

VILLAGE OF QUESTA
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, JUNE 02, 2015
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.

Those present were:

Councilor Julian Cisneros

Councilor Lawrence Ortega

Councilor Brent Jaramillo arrived at 6:09pm.

Also present:

Village Attorney Vanessa Chavez

Administrator Loretta Trujillo

Finance Director Karen Shannon

Village Clerk Renee Martinez

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. David Kisten led the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Trujillo asked that Item VII (A) be removed from the agenda. Mr. Rael will not be present.

Motion: Councilor Cisneros

Second: Councilor Ortega

In Favor: All

Opposed: None

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

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES –

- Special Meeting, May 14, 2015

Councilor Ortega asked that on line 76 of page 2 that Mr. Ortega's (Mark) first name be inserted so it be clear that he is being referred to.

Motion: Councilor Cisneros

Second: Councilor Ortega

In Favor: All
 Opposed: None

To approve the Meeting Minutes of May 14, 2015 as amended. All voted yes. Motion carried.

- Regular Meeting, May 19, 2015

Motion: Councilor Cisneros
 Second: Councilor Ortega

In Favor: All
 Opposed: None

To approve the Meeting Minutes of May 19, 2015 as presented. All voted yes. Motion carried.

Councilor Ortega asked if the minutes for the public hearing and special meeting will be on the next agenda. Ms. Martinez stated yes.

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.)*

*There were no Public Comments.

VII. **PRESENTATIONS** –

A) Mr. Lucas Rael – Ambitions Consulting Group

*Removed from Agenda.

B) Mr. Elmer Salazar - Petroglyphs on the Rio Grande

Mr. Salazar informed the Governing Body that things are going exceedingly well and they are learning a lot of things from the community. He stated that one of the things he has decided to do on his own is the agriculture-farming/ranching piece. He and the Vista Volunteer are visiting and talking with ranchers. From Lama to the Colorado border, water is the big priority. After the briefing from NM Tech, it is now clear that there is a reasonable amount of ground water available to the extended community. He stated that they will be meeting next week with the seven local acequia associations in Questa.

(Councilor Jaramillo arrived at this time – 6:09pm)

Mr. Salazar stated that he believes that the agriculture community does not understand what is going on with the Top of the World Farms issue. A discussion was held regarding Top of the World Farms. Mr. Salazar stated that along with his team, he has come up with an idea. Chevron Mining has told him that they would consider how their water rights could remain in the community and actually leverage future agriculture and municipal activities.

He stated that they are likely to be making a recommendation that creates a land and water trust entity. For the land that isn't used by Chevron for other purposes, but that they own, would go into trust and can be distributed for various uses for the Village and to farmers. The Water Rights, both ground and surface, would go into this trust and also be available for lease for beneficial economic uses.

He stated that the Fund Board has the responsibility to run the economic development activities, the Council has the job of running the Village of Questa activities. These two entities would not necessarily need to get into the land/water business. The Trust will insure that it will be managed properly for many years to come.

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He stated that he did not want this to come as a surprise to the Council because it is a pretty dramatic conclusion that he and his team are reaching. Mr. Salazar stated that he believes this option will be more powerful, with further development of the concept, while working with Chevron. He stated that Chevron does not yet know about this concept because it is not the time to take it to them yet. He stated that it is time to sit with the Fund Board and hash this idea out.

Councilor Jaramillo inquired if Mr. Salazar would be seeking out other organizations such as Greenprint. He asked if the Council was to give their approval for this Trust, would they seek out other existing organizations. Mr. Salazar stated that they absolutely would and there is no reason to reinvent the wheel, however; Chevron owns all the cards in this deck. He stated that he is trying to look for something that Chevron looks at as good business. They want to make sure that the water is being effectively managed and used. In the end, he believes that it is going to be Chevron's call.

Mayor Gallegos stated that he had some concerns. He stated that the land and water trust entity is not going to generate any revenue for the Village of Questa. We again sit on the outside, watching someone else manage the water and land as well as create some kind of agreement. He stated that we have been having to live this way for so long because we haven't gained any revenue from Chevron directly, it has always been through contracts or from them purchasing things at our stores. Mayor Gallegos stated that the Village of Questa needs to be the primary beneficiary. He stated that we are impacted by the mine closing, we have the 'black eye' of a contaminated community in people's eyes and we are a Superfund site. Let the Village of Questa manage it, lease it and collect some revenue on it. We are struggling every year just to make budget, meanwhile our town is not growing. How much growth will we be able to project with farming out north? Under the Village of Questa's watch, we have more to gain at the end of the day. Mayor Gallegos stated that he can see where Mr. Salazar is coming from. He does believe that it is important that the Village has a chair at the table. He asked if this trust entity will be based in Questa so that we can collect some revenue from them. Mayor Gallegos wants to know how all of this is going to work.

