VILLAGE OF QUESTA
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 07, 2017
VILLAGE OF QUESTA COUNCIL CHAMBERS
6:00PM

I. CALL TO ORDER BY MAYOR MARK L. GALLEGOS
Mayor Gallegos called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

II. ROLL CALL
Mayor Gallegos asked Village Clerk Renee Martinez to take roll.

Present:
Councilor Lawrence Ortega
Councilor John Anthony Ortega

Not Present:
Councilor Brent Jaramillo
Councilor Julian Cisneros

Also Present:
Village Clerk Renee Martinez
Finance Director Karen Shannon
Village Attorney Lance Hough

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
Councilor Lawrence Ortega led the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
Motion: Councilor Lawrence Ortega
Second: Councilor John Ortega

In Favor: All
Opposed: None

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

V. ACTION ITEMS

A. Discussion, Consideration & Decision - Resolution No. 2017-23 / Resolution calling for the 2018 Municipal Election

Councilor Lawrence Ortega stated he is fine with the Resolution but stated there has been some concern with some local elections regarding absentee ballots and wants to make sure we keep a good handle on it. Ms. Martinez stated that she agrees and thanked Councilor Lawrence Ortega for his comment. Councilor John Ortega requested the numbers of absentee voters in the past two elections. Ms. Martinez stated that she would get the numbers together. Councilor John Ortega asked if the early voting will be held Monday through Friday 8:00am to 5:00pm. Ms. Martinez stated it is normally held during regular office hours. Councilor John Ortega would like to see that we offer a couple of Saturday’s for early voting. Ms. Martinez stated that she would look into this.

Motion: Councilor Lawrence Ortega –Table until the next meeting of December 12, 2017.
Second: Councilor John Ortega

In Favor: All

Opposed: None

To approve the tabling of Resolution No. 2017-23 / Resolution calling for the 2018 Municipal Election. All voted yes. Motion carried.

B. Discussion, Consideration & Decision – Questa Land & Water

Attorney Lance Hough stated that before them were the QLW Trust By-Laws, the standard land/water rights transfer form, map for target area and the Articles of Incorporation. Mr. Hough stood for questions.

Councilor Lawrence Ortega asked Mr. Hough to summarize how this corporation is going to benefit primarily the Village of Questa; he wants to make sure it is going to have the best interest of the Village in mind. Mr. Hough stated that the best way to describe it is that the QWL, first of all is going to be a review board to review transactions and insure these transactions have some benefit. The biggest tangible component that we can look at right now is if someone has a commercial operation, they are going to have to report their taxes through the Village. There will also be deed restrictions on transferring water rights out of the target area. Mr. Hough stated that he understands the Village’s concern. It is important to get a good board in place who are going to make these decisions. Councilor Lawrence Ortega asked if he is correct is saying that in one of our recent meetings, there was a discussion that there is a separate amount of water rights that Chevron is considering just for the use of the Village. Mr. Hough stated that there is some set aside for settlement and there are some set aside in the remaining pool that can be transferred to the Village. He stated that the Village should be able to acquire some of these water rights of the QLW also. The Village can apply as its own business, for some of the 400 acre ft.

Councilor John Ortega asked what is the feasibility that anyone is going to actually lease that property to start a business other than agricultural use and there is really no GRT linked to this. There is really no benefit to anyone except Chevron and whoever is leasing the water rights on these properties. Mayor Gallegos stated that part of the application process is for the applicant to find an operation/business locally in Questa for GRT gain to benefit Questa. If the business is selling wholesale, the Village won’t benefit except for what the business buys locally such as gas or other products. Mr. Hough stated that if it was strictly a wholesale agricultural transaction, not benefiting the Village in any way, it would be rejected. Councilor John Ortega stated that he understands this but wants to know what the feasibility that anyone is going to actually want to invest in this. Mr. Hough stated that there is no way to predict this. Councilor Lawrence Ortega stated that the benefits have to be more than just the GRT. Mayor Gallegos stated that the importance of us supporting this is that one of the Council on the Board will be able to ask the good questions and make decisions. Without the board in place, Chevron could just sell to the highest bidder.

Councilor Lawrence Ortega asked if the document lends itself for revision as the process moves on. Mr. Hough stated that they are amendable.

Ms. Louise Gallegos asked if this Board is being formed to oversee and make sure the Village has benefitting from this operation. Mr. Hough stated yes. Ms. Gallegos stated that then we would want people on the board who have interest in investing in the Village.

Councilor John Ortega asked, for the record, that he has heard that the composition of this board, aside from the Governing Body member has already been made up. Is this true? Mr. Hough stated no; the other component is getting board members from the QLW, we don’t have their recommendations yet, it is still wide open. Councilor Lawrence Ortega stated that in previous discussions, that this Governing Body will select 3 at-large board members. Mr. Hough stated that that was the original idea and got pushed back by Chevron; a QEDF member, a Village Council member and 3 public at-large members, so 3 recommendations from the Village, one from QEDF-

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the Attorney’s would then get together and make the final selection. Councilor Lawrence Ortega asked so there is 3 selections from the Governing Body and 3 from the QEDF? Mr. Hough stated yes, that is the idea.

A discussion was held regarding how the 3 at-large members would be selected. Mayor Gallegos suggested that each member come up with three names to submit. Councilor Lawrence Ortega agreed and stated that we should make the decision at next Tuesday’s meeting. Councilor John Ortega stated that he believes that amongst the members of the Governing Body, they can narrow the list down to the final 3. Mayor Gallegos stated that he will submit a couple of names and the Council can make the decision.

A discussion was held regarding the appointment of the Councilmember to the board. It was decided to appoint someone through March 2018. Mayor Gallegos asked Councilor Lawrence Ortega if he would like to serve as the board member on behalf of the Council. Councilor Lawrence Ortega stated that he would be interested. Mr. Hough stated that the remaining step would be the selection of the 3 at-large members. The 3 names from the governing body members will be submitted to Mr. Hough or Marcus Rael by Tuesday.

Mr. Hough stated that the approval tonight would be the Corporate Documents of the Questa Land & Water Trust that consist of the by-laws, with attachments (water rights/land transfer form and map) as well as the Articles of Incorporation. Councilor Lawrence Ortega asked Mayor Gallegos if he has received any feedback from Councilor Brent Jaramillo or Councilor Julian Cisneros. Mayor Gallegos stated that he believes that Councilor Jaramillo, in regards to the comments tonight were similar to the last meeting and he is not sure about Councilor Cisneros.

Motion: Councilor Lawrence Ortega
Second: Councilor John Ortega

Mayor Gallegos made the recommendation that can be solidified by the Council at the December 12th meeting that Councilor Lawrence Ortega have a seat on the QLW Board as representative of the Village. Also, that the names of the 3 potential at-large members be submitted.

A discussion was held regarding coming up with the short list. Councilor Lawrence Ortega asked if the Attorneys’ have the final say on a possible disagreement or does the Council. Mayor Gallegos stated that the Attorney’s do. It was decided that the Governing Body agree on the 3 names to submit for next Tuesday’s meeting. It was agreed that if their personally submitted names are not chosen, that the Council members will agree to the names that are decided on by the members.

In Favor: All
Opposed: None

To approve the tabling of Resolution No. 2017-23 / Resolution calling for the 2018 Municipal Election. All voted yes. Motion carried.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Councilor John Ortega
Second: Councilor Lawrence Ortega

In Favor: All
Opposed: None

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 6:52pm.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Renee Martinez, CMC

Mark Gallegos, Mayor

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