monitored? We shouldn't have to be dealing with this.
- Mr. Bobby Ortega – How did we get to this point and how do we learn from it. He stated that he is looking for the Mayor and Council to take ownership of it. You were elected by us to represent the community. We need a plan going forward. There have been many red flags all summer. We have been lucky the winter has been mild. He has had very poor pressure at his home. We need to talk about solutions moving forward. We need to purchase water rights for now and for the future.

Councilor Lawrence Ortega responded by saying that it did not happen overnight. We as a Governing Body are committed to move forward and take care of the problem; we can reassure you that this Governing Body is going to come up with a plan and fix it.

Councilor John Anthony Ortega stated that he is committed to getting this water system to operate at its potential. As far as he is concerned we will commit ourselves to fix everything before we come out of emergency status. He will not be happy until the system is fixed as close to 100% as possible.

- Ms. Krystle Rivera – Asked that the Village revisit ordinance for wells in Village limits. Stated they paid for a water tap for a system that the Village knew was failing and now we are 8 days with no water. It is frustrating; life doesn't stop. Our kids can't go to school. She stated that they have not had good water service since they moved in their home in November.
- Ms. Judith Cuddihy – Suggested a citizens committee be appointed to assist the Governing Body.

Councilor John Anthony Ortega thanked the public for coming out to the meeting and invited them to come to future Council Meetings. Councilor Brent Jaramillo also thanked the public for attending the meeting tonight. Mayor Gallegos thanked the public for their comments and concerns and reassured them that we have reached out to various agencies for assistance as well as financial assistance.

IX. PUBLIC HEARING

A. Village of Questa Ordinance # 2016-147 / Off-Highway Vehicle Ordinance

Mayor Gallegos opened the Public Hearing at 7:00pm.

Mr. Bobby Ortega spoke in support of the ordinance.

Mayor Gallegos closed the Public Hearing at 7:07pm.

B. Village of Questa Ordinance # 2016-148 / Uniform Traffic Ordinance

Mayor Gallegos opened the Public Hearing at 7:07 pm.

There were no public comments.

Mayor Gallegos closed the Public Hearing at 7:08pm.

X. ACTION ITEMS - (Consideration and Action)

A. Village of Questa Ordinance # 2016-147 / Off Highway Vehicle Ordinance

Councilor John Anthony Ortega asked if the Village could petition the state for use on state roads, specifically North Kiowa Road. Mr. Randy Autio stated that there is a process in which we could do this. Councilor Lawrence Ortega asked that we move forward with this as soon as possible.

A motion to pass Ordinance # 2016-147 was made by Councilor Lawrence Ortega, seconded by Councilor Julian Cisneros.

A motion was made by Councilor John Anthony Ortega to remove Exhibit A from Ordinance # 2016-147 and move it to Ordinance # 2016-148. The motion was seconded by Councilor Lawrence Ortega.

Roll Call:

206 Councilor Lawrence Ortega YES
 207 Councilor Brent Jaramillo YES
 208 Councilor John Anthony Ortega YES
 209 Councilor Julian Cisneros YES

210
 211 To approve the amendment to Ordinance 2016-147. All voted yes. Motion carried.

212
 213 A motion to approve Ordinance # 2016-147 was made by Councilor Lawrence Ortega, seconded by Councilor Brent
 214 Jaramillo.

215
 216 Roll Call:

217
 218 Councilor John Anthony Ortega YES
 219 Councilor Julian Cisneros YES
 220 Councilor Lawrence Ortega YES
 221 Councilor Brent Jaramillo YES

222
 223 To approve Ordinance 2016-147 as amended. All voted yes. Motion carried.

224
 225 B. Village of Questa Ordinance # 2016-148 / Uniform Traffic Ordinance

226
 227 A motion to pass Ordinance # 2016-148 was made by Councilor John Anthony Ortega, seconded by Councilor Brent
 228 Jaramillo.

229
 230 A motion was made by Councilor John Anthony Ortega to add Exhibit A removed from Ordinance # 2016-147 and
 231 add it to Ordinance # 2016-148. The motion was seconded by Councilor Lawrence Ortega.

232
 233 Roll Call:

234
 235 Councilor Lawrence Ortega YES
 236 Councilor Brent Jaramillo YES
 237 Councilor John Anthony Ortega YES
 238 Councilor Julian Cisneros YES

239
 240 To approve the amendment to Ordinance 2016-148. All voted yes. Motion carried.

241
 242 A motion to approve amended Ordinance # 2016-148 was made by Councilor John Anthony Ortega, seconded by
 243 Councilor Julian Cisneros.

244
 245 Roll Call:

246
 247 Councilor John Anthony Ortega YES
 248 Councilor Julian Cisneros YES
 249 Councilor Lawrence Ortega YES
 250 Councilor Brent Jaramillo YES

251
 252 To approve Ordinance 2016-148 as amended. All voted yes. Motion carried.