Mayor Gallegos stated that he is glad that Taos Mountain Energy will be locating to Questa, however; the Village of Questa is not going to see any revenue from it. Mr. Salazar stated that the Village will be making some money off of the sales in GRT. Ms. Shannon stated that the Village will not see any GRT's from them for the reason that they are selling their product as a retail product for re-sale in other locations. So, the person they sell it to collects the GRT's on the product. Mayor Gallegos stated that he was grateful for them coming in because some jobs will be brought to Questa.

Mr. Salazar stated that it will take some time to address these concerns. He believes that professional management is the better option. Mayor Gallegos stated that his number one priority is Questa, and that Questa gains something in this endeavor.

A discussion was held regarding the local business assessment, marketing, maintenance and customer service.

Mr. Salazar stated that Phase II is completed. He stated that as we are moving forward into Phase III, which will analyze the business and industry opportunities, and then into Phase IV which is projections for economic development. The completion date is set for July 31, but it will be tight. He stated that it has been a pleasure to interact with all the business owners and ranchers. He also stated that it is important that a date be set for a work study session with council.

Mr. Malaquias Rael stated that the land/water trust would be a great idea for Questa if it is set up and managed correctly.

VIII. **ACTION ITEMS** - (Discussion, Consideration and Action)

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A) 911 Data Conversion Expenditure – Mr. Dominic Martinez, E 9-11 Director

Mr. Dominic Martinez, Taos County E911 Director, informed the Governing Body that he is here to request the approval of the expenditure of approximately \$32,586.06 from the reserves of the Taos Emergency Communications Center for the 911 data conversion. It was made clear that this would not cost the Village of Questa any additional monies.

Councilor Ortega asked what the main source of revenue is for that fund. Mr. Martinez stated that the Village of Questa pays \$10,000.00, the Village of Taos Ski Valley also contributes \$10,000.00 as well as the funds that were in there prior to the County taking over. If the fund comes up short at any time, they will go to the Town of Taos and to the County Commission and request an increase to their contribution. They will not request any additional money from the Village of Questa or the Village of Taos Ski Valley.

Mr. Martinez stated that they will be very transparent in keeping the Council updated. Councilor Ortega asked who sits on their board for the Village of Questa. Mr. Martinez stated that Chief Bates currently sits on the board. He also stated that all trainings will be in Taos at no cost directly from them to the Village. There will be no maintenance fees.

A motion was made by Councilor Jaramillo to accept the recommendation from the E911 Board to expend money for the data conversion from the reserve fund. The motion was then seconded by Councilor Ortega.

In Favor: All

Opposed: None

To approve the 911 data conversion expenditure. All voted yes. Motion carried.

IX. **DISCUSSION ITEMS** –

A) Economic Development Director Position

Mayor Gallegos asked the Council if there were any questions or changes they would like to make to the Executive Director description. Councilor Ortega asked who this person will report to and be hired by. Malaquias Rael stated that this person would be a contract employee with the Fund Board. This position is for a three year period. This person must work with the Village as well as with all of the economic activities that the Village feels are important as well as forming committees. Councilor Ortega stated that he wants to make sure that the interest of the Village is first and foremost as far as the Council is concerned. Councilor Cisneros asked how much the Village gets on an annual basis from the fund board. Councilor Jaramillo stated that it comes to about \$156,000.00 roughly, that is conceivably available. Councilor Cisneros stated that he would like to use these funds for projects we need and not to pay another employee. He is concerned that the money is going to be used for another liaison between the Village and the fund board. A lengthy discussion was held about the funding. Councilor Ortega stated that he would like to stress that he wants to make sure that the Village of Questa is involved in every step of the way. Mr. Rael stated that a committee can be formed as an interview panel.

Councilor Jaramillo inquired about the possible MOU between the Fund Board and the Village of Questa. Mr. Rael stated that the purpose is so that we have a clear understanding of what the relationship is between the board and the Village and how it's spelled out. He stated that we have been going on good faith which leaves room for questions and innuendos as to who's doing what. Also, implementation of the Economic Development Plan will need a clear definition of roles. The trust document lays out the basis for it but there is some room for some clarity. Ms. Trujillo stated that in her opinion standard operating procedures seems to make more sense since we have a trust document that lays out the roles already. Councilor Ortega stated that an MOU will properly define the roles of both the board and the Village.