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 254 VIII. **FINANCIALS** – Ms. Karen Shannon, Finance Director
 255 A. Approval of Unpaid Vouchers

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The Vigil's Well Drilling invoice will be paid out of the general fund. Councilor Lawrence Ortega asked if we were paying the invoice 100% right away or when it is complete. It was decided that Ms. Shannon would make sure all work is completed and all equipment is installed before full payment goes out. Councilor John Anthony Ortega asked if we do have the money on hand to pay this. Ms. Shannon stated yes. Councilor John Anthony Ortega stated that he is fine with it because he came out to do this right away.

Councilor John Anthony Ortega asked if he can get the credit card statements to see what is being payed. Councilor Julian Cisneros stated that it would probably be easier to come in and review them with the Finance Director instead. Ms. Shannon stated these are always open for inspection.

Councilor Lawrence Ortega asked if the Cambalache expenses were paid by the QEDFB. Ms. Shannon stated that they did get some money from the fund board and also some donations. There was also a carryover from last year.

Councilor John Anthony Ortega asked if we bought the riding mower that we talked about earlier this year. Ms. Trujillo stated that we did not for the reason that we used that money to equip the new truck with the salt spreader. Councilor John Anthony Ortega stated that he is inquiring because there is an expense for maintenance to a mower. Ms. Trujillo stated that that is for our mower that is not working; Mr. Anthony Martinez is trying to get it going. Councilor John Anthony Ortega stated that we should still follow through in purchasing a mower and the crew has the needed equipment.

Mayor Gallegos stated that on page 2 are his travel expenses to the leadership workshop he attended in Nevada. Councilor Lawrence Ortega asked for the information on these workshops when they come in. Mayor Gallegos stated that he will ask Ms. Coleman to get the information for these workshops to their calendar.

Motion: Councilor Julian Cisneros

Second: Councilor Lawrence Ortega

In Favor: All

Opposed: None

To approve the presented vouchers. All voted yes. Motion carried.

XI. MATTERS FROM ATTORNEY

There were no matters.

XII. MATTERS FROM ADMINISTRATOR, MAYOR AND COUNCIL

Ms. Trujillo introduced Officer Miguel Cardenas who joined the Village of Questa Police Department on December 5, 2016. Officer Cardenas is a certified Officer. Mr. Joseph Fernandez has resigned as Police Cadet. Ms. Trujillo also stated that Ms. Raynelle Sanchez-Cordova has been hired as the Village EMS Coordinator effective December 5th.

Ms. Trujillo informed the Governing Body that the Village has received full reimbursement from NM Finance Authority for the Asset Management Plan.

Councilor John Anthony Ortega asked if the audit exit was held today. Ms. Trujillo stated that because the audit has not been approved by the State Auditor, it cannot be discussed.

Councilor Brent Jaramillo inquired if there was anything we needed to discuss about the water system. Mr. Anthony Martinez stated that we will have a better idea tomorrow as soon as Mr. Gil Vigil completes all the connections to the

exploratory well. Councilor Lawrence Ortega asked if once the test pump is set up Mr. Vigil will be able to tell what the production is. Mr. Martinez stated yes. Councilor Brent Jaramillo stated that the rumor is that the whole system will be turned off on Friday during the connection and everyone will be without water. Mr. Martinez stated that it is a rumor and hasn't been discussed. Mr. Martinez stated that the way the system is set up, it would be ideal to leave the water on and the air will get purged out of the hydrants. Ms. Trujillo stated that we are telling customers that the intent is not to shut off the system. Councilor Lawrence Ortega stated that he doesn't think there would be any reason to shut down Well #1.

Councilor John Anthony Ortega stated that he has learned a lot about the water system in the last week. He appreciates the opinions given and that the community has come together. He thanked the staff and volunteers who have all been helping and working hard. He also stated that we do need to have our retreat, but maybe it should be pushed back.

Councilor Julian Cisneros inquired about how many pallets of water we still have. Ms. Trujillo stated that she would have to get with logistics to get the exact amount.

Councilor Lawrence Ortega asked about the QEDF Budget. Mayor Gallegos stated that he was hoping to have this discussion at Thursday's meeting. The fund board meeting is on the 20th but it still needs to be a unified agreement. He believes a work study session with the Village and the QEDFB would work better in order to discuss it together. Councilor Lawrence Ortega stated that what was decided was that the Council would give their comments and ideas to Ms. Trujillo. If this is no longer the case we need to know.

Councilor John Anthony Ortega asked Councilor Brent Jaramillo that as a member of the QEDFB, how he voted on the budget. Councilor Jaramillo stated that he was at the National League of Cities Conference. Councilor John Anthony Ortega then asked Mayor Gallegos how he voted. Mayor Gallegos stated that they did not vote on the budget. Mr. Christian Isely suggested that the work study be done during the Leadership Team meeting on December 19th. It was decided that the agenda for the Leadership Team meeting agenda be solely on the budget. A discussion was held regarding the QEDF Executive Director position. Councilor John Anthony Ortega stated for the record that he believes that this position should not be eliminated and is needed in the QEDFB and the Village.

At the request of Councilor John Anthony Ortega, Mayor Gallegos gave a brief summary of the leadership conference he attended in Nevada.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Councilor Julian Cisneros

Second: Councilor John Anthony Ortega

In Favor: All

Opposed: None

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:07pm.

ATTEST:

 **SEAL**
Renee Martinez, CMC

APPROVED:


Mark Gallegos, Mayor