Mr. Rael asked the Mayor or Ms. Trujillo to ask Ms. Bouyer to be a little more specific on the numbers of visitors to Questa. Also, if she could explain how the Tourism Grant works.

B) 2015-2016 Village of Questa Funding Requests to QEDFB

- \$30,000.00 for the rapid action fund will be made
- \$40,000.00 for the Lobbyist contract

C) Beautification Project

A brief discussion was held regarding the Beautification Project. No decisions were made.

X. **FINANCE DEPARTMENT** - Ms. Karen Shannon

A) Approval of Unpaid Vouchers

Ms. Shannon presented the bank balances and outstanding invoices.

She stated that she called the ditch association regarding the bill we received from the south ditch and was told it was the water rights at the sewer plant. Ms. Trujillo stated that she would call Louise Padilla and clarify.

Councilor Cisneros inquired about the repair to the Impala and if it was the same one that we had just paid to get fixed. Ms. Shannon stated yes but that the transmission went out on it Memorial weekend. This current repair had nothing to do with the last repair.

A motion was made by Councilor Cisneros to approve the vouchers with the exception of invoice #5818 for Northern NM Diesel until we have clarification. Seconded by Councilor Jaramillo.

In Favor: All

Opposed: None

To approve the Unpaid Vouchers with the exception of the invoice Northern NM Diesel. All voted yes. Motion carried.

XI. **MATTERS FROM ADMINISTRATOR**

Ms. Trujillo informed the Council on the following:

- The Resolutions regarding the Village doing business with immediate family members has been revised. It is included in the packet for review and will be brought back next meeting. She asked that the Council to call her if they had any questions or concerns.
- Ms. Shannon, Ms. Martinez and Ms. Trujillo will be out of the office tomorrow at an HR training in Santa Fe.
- The Village was successful with the Planning Grant and we will have more information at the next meeting.
- The appraisal from Marie Reynolds has been received.
- Mr. Andamo Sanchez did not get a formal appraisal.
- We will be providing mulching for the community every Friday in the month of June from 2pm-4pm, as well as cleaning up the yard in back.
- A walk through at La Cienega was conducted yesterday and she has made available the loss control and safety audit for review.
- Souder Miller and Garcia Underground did a walk through last week of the water system project. There are two items that need to be fixed. This should be taken care of by June 15.

Councilor Ortega asked that the Water Rights be included in Executive Session at the next meeting.

XII. MATTERS FROM MAYOR AND COUNCIL

Councilor Cisneros asked when the IPAD's will be available. Ms. Trujillo stated that in order to activate them through Verizon we need to check on the cost. A discussion was held regarding the Wi-Fi availability. Ms. Trujillo stated that we want to be able to communicate with the Council by e-mail regularly. Councilor Cisneros asked what we are going to do about the police vehicles that are not working. Ms. Trujillo stated that they are working on some solutions. He stated that this is where the trucks the Fire Department got from the mine would come in handy.

Councilor Jaramillo inquired about the Old Red River Road project. Ms. Trujillo stated that she has received a quote from Joe Moore and will be presented at the next meeting. He stated that he attended the CDBG hearings today with the CDC Council on the CDBG application for the Wastewater. He believes that we have a great chance at get funding. Councilor Ortega requested a copy of the CDBG application.

Councilor Ortega asked Ms. Trujillo if Ms. Bouyer has informed her about the Grant that Mr. Rael was talking about. Ms. Trujillo stated that she would meet with her and get an update.

Mayor Gallegos asked for a cost on what we have aid to clean the graffiti up at Molycorp Field. He would like to see cameras put up at some point. Also, Mr. Young has encroached on our 29 acres and has probably put seed down. He asked the Council what steps they want to take from here forward. Ms. Trujillo stated that a cease and assist letter to Mr. Young has been sent by our attorney and she has also talked to Mr. Young informing him that the property belongs to the Village.

It was decided to decide on a date for the Work Study with Petroglyph's. It was decided the meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 10th at 7:00. The Administrator evaluation will be at 6:00pm.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Councilor Ortega


Second: Councilor Jaramillo

In Favor: All

Opposed: None

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:47pm.

ATTEST:


Renee Martinez, Village Clerk

APPROVED:


Mark Gallegos, Mayor